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# Tidbits

Early Childhood Education Newsletter of the Nebraska District LCMS

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## From Eunice's Desk:



I hope that each of you had a wonderful summer doing what you enjoy and taking some time to rest, relax and rejuvenate.

I know that you have not received a “Tidbits” for several months. This is due to the fact that Carol Oetting, Don Weber’s administrative assistant, took a different position. His new assistant is Candi Menze. She is ready to start editing and sending out the newsletter.

We welcome all ideas, articles and suggestions for this monthly newsletter. Its purpose is to assist you in your ministry with children and their families. If you have an idea or article you would like to share with other Early Childhood Educators in the district or a question that you would like answered, please send them to [euni@triluthgi.org](mailto:euni@triluthgi.org) or [candim@ndlcms.org](mailto:candim@ndlcms.org).

Exciting things are happening in the Nebraska district in early childhood ministry. It is exciting for me to see teachers and directors consciously making an effort to raise the standard of experiences and care in their classrooms and centers.

It thrills me even more to see the enthusiasm to reach out with God’s love to the children and their families as we encourage them in their faith walk. Our early childhood centers are the biggest mission field in our district. It is the only mission field where people pay to hear God’s Word. I pray that each of you are working with your pastor, principal, DCE, board and others to harvest this mission field - not by lecture and guilt, but by friendship, love and relationships.



Jesus met the people where they were – in their homes, in the market, by the well. He built relationships, met their physical and emotional needs and then fed them with His Word. This was all done with love. Are you meeting all the needs of the children and families in your ministry?

I challenge each of you, together with other staff and/or board members, to take time before school starts to put together an action plan. This action plan should show ways of how you, with assistance from others, will minister to the families that are in your school/center this year. Some areas to consider are:

### #1 - What are ways we can meet *physical* needs of the child and family?

- A. Food pantry
- B. Keep a current list of Social Services and referral numbers
- C. Keep a current list of local and state assistance agencies
- D. Health clinic information
- E. Childcare
- F. Employment assistance
- G. Set up meals for families going through sickness or other crisis
- H. Offer tuition assistance to families having financial difficulties
- I. Other

### #2 - What are ways we can meet *emotional* needs of the child and family?

- A. Counseling referrals
- B. Parenting classes
- C. Mentoring family
- D. Stephen Minister
- E. Reach out to families
  - 1. Send cards to families who've lost loved ones
  - 2. Send cards or take a small gift to families who have a new baby

- 3. Have caring, loving people available to offer listening ears

#### F. Other

### #3 - What are ways we can meet *spiritual* needs of the child and family?

- A. Have the pastor and/or DCE available at least once a week to meet and greet families when they arrive or are picked up.
- B. Set up prayer partners for each family in the school/center with a church family.
  - 1. Supply the church family with names and ages of the family members
  - 2. Host a time (picnic, ice cream social, watermelon at the park, etc.) where prayer partners can meet one another
  - 3. Encourage the school/center family to share prayer needs with their prayer partners
  - 4. Encourage the prayer partners to invite the family to church activities and build a relationship with them
- C. Offer sessions on how to have family devotions
  - 1. Have resources available to families through the church or school library
  - 2. Give a children's Bible to each family in attendance
- D. Invite the families to church and Bible studies
  - 1. Make the church service family-friendly
    - a. Have children's bulletins or bags available for various ages.
    - b. Have visible signage for nursery, cry room, restrooms, etc.
    - c. Include a children's song
    - d. Include a children's message

- e. Have the children bring their offering up front when they come for the children's message
- f. Have booster seats available so children can see what is going on
- g. Have a member make a short personal visit to the family after their first visit. Take a plate of cookies/brownies or fresh fruit to welcome them
- h. Have the Pastor or DCE make follow-up calls after their 2nd visit
- i. Other
- 2. Sunday school/Bible studies
  - a. Have greeters available to direct families to rooms
  - b. Encourage teachers to welcome parents and children and start building relationships with them
  - c. Encourage teachers to send a note or call the family the week after they visit
  - d. Offer adult Bible studies that are at an introductory level that would be appropriate for non-Christians
- 3. Send home church newsletters with each school/center family
- 4. Personally invite them to all church activities and encourage the members to make them feel comfortable and included
- 5. Have someone visit the hospital if a family member is admitted
- 6. Call or visit the family if they have lost a loved one - give them reassurance and assistance with funeral or other needs
- 7. Other



- The Fall Educator’s Conference, “*Rooted and Growing In Christ,*” will be held at Christ Lutheran in Lincoln on October 20-21. This is a great opportunity to worship with other Lutheran educators, network with early childhood educators from across the state, and attend awesome sectionals (Project Approach, Ministering to Military Families, Ministry Partners, Staff Relations, Science for Early Childhood, Teaching the Faith to the Very Young and more). Registration information will be in the mail and available on the district website, [www.ndlcms.org](http://www.ndlcms.org), shortly. Make arrangements for a sub now so you can attend this uplifting, inspirational conference.



**Please share!**

My Idea/Question: \_\_\_\_\_

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Submitted by: \_\_\_\_\_

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