

TOMS RIVER SCHOOL CELEBRATES THE WEEK OF THE YOUNG CHILD

STAFF WRITER



Goddard School employee Theresa Lutz painting the face of a young student during the Week of the Young Child festivities at the 255 Route 70 site.

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TOMS RIVER - You are never too young to learn. That was the message during the Goddard School's Week of the Young Child Celebration that Mayor Thomas F. Kelaher attended to show his support for the local educational facility.

Dana Chibbaro, owner and operator of the Goddard School, which has recently been selected to partake in a pilot evaluation study with Yale University Child Study Center's Educational Records Bureau and Children's Progress, said the philosophy of the franchise learning center is to assist children in developing at their own pace, the child's emotional and social needs.

"I was amazed to see the level of activity and creativity of the various age groups at the Goddard School, where it was obvious each child progressed at his or her own speed," said Mayor Kelaher. "I would like to commend Dana Chibbaro for celebrating the Week of the Young Child, since the youngest years of a child's life are vital to their future development."

According to Chibbaro, the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) is a premier organization for advancing the highest standards of early childhood development and education for young children.

"We are proud to help them advocate for young children and promote developmentally appropriate practices in early childhood education," said Chibbaro at the local school the week of April 19.

"Our Week of the Young Child celebration that was culminated with a children's festival at our school and a county celebration, which NAEYC is sponsoring in Toms River, is part of a campaign to educate the community of the importance of high-quality early childhood education programs and the gains achieved through such programs," she added.

Aside from celebrating the week with blow-up Disney amusement rides, face painting, games and treats at the 255 Route 70 location, Chibbaro sent a letter to Senator Andy Ciesla and Assemblymen David Wolfe and James Holzapfel asking the officials to research the current regulations for early childhood programs in the state since she said the present early childhood centers are regulated through the bureau of licensing, a division of youth and family services.

"These regulations are woefully inadequate and the oversight of centers desperately needs to be expanded," she said, adding, "It is our goal to have the state regulations mirror NAEYC guidelines so that the children of the state of New Jersey can benefit from early childhood education."

For more information on the National Association for the Education of Young Children, visit Week of the Young Child, visit www.naeyc.org.