



# The DART Board



A publication of the Allegheny Intermediate Unit

# September 2010



## Welcome Back!!

It's the start of the new school year and the DART Program would like to take this opportunity to welcome both our returning and our new students.



We hope that everyone enjoyed the summer and is looking forward to a fun and exciting school year. If you have any questions about your child's programming or anything else related to the DART program, please feel free to ask your child's teacher/therapist. We are here to assist you in any way we can.

## Focus on Health and Safety

### Immunization Update

Welcome back! The start of the new school year is always accompanied by a large "to-do" list. Please make sure that updating your child's immunization record with your child's teacher is on that list. Remember, preschool children are required to show proof of immunizations, just like children who attend elementary schools. The Allegheny County Immunization Coalition (ACIC) has a very helpful website which was developed earlier in 2010 ([www.immunizeallegheny.org](http://www.immunizeallegheny.org)).



Immunization schedules can be accessed from the site. There is also a section which is specifically targeted to parents.

Please check with your health care provider or contact the Allegheny County Health Department at 412-687-ACHD or [www.achd.net](http://www.achd.net) to keep yourself up to date with your vaccinations!

## Reminder to all DART Parents

If you have a child with physical health needs (asthma, seizures or anything else), please contact the DART Service Coordinator for Physical Health (Cindy Callaghan, 412-394-3616). We want to make certain that all of the children in the DART Program have their health needs met in the classroom.



## Parents Corner

### Competence and Confidence: Partners in Policymaking for Families of Children in Early Intervention (C2P2/EI)

A free leadership development training for families with children in Early Intervention (EI) and preschool programs. Participants will learn to:

- Identify best practice supports in EI
- Connect with community resources
- Navigate the Pennsylvania EI System

Families will receive overnight lodging, meals, travel, and childcare cost reimbursements (if eligibility requirements are met).

### Who should apply?

Interested family members from Pennsylvania who:

- Have an infant, toddler or preschool age child who receives EI services
- Have a desire to learn to advocate for themselves and others by building leadership skills
- Are willing to make a time commitment to attend all trainings.

All 4 trainings are 2-day sessions. All C2P2/EI training sessions will be held on Fridays and Saturdays (starting in October 2010 and ending in April 2011) in King of Prussia, PA. Applications are due by October 1, 2010. For more information and/or an application, contact Diane Perry at 215-204-3031(voice), 215-204-1356(TTY), or email her at [dperry@temple.edu](mailto:dperry@temple.edu).

## Early Learning Standards 101 and the Importance of Play

We will continue to focus on the Pennsylvania Learning Standards for Early Childhood and how you can incorporate them into your child's play at home. This month we focus on Guiding Principles of High Quality Early Childhood Programs. Future issues of the DART Board will center on ideas for your child's play at home as related to the Learning Standards.

**#1:** High quality early childhood education and care programs have a significant impact on children's futures successes.

**#2:** All children can learn and deserve high expectations that are age, individually, and culturally appropriate.

**#3:** Young children learn best when they are able to construct knowledge through meaningful play, active exploration of the environment and thoughtfully planned activities.



**#4:** The learning environment for young children should stimulate and engage their curiosity of the world around them, and meet their physical needs and emotional needs so that children feel safe and secure.

**#5:** Language and early literacy development must be supported and integrated throughout all aspects of early childhood care and education programs.

**#6:** Children's learning, development, and opportunities are supported when their teachers are trained in early childhood development and education, and are intentional in their relationships and work with children and families.



**#7:** Early childhood care and education programs must address the individual needs of a diverse population of children.

**#8:** Early childhood care and education programs are defined by a set of comprehensive standards that maximize a child's growth and development across all domains.

**#9:** There must be a system of research based assessment that documents children's growth and development in relationship to a defined set of standards, and is used to inform instruction.

**#10:** Children's learning is enhanced when families, schools, and communities work together.

## Celebration of Success

This month we feature part of a parent letter praising staff at our Quaker Valley DART classroom.

*I am writing you this letter to let you know how great one of your employees is, Mrs. Diane Catterall, with my son Ryan at the Quaker Valley DART classroom and my son absolutely adores her. I believe that Diane is the biggest reason why my son has opened up to school so well. Ryan is three and has autism and doesn't talk too much, but Diane was the first one from the picture book that was sent home for us to go through that he recognized. When I pick Ryan up from school and ask how his day was, the very little that he does say always has "Miss Diane" in it. My son goes into school better when Diane is there to greet him at the door. He is so excited to see her. I know my son Ryan not only sees but also feels how great, caring and loving Diane is.*

*The greatest thing about Diane though, is that she is not just this way with my son, I have noticed that all the students love her the same way my son does. When school lets out for a break all of the students go up to give "Miss Diane" a great big hug and say how much they will miss her.*

*As a parent I feel that I am truly lucky that my son has someone so great and caring working and helping him in school like Diane. She shows everyday how much she cares and loves the kids that she works with. That makes a world of difference in a child's eyes. I know that all of the other parents in my son's class feel the same way about Diane as I do. I just thought you should know how great of a job that Diane does with all of the kids everyday. I know that I cannot thank her enough for everything that she does for my son.*

*Thank you so much!!  
Linda Kennedy*



Sources: "Focus on Health and Safety" created by Cindy Callaghan, DART Service Coordinator for Physical Health. "Parents Corner" created by Sue Vandervort, DART Preschool Service Coordinator. Early Learning Standards" and "The Importance of Play" information provided by PDE and DPW.