Child Care Aware of Virginia invites you to join us at:

**The 2015 Child Care & Early Childhood Education Business Summit**

Thursday, December 3, 2015
8:30am – 3:30pm
Wyndham Virginia Crossings Hotel & Conference Center
1000 Virginia Center Parkway
Glen Allen, VA 23059

The 2015 Child Care & Early Childhood Education Business Summit offers owners and directors an opportunity to move to the next level of success for your business!

Whether you are a seasoned business owner with multiple child care locations or a new director of a child care or early education program, this summit will have exciting, innovative, and thought provoking presentations to help meet some of your daily challenges!

Budgets are tight and operating a child care business has never been more challenging or time consuming. **You don’t want to miss this opportunity to learn, be inspired and network!**

**Business Summit Topics Include:**
- Leadership
- Human Resources
- Marketing
- Budgeting & Business Best Practices
- Risk Management
- Child Care Financing: Loans & Grants
- Much, much, more!

**Space is limited!**

Early Bird Registration is $30 through November 12.
After November 12, registration increases to $45.

Register Now for an early bird discount!
✓ Includes 6 hour training certificate and lunch!

[http://va.childcareaware.org/registration/](http://va.childcareaware.org/registration/)
The Neighborhood Resource Center, a multi-use community center in the east end of Richmond has made a commitment to serving children healthy, home-made food in their Montessori preschool and after school programs. The center participated in our “Think Outside The Juice box” training grant in the spring through the Virginia Department of Health. Sarah Orr, Food Program Director, talks about why providing children with good foods is so important to her, and shares some secrets for helping children happily eat more than chicken nuggets.

Q: Why is providing healthy foods to children important to you?

Many children (and adults) are disconnected from the food they eat and where it comes from. It used to be normal to have a garden in the backyard and know how to grow food. Lots of children think food originates from the store and have trouble identifying fruits and vegetables.

Our first Food Program Director, Blue Clements, focused on linking our gardening and cooking programs. We want to teach our kids where food comes from, and to give them skills to maybe have their own garden someday or to cook a meal for themselves. Once you start exposing kids to a variety of healthy foods, it gets easier to keep it up because the kids get used to trying new things, experimenting with food, and eating fruits and vegetables.

Fulton, the community that we serve in the East End of Richmond, is located in a recognized food desert where the only options for shopping are corner stores and a family dollar. Children we care for may have pretty limited food choices at home. Considering this, I would say we use CACFP and SFSP as a tool to provide meals with substance while simultaneously expanding the scope of experiences with and knowledge of food for our kids. We hope that providing these healthy foods now, in preschool, will pay off for children’s future health, vitality and eating habits.
Q: Do you have a few suggestions for educators who’d like to improve their program’s meal and snack options for children?

- Consistency is so crucial for introducing a new food. When I introduce something new, say edamame (soybeans), I make sure it is on the menu each week, so the kids will remember trying it and whether or not they liked it. Without consistency, the kids forget they have tried it and we go back to square one each time. Not all foods go over, so my rule of thumb is to try it three times. If they still don’t like it after three times of serving something new, I give it the boot.

- Experiment! You might be surprised. One of our volunteers brought in asparagus from his garden and the preschool teachers and I decided to test it out with the expectation that it would be a disaster. On the contrary, after lunch, several of the children asked me if they could have asparagus the next day. The second time I served asparagus they recognized it on the plate and actually started chanting for it - can you believe that?

- Involve the children in preparing new dishes if possible. Our after-school cooking class frequently prepares supper for the next day in class, which almost guarantees the kids will eat it the next day- they have a sense of ownership and pride over what they have created and are excited about that.

- Involve children in a garden. This is another way to foster a relationship with food and increase willingness to try new things. If your facility doesn’t have the space or resources for a garden, maybe try having a few edible plants in the windowsill that children are responsible for taking care of- herbs, for instance, are easy to maintain, very resilient, and fun to taste test.

- Introduce new foods as an activity instead of doing it at meal time. This creates a no pressure environment for the kids to freely try things as well.

- Lots and lots of encouragement and positive reinforcement promotes an attitude of being adventurous and trying something different. Kids are naturally curious, so channeling that curiosity into taste testing is a great method as well. What’s the worst that could happen? Plus, they have a wonderful time being supremely dramatic and making their friends laugh when they don’t like something.

- Keep foods whole, for younger children. Little ones are way more likely to try foods that are in whole identifiable pieces instead of being mixed together in a casserole or chopped very small.

- Older children are more open to sneaky, healthy additions. Putting quinoa in chili, for example, is one of my favorite sneaky nutrition tactics- it’s barely noticeable but adds protein and a healthy grain!

Q: What are some of the children’s favorite dishes?

Some of the kid’s favorite dishes are chicken, broccoli, and rice casserole, pasta with sauce and ground turkey, homemade chicken nuggets, and tacos. They love virtually all fruits and their favorite vegetables are edamame, kale chips, and broccoli. The absolute most favorite meal is breakfast for dinner, which usually consists of scrambled eggs, pancakes, and two fruits (instead of a fruit and a vegetable, which is the norm). Needless to say, I am very popular on two fruits day.
THINK OUTSIDE THE JUICEBOX
Best practices for increasing physical activity and incorporating healthy meals and snacks

Attend one of CCAVA’s Out of the Juice Box Training 4 hour trainings on Best Practices for increasing Physical Activity and incorporating healthy meals and snacks. Become one of the first 10 programs to sign up in each region and receive $400 in materials and on-site technical assistance.

Central Region:
Saturday November 21, 2015 9:00 am to 1:00pm at Northside Partnership for Families 800 Graham Road, Richmond VA to register contact Jodi Roberts JodiR@va.childcareaware.org or 804-285-0846

Eastern Region:
Saturday December 12, 2015 9:00-1:00pm location TBD contact Marsha Goodman mgoodman@smartbeginningsvp.org

Piedmont Region:
Tuesday November 4 2015 1pm to 5pm at Blue Ridge Hall James Madison University, Room 333 to register contact Angie Rouse 540-564-5892 or axrouse@sentara.com

Western Region:
Saturday November 14, 2015 8:30-12:30 at Fieldstone United Methodist Church 3385 Franklin St. Christiansburg VA to register contact Jaye Harvey 540-588-7358 or jayeharvey@cox.net
What is Vroom?
New science tells us that our children’s first years are when they develop the foundation for all future learning. Every time we connect with them, it’s not just their eyes that light up—it’s their brains too. In these moments, half a million neurons fire at once, taking in all the things we say and do. We can’t see it happening, but it’s all there, all at work. That’s why Vroom is here.

Vroom turns shared moments into brain building moments. Whether it’s mealtime, bath time, or anytime in between, there are always ways to nurture our children’s growing minds.
The Virginia Shared Services Network is an easy-to-use website offering many tools and services to help child care centers, family child care homes and after school programs manage their programs more cost-effectively and efficiently. The website features exclusive discounts on items from office supplies to toys to food and beverage products. The site also contains resources related to program administration, human resources, marketing, a library of early childhood reference materials, licensing regulations and classroom resources.

We call it “child care in a box” because it contains so many resources you can download and customize for your program needs. For example, the site includes sample policies, procedures, handbooks (for parents and employees), forms, job descriptions, and much more!

Our Goal: To provide support to child care centers and family child care providers to help strengthen the quality of care for all children.

Child Care Aware of Virginia chose this innovative approach because it offers a one-stop shop for child care providers to access group discounts for common services and products that individual programs alone could not access.

For example:
- Child Care Products & Classroom Supplies
- Payroll Processing
- Facility & Operations Products
- Office Supplies
- And much more

For additional information contact Jodi Roberts JodiR@va.childcareaware.org

10 last-minute Lights On Afterschool event ideas

There’s just one week left until communities around the world shine bright for Lights On Afterschool!

Still looking for last-minute inspiration or tips? The Afterschool Snack has 10 last-minute Lights On Afterschool ideas

- Make the most of your last week of planning—keep these steps in mind from our planning checklist:
- Put together a media kit to share with reporters that cover your event.
- Submit letters to the editors of local newspapers to promote your event.
- Begin any radio and TV interviews you had scheduled.
- Start printing out materials to have on hand at your event, like light bulb art to decorate or petitions to sign.
- Plan your social media outreach by joining our Thunderclap and reviewing our new social media guide with tips for the day of your celebration.
- Get your news release ready using our brand-new sample release.

We want to see your celebration firsthand! Next week, remember to share your event photos with us (be sure to put your program’s name and location in the subject line!): loa@afterschoolalliance.org.