



NEWS RELEASE

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Activities Planned to Celebrate Week of Young Child

United Way, BrightStars collaborative with an assist from RI College students

Providence, RI (April 10, 2008) – There will be educational activities for parents and children the week of April 14-18 as Rhode Island joins the rest of the nation in celebrating the “Week of the Young Child.” The purpose of the event is to highlight the needs of young children and their families and to recognize the early childhood programs and services that meet those needs.

Daily events are being sponsored by United Way of Rhode Island and the *BrightStars* program.

The week kicks off on Saturday, April 12, at the 43rd Annual Rhode Island Early Childhood Conference and Expo at the Convention Center sponsored by the Rhode Island Association for the Education of Young Children.

Events for children and their families begin on Monday, April 14 with a look at *Nutrition* at the Providence Boys & Girls Club (North Providence Club House) from 4-6 p.m. Executive Chef of Ruth’s Chris Steak House Kevin Gaudreau will be conducting a food demonstration during which he will discuss healthy snacks and meals. There will be interactive and educational games for the children to take part in, as well as nutritious snacks and a raffle.

On Tuesday, April 15, the theme is *Childhood Literacy* with a “Books are Wings” party at the West Warwick Public Library from 6:30-8 p.m. Kids will have a great time "shopping" for free books that look interesting, while being treated to assorted types of free milk from Rhody Fresh Dairy and cookies. Other activities include face painting and making personalized bookmarks.

Wednesday, April 16 is *Child Safety Day* at the Warwick Public Library from 3-5 p.m. The Warwick Fire Department will have a fire truck on site for kids to tour, and Anne Castelli, High Sheriff of Kent County, will also be speaking. Water safety, 911, and fire safety will be covered in a fun and informative manner. Light refreshments will be available.

Thursday, April 17 is *Physical Fitness & Play* at Connecting for Children and Families in Woonsocket from 3-5 p.m. This event will focus on the importance of physical activity and

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play, and will even have a series of physical activities led by Stephanie Bruna, a physical education teacher at the Bradley School.

Friday, April 18 will end the weeklong series of events at Roger Williams Park Zoo with *Environment Awareness* from 11 a.m.-3 p.m. As part of the Zoo's ongoing events during Conservation Week, young children will make planters out of recycled newspapers. Activities are free with zoo admission; for more information on Conservation Week, visit the Zoo website at www.rogerwilliamsparkzoo.org.

Daily events were planned with the assistance of students from the PR Lab class at Rhode Island College. Working with members of United Way's Communications staff, students made arrangements for each of the week's activities, wrote copy and designed a brochure, and assisted with other media related activities. They will also be assisting with the daily events.

About *BrightStars*

BrightStars is a premier quality rating and improvement system created to improve the care and education of infants, toddlers, preschoolers and school-aged children in Rhode Island. States with strong child care quality rating systems see significant improvements in the quality of care and learning that children experience. United Way of Rhode Island supported the design and launch of *BrightStars*. For more information, visit www.BrightStars.org.

About United Way of Rhode Island

United Way of Rhode Island has been working to improve the quality of life in Rhode Island communities for over 80 years. UWRI's mission is to mobilize the caring power of the community to improve the lives of people in need and address the issues Rhode Islanders care most about. Our goal is to create long-lasting changes that prevent problems from happening in the first place. We believe that all Rhode Islanders deserve the opportunity to have a better life, as when any one of us succeeds, we all succeed. At United Way, we refer to this as advancing the common good. For more information, visit www.uwri.org

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