

SMART BEGINNINGS WESTERN TIDEWATER

COVID-19 AND CACFP

Due to the rapidly changing economic situation happening in Virginia due to COVID-19, now is a good time to consider whether the Child and Adult Care Food Program is right for your early care program. The CACFP is a nutrition program that brings economic supports and improved nutrition to child care businesses. 1 in 5 Virginians are now currently out of work – and many families need this nutrition assistance now more than ever. USDA's Child and Adult Care Food Program plays a vital role in improving the quality of child care and making nutritious meals more affordable for children in care. Each day, 3.3 million children receive meals and snacks through CACFP. This program provides reimbursements and supports to family child care homes and centers that helps purchase healthy, nutritious meals.

Why CACFP may be right for many child care centers and family homes today:

- High unemployment means more families and more child care programs are likely to qualify for CACFP – and many children are in need of nutritious meals and snacks while in child care.
- Smaller enrollment numbers in child care programs can make it easier for providers to collect all required documentation
- With low enrollment, child care budgets are tighter; it is important to pursue funding and reimbursements for which a program is eligible
- Even with stay-at-home orders, VDH has provided sponsor organizations with the flexibilities they need to enroll qualifying child care programs

A CACFP sponsoring organization near you can explain the benefits of the CACFP, and can help interested child care programs apply. The sponsoring organizations that cover the Western Tidewater footprint are The Planning Council (Sharon Howell, 757-622-9268, Ext. 3059) and Children's Harbor (Rickeya Smith, 757-397-2984).

Donald R. Goff, CEO
Child Care Resources



855-427-2888



USDA TEAM NUTRITION GROW IT, TRY IT, LIKE IT! VIRTUAL TRAINING

CACFP Eligible Programs are invited to participate in a Grow It, Try It, Like It! GoToTraining facilitated by The Planning Council. The training will take place on Wednesday, June 17, 2020 from 6-8pm. Programs that participate will receive a complimentary kit with educational lessons and activities to utilize in centers and homes. Programs will also receive an EarthBox Junior Ready-To-Grow kit complete with engaging nutrition manipulatives. Sharon Howell, Children's Services Training Manager, will be available before and after the training to answer questions about the CACFP.

This project is supported by the Virginia Early Childhood Foundation and the Nemours Foundation.

COVID-19 CHILD CARE PROVIDER RESPONSE

This spring, Smart Beginnings Western Tidewater conducted a regional COVID-19 Child Care Provider Needs Assessment to assess the child care landscape and to address provider needs in Franklin City, Southampton and Isle of Wight County. As anticipated, the items most requested by providers were cleaning and disinfectant supplies and paper products. In April, **International Paper Foundation Care Kits** were safely delivered to seventeen early child care programs serving the children of essential personnel. This May, Smart Beginnings Western Tidewater partnered with Child Care Aware of Virginia to distribute additional supplies to open programs.

In the coming weeks, Smart Beginnings Western Tidewater will distribute even more basic health supplies to Virginia Quality eligible programs. (This project was supported by the Virginia Department of Social Services Grant # 93.575, with funds made available to Virginia from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services)

As more programs reopen, the need for resources continues. Want to know how you can help? Support a child care center or family day home provider by equipping them with the essentials as well as educational resources like crayons, paint, construction paper, games and toys for outside use.

CHILD CARE PROVIDER SEARCH

As more parents and caregivers return to the workforce during Phase 1, the demand for child care is expected to increase. Families should contact Child Care Aware of Virginia at **866-KIDS-TLC** or visit **www.vachildcare.com** for assistance locating available child care options.

PRE-K APPLICATIONS STILL ACCEPTED

Will your child be 4 years old on or before September 30, 2020? School systems in Western Tidewater are still accepting applications for the Pre-K Program. If you would like your child considered for one of the Four Year Old Pre-K Programs in Franklin City, Southampton or Isle of Wight County, please contact the following to sign up for screening:

- **Franklin City Schools**
 - Tanyeka Thornton @ 757-562-5458
- **Isle of Wight County Schools**
 - Clint Walters @ 757-357-4393
- **Southampton County Schools**
 - PreK Program @ 757-653-2692

"Children who attend a high quality preschool enter kindergarten with better pre-reading skills, richer vocabularies, and stronger basic math skills than those who do not," (W. Steven Barnett, PhD) increasing their lifelong learning/earning potential.

BRIDGING THE GAP DURING COVID-19

Smart Beginnings Western Tidewater has partnered with Franklin City Public Schools to provide four mailings of Books by Mail to 182 SP Morton Elementary K-3 students. Each packet includes a book with reading, math, and science activities to supplement learning at home. Special thanks to Principal Dexter Warren and his team at SP Morton for assisting with this project as well as Franklin City Public Schools for providing postage!

This spring, 55 SP Morton Bright Starts students received Kindergarten Transition Kits to use at home over the summer. Each kit contained a dry erase board, journal, magnetic letters, sight words, scissors, crayons, and more! Bright Starts staff distributed the kits during weekly packet distribution and held conversations with parents on how to use the kits with their children.