

Provider Appreciation Day On Friday Celebrates Care Givers

Child care organizations and families across the nation will be joining together on May 7, the Friday before Mothers' Day, to celebrate Provider Appreciation Day. It is estimated that over 12 million children under age 5 in the United States are in some type of child care every week. In St. Lawrence County our youngest children are cared for in a family day care or group family day care home, a day care center, legally-exempt child care, or by other family members.

There are also hundreds of older children in our county cared for in School-Age Child Care programs every afternoon during the school year.

Locally, the St. Lawrence Child Care Council is leading this effort.

"Every day, child care providers and staff care for the most precious resource we have in St. Lawrence County – our children," says Bruce Stewart, Executive Director of the St. Lawrence Child Care Council.

"Families depend on child care. Without adequate child

care how would thousands of St. Lawrence County parents work or continue their education? Friday is the day everyone should recognize the hard work and dedication of those who work in the early childhood field and acknowledge their contributions to the children of St. Lawrence County, our state and this nation."

"By applauding the dedication of child care providers on May 7th, we remind our communities of the importance of high-quality child care, and let early childhood providers everywhere know that we recognize and value their important work," says Linda K. Smith, Executive Director of the National Association of Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies (NACCRRA), the lead sponsor of Provider Appreciation Day.

"It is important that the care a child receives during the first five years of life be of high quality because 90 percent of brain development occurs during those years."

"It takes an incredibly special person to work in the early childhood field and these

individuals go unrecognized far too often," says Stewart.

"This day offers an opportunity for parents to show their child care providers or center staff their appreciation. Families can support their child care provider or program in a number of ways such as getting together with other families to create a special surprise, working with your child to create a special remembrance gift, purchasing materials or play equipment for the program, ask if your employer would offer discounts or promotions for your provider or program, offer your family day care provider a paid day off, or at least a hand written note to tell your child's provider how much you appreciate everything they do for your child and family."

To learn more about Provider Appreciation Day, contact the St. Lawrence Child Care Council at 318 Ford Street, Ogdensburg, NY (315) 393-6474 or (800) 246-5352 or visit www.providerappreciation.org.

