

# EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

ATLANTIC UNION CONFERENCE

*Training to Lead ~ Empowering to Serve ~ Inspiring to be Ready*



## THE BUZZ

### What's buzzing ?

*Happy New Year! This is a year of change and excitement in the Atlantic Union Conference. My name is Marlene Alvarez and I joined the Atlantic Union family as the assistant director for Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) on July 1, 2009. I am responsible for coordinating a cohesive, quality, Christ-centered ECEC system within the Atlantic Union. As part of my responsibilities, I will provide regional in-service education for conference school-based ECEC personnel. I look forward to visiting your schools/centers, working with you and supporting you. This newsletter is for you, the early childhood providers of the Atlantic Union Conference. I am happy to be a co-laborer with you in this most rewarding and noble task, that of educating children for eternity. May God's richest blessings be yours.*

*Yours in His Service,*

*Marlene C. Alvarez*

*Assistant Director, Early Childhood Education*



**Kellogg Adventist School**



### Special points of interest:

Kellogg Adventist School in New Hampshire, pictured on the right, will soon be opening their Pre-school program. Keep them in your prayers as they complete the renovation of the building and open their doors to lead little ones to Christ.

### Pre-school Sparks whole School Growth

When Rita Jackson moved back to Stoneham, Massachusetts 3 and ½ years ago with her husband Bobby, who had been hired to teach 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade at Greater Boston Academy (GBA), she had a spark of an idea that she hoped would catch fire. She wanted to start an Adventist pre-school at the school. "I wanted to help the school grow," she says. "I enjoy working with young children, and I thought a pre-school class could do that." Little did anyone know then that that spark would burst into flame and grow, literally, like wildfire and just how much her little class would change the entire school population. (Cont. on page 4.)



Maria Andrade, GBA student

*Attempt great things for God and expect great things from God.*

*It only takes one spark!*



*Mrs. Jackson's hope to help the school grow came true abundantly!*



Rita Jackson & her students



### Inside this issue:

Pre-School Sparks Whole School Growth	1
Taming Temper Tantrums	2
Guidance Techniques that work (Part 1)	3
Teach Safety	4
Health Corner	5





*He was completely out of control.*



## Taming Temper Tantrums

"She was completely out of control." "His shrieking was giving me a pounding headache."

The statements above are just a few ways to describe temper tantrums, a concern for many caregivers of young children. Many caregivers and parents report temper tantrums as a behavior that they have difficulty coping with in a patient and positive way. Although associated with toddlers, temper tantrums are a frequent occurrence in young children, only beginning to diminish around ages five or six. And although it is a common behavior, many caregivers lack strategies for preventing and taming temper tantrums.

As with talking gestures and crying, temper tantrums are a mode of communication for the young child. Their lack of language skills may lead to a more direct way of expression; such as throwing puzzle pieces across the room. It then becomes the caregiver's task to decipher the message and address the issue. What follows is a list of possible causes of temper tantrums and the messages they convey.

Even young toddlers and infants are prone to experience intense frustration. The child who is struggling to obtain a toy that is out of reach only needs to fail a few times before feelings of anger and frustration become overwhelming. The caregiver who recognizes that providing for success in young children's activities and environment, by supplying age appropriate toys and materials, can prevent much frustration and is well on the way to taming temper tantrums.

### Tips to handle tantrums

- ⇒ Remain calm and do not argue with the child. Spanking is not an option and yelling at the child will not solve the matter but only make it worse.
- ⇒ Think before you act. Count to 10 and then think about the source of the child's frustration. You may find the solution before the tantrum escalates.
- ⇒ Try to intervene before the child is out of control. Get down at the child's eye level and reason with the child.
- ⇒ You can positively distract the child by getting the child focused on something else.
- ⇒ You can place the child in time out. Time out is a quiet time away from the others where the child goes to calm down. think about what he or she needs to do, and, with your help, make a plan to change the behavior.
- ⇒ At times a tantrum is thrown to get your attention. Never give in to a tantrum. Instead, help the child to understand that he/she won't get your attention acting the way they are acting. Once the child calms down, give the attention that is desired.

Caregivers will often see what can be referred to as mid-afternoon slump. During the late afternoon, young children can become overtired; resulting in crankiness, irritability and a decrease in their skills to handle strong emotions and conflict. Of course, it is wise to note, children can also become over tired from a lack of balance in the daily schedule, or a schedule that does not consider the needs of the child. Also children may react in a similar manner when they are overstimulated. Field trips and holidays, when the excitement level is high, there is a change in routine, and many things are vying for a child's attention are particular problems. Adhering to the routine, preparing young children in advance, keeping things simple, providing a balance between active and inactive activities, and ensuring a time for rest, these are just some ways a caregiver can prevent a child from becoming overtired and overstimulated.

Independence and autonomy have long been recognized as crucial issues for young children. They can now see how their actions impact and influence events and people around them. Such is the need for independence and control, that a child who is denied may be compelled to assert their independence in dramatic or inappropriate ways. Many of us have witnessed young children losing control because they don't want help. Toddlers have even been known to reject snack or trips to the zoo, just to assert the power to say no! It is helpful to avoid conflict by providing opportunities for a child to feel independent. Caregivers need to allow children to make some choices, encourage independent action, and allow them to try new skills.

Temper tantrums have been associated with the child who is acting out to get attention. This seems to occur in the older child who has learned from past experiences that temper tantrums can achieve the desired result. Most likely, the older child who has a temper tantrum for attention has not been encouraged to seek attention in more appropriate ways. A caregiver must be sensitive to their response to this behavior and consider, are they actually reinforcing an unwanted behavior. Remember, for some children, negative attention is better than no attention at all. Temper tantrums for attention can often be avoided by the caregiver's effort to give attention to a child's positive behavior.

Appropriate caregiver interaction and response is the key to coping with temper tantrums once they occur. Frequently, a child who is in the throes of a temper tantrum is feeling out of control, both emotionally and physically. This can be frightening and overwhelming to the child, only intensifying the episode. Caregivers often add fuel to the fire by telling, or reacting in a manner that may mirror the child's actions. It is beneficial to remain calm and speak slowly and softly. Acknowledge the child's feelings and reassure them you are there to help them regain control. A caregiver may say something like, "I can see you are very angry right now. I wonder if it is because you want to go outside? I can't help you when you're screaming and kicking. Let's sit down and get calm, then maybe you can tell me with words what is wrong.

Taming temper tantrums takes patience and skill, and the first step is understanding that they are a normal and expected part of children's behavior as children develop skills for coping with the disappointment and frustrations in life that we all experience.

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## Guidance Techniques That Work (Part I)



What's the most challenging aspect of caring for children? Many caregivers and teachers say "discipline." Actually, the word *discipline* is off target. *Guidance* is a more accurate term. As caregivers and teachers, we *guide* children's behavior. We teach them acceptable behavior and guide them to develop self-control. The goal is that children learn to make good decisions about how to act in specific situations. Here are some tried-and-true guidance techniques that help children achieve that



**Focus on "Do's" Instead of "Don'ts."** Listen to how you speak to children. If you hear the words *don't*, *stop*, or *quit* before your directions to children, try to rephrase your words to tell children what to do instead of what not to do. Telling children what not to do doesn't give any information on the correct way to behave. Translating your "don'ts" into "do's" gives children clear guidance on what you expect.



### Don'ts

- ⇒ Stop running in the hall.
- ⇒ Don't squeeze the kitten.
- ⇒ Quit whining.
- ⇒ Don't climb on that counter.

### Do's

- ⇒ Walk in the hall, please. You can run when we go outdoors.
- ⇒ Pat the kitten gently with your hand flat and loose.
- ⇒ Tell me about the problem with words.
- ⇒ In our classroom, feet stay on the floor.



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## Children learn what they live



If a child lives with criticism, he learns to condemn.

If a child lives with hostility, he learns to fight.

If a child lives with fear, he learns to be apprehensive.

If a child lives with pity, he learns to feel sorry for himself.

If a child lives with ridicule, he learns to be shy.

If a child lives with jealousy, he learns to feel guilt.

If a child lives with tolerance, he learns

to be patient.

If a child lives with encouragement, he learns to be confident.

If a child lives with praise, he learns to be appreciative.

If a child lives with acceptance, he learns to love.

If a child lives with honesty, he learns what truth is.

If a child lives with fairness, he learns justice.

If a child lives with security, he learns to have faith in himself and those about him.

If a child lives with friendliness, he learns the world is a nice place in which to live.

Adapted from poem : *Children learn what they live* by Dorothy Law Nolte

Luke 18:16  
But Jesus called them *unto* him, and said, *Suffer little children to come unto me*, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God.

"Children need love, especially when they do not deserve it."

Harold Hulbert



## Teach Safety

Extra care to make sure they stay safe is needed when children are very young. Here are some simple things you can do.

- Keep all lighters and matches well out of reach (and out of sight).
- Never leave children alone in a room with a naked flame ( e.g., candle).
- Keep portable heaters in a safe place - when they're

in use and when they're being stored.

- Put plug guards into sockets so children can't stick objects into the holes.
- Unplug appliances that children could trip over.
- Make sure that there is an exit procedure in place in the event that there is a fire. Practice evacuation with the children.

- Keep escape routes clear of toys and other obstructions.
- Teach the children that they should "stop, drop, and roll" if their clothes catch on fire.



## Pre-School Sparks Whole School Growth, (Cont. from page 1)

As soon as the school board passed her request, Mrs. Jackson went to work to create a comfortable and inviting space for the three year olds she hoped would show up on the first day of school. Before long, the upstairs multi-purpose room was transformed into an educational wonderland for three year olds that would be the envy of many could they see it. Meanwhile, she was also putting the word out that GBA was offering an affordable Christian alternative to public pre-schools.



*Mrs. Jackson says, "I enjoy working with young children, and I thought a pre-school class could do that."*

When school opened at the end of August, five little ones were there, along with their anxious parents, hoping for a good day. Soon the word spread that Mrs. Jackson ran an excellent class. By the end of the first semester, the small group had grown to 15. By the beginning of the second year, there were 20 students and the school had to hire a full-time assistant. And this year, the class has topped out at 23, with a waiting list of 4 or 5. In fact, Mrs. Jackson is lobbying the board for a second classroom, certain that the students would be there if space was available. The best news for GBA, though, is that each year, the students have moved on to the pre-kindergarten and kindergarten classes *and* brought with them friends and family members for other classrooms. Mrs. Jackson's hope to help the school grow came true abundantly!

What brings Mrs. Jackson particular joy is "the satisfaction of witnessing to and teaching the non-Adventist students about our beliefs. We have quite a few non-Adventists attending because we are Christian. They stay because their parents like the strong spiritual atmosphere." Not that there aren't challenges. A majority of the pre-schoolers do not speak English as their first language. Most arrive on day one without much English at all. Fortunately, Mrs. Jackson is fluent in Portuguese (many of her students are Brazilian, as is she), so she is able to communicate with the children in a language they are comfortable with. Her assistant this year is a native Spanish -speaker, so the two cover most language bases. Young children pick up languages easily, though, and before the end of the first quarter, they at least understand English. By the end of the first semester, most are comfortable speaking it as well.



*"I thank God everyday for the pre-school program and Mrs. Jackson. We will do anything to support the program."*

In the summer, Mrs. Jackson runs a Day Camp for GBA students as well as others who aren't yet enrolled. She welcomes every student with gentleness and enthusiasm. These summer camps also serve as a feeder for the whole program and have been responsible for bringing a number of students to the regular school year.

One parent's testimony is typical of the response families have to the GBA pre-school experience. Carmen Nazario writes that she is "most grateful for the preschool program and Mrs. Jackson." This past summer her son was struck by a car and had a lot of separation anxiety as a result. "When Ehlias arrived to the preschool program at GBA my husband and I were scared, as you could imagine... Mrs. Jackson just embraced our son with so much love, compassion and patience and helped us feel very comfortable leaving our son in her care. We are very pleased with the changes in our son, especially with his speech. Although Ehlias received therapy for his speech, I can honestly say that we saw drastic changes in his speech after he participated in the preschool program here. . . . I thank God every day for the pre-school program and Mrs. Jackson. We will do anything to support the program."

The success of GBA's pre-school program does not come as a surprise to Mr. Jackson, who is also the school's recruiter. Parents are looking for quality Christian education and they are finding it at GBA for ages 3 through 18. That's a wide age-spread, but the staff makes it work and all age groups are learning from each other. The three year olds help the older students pay attention to their manners and the older ones help give the younger ones confidence and appreciation for their Christian education. One of GBA's mottos is "Educating for Eternity" and it's doing just that, from the oldest down to the smallest three year old.





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### Four bones that teachers need

**Backbone** – be their teacher, not a buddy or friend.

**Wishbone** – be always optimistic in your goals and aspirations for the children.

**Funny bone** – keep your sense of humor—a must: keep one eye blind and one ear deaf.

**Knee bone** – pray, keep praying, and keep on praying—God will help us do what we can't.

Then our sons in their youth will be like well-nurtured plants, and our daughters will be like pillars carved to adorn a palace.

**Psalm 144:12 NIV**

### Health Corner



It is often said that an apple a day, keeps the doctor away. Apples really aid in keeping us in good health. Did you know that apples

are a source of fiber. It contains vitamin C, beta carotene, iron and potassium. Apples have high mineral contents, pectin, and malic acid which helps to normalize the intestine. Apples are unlikely to cause allergic reactions and are excellent providers of fluids to the body. It is a healthy snack that you can enjoy with your students.

**Green Apples** - Good for strong bones and teeth, aids in vision, anti cancer properties.

**Yellow Apples** - Good for heart and eyes, immune system, reduce risk of some cancers.

**Red Apples** - Good for the heart, memory function, lowers the risk of some cancers and maintains the health of the urinary tract.

Eat healthy and be wise!



### Baked Apples Snack

Make baked apples for the children to enjoy at snack time.

- ⇒ Wash and core one apple per child.
- ⇒ Place apples upright in a baking dish.
- ⇒ Fill centers of apples with raisins and brown sugar. Sprinkle some cinnamon on top.
- ⇒ Bake for one hour at 350.
- ⇒ Serve with vanilla ice cream.



**2010**

Brooklyn Adventist School



Busy Bee Learning Center



Linden Adventist Day Care



Oakview Preparatory



Hanson Place School



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## RESOURCES



- Fire safety activities booklet for families:  
[Sesame Street Fire Safety Station Color and Learn](https://www.usfa.dhs.gov/applications/publications/display.cfm)  
<https://www.usfa.dhs.gov/applications/publications/display.cfm>
- Agassi, M. (2000). *Hands are not for hitting*. Minneapolis: Free Spirit. ISBN: 1575421127.
- Greene, R. W. (1998). *The explosive child*. New York: Harper Collins. ASIN: 0060175346.
- Mackenzie, R. (2001). *Setting limits with your strong willed child*. New York: Prima. ISBN: 0761521364.
- Nelson, J. (1999). *Positive time-out and over 50 ways to avoid struggles in the home and the classroom*. New York: Prima. ISBN: 0761521755.
- Reichenberg-Ullman, J., & Ullman, R. (1999). *Rage-free kids*. New York: Prima. ASIN: 0761520279.

## Thoughts for the month

Bitter are the tears of a child: Sweeten them.  
Deep are the thoughts of a child: Quiet them.

Sharp is the grief of a child: Take it from him.

Soft is the heart of a child: Do not harden it.

Pamela Glenconner



Even a child is known by his actions, by whether his conduct is pure and right.

Proverbs 20:11

Pleasure in the job puts perfection in the work.—Aristotle

*“How you react often determines how others respond to you.”*

## A Little Birdie told



## UPCOMING EVENTS

riculum for early childhood education. Your input is treasured. Please look out for information and opportunities to make your voice heard.

⇒ NAEYC Conference. It's not too early to plan to attend.

**June 6–9**—National Institute for Early Childhood Professional Development in Phoenix, AZ.

**November 3–6**, Annual Early Childhood Conference and Expo in Anaheim, CA. Further information is available at [www.naeyc.org](http://www.naeyc.org).

## Just for laughs:

**TEACHER:** *John, why are you doing your math multiplication on the floor?*

**JOHN:** *You told me to do it without using tables.*



*Laughter is good for the soul.*

⇒ **February 6, 2010**, union-wide special offering for relief efforts in Haiti. Even the little ones can participate in this endeavor to lend a helping hand.

⇒ Teacher Bulletin will include an Early Childhood Unit in the upcoming volume.

⇒ NAD is working on a cur-

## The Busy Bees of Atlantic Union

## Conference

