FROM THE DIRECTOR’S DESK... Dr. Lea Maue
It’s hard to believe, but the end of the school year is right around the corner! The children’s last day is May 14th. I’m happy to report that children made excellent gains in their skills, which is so important for their success in kindergarten. We are fortunate to have the best teaching and support staff who contribute greatly to the quality of the services your child and family receive. May 6–10 is national Teacher Appreciation week, but we like to celebrate all of our staff that make a difference this week. Be sure to send words of appreciation to your child’s teachers, center director, bus monitors, drivers, community worker, and cooks as we end a successful school year and send 162 children to kindergarten!

Get to Know... Noel McKinney
We are thrilled to introduce Ms. Noel, our valued Supervising Teacher, who brings over 17 years of passion, dedication, and expertise to our preschool program. With a heart full of love for education and a nurturing spirit, Ms. Noel has become an integral part of our community, shaping the minds and hearts of young learners with care and enthusiasm.

As a mother of four wonderful teenagers, Ms. Noel understands the joys and challenges of parenting, which adds a special touch to her role as a teacher and mentor. This year marks an exciting milestone for her as she embarks on the journey of being a first-time proud grandmother, cherishing every moment of watching her grandchild grow and learn.

Ms. Noel has been a cornerstone of the SIUC Head Start family since her internship in 2006. Starting as a community worker in the Marion location, she quickly found her calling in teaching and has been inspiring young minds ever since. What initially began as a stepping stone towards owning her own daycare center has blossomed into a lifelong commitment fueled by her passion for early childhood education. One of the many joys Ms. Noel finds in her role is witnessing the growth and progress of her students throughout the academic year. From the first day of school to the last, she takes pride in observing their development and accomplishments, knowing that she has played a part in laying a strong foundation for their future.

In her free time, Ms. Noel enjoys indulging in her hobbies, whether it’s shopping for treasures, going on vacation adventures, or savoring delicious meals at restaurants. Yet, her greatest joy comes from the simple pleasures of spending time with her family, taking them swimming, and creating lasting memories together.

We are truly fortunate to have Ms. Noel as a guiding light in our Head Start community, her dedication and compassion touching the lives of all those she encounters. As we continue our journey of learning and growth, we are grateful for her unwavering commitment to the success and well-being of our students.

This will be our last Family Connections Newsletter for this school year. Enjoy your Summer!

Summer Meals
Did you know that children under 18 years of age can receive free meals over the summer? To find a location that offers summer meals near you:

CALL: 1-800-359-2163
TEXT: “FOOD” to 304-304
VISIT: http://summerfeedingillinois.org

When using the website, click “Find Food” and then “Find Sites” at the top right hand corner of the map. Then, type in either your city or zip code to find the nearest location.

You can also call the Health and Nutrition Coordinator at SIU Carbondale Head Start for assistance at 618-453-0930.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Center</th>
<th>Lead Teacher/ Teacher/CCA</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CD—Yellow</td>
<td>Ms. Cherrelle &amp; Ms. Hannah</td>
<td>May 7</td>
<td>9:30 am (Full Day)</td>
<td>Carbondale Head Start Center Gym</td>
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<td>CD—Orange</td>
<td>Ms. Noel M &amp; Ms. April</td>
<td>May 10</td>
<td>9:30 am (Full Day)</td>
<td>Carbondale Head Start Center Gym</td>
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<tr>
<td>CD—Green</td>
<td>Ms. Krystal &amp; Ms. Denise &amp; Ms. Janae</td>
<td>May 8</td>
<td>9:30 am (Morning class)</td>
<td>Carbondale Head Start Center Gym</td>
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<tr>
<td>CD—Green</td>
<td>Ms. Krystal &amp; Ms. Denise &amp; Ms. Janae</td>
<td>May 8</td>
<td>1:30 pm (Afternoon class)</td>
<td>Carbondale Head Start Center Gym</td>
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<tr>
<td>CD—Purple</td>
<td>Ms. Tara &amp; Ms. Yolanda</td>
<td>May 8</td>
<td>9:30 am (Morning class)</td>
<td>Carbondale Head Start Center Gym</td>
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<tr>
<td>CD—Purple</td>
<td>Ms. Tara and Ms. Yolanda</td>
<td>May 8</td>
<td>1:30 pm (Afternoon class)</td>
<td>Carbondale Head Start Center Gym</td>
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<tr>
<td>CD—Red</td>
<td>Ms. Angela &amp; Ms. Shakitta</td>
<td>May 10</td>
<td>1:00 pm (Full Day)</td>
<td>Carbondale Head Start Center Gym</td>
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<td>CD—Maroon</td>
<td>Ms. Kim &amp; Ms. Meliyah</td>
<td>May 9</td>
<td>1:00 pm (Full Day)</td>
<td>Carbondale Head Start Center Gym</td>
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<td>MN—20</td>
<td>Ms. Danielle &amp; Ms. Lauren</td>
<td>May 1</td>
<td>9:00 am (Full Day)</td>
<td>Marion Head Start Center</td>
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<td>MN—16</td>
<td>Ms. Kristen &amp; Ms. Amanda &amp; Ms. Amber</td>
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<td>9:00 am (Morning class)</td>
<td>Marion Head Start Center</td>
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<td>MN—17</td>
<td>Ms. Kristen B &amp; Ms. Amanda &amp; Ms. Amber</td>
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<td>Marion Head Start Center</td>
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<td>MN—18</td>
<td>Ms. Jennifer &amp; Ms. Jaime</td>
<td>May 8</td>
<td>9:00 am (Morning class)</td>
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<td>MN—19</td>
<td>Ms. Jaime &amp; Ms. Jennifer</td>
<td>May 9</td>
<td>1:30 pm (Afternoon class)</td>
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<td>MB—23</td>
<td>Ms. Robertta &amp; Ms. Cheyenne</td>
<td>May 6</td>
<td>9:30 am (Full Day)</td>
<td>MB Head Start Center—School Gym</td>
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<td>MB—24</td>
<td>Ms. Shannon K &amp; Ms. Shalika</td>
<td>May 6</td>
<td>2:00 pm (Full Day)</td>
<td>MB Head Start Center—School Playground</td>
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<td>MB—25</td>
<td>Ms. Caitlin &amp; Ms. Allison</td>
<td>May 2</td>
<td>10:00 am (Morning class)</td>
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<td>MB—26</td>
<td>Ms. Caitlin &amp; Ms. Allison</td>
<td>May 2</td>
<td>2:00 pm (Afternoon class)</td>
<td>MB Head Start Center—School Playground</td>
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<td>JALC—28</td>
<td>Ms. Kim C &amp; Ms. Gianna C</td>
<td>May 10</td>
<td>10:00 am (Full Day)</td>
<td>John A Logan Head Start Center</td>
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<tr>
<td>JALC—29</td>
<td>Ms. Jennifer &amp; Ms. Mel L</td>
<td>May 9</td>
<td>10:00 am (Full Day)</td>
<td>John A Logan Head Start Center</td>
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Last Day of School May 24! Have a GREAT summer!!!!!
Parent Curriculum Corner:
The Pyramid Model: Promoting Social Emotional Competence in Young Children

During this school year, we introduced the Pyramid Model Backpack Connection Series to provide a way for teaching staff, parents and caregivers to work together to help children develop social emotional skills, and to help reduce challenging behaviors. Each Backpack Connection handout shares information on how to stay informed about what children are learning, and gives specific ideas on how to use these strategies or skills at home. Topics that have been shared this year: Using Positive Language to Improve Child Behavior, How to Help Children to Recognize and Understand Anger, We Can Be Problem Solvers at Home, and Tucker Turtle Social Stories.

There is a profound connection between resilience, and social and emotional health and wellness. The role our own resiliency plays in maintaining our well-being, caring for ourselves and our children and those around us is important. Resilience is a life journey and should be a priority each and every day.

Next program year, we will continue to focus on implementing the Pyramid Model to promote the social, emotional, and behavioral outcomes of children in our program. We invite parents to become members of the Pyramid Model Leadership Team (PMLT). Contact your center director for more information.

Thank you families and staff for attending Parent Committee Meetings and program activities and events. Looking forward to seeing you next program year. Enjoy your summer!

Joyce Guy, Family Community Partnerships Coordinator

“Educating Children, Empowering Families, Strengthening Communities.”

Keeping Kids Safe This Summer

Summer is a fun time for children to play outside and walk in their neighborhoods, but kids can be at risk for injury during this season. To make sure your kids stay safe, here are a few recommendations for children and parents:

- Cross the street at corners, using traffic signals and crosswalks.
- Slow down and be especially alert in residential neighborhoods.
- Take extra time to look for kids at intersections, on medians and on curbs.
- Enter and exit driveways and alleys slowly and carefully. Be on the lookout for children playing.
- Never leave a child alone in a vehicle. Temperatures can climb dangerously HIGH very fast!
- Carry SPF 30 and above to apply at all times. Especially for those bright and sunny outdoor days.
- Brush up on the list of poisons. There are many poisonous products that are similar to edible things.
- Enroll your family in a CPR class. Learn how to be prepared for emergencies.
- Hydration is key. Keep non-sugary drinks available at all times!

Here are a few websites with more information to keeping children safe this summer!

https://www.verywellfamily.com/top-summer-safety-checklist-tips-620524
1. **Grow fresh herbs in containers.** Use old coffee cans, milk jugs, mason jars, plastic cups, or anything else you have around the house. Keep your herb garden on a patio or windowsill.

2. **Pick your own plants.** Find a farm with blueberries, strawberries, raspberries, veggies, or flowers and get picking.

3. **Join a summer reading club at your library, or create your own.** Keep a list of all the books read over the summer. Parents can participate too.

4. **Collect rocks and paint them.** Turn them into pet rocks, garden ornaments, or gifts for family members.

5. **Host an outdoor movie night.** Rent or borrow a movie projector and show a movie on a white sheet draped across PVC pipe in the backyard or at a friend’s house. Bring sleeping bags, air mattresses, and pool rafts out as the seating and enjoy the show (with snacks of course).

6. **Set a goal and complete a home project.** Whether it is cleaning the garage, organizing the basement, or re-decorating the spare bedroom, find ways to let the kids help and make it FUN!

7. **Take a road trip to a nearby city, or plan a stay-cation.** Spend the night if you can or just make it a day trip, exploring the sights. If you can’t afford to go away, stay home and plan your own stay-cation.

8. **Go to a flea market or garage sale in your community, or plan your own.** Have the family sale their own items. Make it a fun contest. See if the kids are better negotiators than you. Use the funds you make from your yard sale for a family get-a-way, or purchase an item for your home for all to enjoy.


**BOOK OF THE MONTH: “Mouse’s First Summer” by Lauren Thompson**

Read the book aloud or watch the story being read aloud on YouTube: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HrGzpvyjTQE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HrGzpvyjTQE)

**Activity:** Using the summer calendar you were provided during home visits, work with your child to schedule summer activities. Use the activities in the book as a reference (eating watermelon, making lemonade, making peanut butter and jelly sandwiches, roll in the grass, etc.). Write activities on the calendar and put it on your refrigerator. You can also use the calendar to document important activities as you get ready for the next school year (doctor appointments, registration activities, the first day of school).

**School Readiness Goals Aligned To This Activity:**

- Children will express their thoughts and needs in clear and complete sentences using a varied and complex vocabulary.

- 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.