From the Director’s Desk

Happy Spring to our Head Start Families! The children always enjoy increased opportunities to play outside at the centers. Keep in mind that the weather varies greatly this time of year (especially in southern Illinois), and children should be sent in clothing for outdoor play every day.

The end of the school year is quickly approaching and many of our Head Start children will be heading off to an exciting new adventure in kindergarten. One factor important for school readiness is attendance. Children who are on time and attending every day have been shown to do better in school, and this includes remote attendance. Head Start children learn pro-social skills in addition to academic skills that are critical for their success. Head Start views children who miss more than 10% of school as a “chronic absentee.” For children who began in August, that’s only 16 days! Kids who miss more than 10% of school run the risk of not being as prepared for school as they could be. If your child is missing school because of barriers that you need assistance with, please call your Community Worker or Center Director. Let’s work in partnership to promote the success of every child in Head Start!

— Dr. Lea Maue

Get to Know. . . Ms. Robertta Lindsey-Jones

Ms. Robertta was born in Champaign, IL. She was married, had three children, and moved to Carbondale over 49 years ago. She attended SIU Carbondale and received a Bachelor’s degree in Child and Family (Early Childhood). Her career began as the director of a community program providing low income families with high-quality food at low cost.

Ms. Robertta worked for the Eurma C. Hayes Center in Carbondale for 14 years as a supervising teacher. In 1993, she was hired at the Johnston City Head Start Center as a Sub-teacher, and then as a Teacher. She worked at both the Carbondale and Murphysboro centers, as a Teacher and Supervising Teacher. She is now a Lead teacher at the Murphysboro Head Start center.

She enjoys how the children know very little when they enter the program and are kindergarten ready when they transition out. She learns as much from the children as they learn from her. Her biggest joy is getting to see the children in her class accomplish something that they have been struggling with. She feels that it is wonderful to see the excitement on the children’s faces when they are learning new skills. She loves spending time with family especially during the holidays.

We want to thank Ms. Robertta for her 20 plus years of service to families and children at the SIU Murphysboro Head Start Center.

From your Policy Council

My name is Jamey White. I am the parent representative from the Marion Center since Sept. 2020. I love being a part of Policy Council because it lets me know that I am not alone as a parent with a young child. I also love interacting with the other parents. It’s been great being a part of the program because I have seen my son Douglas improve in his speech. At first, I thought he would have a hard time transitioning, but he has shocked me with the way he thinks and interacts. The conversations that Douglas and I have are amazing.

Ms. Leslie, his teacher, has been a great help in preparing Douglas for school now and in the future as he moves into kindergarten next year. Daily remote learning gives my son a chance to be expressive, and as his father, that makes me very proud of him, and makes me feel good. Douglas is getting better at communicating about his daily experiences both in school and at home. He will talk your ear off.

It is so important that your child participates in remote learning EVERY DAY! As a Parent Café Leader, it’s very important to be involved in any way that you can. You will be surprised at the amazing ideas that can come from talking to other parents.
You & Your Preschool Child

Ensuring That Your Child Is Ready to Learn

Research shows that many things affect how well preschool children perform in school, including meeting their physical needs with a healthy diet, exercise and good medical care. Young children also need social and emotional help that will build their confidence, independence and cooperation skills. Families of preschoolers need to show their children how to behave by being dependable, setting a good example and using appropriate, consistent discipline. Children also need opportunities to play and ask questions, and to be read to and introduced to a variety of learning activities. Allow time each day for these things to happen in the life of your young child.

Needs of Your Preschooler:

Babies need loving parents or caregivers who respond to their cries or noises, making them feel safe and comfortable. They need to be able to play in safe areas, move around, play with safe objects, and hear and make sounds.

Toddlers need opportunities to make choices within clear and reasonable limits. They need activities that allow them to use their muscles, experience their senses and develop language skills. As a toddler reaches three years old, they will need to work with their hands, learn to do things for themselves, play with other children, continue to learn about their body's movements, and build their vocabulary and knowledge about their surroundings.

Four- and five-year-olds will require even more opportunities to use things like books, games and songs, and the chance to do science, math and art activities. Families and caregivers can find these opportunities at their local community centers, libraries or schools. Children need to build their self-reliance and language skills, as well as their awareness of the world and people around them, as they prepare to enter school.

“Our challenge is to reach all children early so that every child starts school with the skills needed to learn.”
—Laura Bush

Source: https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/parenting/article/you-your-preschool-child#Ensuring

COVID–19 Response Resources

COVID-19 Southern Illinois Resource Guide

Information on COVID-19 assistance resources for individuals and businesses can be found in the resource document website below. This information is updated weekly as new items come up or additional information is requested. Details about job search; training and job openings; unemployment insurance; food assistance; utility Information; rental assistance; healthcare resources; childcare; transportation; licensing and certifications; student loans; small business resources and more resources can be found on this website: https://eeca.coop/covid-19-southern-illinois-resource-guide/

For more information contact Egyptian Electric Cooperative Association at https://eeca.coop/

1732 Finney Road
Murphysboro, IL 62966
800-606-1505 or 888-554-8181
Your Journey Together: Building the Resilience of Children and Families (Building Your Bounce)


This month we are going to review the third Adult Protective Factor: Initiative

Initiative: The ability to make positive choices and decisions and act upon them.

As an adult in the lives of children, it is important to set an example of eagerness and curiosity that a spirit of initiative will bring. Initiative relates to adult resilience—faced with difficulty, those with initiative will make decisions and act upon them to more from a state of “what is” to a state of “what can be.”

Use these strategies to get ideas for supporting your initiative.

1. I communicate effectively with those around me. Many of us communicate often throughout our day. We communicate with those in our homes, we engage in brief conversations during mealtime, and we communicate with those in our neighborhood. If you were to replay all of the different ways in which you communicate (remember, we communicate both verbally and nonverbally). Take time and think about how you communicate with others.

2. I try many different ways to solve a problem. When we try many ways to solve a problem, we empower ourselves. Life will inevitably bring us many ups and downs. The key to making the best out of life is successfully managing our way through life’s mountain highs and low valleys.

3. I have a hobby that I engage in. We all have something in life that puts a sparkle in our eyes. Finding your passion takes time. When you discover and engage in a hobby, you release your passion. Released passion affects everyone around you. Don’t keep your skills only to yourself, use them to benefit others.

4. I seek new knowledge and new ideas. When was the last time you tried something new? As a parent and caregiver, seeking something new can reignite your spirit. When you are open to new ideas, new results may develop. If you always do what you’ve always done, you’ll always get what you’ve always gotten.

5. I am able to say no. We may realize how ineffective we are when we take on more responsibilities and commitments than we can handle. To stay productive and to get things done in a high-quality way, we must learn how to say no. Remember, you cannot change others, you can only change yourself and how you respond. It may help you to set limits.

6. I can ask for help. When you are not comfortable asking for help, you tend to suffer in silence. Healthy initiative involves being able to ask for help. Asking for help when you need it shows strength.

FINAL THOUGHTS: Taking initiative in our lives is a skill that helps us bounce back and keep moving forward, trying new ways to solve problems and to stay curious and alive. Take time to celebrate all the ways you take action in your life, and revisit the strategies above so you can continue your journey to resilience.

Stay tuned next month as we feature the last Adult Protective Factor: Self-Control

Your Journey Together and Building Your Bounce.

“Educating Children, Empowering Families, Strengthening Communities”

618-453-6448  headstart.siu.edu  SIU Carbondale Head Start
Recipe: Nutrition Activity

Hello Parents! On March 25th the children will be making Orange Slushies in the classroom for our Nutrition Activity. Here is the recipe for you to try at home.

INGREDIENTS FOR ORANGE SLUSHIES

- 20 ice cubes
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1/2 cup low-fat or fat-free plain yogurt
- 2 cups orange juice

DIRECTIONS

1. Put the ice cubes in a blender
2. Add the vanilla extract, yogurt, and orange juice
3. Blend on high for about one minute or until drink is well mixed
4. Serve and enjoy!

Book of the Month: Iggy Peck Architect by Andrea Beaty

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

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dz1zd-vkrew

After reading the book, tell your children to get creative! Use materials around the house and build a structure of their own. Throughout the activity, ask your children questions about their structure. What are they working on? What materials are they using? How tall is their structure? What can they use to measure the height of the structure? Write down their words and take a picture of the structure they made.

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 persistence and engagement in a variety of creative experiences.
- Children will express their thoughts and needs in clear and complete sentences using varied and complex vocabulary.
- Children will demonstrate beginning math skills (counting, numeral recognition, quantifying, measuring, and shapes).