From the Director’s Desk

February is always a busy month for our program. First and foremost, it is family involvement month, which means every Wednesday is designated as a special day for a member of the family to visit the center and participate in an activity with their Head Start child. February is also dental health month. Your child’s dental health is essential to his or her overall health and we have some special activities planned for the children to highlight the importance of their beautiful teeth!

Every year, we have a self-assessment meeting where we look at the program’s strengths and areas for improvement. Parent input is critical to this process, so please consider attending. This year it is on February 7th from 8 am until noon at the Carbondale Civic Center. Let your Center Director know if you can attend. Your input is also important as we plan for our next grant period. Inside this newsletter is a questionnaire asking your opinion of what the program’s goals should be over the next five years. As community members and parents of currently enrolled children, you are in the best position to inform our planning process.

— Dr. Lea Maue

Get to Know. . . Ms. Renee Jones

Ms. Renee began her career at SIU Carbondale Head Start as a Teacher in January of 2000 and was promoted to Lead Teacher in August 2000. Renee grew up in Elgin, IL. She came to Southern Illinois to attend SIU Carbondale from 1995—1998. During her college years, she met her husband and was married in 2001. Renee loves teaching children and enjoys reading books to the children in her classroom. She uses puppets, music, silly voices, and other fun activities to bring the books to life. In her free time, she loves playing with her pet rabbit, camping, hiking, sewing, and visiting family. She has traveled with family to places like Yellowstone National Park, Grand Canyon, and Mount Rushmore. We want to thank Renee for nineteen years of service to the families and children in our program.

From your Policy Council

I am Dasha Hibbler, and I am a Policy Council Representative for the Murphysboro Center. This is my son’s first year in the program. I feel that he has had a great experience so far. I have seen such a change in him. He is growing and learning everyday. I want parents to spread the word about how great the program is. Now is a good time to tell your friends and those in our community with young children to enroll their children in our program. Being on the council has given me an opportunity to learn about Head Start and how the program operates. I encourage parents to volunteer in their child’s classroom because parent involvement is very important. It is up to us as parents to be involved in our children’s education. I want to challenge all parents who are making New Year’s resolutions to attend parent meetings and to volunteer at your child’s center!
Developing Social Skills

Having good relationships with a range of people is very important for a person’s mental health. To develop these relationships, children must learn social skills, such as:

- communication skills – using the right words for the situation, smiling and facial expressions, using eye contact and listening
- entry skills – knowing how to join a group
- being part of a group – sharing, taking turns, following rules, cooperating, managing conflict, helping others
- being a friend – supporting friends, being kind, helpful and affectionate, being willing to follow requests and participate in group decision-making.

Ideas to help your child develop good social skills:

- Show children what good social skills look like. They learn by watching as well as participating. Your child is probably copying the way you behave when you’re around other people.
- Be consistent when teaching social skills. Keep telling your child things like, "Everyone gets a turn," and "He is frustrated, you know how that feels." As your child becomes older, your explanations can get more complicated, but the messages should stay the same.
- Talk with your child about his feelings and your own. Talk about situations that make us feel bad and those that make us feel good.
- Give your child lots of opportunities for imaginary play such as: dress-up, telephone play, playing shop, acting out stories and rhymes, playing with other children, constructing things with bricks, cut-outs and dough, and helping around the house with simple chores.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding your child’s social skills, please contact your child’s teacher or family community service worker.

Community Resource of the Month

**SIU Community Dental Center**

**Services:** For children include cleanings, x-rays, dental exams, school exams, sealants, and topical fluoride treatments. Restorative treatment, such as fillings, may also be performed if needed. Services provided for adults include x-rays, dental exams, and restorative work, such as fillings. In some cases, we are able to provide root canals, dentures, and crowns as well. Dental cleanings for adults are referred to the SIU Dental Hygiene clinic. Patients are seen by appointment only.

**Payment Options:** Focuses on self-pay (Deeply Discounted rates). They accept cash and credit card payments only. They also accept Medicaid, Blue Cross/Blue Shield, Meridian, Athena, Humana, HFS All-Kinds Insurance, and Delta Dental. Some services MUST be preapproved by your insurance. **They DO NOT accept other forms of insurance or Medicare at this time!**

**Location:** Applied Sciences and Arts Building (entrance close to SIU Arena) 1365 Douglas Drive. They are located on top of the hill across from the SIUC Arena. Look for “dental Clinics” Please call the office if you need directions!

**Schedule:** Spring 2019 clinic hours are Tuesday & Thursday 8am-8pm. For Summer 2019 clinic hours, call the office.

**For Appointments:** Call 618-453-2353. You can also contact them at communitydentalcenter@siu.edu. Please call 24 hours in advance if you cannot make it to your appointment.
Conscious Discipline in the Home: Choices

Each month, we 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. This month’s skill of focus is Choice which builds Self-Esteem and Willpower.

Power of Free Will
BIG IDEA: The only person you can change is you.
GOAL: Learning to connect and guide instead of force and coerce.

The Power of Free Will is the belief that each and every person has the inner power to choose helpful or hurtful actions at any given time. Each of us is responsible for the way we behave. We cannot make others behave in certain ways. They must choose for themselves.

We can help children fulfill our expectations while still encouraging their free will by offering two positive choices instead of giving an assertive command. Two positive choices allow children to comply with our wishes while honoring their Power of Free Will.

Here are some tips you can use to introduce the Skill of Choices at home:
Practice creating two positive choices. We must choose two options we’re completely okay with. Two positive choices requires us to focus on the desired behaviors and let go of control over which option the child chooses.

When introducing two positive choices state the following: “You have a choice. You may ______________ or ______________. Which is better for you?”
Encourage your child’s cooperation. “You did it! You chose ______________. Good for you!”

By offering two positive choices, we help children do the following:
• Focus their attention on the tasks we deem important
• Comply with our wishes
• Learn decision-making skills
• Feel empowered, thereby reducing power struggles
• Redirect their behavior and learn impulse control
• Establish and maintain self-control

From “Conscious Discipline: Building Resilient Classrooms” by Dr. Becky Bailey

“Educating Children, Empowering Families, Strengthening Communities”
Recipe: Nutrition Activity

Hello Parents! Please join your child on February 21st for some fruit dip with this month’s Nutrition Activity or listed below you will find the recipe that you could make with your child at home.

INGREDIENTS FOR YOGURT FRUIT DIP

- 8 oz. low-fat cream cheese, softened
- ½ cup Greek vanilla yogurt
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 2 teaspoons brown sugar

Fruit for Dipping: fruit (berries, apple slices, grapes, pineapple chunks, melon chunks, etc.)

DIRECTIONS

In a large bowl, mix the ingredients. Refrigerate. While the dip is chilling, cut the fruit into small pieces for dipping. Serve when chilled and enjoy!

Book of the Month: I Love You Too by Ziggy Marley

Activity: Read the book aloud to your child or watch it on YouTube:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QNOBruf3VvI&t=70s

While reading or listening to the book, focus on identifying the rhyming words (bee/tree, you/too, green/clean, etc.) throughout the book. Explain to your child that rhyming words are words that sound the same at the end and different in the beginning. After reading the book, complete the attached rhyming worksheet that focuses on identifying rhyming words by coloring in the matching balloons.

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 recognize letters and letter sounds and demonstrate phonological awareness.
- Children will demonstrate persistence and engagement in a variety of creative experiences.
- Children will understand and follow classroom expectations, routines, and directions.