

# FOCUS on The Child Development Center

*The Bergen Community College  
Child Development Center*

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Director:  
*Dr. Ursula Parrish Daniels*

Head Teacher:  
*Ms. Sally Dionisio*

Group Teacher:  
*Ms. Hope D'Avino-Jennings*

Group Teacher:  
*Ms. Cindy Gennarelli*

Assistant Teacher:  
*Ms. Barbara Kryzanowski*

*The Early Childhood Education  
Advisory Committee*

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Coordinator,  
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*Ms. Laura Schneider*



## ***A Unique Laboratory School Provides Affordable Quality Childcare in Bergen County***

The Bergen Community College Child Development Center is a unique laboratory school, licensed by the Division of Youth and Family Services (DYFS), that provides quality and affordable childcare for children of Bergen Community College students, faculty, staff and Bergen County residents. The Center, licensed to care for children 2 1/2 to 6 years of age, is staffed by teachers certified in Early Childhood Education and student interns enrolled in the Associate Degree Program in Early Childhood Education.

"Over the years, we have been very proud of our Child Development Center for two important reasons," explains Dr. Judith K. Winn, President of Bergen Community College. "It serves as a childcare resource for BCC students and staff and provides an excellent learning opportunity for the students in the Early Childhood curriculum. This is the best of all possible worlds, quality and affordable childcare for the community and an outstanding learning experience for our students."

In 1997, the Child Development Center underwent a comprehensive renovation which expanded and upgraded the facility by adding

three new classrooms, computers and a one-way observation room so the students from college-wide curricula can view classroom operations in this very exciting laboratory environment. The new state-of-the-art facility was funded through a grant issued by the State of New Jersey.

After researching other childcare centers in Bergen County, Betsy Usami, an elementary school teacher in Glen Rock, enrolled her daughter in the Bergen Community College Child Development Center.

"The program at the CDC is exceptional and met all of my expectations," said Ms. Usami. "The children develop age-appropriate critical thinking skills through a variety of daily activities. I recommend the Child Development Center to all parents with pre-school children."

The Child Development Center, open 11 months a year, is open weekdays 7:45 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Year long enrollment following the college calendar is encouraged for all of the children. Only Bergen Community College students may use the "drop in" service while they are attending college classes.



*CDC teacher Hope D'Avino-Jennings explores nature as part of her Spring Science Curriculum Unit.*

## ***CDC Teachers Train Childcare Professionals at Nat'l Association for the Education of Young Children Conference***

According to a recent *Washington Post* article, 65 percent of the nation's 3-to-5-year-olds were enrolled in preschool or kindergarten programs in 1998, compared with 54 percent a decade earlier.

Because so many children are now enrolled in early childcare programs, professionals in Early Childhood Development and Education have moved toward advocating higher qualifications for entry-level personnel.

The outstanding faculty and staff of the Bergen Community College Child

Development Center have joined the growing national network of teacher education personnel as seminar instructors for the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Conference. Since 1996, Bergen Community College has hosted the Bergen/Passaic Chapter's annual Fall Conference, which is co-sponsored by the Bergen County Office for Children, the BCC Early Childhood Education Advisory Committee, the Early Childhood Education Club, and the Division of Business, Math and Social Sciences.



*Children at the Child Development Center learn through discovery and experimentation.*

## ***Bergen Community College and the Bergen County Office for Children Launch New Child Development Associate (CDA) Program for College Credit***

The CDA National Credentialing Program was initiated in 1971 as a major national movement to improve the quality of childcare. Funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the program

is designed to assess and credential early childhood education para-professionals based on portfolio assessment.

The CDA program at Bergen Community College was launched in response to

the Abbott vs. Burke decision which mandates that school districts designated as "Abbott" districts by the N.J. Department of Education provide a half-day of pre-school for all three and four year olds by September, 1999. The ruling also mandates that all teachers of these pre-school children must receive academic training. The enrollees in the program earn a CDA plus 9 credits toward an Associate Degree in Early Childhood Education. "Earning the CDA has many advantages," said Dr. Ursula Parrish Daniels, Director of the Child Development Center at Bergen Community College. "It can motivate caregivers toward educational pursuits, and provide leverage for professional and career opportunities."

## ***A Unique Laboratory School Continued from cover...***

The Childcare Program and the Academic Program for teacher training both focus on developing each child's full potential.

Karin Kwasniewski, parent of Thomas, is an early childhood education major at Bergen Community College and student teaches at the Child Development Center. "The faculty and teachers in the Child Development Center are excellent," explained Kwasniewski. "Working at the Center, I know my son is getting the care and attention he needs."

Traci's mother, Lynne DeMarigny, works full time for the science department at Bergen Community College. "After seven months of Traci's involvement, I am hooked on their teaching methods. Traci is learning about the world around her, not just that 'apple' begins with an 'A.' I am amazed at the wonderful things they do here with such young children."



*College faculty and certified Early Education teachers provide educational training for students in the Early Childhood Education Program. From left to right: Cindy Genarelli, Hope D'Avino-Jennings, Barbara Kryzanowski, Dr. Ursula Parrish Daniels, Sally Dionisio.*