



DIRECTOR'S CORNER

>>> APRIL 2018

An effective family engagement system builds connections between home and school and is an essential component to meeting the needs of each child in your program.

TIP#1 EARTH DAY/ARBOR DAY/GARDENING

April is full of "Green" holidays. Earth Day is April 22, Arbor Day is 27 and the month of April is National Lawn and Garden Month. Think of ways your center can "Go Green" besides recycling. Some ideas include switching your light bulbs, putting computers in "sleep mode" when not in use, installing motion sensor lights for certain areas and inspecting the building for leaks, cracks and holes to save on heating and air. See more ideas [here](#). If employees are dedicated to saving Mother Earth maybe even start a committee where the group comes up with ideas and events for the center to be more eco-friendly year round.



With Spring right around the corner it is a good idea to start planning your center's garden either indoor or out. Gardening provides different forms of engagement for children, including designing, planting, and maintaining gardens; harvesting, preparing, and sharing food; working cooperatively in groups; learning about science, math and nutrition; and creating art and stories inspired by gardens. Read more [here](#).



TIP#2 APRIL IS STRESS AWARENESS MONTH

Provide resources to parents, children ([Kids get stressed too](#)) and staff on how to reduce stress to create a healthy school family. See tips [here](#). Plan an event for children and their families to discover ways to reduce stress such as, Yoga Night. Ideas to reduce stress at the center include: Introducing Meditation/ Breathing techniques into everyday routines, getting outside more by taking walks or gardening, listening to music throughout the day, more free art time for the kids and even putting fish aquariums/ bowls throughout the center can be very relaxing for all.

TIP#3 STAFF APPRECIATION

Start planning now for staff appreciation days coming up. Admin Professionals Day is April 25 and Teacher Appreciation is the first week in May. Employee appreciation is never out-of-place. Use every opportunity to demonstrate your gratitude and appreciation to employees. Small surprises and tokens of your appreciation spread throughout the year help the people in your work life feel valued by you all year long. Food is always a great idea! Bring in food each [themed](#) day that week (Muffin Monday, Taco Tuesday, etc.) have families help host a potluck Luncheon. Check out Pinterest or this [article](#) for gift and food ideas.



TIP#4 TORNADO DRILLS

Tornado season in the US is between March and June. Tornadoes occur with rapid onset and, perhaps, no warning. Decisions must be made fast and actions taken immediately. One cannot wait for the storms to strike to plan what must be done to save lives. Prepare now and develop an emergency action plan for your center. Make sure your safety drill procedures are in place and are up to date. Check all room maps to make sure they are correct and readable. Plan to have periodic severe weather drills and severe weather safety training. Drills not only teach students and instructors the actions they need to take, but will allow you to evaluate your plan's effectiveness. Learn more [here](#).

TIP#5 PRESCHOOL GRADUATION

Preschool Graduation.....already? Yes! There are so, so many details to consider for this special day! Such as location, decorations, programs, food, diplomas, speeches, concert/music and gifts. The transition from preschool to kindergarten marks a very important step in a child's life. It is only appropriate to celebrate this moment with an event that will be as memorable as the rest of the year was. Get ideas [here](#).



TIP#6 BUDGETING

What is your center's policy during the summer? Do you allow children to opt out during these months? Start planning your budget for the summer to accommodate teachers requested time off and enrollment numbers to make the necessary adjustments. Do you provide additional services (summer camps and programs) during the summer to offset missing cash flow?