

Haddonfield Child Care Awarded Grant

Haddonfield Child Care has been awarded a \$2000 grant by the NJ School-Age Care Coalition to develop a robotics program at the Elizabeth Haddon School afterschool program.

HCC teacher Freddy Schurr developed the project, and will implement the program from March through May. Using Lego software and other materials purchased through the grant, afterschool program students will work in teams to design, build and compete with their Lego robots. Schurr has extensive experience working with high school students in the field of robotics, and has been anxious to bring his expertise to younger students through his work at HCC.

The grant, one of only fifteen awarded statewide, is intended to improve the quality of afterschool curriculum, and is tied to the national standards of program quality promoted by the National AfterSchool Alliance. The NJ SAC Coalition will provide oversight and technical assistance throughout the project. The expectation is that students who participate in the project will gain socially and academically through teamwork and the opportunity to explore interests and take initiative

The robotics project is an outgrowth of recent changes in the structure of the Haddonfield Child Care curriculum, to reflect the mission of the program to inspire creativity and provide enrichment in a safe, caring environment. It also ties in with HCC commitment to support the personal growth and development of program students by building important developmental assets, such as motivation to mastery, sense of purpose and personal power, and positive peer relationships.

To this end, HCC has re-structured the programs to include enrichment activities 2-3 days per week at each afterschool site. These include a science component led by Freddy Schurr at Tatem and Elizabeth Haddon, an art program led by local artist Lydia Brown at Tatem, Elizabeth Haddon and Central, and a "Reading for Pleasure" activity at least once per week at all three afterschool programs. The Extended Day Kindergarten Program (EDKP) has a substantial theme-based literature program already in place. In addition, a pilot project has been implemented with the cooperation of counselor John Toto at Central School, which brings Middle School Peer Leaders in to work with the afterschool students every Monday to develop developmental assets through group activities. If successful, this program may be expanded to the other two schools as well.

Would your child benefit from an enriching environment where they can enhance their social skills and enjoy interesting activities a few days per week? Parents interested in enrolling their children in the before or afterschool programs or EDKP are encouraged to visit the HCC website at www.haddonfieldchildcare.org or call the office at 429-1603 for more information.