Greetings to all of our Head Start families! As many families are aware, we’ve had a rough beginning to the school year due to staffing shortages that continue to prevent the opening of multiple classrooms. Unexpected staff resignations and extended absences have also forced the temporary closure of two classrooms at the Carbondale facility. Our program is not unique and is experiencing the same labor issues as many other early childhood programs, and we are actively and aggressively recruiting staff until the program is fully staffed. Please spread the word that we are hiring full-time education and support staff who love working with children. Most of our positions are permanent, which means the employee would receive tuition and health benefits.

I’m happy to report that no children have tested positive for COVID-19 over the course of the last month, which reflects the declining number of cases in this area. Per the Governor’s mandate, all of our staff have either been fully vaccinated or are receiving weekly testing. Until further notice, we will continue our COVID protocols, including mask wearing. Thanks to all of our families for their continued patience and support as we negotiate these challenging times.

Get to Know... Eunice Rowe

Hello everyone! I have been employed with the program for about 5 years. I started as a bus monitor at the Carbondale center and worked for two years. After many years, I was re-hired as a cook at the John A. Logan center in August 2018. Over the past 50 years, I have worked as a CNA, head cashier, cook, janitor, bus monitor, and driver. What I love most about my job as a cook, is that the children keep me laughing—they call me “grandma” and they love my cooking. Everyday they love to surprise me when I bring their food and they give lots of hugs and high fives.

Most of all, I love going to church, singing, writing, and spending time with family, especially my grandson. I love traveling with my family to family reunions. We have traveled to Atlanta, New Orleans, St. Louis, Chicago, Wisconsin, and many other places. I have enjoyed working with SIU Carbondale Head Start because of the many people I have been blessed to meet. Thank you Eunice for your love and care for the children and families at the John A. Logan Head Start Center.
Simple Self-Care Tools for Parents

Many parents are overworked and exhausted. In fact, a recent study showed that single parents work an average of 98 hours per week! Parents also survive with minimal free time. The average single parent only gets 17 minutes of free time each day. It is essential that parents care for themselves and their own well-being because any effort put into self-care also has huge payoffs for the child. When parents “fill their own cups,” they have more patience, energy and passion to spread to their families. Here are a few self-care strategies to help parents strengthen relationships, be compassionate toward themselves, and renew their energy:

- Listen to uplifting music
- Schedule an uninterrupted hour with a close friend- go for coffee, dinner, or a walk
- Color a picture from a coloring book by yourself or with your child
- On a piece of paper, write down 3 things that are weighing on you. Then write down ideas of how to relieve your stress.
- Each day, write down one thing you are thankful for
- Make a list of three things you are looking forward to in the near future
- Write down a goal for the week and break it into small steps in order to achieve it
- Look at your schedule for each day and see if there is an activity that can be put off to a later date or someone can help you complete

If you are in need of more mental health resources or would like to talk to our mental health consultant, please contact your community worker.


Community Resource of the Month

Centerstone of Illinois

Centerstone is one of the largest behavioral health care providers in Illinois, with more than 50 years of experience serving children, youth, adults, and families. They offer skilled counseling, psychiatric and medical services, substance abuse treatment, and services for adults with developmental disabilities.

Services Include: Crisis Services for Adults and Children, Community Support Services for Children and Adults, Counseling Services for Children, Adults, Couples, and Families, Early Head Start; Integrated Primary and Behavioral Health Services, Life Skills Enrichment, Psychiatric and Medical Services, Residential and Housing Services for Adults, and Senior and Caregiver Services.

Locations where Open Access assessments are available: (855) 608-3560  
For Initial Appointments call: (877) 467-3123

Carbondale: 2311 South Illinois Ave & Emerald Plaza—200 North Emerald Lane. Carbondale, IL 62901
Carterville: 402 East Plaza Drive. Ste 4/5. Carterville, IL  62918
Marion: 1307 West Main St. Marion, IL 62959
West Frankfort, 902 W Main St. West Frankfort, IL 62896

Website: https://centerstone.org/
Your Journey Together: Building the Resilience of Children and Families (Building Your Bounce)

The Resilience Lens

Resilient people have many positive characteristics and inner strengths that allow them to “bounce back” from adversity. These inner strengths help them overcome and move forward despite misfortune, challenge, and risk. These characteristics are called with-in protective factors.

What are the Three Protective Factors?

There are three protective factors that children need in order to be more resilient—attachment/relationships, initiative, and self-regulation. These with-in protective factors are related to social and emotional competencies that help children be resilient. During October’s parent meeting, we introduced the three protective factors that children need to be more resilient.

Defining the three protective factors:

♦ Attachment/Relationships (A/R)—the child’s ability to promote and maintain mutual, positive, connections with other children and significant adults (i.e. making and keeping friends and trusting others).

♦ Initiative (IN)—The child’s ability to use independent thought and action to meet his or her needs (i.e. trying new things, asking lots of questions, and sticking to a task even when it is hard to do).

♦ Self-Regulation (S/R)—The child’s ability to experience a range of feelings and express them using the words and actions that are considered appropriate (i.e. adhering to the rules of the classroom: walking feet, inside voices, and hands on your own body).

Parents will receive a booklet entitled: Promoting Resilience For Now and Forever: A Guide for Supporting Social and Emotional Development of Preschool Children, Second Edition from your child’s teacher once both the teacher and parent DECA’s have been completed. As a part of a formal parent contact, you and your teacher will review DECA results of both assessments and use the Promoting Resilience for Now and Forever booklet to develop strategies to support child resilience.

Each month in this section of the newsletter we will feature tips, strategies, activities, and information from Your Journey Together and Building Your Bounce.

Stay tuned as we dive deeper into Your Journey Together and Building Your Bounce!

See you at this month’s parent meetings! The flyers and zoom links will be posted on ClassTag!

“Educating Children, Empowering Families, Strengthening Communities”

618-453-6448

headstart.siu.edu

SIU Carbondale Head Start
Recipe: Nutrition Activity

Hello Parents! Please enjoy trying this recipe with your family. Nutrition Activity of the Month. The children and teachers will be sampling Strawberry Fruit Pizza. Here is the recipe below:

INGREDIENTS FOR STRAWBERRY FRUIT PIZZA

Prep items Needed:
• 2-3 Cookie baking Sheets and a Pizza Cutter

Ingredients:
• 1 Tortilla (8 inch) per child
• 2 tablespoons strawberry yogurt
• 3-4 Fresh strawberries, sliced
• 1/2 medium firm banana peeled and sliced
• 1/2 medium kiwi fruit, peeled and sliced

DIRECTIONS:
1. Spread tortilla with yogurt. Arrange fruits over the top.
2. Cut into 4 wedges. Serve and enjoy.

Book of the Month: Hands Are Not For Hitting

Activity: Read the book aloud or watch the book being read on youtube:
https://youtu.be/kU6l_IgW2e8

Next, take a piece of paper and writing tool and trace your hand on the paper. After tracing your hand, make a list of activities that you can do with your hands (from the book or your own ideas) and write those activities on the outside of the handprint. On the inside of the handprint, draw a picture of your favorite activity from the list.

School Readiness Goals Connected 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.