



HEALTHY LIVING MATTERS

Connecting Policy to the Future



A Houston/Harris County Childhood Obesity Prevention Collaborative

Early Care & Education/Out-of-School Time Sector Edition

Issue No. 9



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SPOTLIGHT FROM THE FIELD

[Blossom Heights Child Development Center](#), located off of Westpark Tollway and Fondren in Houston, offers a play-based curriculum for children 18 months through pre-K. This center encourages children to learn naturally through play experiences and their policy is for children to be outdoors at least 40% of the time.



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According to Ms. Linda Draper, Owner and Director of Blossom Heights, "I hear all the time from other early childhood professionals that they see behavioral challenges increasing because they feel there is something different with kids these days. What we should be examining are our practices and look at the amount of time kids are sitting. If we consider Developmentally Appropriate Practices (DAP), a 5-year-old should not be sitting longer than 15 minutes at a time."

When asked her motivations for creating a center based on play and outdoor learning, Ms. Draper stated that all her memories of joy and happiness stem from outdoor experiences.

Parents receive monthly newsletters with information about the importance of play and what parents can do to support this. Ms. Draper plans to expand her center this summer and will soon be creating an active garden. For more information, please contact Ms. Draper at 713-780-8702 or info@blossomheights.com.

We applaud efforts that centers like Blossom Heights are making to improve the health of our young children and hope that others feel motivated to do so as well. If your facility or program is doing great things around nutrition and/or physical activity, and would like us to share your story, please [contact us](#)!

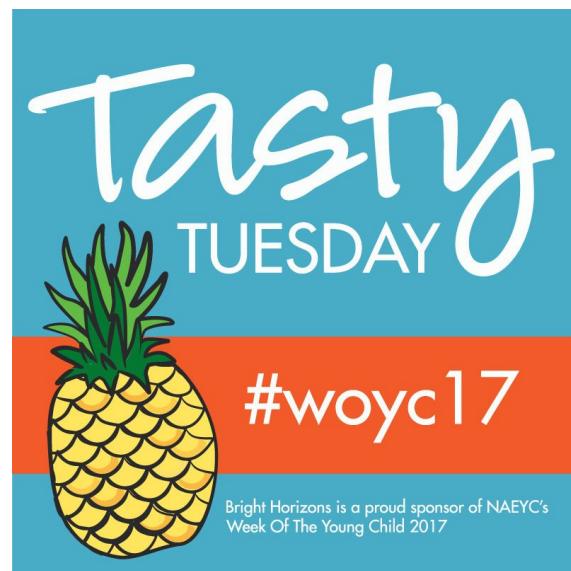
EAT



The [Week of the Young Child \(WOYC\)](#) is an annual celebration hosted by the [National Association for the Education of Young Children \(NAEYC\)](#) celebrating early learning, young children, their teachers and families.

The Tuesday of WOYC is designated "Tasty Tuesday" and it is a fun, food-themed day about more than just cheese and crackers. Cooking together connects math with literacy skills, science, and more. With the rise in childhood obesity, you can encourage healthy nutrition and fitness habits at home and in the classroom. Create your own healthy snacks and share the recipes and photos of your creations on

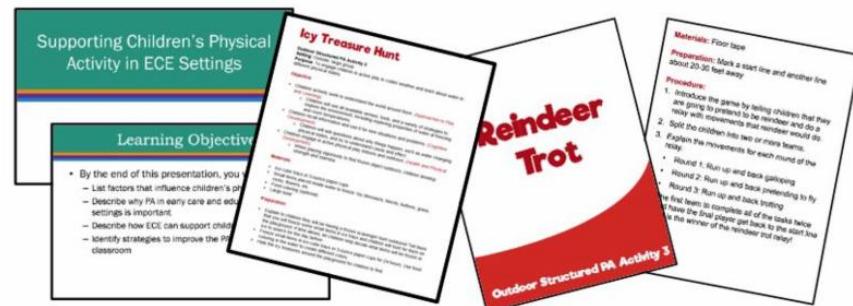
the [NAEYC](#) or [HLM Facebook page](#) or post to Twitter using the hashtag #woyc17.



In 2016, NAEYC introduced a new way to celebrate WOYC with the Taco Cookbook. [Click here](#) to download this delicious resource!



The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, in partnership with [Nemours](#) and the [General Mills Foundation](#), developed materials to help early care and education (ECE) teachers increase the amount of physical activity in their classrooms. These materials can also be used by those who provide training and technical assistance to ECE teachers.



The resources include:

- 1) [Training Workshop Slides](#)
- 2) [Lesson Plans](#), and
- 3) [Activity Cards](#)

For more information, contact creatingactiveclassrooms@unc.edu or julie.shuell@nemours.org.

LEARN



Gulf Coast Association for the Education of Young Children

[Gulf Coast Association for the Education of Young Children](#) (GCAEYC) invites you to attend their Early Childhood Summer Conference: **Healthy Beginnings!** The conference will include:

- 4 interactive training sessions focused on health (social, emotional, physical, and cognitive), nutrition, and safety
- A networking scavenger hunt
- A Lunch & Learn provided by Healthy Living Matters (HLM)

Date: Saturday, May 20, 2017

Time: 8:30 AM – 4:30 PM (scavenger hunt begins at 8:00 AM)

Location: University of Houston – Clear Lake, Bayou Building

Cost: \$25 for NAEYC members/\$50 for non-members. Texas Rising Star programs, please contact Yolanda Franklin for scholarship information at yfranklin@collabforchildren.org.

Registration:<https://healthybeginningsconference.eventbrite.com>

[Click here](#) to download the event flyer. Please share!

FOR PARENTS & FAMILIES



The [Obesity Action Coalition](#) produces the Your Weight Matters magazine, which includes a special section directed toward children and their parents, titled "Kid's Corner". The Kid's Corner features articles specifically for children to enjoy with their parents. Here are some of the past Kid's Corner articles that have appeared in Your Weight Matters. Please share with the parents and families you serve!

[Fitness Apps to Get Your Child Moving!](#)

[Building Healthy Nutritional Habits for Your Family](#)

[Dinnertime – The New Family Meal](#)

[Staying Fit this Summer... Everyone Can Do It](#)

To check out more of these articles, [click here!](#)

UPCOMING EVENTS

Afterschool Professionals Appreciation Week

April 24-28, 2017

[More information](#)

NAEYC Week of the Young Child

April 24-28, 2017

[More information](#)

Every Kid Healthy Week

April 24-28, 2017

[More information](#)

Texas Association for Family Child Care (TAFCC) Conference

April 28-30, 2017

The Radisson Hotel, 2450 Meachum Blvd, Fort Worth, TX

[More information](#)

Employee Health & Fitness Month

May, 2017

[More information](#)

Healthy Living Matters (HLM) Quarterly Collaborative Meeting

Friday, May 5, 2017 from 1:00 PM - 4:00 PM

Kashmere Multiservice Center, 4802 Lockwood Dr, Houston, TX 77026

For more information, contact Mark Solano at msolano@hcpches.org

Teacher Appreciation Week

May 8-12, 2017

[More information](#)

Gulf Coast AEYC Early Childhood Summer Conference

Saturday, May 20, 2017

University of Houston - Clear Lake, Bayou Building, 2700 Bay Area Blvd, Houston, TX 77058

[More information](#)

Healthy Living Matters (HLM) Early Care & Education/Out-of-School Time Meeting

Thursday, May 25, 2017 from 10:00 AM - 11:30 AM

Harris County Public Library, 5749 South Loop East, Houston, TX 77033

For more information, contact Katie Chennisi at cchennisi@hcpches.org

To view more events, visit our [Calendar of Events webpage](#).