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. 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. Kim Arnett

Kim was born and raised in DuQuoin, IL and moved to Pinckneyville about four years ago. She is married and has a nine-year old son and two-year old boy/girl twins. Kim has always loved working with children. 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.

Kim earned a Bachelor’s Degree in Early Childhood from SIU Carbondale in 2009 and is currently working to complete a Master’s in Early Childhood this summer. She started her career at SIU Carbondale Head Start in 2012 as a substitute teacher. She was then hired as an Assistant Teacher in Johnston city in 2013. Kim moved to the Murphysboro center where she spent two more years as an Assistant Teacher and the last five years as a Supervising Teacher.

In her spare time, she enjoys just spending time with her three kids and with family. We want to thank Kim for her years of service to the children and the families in our program.

From your Policy Council

My name is Heather Baum. I am the parent representative from the Murphysboro Center since Sept. 2019. I love being a part of the Policy Council because it gives me the opportunity to be more involved and to be part of the team.

As a single parent, it’s been an honor to have the program staff work alongside me to help develop my daughter’s educational experiences. She was very shy when she first started school. I have noticed a lot of improvement in the way my daughter socializes and communicates with her friends at school and her teachers. My daughter is getting better at sharing her feelings and is becoming a better communicator. She will talk your ear off.

Her school readiness skills have also improved tremendously. She has learned so much and she loves coming to school every day. It is so important to send your children to school regularly because they learn so much. She loves her teacher Ms. Kim. As a parent, it’s very important to be involved and to volunteer. It not only shows the staff that you are concerned, but your child will see how important school is too! It will help them to be successful and to have a successful school year! Take 5 minutes to visit your child’s classroom! Get Involved!
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

Community Resource of the Month

WOMEN, INFANTS AND CHILDREN (WIC)

The mission of the WIC program is to improve the health of pregnant or breastfeeding women, women who have recently had a baby, and children from birth up to age 5 by providing nutritious food to supplement diets, information on healthy eating, and referrals to health care.

The WIC program is funded by the United States Department of Agriculture and provided through the Illinois Department of Human Services. To receive WIC in Illinois, participants must meet income eligibility requirements, live in Illinois and be at nutritional risk. During the WIC appointment, participants meet with a health professional to receive a nutrition risk assessment, develop a personal nutrition-related goal, receive practical tips to help them reach their goals, and receive food vouchers that can be used in local stores to receive free supplemental foods. There is no cost for the WIC program. WIC does not require proof of citizenship or alien status, and is an equal opportunity program. Many people are eligible for the WIC program. Most children under 5 years of age in the Head Start program are eligible for WIC. To find out more information, visit the Jackson County Health Department website at http://www.jchdonline.org/ or call 618-684-3143 ext. 148.
Conscious Discipline in the Home: Empathy

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 Empathy which teaches children to manage their emotions.

Power of Acceptance

BIG IDEA: The moment is as it is. It is mindfulness in action.
GOAL: To learn to respond to what life offers instead of attempting to make the world go our way.

Power of Acceptance

The Power of Acceptance provides a frame of mind that promotes change by quietly observing the moment without the need to change or fix it. Acceptance fully embraces the moment rather than ignoring, distracting, escaping or denying what’s happening. The key is to offer empathy to others and ourselves.

When children are upset, our task is to act like a mirror, reflecting back their inner state so they can regulate it enough to adjust their outer behavior. Face-to-face playfulness regulates positive emotions and empathy regulates negative emotions. How you respond to your child’s upset teaches them how to respond to the upset of others.

Here are some tips you can use to introduce the Skill of Empathy at home:
Accepting the moment and empathizing with children does not change the limits we set on their behavior; it helps children become better able to accept the limits we set.

The D.N.A. process provides us with a concrete formula for providing empathy in order to help children manage their emotions.

D. Stands for Describe.  N. Stands for Name  A. Stands for Acknowledge.

Describe: Describe what you see. “Your face is going like this!” (Mirror their face with your own facial expression as you describe with words what you are seeing).
Name: When the child makes eye contact, Name the Feeling. “You seem angry.” Use questioning tone so the child can correct you if you misinterpret the feeling.
Acknowledgement: Quickly follow by Acknowledging their desire. “You wanted to stay outside and play.”

When we empathize, we symbolically say, “I see you, hear you, and I Love You.”

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

“Educating Children, Empowering Families, Strengthening Communities”

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

Hello Parents! Please join your child on March 26th for fruit salad 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 FRUIT SALAD!**

- Variety of fruits and berries

**Variety of fruits:** (Berries, apples, pineapples, kiwi, grapes, raisins, bananas, melons etc.).

**DIRECTIONS**

Cut larger fruit into smaller chunks. Combine fruit together. 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).