From the Director’s Desk

As the Director of the program, I can say that I’m so thankful for the continued parent and community support that our program received. During family volunteer month in October, 242 family members of Head Start children volunteered at our centers. It was a phenomenal turn out and speaks volumes to the commitment of our families to the growth and development of their children. On November 7th, the JALC ECE 360 students and parents enjoyed fun literacy activities. The Family Fall Festival on November 9th was a big success with over 100 family and community volunteers. Community reading week (November 18th—November 22nd) had 18 volunteers from SIUC Med Prep, Sigma Chi, Alpha Kappa Alpha, Delta Sigma Theta, National Association of Black Accountants, Carbondale Public Library, The United States Air Force, The Vine Church, Sigma Alpha, Carbondale Police Department, Ameren Illinois, SIUC University Scholars, Zeta Phi Beta, and Murphysboro Mayor Will Stephens. The events were a great success with readers from our supportive community volunteering to come read to children. We broke our record during October/November with 545 volunteers. Thanks to all the parents who attended parent-teacher conferences the week of Thanksgiving. Maintaining regular and open communication with your child’s teacher is important in helping your child build the skills necessary for success in school. If you missed your conference and want to come discuss your child’s progress, simply contact your child’s teacher to make an appointment. Thanks to all of our dedicated staff, parents, and community members who are key to the success of this Head Start program.

—Dr. Lea Maue

Get to Know. . .Laura Lindsey

Laura Lindsey has 15 years of experience working within the program. She was a teacher in Carbondale for five years, a Lead Teacher in Marion for four years, and this is her sixth year as the program’s Child Development Coordinator. As the Child Development Coordinator, Laura's primary role is to oversee the children's preparation for kindergarten. Laura's favorite part of her position is supporting the teachers and seeing them succeed. Laura was raised in Cobden Illinois, a small town twenty minutes from Carbondale. She received a Bachelor's degree in English and Master's degree in Early Childhood at SIU. In Laura's free time, she enjoys spending time with family and friends, reading and watching movies.
Getting Your Child Ready For School

It's great to see and hear the children back at the centers again. This place is pretty boring over the summer without our children families around! I enjoyed meeting some of the new parents at Parent Orientation. For those of you who have not visited your child's center yet this year, please take some time to visit soon and meet your child's teachers, your Community Worker, and the Center Director. We encourage all of our parents to take an active role in their child's education, and the first step is being present at school. Also, September is when we hold our first parent meetings at each center. You can find the dates for your center in the blue box to the right. Please come out to your center and participate in this meeting. Your voice is important in the decisions made at Head Start!

—Dr. Lea Maue

Ready Or Not, Kindergarten Here we Come!

While many of us focus on the basics of letter and number recognition or reading skills, kindergarten readiness encompasses more than these few isolated skills. We need to look at the child as a whole, while keeping in consideration the skills and strengths each child has developed.

Here are some tips to help you prepare your child for kindergarten:

- **Help them to develop independence at home.** Encourage your child to dress himself, take his coat on and off and hang it up, use the bathroom without assistance and wash his hands and put on his own shoes.

- **Teach responsibility.** Start transferring small responsibilities over to your child, if you haven't already. Even when it may be easier for you to complete the tasks, let him accept the responsibility.

- **Develop and follow routines.** Set up morning routines that will transfer into a school setting.

- **Read aloud to your child.** Get your child a library card, take her to the library to check out books, and be sure to read to your child every day.

- **Acknowledge his feelings.** Your child may express being nervous, not wanting to go or, alternately, feeling very excited to start school. Whatever they feel, take time to acknowledge those feelings. If they are nervous, talk about why they feel that way and maybe take a school tour to relieve some stress about the move to a new school.

- **Communication with your child’s teacher is key.** Take initiative and communicate with your child’s teacher about your hopes and dreams for your child. Discuss what goals you want your child to achieve before Kindergarten.

Rather than worry about whether your child is ready to read and write, think about his or her skills as a whole. What can they do well that will help them succeed?

Community Resource of the Month

**Man-Tra-Con**

Man-Tra-Con Corporation offers workforce solutions for both businesses and job seekers free of charge! Browse their web site to find out how they can help you achieve your career and employment goals.

The corporation serves the communities of Franklin, Jackson, Jefferson, Perry and Williamson counties in a variety of ways. They offer recruitment services to help local employers connect with qualified job applicants. Representatives partner with local businesses to provide assistance with skills training, worker retention, and more.

Man-Tra-Con also helps employers make informed decisions by providing access to up-to-date labor/market statistics and other local demographic information.

In addition, their Business Services representatives collaborate with economic development organizations to develop a skilled workforce pool for new and existing businesses. Contact Business Services Administrator at 618-998-0970, ext. 224, for more information.

Conscious Discipline in the Home: Encouragement

Each month, will feature the Seven Skills of Conscious Discipline and the Seven Powers of Conscious Adults. The seven skills are Composure, Encouragement, Assertiveness, Choices, Empathy, Positive Intent and Consequences.

Encouragement creates a sense of belonging and takes the place of all external rewards and can be done to help children learn what positive and helpful things they can do wherever they are. Ex.—Giving stickers for motivation or rewards or time out or removing privileges as punishments.

Discipline = Teaching and coaching in life skills and social skills.

Power of Unity

BIG IDEA: We are all in this together.

GOAL: To perceive compassionately, and offer compassion to others.

Specific ways to encourage your child:

1. You did it!
   You __________________ (describe in detail without judgment)
   Example: You did it! You helped your brother put all of the toys away.

2. You _______ (describe in detail with judgment)
   So __________ (relate to how it helped others)
   That was _____ (helpful, etc.)
   Example: You put your plate in the dishwasher after dinner so mom wouldn’t have to do it.
   That was helpful.

3. You ____________ (describe your child’s unique strength)
   Would you be willing to ______________ (share how that talent is beneficial to others)
   Example: You take time to keep your things together. That’s called organization. Can you show me how you would organize these crayons?

From "Conscious Discipline: Building Resilient Classrooms" by Dr. Becky Bailey
Recipe: Nutrition Activity

Hello Parents! Please join us in the classroom on December 12th for our Nutrition Activity of the Month. We will be making Sugar Cookies.

INGREDIENTS FOR SUGAR COOKIES:

- 1/3 cup softened butter
- 3/4 cup of white sugar
- 1 1/2 teaspoons of baking powder
- 1/3 cup of oil
- 1 Tablespoon of milk
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1 1/2 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 egg

DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. In a large bowl, cream butter, sugar, oil, egg, milk and vanilla until light and fluffy. In a separate bowl, lightly blend flour and baking powder. Combine wet and dry mixes together at low speed until well mixed. Line the baking pan with parchment paper. Spread dough evenly in the pan with a spatula or with fingers. Bake for 10 minutes until light golden brown. Cool for 5 minutes before using cookie cutters to cut out cookies.

Book of the Month: Llama Llama Red Pajama by Ann Dewdney

Activity: Read the book aloud or watch the story being read aloud on YouTube.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HD1g3P-nKWo

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 the 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 the 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.