

Learning for Life Offers Unique Early Childhood Program

The years before a child reaches kindergarten are among the most critical in his or her life to influence learning. President Obama is committed to providing the support that our youngest children need to prepare to succeed later in school. The President supports a seamless and comprehensive set of services and support for children, from birth through age 5. Because the President is committed to helping all children succeed – regardless of where they spend their day – he will urge states to impose high standards across all publicly funded early learning settings, develop new programs to improve opportunities and outcomes, engage parents in their child’s early learning and development, and improve the early education workforce.

Children ages 3 and 4 will now have a unique and fun opportunity to learn more about character traits, life skills and cognitive, emotional and social skills through an Early Childhood program developed through the national office of Learning for Life, an affiliate of Boy Scouts of America. In today’s world, where many youth are placed in situations that test them to make the right choices, this Early Childhood program allows for the children to have fun and learn at the same time. Dr. Diane E. Thornton, Learning for Life Director of Curriculum and Training as well as a past school superintendent is very excited to announce the debut of this program. With a wide variety of lesson plans, family/home activities and value-added features, the participating youth will gain a “hands on” experience which can be applied in various settings, such as at home, in school, daycare, and their other activities.

This program was developed by Dr. Kevin Ryan, founder of the Center for Advancement of Ethics and Character at Boston University. Dr. Ryan and his staff developed fifty-eight lesson plans based on life skills development and eight character traits: caring/fairness, courage, citizenship, honesty/trust, perseverance, respect, responsibility, self-discipline. Additionally, there is a Youth Protection Program that features information titled “A Parent’s Guide to Abuse,” and a DVD feature “Play it Safe” with a parent discussion guide. Ventriloquist Ronn Lucas and his friends are featured on the DVD, with an emphasis on teaching pre-school children the four rules of personal safety which include: 1) Check first, 2) Go with a friend, 3) It’s my body and 4) Tell a trusted friend. Also included is a children’s book, “Wonderfully Made Under My Bed,” written by a local author, Janice Stitzel Bloom.

Learning for Life is presently a K-12 school-based, after school and workforce character education program that is serving approximately 1.3 million youth nationwide. This Early Childhood program will be a valuable addition that can be integrated with or supplemented by the early reading literacy programs presently available in schools and daycares. To learn more about this Early Childhood program, please contact Dr. Diane E. Thornton at (972) 580 2483 or dthornto@lflmail.org.