

# ACDS Quarterly Newsletter



**Apprenticeship For  
Child Development  
Specialist**

**Winter 2018**

## Inside this issue:

Your Classroom is  
Speaking, Are You  
Listening? 2

Suggestions for  
Arranging Your  
Physical  
Environment 2

The New ACDS  
Curriculum 3

Get Involved with  
ACDS 3

Requests for Mentors  
and Instructors 3

Contact Information  
& Resources 4

ACDS Questions &  
Answers 4

**Hello Everyone,**  
I would like to take a moment to introduce myself to those of you that may not know me. My name is Jennifer Conkle and I am now the ACDS Statewide Coordinator. I began this position in August and have enjoyed every moment of it! I have been working in the field of early childhood approximately 22 years. I have worked in the classroom setting, as a center director, as an early childhood specialist, as a child care health educator, and as the ACDS Regional Coordinator. **Wow, seems like I've been busy!** I am thankful for the opportunity to be back in the ACDS program. I truly believe ACDS can be a wonderful educational experience for early childhood providers.

As you probably know, we are finishing up a new curriculum for ACDS. First and second semesters are complete and third and fourth will be ready to implement in fall 2018. We are very excited by the opportunities for growth that the new curriculum provides for us. We feel that this new curriculum will continue to provide students with the most current information pertaining to child development, licensing regulations, and best practices.

We are excited for the future of ACDS. Remember to follow us on Facebook for the latest updates relating to classes and events.

Stay warm, Jennifer



## ***Congratulations to this fall's ACDS Graduates!***

The following counties had graduates this fall:

- ◆ Berkeley
- ◆ Cabell
- ◆ Harrison
- ◆ Kanawha
- ◆ Putnam
- ◆ Wood



Remember to visit our website [www.wvacds.org](http://www.wvacds.org) and our **Facebook** page for the latest updates and information pertaining to the ACDS program!



## Your Classroom Is Speaking, Are You Listening?

What does the physical environment in your classroom say to you? What does it say to the children and their families that it represents? The classroom environment should be welcoming, stimulating, and safe for the children in your care. The physical layout and materials in classrooms will vary somewhat according to the ages and development levels of the children in the class. But all environments should be further individualized to reflect the interests and cultures of the

children that make up the class. Everything from the displays on the walls, to the placement of the furniture, needs to meet the individual needs of the children. Take a moment and ask yourself some questions about your classroom. Are your shelves low enough to make materials easily accessible for the children? Is the atmosphere inviting and relaxing? Do the colors in your room overstimulate children, or are they soothing? Can family members easily enter and drop off

the children, or are they stepping through activities? Do the children have individual space to keep their personal belongings? Is each child represented in their environment by artwork, photographs, or writings? These are a few questions that you may take a moment and ask yourself about your classroom environment. All children need to feel safe, secure, and have a sense of belonging. Remember, your classroom is speaking, are you listening to what it has to say?

The classroom should contain furniture that is child sized and in good repair.

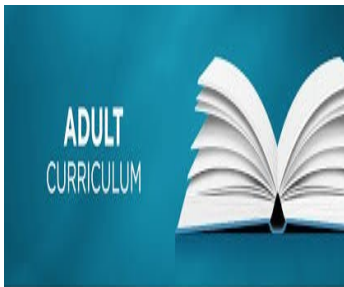


## Suggestions for Arranging Your Physical Environment

- ◆ Arrange the classroom environment into interest areas or centers.
- ◆ Furniture should be child sized, sturdy, and in good repair.
- ◆ Store materials in containers/baskets and on shelves that are accessible by the children.
- ◆ Create an art center that inspires children to manipulate materials and design original art work. Stock this center with a variety of materials that are inviting to the children.
- ◆ Save space for a designated cozy area that contains many soft materials.
- ◆ Allow children to have space for privacy where one or two children can participate in an activity free from interruption of others, but can still be easily supervised by adults.
- ◆ Provide a variety of books in your classroom, and read them throughout your day.
- ◆ Arrange the environment so that quieter activities (library) are not disrupted by louder activities (blocks).
- ◆ Materials displayed throughout the room should include children's art work and photographs. Materials intended to be viewed by children should be displayed at their eye level.
- ◆ Keep your environment safe by covering outlets, keeping safety materials on hand, and discussing safety guidelines with children.

## The New ACDS Curriculum

This fall all first semester ACDS classes used the new ACDS curriculum. The new curriculum differs somewhat from the old. Below are some of the changes accompanying the new curriculum:



- The registration fee for ACDS is now \$25.00 and is due the first night of class each of the four semesters.
- Students now receive a group of printed handouts that include homework assignments, articles, note pages, and quiz reviews.
- The curriculum is set up to focus on a specific age group each semester. First semester focus is infant/toddler, second semester is infant/toddler and preschool, third semester focus is preschool, and fourth is school-age.
- WVIT I completers can enter ACDS in second semester if they choose to. Also, completers of ACDS do not have to take WVIT I.
- The curriculum is outlined with great detail for instructors. Homework assignments

and quizzes are provided. This will assist with the consistency of the information being disseminated in ACDS classes throughout the state.

We hope that the changes made will help with the continued growth of the ACDS program. Please be patient with us as we continue to revise forms and our website to reflect the updates to our program.

### Our Mission

ACDS promotes highly skilled, confident early childhood employees; quality early childhood classrooms; and informed, supportive early childhood professionals.

## Get Involved With ACDS

Would you like to become more involved with the ACDS program but just aren't sure how you can help? There are many ways to support ACDS besides being a student.

ACDS is always looking for assistance from the communi-

ty in implementing the program. Some ways to get involved include: serving on a local council, instructing, mentoring, being a supervisor/sponsor, enrolling as a student or journey person, and housing ACDS orientations and classes.

If you would like to find out more information on how you can support ACDS in your region, please contact the ACDS office at 304-523-0433 or email us at [wvacds@rvcds.org](mailto:wvacds@rvcds.org).



## Request for Mentors and Instructors

- ◇ Mentors and Instructors are needed in many regions throughout the state. Both are excellent opportunities to be a part of the ACDS program. If you are interested in becoming either, or know someone that may be interested, please contact the ACDS office for more information. We are currently revising our application process for instructors and mentors and will have the updated information available on our website, [www.wvacds.org](http://www.wvacds.org), once it is complete.



## ACDS Staff

611 7th Avenue, Suite  
208

Phone: 304-523-0433

Fax: 304-697-6613

[www.wvacds.org](http://www.wvacds.org)

**Jennifer Conkle—ACDS Statewide  
Coordinator**

**Tara Kitts—ACDS Specialist**



Are you providing care for children in your home? If so, you may qualify to receive reimbursement for the cost of food served to the children from the food program. For more information contact [Tammy Leonard](#) at:

**Family Child Care Food Program**

Address: 611 7th Avenue, Suite 201,  
Huntington, WV 25701

Telephone: 304-523-3031, ext.301

Email: [food@rvcds.org](mailto:food@rvcds.org)



Are you registered on WV's State Training and Registry System (WVSTARS)? If not, or if you have let your credential expire please visit the website [wvstars.org](http://wvstars.org) to find out how you can be an active participant in the program. 45 hours of credit is awarded at the end of each ACDS semester to those that are registered on the pathway during the semester.

*This program is being presented with financial assistance as a grant from the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources and is administered by WV Early Childhood Training Connections and Resources, a program of River Valley Child Development Services.*

## Questions & Answers

1. Do I have to attend orientation each semester?

Orientation is only required once, prior to entering the program. The goal of orientation is to familiarize apprentices with how the program is designed, what is expected of them, and to answer any questions they may have.

2. Do I need to call and register each semester?

Registration is only required for first semester. Your apprentice file and information is automatically transferred to the instructor that is teaching your next semester. If you do intend to drop the program, or sit out a semester it is appreciated if you inform either the ACDS office or your instructor.

3. Can I switch counties that I attend class?

If you need to travel to a different county to attend ACDS classes you may do so. You should inform your instructor and the ACDS office of your intentions so that availability of class can be confirmed and your file can be transferred accordingly.