

# SIU Carbondale Head Start Family Connections Newsletter December 2017

## From the Director's Desk

As we approach the holidays, I want to take this time to reinforce our program's belief that the most meaningful gifts we can give our children are love, understanding, and patience. Head Start works directly with its families to provide the gift of quality education, so make sure that your child is present when they are not ill. Remember that our teachers will be teaching and the children will be learning all the way up to the Christmas break! I am very proud of the children's mid-year progress and the unique talents your child brings to his or her classroom. The Head Start staff are truly thankful to be working with such amazing children and supportive parents. Sending best wishes for the happiest of holidays to all of our Head Start families! — **Dr. Lea Maue**

## Get to Know. . .



### Ms. Delores Pollard!

Ms. Delores, a Bus Monitor at the Murphysboro Center, is a great asset to our Head Start team. She is very dependable and keeps everyone in good spirits. She has been a part of our program for many years and continues to show her dedication to our children. She assists us in all areas of our program by helping the teachers, helping in the office, and ensuring our children are accounted for and safe.

Ms. Delores says she enjoys working at Head Start because each day is different and a new adventure. Ms. Delores tends to wear her hair in many styles and the children always ask "Ms. Dor, why do you have your hair like that?" which makes her laugh because the children are so observant and curious. Ms. Delores says, "It 's bittersweet creating bonds with so many children and then seeing them off to Kindergarten. However, it's an amazing feeling to see them in the community and they continue to recognize you."



## From your Policy Council

I just wanted to share how much Head Start has benefited my family. Fortunately, both of my children have been able to participate in the program. One of the things I love the most is how involved you can be in your child's education. I am currently the Vice-Chair on the Policy Council and feel empowered in my son Jax's education. My son attends the Carbondale Center, and I have loved getting to know his teachers and other staff at the center.

I really feel like it shows your child how important education is when you are actively involved. Understandably, when you are working and have other children, it can be hard to volunteer. But I would like to take the time to invite you to the upcoming Parent meeting. It is a great opportunity to stay updated on what is going on at your child's school, they offer a snack to you and your children, and they also give you great community and parenting resources. I really hope you see you there!

— Jasmin Rickett



## Being an Advocate for Your Child

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As your child enters school, you might be wondering what you can do to make sure that s/he is getting the best support possible when at school. Parents sometimes say or feel that they feel powerless when it comes to school issues, but there is actually a lot that you can do for your child in terms of advocacy. Please remember that you are your child's first teacher- you know them better than anyone! Here are some helpful hints to help you advocate for your child's needs:

- **Communicate with your child and ask questions.**

Study after study show that kids make healthier choices, do better in school, and have higher self-esteem if they have warm, positive communication with their parents. Parents who want to help their children tackle the challenges of school need to be able to ask direct questions on a regular basis and carefully consider the answers. "What do you like best about school?" is often a good icebreaker. Follow-up questions should include "What is easy to do each day?" and "How could your teacher help you learn this subject better?"

- **Recognize that your child behaves differently at home and school.**

It's critical to talk to your child's teacher to find out how well she is functioning at school. Teacher-child relationships vary widely, but given that teachers spend six hours a day with our kids, we can count on them to have a keen sense of how children learn and behave. When you meet with a teacher, ask about your child's strengths and weaknesses. You should feel comfortable asking questions like: Does my child have difficulties with getting along with other children, following instructions, or staying on task? Have you noticed any delays in her academic or social development?

- **Maximize parent-teacher conference time.**

Many parents go to parent-teacher conferences unprepared. They arrive without questions, receive an enormous amount of information about a child's academic performance, and then leave with a laundry list of concerns they haven't been able to talk through. You can maximize your parent-teacher conference time by planning questions to ask at the beginning, not the end, of the conference. By asking your questions up front, you'll help ensure that the conference time is used to address your child's challenges, set appropriate goals, and determine whether any special education services might be needed.

Please feel free to speak to your child's teacher or community worker if you have any questions about advocating for your child. We will be discussing this topic further in May as we get ready to transition to kindergarten.

Source: <https://childmind.org/article/being-an-effective-advocate-for-your-child/>



618-453-6448



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SIU Carbondale Head Start



## Conscious Discipline in the Home

### Planning a Safe Place

The safe place provides a space where children can go to actively calm themselves during times of upset. The safe place is a self-regulation tool and is not a punishment. Children can go there on their own or you can suggest when using the safe place would be helpful.

Decide the location of your child's safe place, ensure it is a comfortable place your child can sit, and keep calming materials nearby. Picture books, pillows, blankets, family photos, stuffed animals, are all great items to store in the safe place. Together you and your child can decide which items will help them feel calm.



### Community Resource of the Month

**Carterville Food Pantry**  
Provides free clothing and \$1.00 winter coats.  
For more information:  
Call: (618) 985-3171

Location:  
121 W Illinois Ave.  
Carterville, Illinois

Hours:  
Tuesday 9:00am-12:00pm  
Friday 9:00am-12:00pm

## Health

As the winter months progress, so will the weather. **Therefore you want to make sure your family is dressing appropriately for the weather.** Before going outside, make sure your family is dressed in the following items this winter.

### Winter Coat



It is essential for everyone in your family to wear a winter coat in the cold weather. **Make sure the coat is buttoned/ zipped for extra warmth.**

Waterproof coats are best as they help keep clothing underneath dry.

### Layers

Always dress in layers as they are easy to take off if they get wet or you get too warm.



### Winter Boots



Make sure that everyone in your family has a pair of boots to wear this winter. **A lot of your body's heat is lost from your feet, therefore you want to make sure that they are covered properly.** Boots help keep snow from getting your socks wet while keeping them warm! Again, waterproof is best.

### Hat, Scarf, Gloves/Mittens



**These three items are a winter must for everyone in your household!** You lose a lot of heat from your head therefore you want to keep it covered with a hat. Using a scarf around your neck can block a lot of the cold air from hitting it. Loosely wrapping the scarf around your mouth and nose can help reduce runny noses when out in the cold. Always wear gloves/mittens as they will keep your hands warm and free from the chance of frost bite.

*"Educating Children, Empowering Families, Strengthening Communities"*





## Dates to Remember

- **December 11th** - Marion Parent Meeting @ 5:30pm
- **December 11th** - Murphysboro Parent Meeting @ 6:30pm
- **December 14th** - Carbondale/Puka Parent Meeting @ 6:00pm
- **December 18th**- Policy Council Meeting @6:00pm
- **December 22nd** - January 2nd - No School / Holiday Closure
- **January 3rd** Children return to school

### Center Telephone Numbers

- Carbondale 453-2440
- Marion 997-4255
- Murphysboro 687-4433
- Puka 453-7173

## Recipe of the Month: Apple Oatmeal Muffins

**Ingredients:**

1/2 cup milk, non-fat	1/4 cup sugar
1/3 cup applesauce	1/2 tablespoon baking powder
1/2 cup flour, all-purpose	1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1/2 cup quick-cooking oats (uncooked)	1 apple (tart, cored & chopped)

### Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 400°F.
2. Place 6 cupcake holders in baking tin.
3. In a mixing bowl, add milk and applesauce. Stir until blended.
4. Stir in flour, oats, sugar, baking powder, and cinnamon. Mix until moistened (do not over mix).
5. Gently stir in the chopped apples.
6. Spoon into cupcake holders.
7. Bake for 15-20 minutes or until an inserted toothpick comes out clean.
8. Cool in pan 5 minutes before serving. Store unused portions in an airtight container.

## Book of the Month

Llama Llama Red Pajama by Anna Dewdney

Activity: Read the book aloud or watch the story being read aloud on Youtube (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HD1g3P-nKW0>)

Use the sheet included (with llama and quilt) in the newsletter to write random uppercase letters in each quilt square-write one uppercase letter per square. Use other sheet included (empty quilt squares without llama) to write either the matching uppercase or lowercase letter (A-A or A-a), depending on your child's level of letter knowledge. Color each square on the second sheet a different color. Explain to child that s/he will be matching letters to one another in order to complete Llama's quilt. You may need to model the first quilt square for your child by naming the letter on the quilt then finding its matching square and placing the square onto the quilt pattern.

### School Readiness Goals Aligned To This Activity:

- Children will recognize letters and letter sounds and demonstrate phonological awareness.
- Children will demonstrate persistence and engagement in a variety of creative experiences.