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Bulletin Board

Care providers celebrated

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Posted: Friday, April 30, 2010 1:34 PM CDT

Child care organizations and parents across the globe will join together Friday, May 7, to celebrate Provider Appreciation Day, a day to recognize child care providers, teachers, school-age program staff, child care center directors and staff and all those who work with children in a variety of ways and are responsible for their education and care. It is estimated that there are nearly 2.8 million child care providers in the United States and that nearly 12 million children under the age of 5 are in their care.

The Calaveras County Resource Connection will recognize child care providers with a certificate in recognition of the seeds they plant every day when they work with children. They also encourage parents to recognize their providers.

"Every day, child care providers care for over 1,500 children in family child care homes and child care centers in Amador and Calaveras counties," said Kelly Graesch, program director of the Resource Connection's Resource and Referral Services. "The children and parents of Amador and Calaveras counties depend on child care providers dedicated to caring for our communities' children. May 7 is the day to recognize the hard work and dedication of providers and to acknowledge their contributions to high-quality care."

"By applauding the dedication of child care providers on May 7, we remind our communities of the importance of high-quality child care and let providers everywhere know that we recognize and value their important work," said Linda K. Smith, executive director of the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, 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."

In recent years, local governments across the United States have joined many governors in proclaiming this day of recognition. Around the globe, Department of Defense installations celebrate Provider Appreciation Day by recognizing those who care for the children of military parents living both at home and abroad.

Efforts are under way to ask child care organizations, public officials and parents to honor their child care providers for their hard work and commitment to children through events such as luncheons, parades, dedications and other recognition celebrations.

"It takes a special person to work in the child care field, and these individuals are often unrecognized," Graesch said. "This day offers an opportunity for parents to show their child care providers their appreciation."

Started in 1996 by a group of volunteers in New Jersey, Provider Appreciation Day is celebrated each year on the Friday before Mother's Day. Momentum and support for the event has grown each year and recognition includes individuals and government organizations throughout North America, Europe and Asia.

To learn more about Provider Appreciation Day, or for ideas on how you can thank your child care provider, call the Resource Connection at 223-1624 in Amador County or 754-1075 in Calaveras County, or visit prociiderappreciation.org.



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