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. Parents that attend parent meetings this month will receive items for dental care for the family. 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 Tuesday, February 25th from 8 am until noon at the Carbondale Civic Center. Let your Center Director or case worker know if you can attend. Your input is also important as we plan for our next grant period. 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 Dudley

Renee Dudley is from Johnston City. She has always had an interest in working with children. Renee went to college at SIU where she played Softball for the Salukis. After college she gave pitching lessons and coached a little league team. Renee has fourteen years of experience working within the program. She started out in the program as a Substitute. She then became an Assistant Teacher and for the last two years she has been a Supervising Teacher. She has a Bachelor’s in Health Education and has recently been taking courses to earn a Drivers Education Endorsement. She loves working with kids in the classroom and coaching. Her favorite part of her position is being with the children every day and watching them grow and develop. She finds joy in teaching each child something new. In Renee’s free time she enjoys spending time with her son, Aiden. We want to thank Renee for fourteen years of service to the families and children in our program.

From your Policy Council

Hello! My name is Katie Day, and I have a four year old daughter at the Carbondale center. This is her first year attending Head Start and both of us have learned so much. I joined the Policy Council at the beginning of the school year and recently was asked to participate as a leader for Parent Cafes. I love that Head Start gives parents so many opportunities to speak up and get involved in their child’s education. I encourage all parents to attend the parent meetings, and to actively participate.

Developing relationships with other parents and families has been very meaningful for my family. There are so many ways to volunteer your time, whether it be reading to your child’s class, helping with arts and crafts, or assisting on fieldtrips, there is something for everyone. It really does take a village and Head Start is a huge part of ours. I can’t wait to see what the rest of the school year has in store for us. If you have any questions or are interested in ways to volunteer, feel free to contact me through the Carbondale center director.

Katie Day
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

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 adults and children: Include filings, extractions, cleanings, x-rays, dental exams, school exams, sealants, and topical fluoride treatments. In some cases, we are able to provide root canals, dentures, crowns and bridges as well. Patients are seen by appointment only.

Payment Options: Focuses on non-insured and self-pay for the Southern Illinois community and surrounding areas (Kentucky, Missouri etc.) at non-profit rates. They accept cash and credit card payments only. **They DO NOT accept other forms of insurance or Medicare at this time! (Subject to change)**

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 2020 clinic hours are Tuesday & Thursday 8am-8pm. For Summer 2020 clinic hours, call the office. Varies per semester.

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*
Recipe: Nutrition Activity

Hello Parents! Please join your child on February 20th for some Fruit Smoothies 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 SMOOTHIES
• Milk, yogurt, and a variety of fresh or frozen fruit.

DIRECTIONS
Combine fruit, milk, and yogurt, in a blender. Blend to desired consistency. Serve 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.