

## PSU Extension sponsoring Provider Appreciation Day

Child care organizations and parents around the globe are joining together this Friday to celebrate Provider Appreciation Day.

Provider Appreciation Day is a special 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 younger than 5 are in their care.

Locally, Penn State Cooperative Extension and the Early Care Community Engagement Committee is leading this effort.

"Every day, child care providers care for hundreds of children under the age of 5 in Clearfield County," says Jacqueline Amor-Zitzelberger, Penn State Cooperative Extension Better Kid Care extension educator. "The children and parents of Clearfield County depend on our child care providers. May 7th is the day to recognize the hard work and dedication of providers, and to acknowledge their contributions to high-quality care."

"By applauding the dedica-

tion of child care providers on May 7, 2010, 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 5 years of life be of high-quality because 90 percent of brain development occurs during those years."

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

Provider Appreciation Day is a special day to recognize child care providers, teachers and other educators of young children everywhere. Started in 1996 by a group of volunteers in New Jersey, it is appropriately celebrated each year on the Friday before Mother's Day. The founding organizers saw the need to recognize the efforts of providers who care for children of working parents.

Momentum and support for this event has grown each year and recognition presently 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, contact Jacqueline Amor-Zitzelberger at 765-7878 extension No. 5. For additional information, visit [www.providerappreciation.org](http://www.providerappreciation.org)

