

SIU-Carbondale Head Start Family Connections Newsletter March 2025



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 Southern Illinois weather varies greatly this time of year. Dressing your child in layers will help to adjust as needed. Children should be sent in clothing for outdoor play as they will go outside every day.

The end of the school year is quickly approaching and many of our Head Start children will be heading off to kindergarten! One important habit to build which can have great effect on kindergarten readiness is regular attendance. While in class at Head Start, children learn not just academic skills, but also pro-social 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! ERSEA Coordinator, Christina, has provided additional information about the importance of consistent attendance in this newsletter. 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

SIU-C Head Start Program Director

Important Dates



Spring Break

Mon, Mar 10 - Fri, Mar 14

There will be no school for the entirety of this week.

Enjoy your break and we will see you on Monday, March 17!

Policy Council

Mon, Mar 17

6:00pm

Carbondale Center



Nutrition Activity



Fri, Mar 21

All Centers

Fluoride Varnish

Fri, Mar 21

9:30am - 2pm

Carbondale Center



Fri, Mar 28

9am - 2pm

Marion & John A Centers

Please join us for March MADNESS!

You are invited to a March Madness-inspired Parent Meeting! We will be celebrating National Nutrition Month with healthy eating activities and materials provided by the University of Illinois Extension Office.

We will also have athletes from SIU, John A Logan, and the local high schools in attendance to encourage getting moving and staying active by playing games, engaging in sports activities, and simply having a great time with the children!

We look forward to seeing you there!

Who:

All children & families
from all centers



When:

Wed., March 26

Time:

5:30 - 7:00pm

Where:

Carbondale Center



Attendance Matters! Attend Today, Achieve Tomorrow

Building the habit of good attendance is crucial for success in preschool, kindergarten, and beyond.

Did you know...



Showing up on time every day, from preschool forward, is important to your child's success and learning. Missing 10% of school (1-3 days every month) can make it harder to:

- * Gain early reading and math skills
- * Build relationships
- * Stay up to date on assignments and learning



What You Can Do

Here are some tips for building strong attendance habits.

- * Set a regular morning and bedtime routine
- * Post your school calendar in a common area of your home
- * Share ideas with other parents for getting to school on time
- * Ask family members or neighbors for help if you need assistance
- * Schedule non-urgent appointments and vacations when school is not in session.

- Christina Lewis
ERSEA Coordinator



Early Childhood Advocacy Day

On March 4, Policy Council President Anna Sloan, Council Member Imani McHenry, and Family & Community Partnership Coordinator Patty Davis participated in Early Childhood Advocacy Day at the Illinois State Capital Building in Springfield. A rally was held in the Capitol Building's Rotunda during which legislators & activists gave speeches discussing the importance of early intervention, increased funding for early childhood initiatives, and supporting growth in the early childhood workforce.



We thank our board members for representing SIU-C Head Start and being a voice for our children, families, teachers, and staff!

Parent Curriculum Corner

How to Help Your Child During Transitions

What are transitions and why are they challenging?

Transitioning, or moving, to new places, people and activities is something we do many times during the day. However, change can be overwhelming and seem unpredictable for children, especially when they are not ready to move on to the next place or activity. Children make many transitions each day—from parents to teachers, home to car, or play time to the dinner table, for example. When and how often transitions occur are usually decided by an adult and children often act out when they feel unable to control their routine. When you help your child prepare for transitions, you are helping them to learn a valuable skill. The good news is that you can teach them this important skill while you are enjoying time together.

What is the bottom line?

The more a child can predict and participate in the schedule and activities of her day, the less likely it is that challenging behavior will occur and the more likely it is that she will eagerly engage in transitions to new people and places.

Helpful Tips

With this newsletter you will find the Pyramid Model infographic entitled, "Helping Children Transition Between Activities." It described many strategies for supporting your child as they move through transitions.



Dear Head Start Families,

It is that time of year where we start thinking about the next step in the children's education and where they will be in the fall. For some, it means preparing for the exciting transition to kindergarten! Attached to this newsletter, you will find information on how to support a successful move to kindergarten. Listed below are some things you can do at home to help your child develop their kindergarten readiness skills. Remember, it is never too early to start practicing, no matter whether your child is moving on to kindergarten or returning for another year (or two!) of Head Start!



- ✦ *Have a consistent bedtime and morning routine to support your child getting a good start for school.*
- ✦ *Read a book about kindergarten to help them feel more comfortable about the transition.*
- ✦ *Practice conversations and listening skills.*
- ✦ *Focus on self-help skills such as blowing their nose, washing their hands, and zipping jackets.*

In the upcoming months, your community worker will be working with you to get you and your child prepared for fall, whether they are returning to Head Start or moving on to kindergarten. We are available if you have questions or need more information on what to expect as we close out this school year. For now, we look forward to the great things we have planned to round out the year!

– Abigail Moberly
Child Development Coordinator





Recipe of the Month

Hard-Boiled Eggs and Cutie Clementines

On Fri, Mar 21, this month's nutrition activity will be implemented in the classrooms. The children will be peeling hard-boiled eggs and Cutie clementines.

Here is the activity for you to try at home!

Prep Items Needed:

Napkins

Ingredients:

Hard Boiled Eggs

Cutie clementines with peel



Directions:

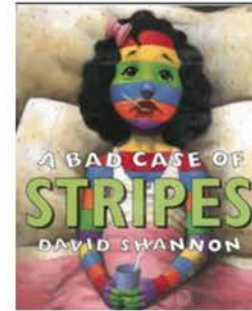
In this activity, the focus will be on children learning how to peel. This skill will be needed as they grow to school age and are responsible for this task during meals at the elementary school. Each person should receive one egg and one Cutie. Adults will model how to peel the egg and clementine and the children will first try independently. If a child is unable to peel the egg and/or Cutie on their own, first try a hand-over-hand approach before simply peeling the item for them.



Did you know?

Activities such as peeling fruit are fantastic fine-motor developing tasks? Fine-motor development is an essential part of learning writing skills!

Book of the Month



A Bad Case of Stripes

Author:
David Shannon

Activity:

Scan the QR code below to view the read aloud video. After listening to the book, talk with your child about the story. You may ask questions such as:

- Why was Camilla worried?*
- When have you felt like Camilla?*
- What made you feel that way?*
- What makes you unique?*
- What do you love about yourself?*

Encourage your child to write and/or draw about the the story, what makes them unique, the special things they love about themselves, and/or any parts of the story they enjoyed. Reinforce the value of being true to ones self and the importance of celebrating differences.

School Readiness Goals:

Language & Literacy: *Children will use language to express their thoughts and needs and engage in conversation.*

Physical: *Children will demonstrate fine-motor strength and coordination.*



Scan the QR code to view A Bad Case of the Stripes on YouTube!

Connect with us!



SIU Carbondale Head Start



headstart.siu.edu



Carbondale	453-2440
John A Logan	985-2828
Marion	997-4255
Murphysboro	967-2118