



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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TWENTY LOCAL CHILD CARE CENTERS BECOME NATIONALLY ACCREDITED

Percentage of Accredited Centers in Columbus Exceeds National Average

COLUMBUS, OH –Twenty child care centers in the Columbus area were honored today for their recent awards as nationally accredited centers. (See list of centers on second page). The centers earned accreditation status from the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). Franklin County and United Way of Central Ohio's Start Smart initiative routinely honors new centers that have earned the national award.

Nationally, about eight percent of all child care centers are accredited. Because of the Start Smart initiative, the Columbus area now has 19 percent of child care centers with national accreditation. And this number will continue to climb as more centers complete the long accreditation process.

"National accreditation is a real indicator of how committed these centers are to nurturing and educating babies, toddlers and pre-schoolers," said Sally Yurchuck, Start Smart Director. "This group of local child care centers and pre-schools represent an outstanding mix of early care and education offered for for-profit, non-profit, faith-based, and Head Start centers."

National accreditation is awarded to centers that offer superior early care and education, going well beyond what is required by state standards. Earning accreditation can be a long and challenging process. It requires centers to spend months in self-study and improvement, including additional staff training and physical upgrades. Approximately 245 child care centers in Franklin County have engaged in working toward national accreditation status. In addition, approximately 115 home-based child care providers have worked on national accreditation.

Start Smart is a local early childhood initiative led by Franklin County and the United Way of Central Ohio. Start Smart partner agencies Action for Children and CDC Head Start provide technical expertise and guidance to centers working toward accreditation. The Start Smart initiative provides financial incentives and rewards to centers that earn accreditation.

The NAEYC web site states: "As thousands of child care centers, preschools, kindergartens and after-school programs have seen, accreditation is a powerful tool for raising the quality of early childhood education. It provides a process through which early childhood professionals and families can evaluate programs, compare them with professional standards, strengthen the program and commit to ongoing evaluation and improvement."

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Newly Accredited Child Care Centers for September 21, 2005

Amazing Kids Academy	4501 Hoover Rd.	Grove City
Bethel Christian Preschool	1220 Bethel Rd.	Columbus
Capital Park – CDCFC	2150 Agler Rd.	Columbus
Central Community House Child Care Center	1150 E. Main St.	Columbus
Children’s Castle Educare	4990 Roberts Rd.	Hilliard
Children’s World Learning Center	3700 Ridgemill Dr.	Hilliard
David Lutheran Christian Preschool	300 Groveport Rd.	Canal Winchester
Dublin Community Preschool	81 ½ W. Bridget St.	Dublin
Grant Child Care Center	383 E. Broad St.	Columbus
Leo Yassenoff Jewish Community Cntr.	1125 College Ave.	Columbus
Little Shepard’s Preschool	5437 Brand Rd.	Dublin
Neighborhood House Inc.	1000 Atcheson St.	Columbus
Overbrook Weekday Preschool	4131 N. High St.	Columbus
St. Cecilia Preschool	440 Norton Rd.	Columbus
St. John Christian Preschool	6135 Rings Rd.	Dublin
The Compass School	3989 N. Hampton Dr.	Powell
Upper Arlington Lutheran Preschool	2300 Lytham Rd.	Columbus
Wee Pals Child Care Center	2956 Cleveland Ave.	Columbus
YMCA North Educare	100 Arcadia Ave.	Columbus
YWCA/MRDD Early Learning Cntr.	2879 Johnstown Rd.	Columbus