Activities for Developing a Literacy-Rich Environment

Adding "Print Props" To Learning Center Areas

Placing print-related props such as notepads, order blanks and grocery coupons in dramatic play areas spark children's interest in reading and writing activities.

Through this activity, children will:

- use reading and writing in their play
- begin to see reading and writing as purposeful, real-life activities
- enjoy imitating adult literacy behaviors.

<u>Directions:</u> Two popular learning centers in every classroom are the housekeeping area and the block area. Listed below are suggestions for adding print props to these areas to enhance children's literacy play.

<u>Housekeeping Area:</u> Add items typically found in the home. Since most classroom housekeeping areas contain primarily kitchen furnishings, you'll probably want to have notepads for list-making and note-taking, pencils, telephone book by the toy telephone, grocery store coupons, store advertisements/empty food containers, cookbooks and recipe cards. You might also add a couple of magazines and newspapers. Label the furnishings, such as, stove, refrigerator, sink, bed, and stroller.

<u>Block Area:</u> Many adults say that some children always go to the block area—never to the writing area. Take advantage of these children's interest in block building, and provide literacy materials, such as markers, strips of cardboard or poster-board, tape, tongue depressors, popsicle sticks or straws, and paper cups, they can use to extend their play. Join in children's play for brief periods of time to model making a sign, such as "Gas Station," or "bridge," to put on a block structure. To make the sign, write on the strips of cardboard, and attach the strips to sticks or straws. Then push the stick or straw through the bottom of a cup to make a sign that can stand on or near the block structure. You might also add books about buildings and construction workers at this center, as well as posters with names of these workers.