



Resource & Referral Center

a publication of the Quality Child Care Initiative

Children Count

September / October 2011

Smart Beginnings Shenandoah Valley

Originally known as “Success by Six”, **Smart Beginnings Shenandoah Valley** (SBSV), partners with community and business leaders to develop high-quality early learning programs and services to help young children enter school healthy and ready to learn.

Operating in the cities of Harrisonburg, Waynesboro and Staunton, along with Augusta, Page, Rockingham and Shenandoah Counties, SBSV relies on volunteers to help coordinate efforts. The coalition has made great strides in initiatives for early childhood education.



Smart Beginnings Shenandoah Valley has a multi-tiered organizational structure, balancing a regional vision with a local viewpoint. The regional vision is maintained through a Leadership Council, comprised of senior level decision-makers from across the region who focus on regional strategic planning, resource sustainability, and public awareness. The SBSV Steering Committee and Locality Teams, on the other hand, are comprised of local individuals who implement programs locally to address the local priorities.

Smart Beginnings Shenandoah Valley employs **Alysia Davis** as its Coalition Coordinator. Ms. Davis has a MS Degree in Public Policy from the University of Rochester. She has a wealth of experience serving in non-profit organizations, as a university instructor with a special interest in policies impacting women and children, and in maternal and infant health.

The lives of many young children in several counties are impacted by new or enhanced early childhood

programs and services provided by Smart Beginnings Shenandoah Valley and its community affiliates, including local school systems, health organizations, and community service providers. With over 85% of brain development happening before age 5, the quality of care a child receives during this time is critical. Foundation for all future learning is laid in these early years.

What can you do to ensure a bright future for your community’s children? Get involved with Smart Beginnings Shenandoah Valley by joining the **Greater Augusta Locality Team!** Donate to SBSV to provide greater opportunities for quality early childhood experiences. Be aware – understand the impact that quality early childhood development has on your community.

For more information, visit SBSV on the web at **www.valleysmartbeginnings.org**, or contact **Alysia Davis** at davis4am@jmu.edu or 540-568-8968.

Quality Child Care Initiative

(540) 245-5899 x108

Family Resource & Referral Center

(540) 245-5899

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www.FRCenter.org



Shenandoah Valley Social Services UPDATE on the Child Care Automation Project

The automation of the Social Services Child Care Subsidy program continues to move forward. A Town Hall meeting was held in Charlottesville on July 18. Vendors were notified and strongly encouraged to attend this to receive information on implementing the swipe card and dial in phone system to register children as present for care. Once the system goes live on October 3, 2011, the process for approving clients to start care will change, as will the forms sent to vendors and clients.

After November 30, 2011 Shenandoah Valley Social Services will no longer issue checks to vendors. There will be no more invoices to complete and return except in extenuating circumstances. All vendors will be paid directly by the state twice a month based on the information entered through the swipe machine and phone call in system. Vendors will either have payments directly deposited to their bank account or have the payment loaded on a debit card. Questions: please call (540) 245-5884.

Thank You, Staunton Public Library

We feel very fortunate to have such a wonderful facility in which to hold our Spring & Fall Training Series, and we would like to thank the Staunton Public Library for the use of the training room.



Family Resource & Referral Center

We are located at 1600 North Coalter St., Suites 11 & 12B, in Staunton. Hours are 8:30 to 5:00. ** Please note: if you need to borrow child care videos, we suggest that you first check availability with Sarah Foster at 540-245-5899 x108 or SarahFoster@ntelos.net. The videos are very popular, and frequently all checked out. We don't want you to drive out here only to find there are no videos available for you.

Early Intervention Services Meeting

Smart Beginnings Shenandoah Valley values working closely with community partners to better serve the needs of young children. In particular, we recognize the importance of coordinated early intervention services throughout our region. As you likely know, there is substantial evidence that high quality early intervention services have long term benefits for children including the need for fewer services later in life and a higher success rate in school that enables children to become productive adults. Furthermore, intervention is likely to cost less while being more effective when provided early in life when children's brains are just developing.

You are an active partner in the health, learning and development of children in our community. We invite you to attend a **Director's Roundtable** to learn more about early intervention services in the Greater Augusta area and the role your program or agency can play to strengthen this critical component of our early childhood system.

The Roundtable will be held on **September 13th** from 1:00-2:00 pm in the main training room at the **Valley Community Services Board**, 85 Sanger's Lane in Staunton (just past Shoney's on the right). Lunch will be provided beginning at 12:45.

Please RSVP to **Stacie Jackson** at **540-213-7355** or scjackson@vcsb.org by September 6th.

Apple Butter Made Easy

- 1 stick of butter (unsalted)
- 1 medium sized apple, peeled, seeded, chopped into small pieces
- ¼ Tbsp. Lemon juice
- 1 Tbsp. Honey
- ¼ tsp. Cinnamon



This is a very simple, no-cook, one-child portion recipe! Combine all ingredients in a mixing bowl, stirring until butter softens and becomes evenly mixed. Best served with warm bread or toast.