Message from the Executive Director

Despite classes being out, June has been a remarkably busy month for us. Our Center's Co-Director, Dr. Junlei Li, spent the early part of this month in China building a partnership with the China Welfare Institute at the Soong Ching Ling Child Development Center. Through this collaboration, Junlei will integrate his Simple Interactions approach to support child development in urban and rural China. The programmatic work will focus on early childhood education quality assessment, independent program evaluation, improving teacher quality, family support, digital media and children's development, children's social and emotional development, special needs children and families, and early intervention.

June also marked the announcement of our newest CGI America Commitment in conjunction with the TEC Center at Erikson Institute and the Pittsburgh Association for the Education of Young Children. Together we are developing a comprehensive pilot to support digital media literacy trainings for 1,300 early childhood educators and 69 libraries in Pittsburgh and Westmoreland County. We will establish a tablet lending system with libraries and empower librarians as media mentors to foster and promote digital media literacy for early childhood educators in formal and informal settings. Plus, we are committed to building new professional development modules, conducting case studies, and designing a new mobile app to create teacher credentialing opportunities. This is our road map to 21st century learning skills.

We look forward to updating you on our progress. For now, our newsletter is going to take a summer break, but we'll back in August with more exciting news.

All the best wishes,

Rick Fernandes

New On the Blog

How do you make decisions about which toys or apps are likely to provide enjoyable and enriching play experiences? Michael Robb and Junlei Li, Fred Rogers Center research psychologists, and parents themselves, explore Fred Rogers' messages on choosing playthings and what lessons can be applied to the digital world in Open-Ended Versus Single-Action Play in the Digital World.

Supporting Digital Media Literacy

Fred Rogers Center Program Coordinator Tanya Baronti Smith recently helped design and deliver the second statewide training for the Pennsylvania Professional Development Instructor Institute on Digital Media Literacy & Technology Tools for Early Learning. Five new modules
In June 1983, reviews were coming in for Fred Rogers' book *Mister Rogers Talks With Parents*. Most of the reviews were favorable, and the book is still helpful to researchers today. The book starts off by reminding readers that "parents are special, too." Fred then goes on to write about disabilities, play, family life, television, and difficult times. The book ends with printed music from *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood*. *Mister Rogers Talks With Parents* is a great asset in the Fred Rogers Archive.

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**Ele's Corner:**

A Reminder: The Fred Rogers Center Early Learning Environment (Ele) will be shutting down, effective June 30, 2015, in order to bring you exciting new resources in the coming months. We are proud of the community we built of early educators, families, and others who care for young children, and the conversations generated around healthy digital media and technology use were added to the curriculum including *A Tech Playdate*, *Digital Tools for Promoting Healthy Social and Emotional Development*, *Going on an App Hunt: Selecting and Assessing Developmentally Appropriate Apps*, *A Deeper Look: NAEYC-Fred Rogers Center Position Statement*, and *Got Tech Policies? Reframing Policies to Reflect the NAEYC-Fred Rogers Center Position Statement*.

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**Sensory-Friendly Concert**

The Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra will host its first sensory-friendly concert on Saturday, June 27, at 2:30 p.m. Open to people of all ages and abilities but designed especially for individuals with autism spectrum disorders, sensory sensitivities, or other disabilities, this concert will provide patrons with the opportunity to enjoy a symphony performance in a welcoming, inclusive, and relaxed environment. For ticket information,
for adults and children.

When the site closes, any playlists you created will be deleted, and you will be unable to access resources through the Ele website. All Fred Rogers Center digital resources will continue to be found on our main website, www.fredrogerscenter.org. Thank you again for your support, and for the work that you do to improve children’s lives.

Carrying the Legacy Forward -- In My Own Words

Just as Fred Rogers understood the importance of community, we know that it takes advocates, collaborators, donors, and so many other friends, to help achieve our mission.

Fred Rogers is a hero. I loved him as a young and developing child, but found that I loved and appreciated him, his understanding and knowledge of children, and his body of work in his neighborhood evermore as a parent. His quiet strength is an inspiration to all who view his work.

Thank you for this wonderful Center to honor an extraordinary man.

-Michele E. Hiener

Words of Wisdom

"Imagine what our real neighborhoods would be like if each of us offered, as a matter of course, just one kind word to another person. There have been so many stories about the lack of courtesy, the impatience of today's world, road rage and even restaurant rage. Sometimes, all it takes is one kind word to nourish another person. Think of the ripple effect that can be created when we nourish someone. One kind empathetic word has a wonderful way of turning into many."

-Fred Rogers