

## Parents as Teachers Supports Shape NC

Region A, the Smart Start partnership serving Haywood, Jackson, Swain, Macon, Graham, Clay and Cherokee Counties, has teamed up with their Parents as Teachers (PAT) program to make a difference in the lives of children and families in the far western counties! At the PAT annual planning meeting, Region A's Executive Director, Janice Edgerton, and the Parents as Teachers staff agreed to work with PAT families to develop at least one goal focused on child/family health, including obesity prevention, each year. This focus will highlight the importance of healthy families, and will be tracked in yearly outcomes. Families across the 7 western counties will now have more access to information, and the support to help them make healthy choices. Thank you Region A for creating shared goals for health and obesity prevention across programs.

*Submitted by Ariel Ashe, Buncombe County Partnership for Children Shape NC Hub Specialist*

## Kids Eat Smart Move More Interactive Online Resource

The Nutrition Services Branch of the North Carolina Division of Public Health recently launched a valuable online resource for child care providers and parents. The **Kids Eat Smart Move More online nutrition and physical activity resource** provides an interactive experience for parents and caregivers to learn how to meet current nutrition and physical activity recommendations. The website allows users to create an account and customize the educational information they receive by answering a short series of questions related to their current practices at home or in the child care setting. Lessons include topics such as Fruits & Veggies Grow Healthy Kids, Healthy Whole Grains, Happy Healthy Active Children, Help Your Childcare Make Good Eating Choices, and Fun and Healthy Drinks for Kids. Visit [www.nccacfp.org](http://www.nccacfp.org) to learn more information about this useful tool!

*Submitted by Susan Hurley, DHHS/Special Nutrition Programs, Kids Eat Smart Move More Grant Coordinator*

## Seriously! The Future Depends on Play

Seriously! The Future Depends on Play is a creative documentary that emphasizes the universal importance of play in our everyday lives, across the lifespan. The film discusses the value of play from perspectives of experts in the fields of psychology, neurology, biology, artists, spiritual teachers, business leaders, and even a talking parrot!

To learn more about the film and how you can get involved go to [www.seriouslythemovie.com](http://www.seriouslythemovie.com).

Be sure to save the date for the upcoming **NC Play Daze – September 21, 22 and 23**. For more information and to register go to [www.beactivekids.org](http://www.beactivekids.org) (click on the Play Alliance tab) or keep the conversation about play going on Facebook (<http://www.facebook.com/playdaze>).

*Submitted by Meredith Dolan, Be Active North Carolina, Be Active Kids Program Manager*

## Outdoor Learning Environment Growing Strong in the West

The Mitchell-Yancey Partnership and their community partners have planted the seeds for quality outdoor learning environments and are seeing them grow. Here are just a few things they have in the works:

- Working with childcare centers assisting them in the development of outdoor classrooms, developing container and herb gardens and gardening opportunities;
- Working with Child Care Resource and Referral to host a child care provider training in July entitled **How Does Your Garden Grow...In Your Center?**;
- Securing additional funding support from a Janirve Legacy Fund Grant awarded by the Community Foundation of Western North Carolina to work with Dig-In Community Garden to implement a children's gardening program;
- Assisting the Graham Children's Health Services and Yancey County Parks and Recreation in the design and development of the play area at Whitt Bottom-Yancey Comprehensive Recreational Grounds;
- Intermountain Children's Place now has both container gardens and an herb garden.
- Yancey Head Start, Bald Creek CDC and Roan View CDC all have container gardens.

*Submitted by Jennifer Simpson, Mitchell-Yancey Partnership for Children, Executive Director*

## Healthy Futures Starting in the Kitchen

Last month, cooks, center directors and caterers working in Shape NC model early learning centers gathered at Central Piedmont Community College's state of the art culinary school for a day of training in the *Healthy Futures Starting in the Kitchen* program. *Healthy Futures* takes a unique approach to obesity prevention through instructing child care center cooks in the preparation of healthy delicious foods that appeal to young children - while staying within center food budgets. Started as a program to prevent obesity in young children in Mecklenburg County, the program is gaining recognition outside the local region. Through the support of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina Foundation, child care centers from 18 Shape NC sites were able to participate. In addition to the day of training, there is support to implement the program. Regional Hub Specialists, who provide ongoing training and technical assistance in Shape NC centers, are following up to assist cooks and directors with serving new healthier menus. Tips and resources are available at <http://charmeck.org/mecklenburg/county/HealthDepartment/healthyfutures/Pages/default.aspx>.

*Submitted by Pat Hansen, North Carolina Partnership for Children, Shape NC Project Manager*

### WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Shape NC will continue to issue newsletters to keep you posted on the happenings with Shape NC and current news and resources regarding physical activity, dietary practices, and outdoor learning environments in childcare.

Please share your successes and/or challenges with improving the health of young children by contacting:

[meredith@beactivenc.org](mailto:meredith@beactivenc.org) or (919)287-7012.