

SIU Carbondale Head Start Family Connections Newsletter January 2018

From the Director's Desk

I hope all of our Head Start families are starting 2018 feeling healthy and happy. Many of us make new year's resolutions this time of year that are hard to keep. I want to strongly encourage parents or guardians who have resolved to further their education to follow through with that goal. You may want to start college, return to college, obtain a GED, or complete short-term vocational training. SIU Carbondale Head Start supports its families in this worthy pursuit by assisting you locate opportunities for free training or education. If attending a tuition-based program, we will help you navigate applications for student aid, and through it all we will encourage you to finish. Please contact your child's Center Director or your family's Community Worker to get the ball rolling. Sending well wishes your way for a great 2018!

— Dr. Lea Maue

Get to Know . . . Ms. Sarah Caldwell!



Ms. Sarah Caldwell, from Marion, is a teacher at our Puka Co-Location and has been employed at SIU Head Start for two years. She really enjoys working with children and getting to know each child and family in her classroom. Ms. Caldwell, we would like to thank you for being a great asset to our team at Head Start!

Ms. Caldwell reflects on her time as a Head Start teacher and one of the most touching experiences she remembers was a home visit with one of her students. The child gave her a home tour and introduced her to all of the family's cats which was exceptionally special because Ms. Caldwell is a cat lover. Ms. Caldwell loves to travel, read books, make music, embroidering, and

spending time outside. She also enjoys spending time with her boyfriend, family, and friends.

Ms. Caldwell is the featured employee of the month because she understands the importance of interacting and engaging in meaningful relationships with the children, staff, and parents. She consistently welcomes everyone with a smile each day.

From Your Policy Council

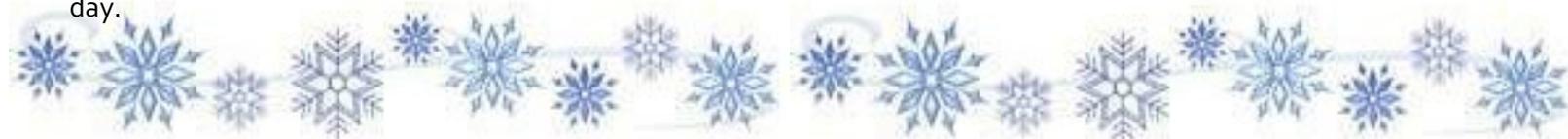
Hello. My name is Jamie Blevens, and I am currently a Head Start parent at Murphysboro and also the co-secretary of the Policy Council. I want to wish all of my fellow parents a happy holidays, and send best wishes for a great new year!

My child is in Ms. Chrisden and Ms. Millie's classroom, and she has shown so much progress in her school readiness skills—plus she loves coming to school!

Being a part of the Policy Council has also been a growth opportunity for me. I get to participate in my child's educational process and contribute in the decision making of the program. I've learned about how to engage in a formal school policy meeting, and I know these skills will help me in the future.

If you haven't already, please consider attending a monthly parent meeting. We talk about what's going on in the program as well as learn Conscious Discipline techniques. I see that the program truly believes that parents are their child's first and foremost teacher, and they give parents the opportunity to participate in so many ways!

—Jamie Blevens.



Promoting Language at Home

Head Start is a program that serves diverse families and children. Currently, the program provides services to families and children that speak six different languages. The program strives to assist in the development of English acquisition, while also promoting the development of the home language. Below is a list of strategies that all families can use to develop language with their child.

Use your language at home: The easiest, most important step is to use your home language every day.

Many families worry that using their home language will confuse their children. Actually, children can easily learn several languages at the same time. They have an easier time learning English when they have a strong foundation in their first language.

Talk about your traditions and culture: Visit your child's classroom and share your language, culture and traditions. Share family stories and songs and encourage your child to retell family stories and share your family's heritage with others. Share songs and games from your culture with your child's classmates and teachers.

Continue using your language as your children grow older: Sometimes children start to prefer English as they get older. Talk with your children about the benefits of speaking two languages. Continue using your language, even if your children respond in English so you keep your lines of communication open.

Don't forget that YOU are key to maintaining your home language: Parents and other family members are the most important people in your children's lives. What you value, your children will learn to value. Help them learn that your family's language and culture are something to be proud of and to treasure. Remember the benefits of your home language and remain committed to continuing to use it.

If you have any questions about how to promote language development at home, please feel free to talk to your child's teacher. They can provide you with specific activities to support language development.

Conscious Discipline in the Home

Wish Well to Help Ourselves and Others



Think of your child's last major meltdown, a time when they seemed completely unreachable. It can be difficult to know what to do in moments like these and in order to access our problem solving skills to come up with helpful solutions we can use a process called active calming. The first step is to take a deep breath, reassure ourselves we can handle it, and finally we wish well.

Wishing well is a powerful healing activity we use to open our hearts and see the preciousness of others. The benefits of wishing well helps calm our brains, bodies, and helps us to view situations in a more positive light. Wishing well provides us with the means of calming ourselves and becoming more understanding of the child's state so we can provide effective assistance.



Medicaid Information

Changes Are Coming to Medicaid

You may have begun receiving notices from HFS, leaving you with many questions.

What is Medicaid Managed Care?

- Managed Care is like private insurance for those on Medicaid. Rather than the state of Illinois paying providers directly, it pays insurance companies to coordinate your care and the insurance companies then pay for the services you receive

I currently have Illinois Health Connect and received a notice that it is ending December 31, 2017. What do I need to do?

- Right now you do not need to do anything. The state will continue to pay your providers directly until April 1, 2018.
- Between mid-January through mid-February, you will receive an enrollment packet from HFS telling you to select a Managed Care plan.
- You will have 30 days to enroll in a plan. If you do not select a plan before your deadline you will be auto-enrolled into a plan

How will I know which plan to pick?

- Assistance is available to help you with the process. The organizations listed below provide free enrollment assistance to all members of the community. You do not need to be a patient to receive this service.

Shawnee Health Service – (618)519-9200

Christopher Rural Health – (800)408-7351

Rural Health, Inc. – (618)833-4471

What information should I bring when receiving enrollment assistance?

- Names of all providers for all household members
- List of current medications

Center Telephone Numbers

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

Community Resource of the Month

Carterville Family Practice
Behavioral Health Services

1006 South Division Street
Carterville, IL 62918

Offers individual counseling for all age groups to resolve emotional, behavioral and mental health problems.

Accepts medical card, Medicare, private insurance and sliding fee scale .

Dates to Remember

January 1st & 2nd -
Holiday Closure

January 8th - Marion
Parent Meeting at 5:30pm

January 8th -
Murphysboro Parent
Meeting at 6:30pm

January 11th -
Carbondale/Puka Parent
Meeting at 6:00pm

January 15th - MLK
School Closure

January 22nd - Policy
Council Meeting , 6:00pm



Recipe of the Month: Taco Lasagna

Ingredients

- 12 lasagna noodles
 - 1 pound ground beef
 - 1 (1-oz.) package taco seasoning
 - 1 egg
 - 1 (15-oz.) carton ricotta cheese
 - 4 cups (1 lb.) shredded cheddar cheese
 - 1 (24-oz.) jar chunky salsa
- Optional toppings: sour cream , green onions, diced tomatoes

Instructions

- Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
- Cook noodles according to the package.
- In a large skillet, brown beef until no longer pink. Drain meat and add the taco seasoning. Stir until combined and set aside.
- In a small bowl, add the egg and ricotta and stir until combined.
- In a 9x13 baking dish, start by layering 4 lasagna noodles on the bottom of the pan. Next, layer 1/3 of the ricotta, 1/3 of the beef mixture, 1/3 of the salsa, and 1/3 of the cheese. Repeat the layers 2 more times.
- Bake covered for 30-40 minutes or until the casserole has heated through and is bubbly. Let casserole stand 10 minutes before cutting. Top with sour cream, sliced green onions, and diced tomatoes if desired.
- Any leftovers can be froze and eaten later. You can also prepare this ahead of time and freeze it. To eat later, thaw in the refrigerator for 8 hours and then bake as directed. (Source: adapted from Taste of Home)

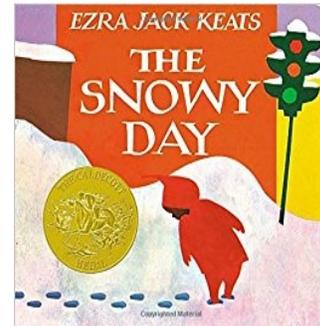
Book of the Month: “The Snowy Day” by Ezra Jack Keats

Activity:

Read the book aloud or watch the story being read aloud on Youtube
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8NsAlTr4uho>

Make snow dough with your child. You'll need:

- 3 cups of baking soda
- ½ cup hair conditioner



Put both ingredients in a large bowl and encourage child to mix the two ingredients together until they make a snow like texture. One fully mixed, place snow dough in shallow container and encourage child to explore the dough. Activities you and your child can do with the snow dough include:

- Mold dough into various shapes
- Use your fingers to practice writing letters or numbers in the snow
- Make snowballs or snowmen
- When you are finished playing, store your snow dough in a Ziploc bag and seal closed until next time!
If snow dough dries up, just add a little bit of conditioner.

School Readiness Goals Aligned To This Activity:

- Children will use small muscles to manipulate materials with strength and coordination, including using art and writing tools to convey meaning through written symbols and letters.
- Children will demonstrate scientific inquiry skills through observation, exploration, and use of simple tools and technology.