From the Director’s Desk

It’s great to see and hear the children back at the centers again. I enjoyed meeting many of the new parents at Parent Orientation before school began. For those of you who have not visited your child’s center yet this year, please take some time to visit soon and meet your child’s teachers, Community Worker, and Center Director. We encourage all Head Start parents to take an active role in their child’s education, and the first step is being present at school. Also, September is when we hold our first parent meetings at each center. You can find the dates for your center in the maroon box to the right. Please come out to your center and participate in this meeting. Your voice is valued and important in the educational and programming decisions made at Head Start!

— Dr. Lea Maue

Creating the School Family

As part of our implementation of Conscious Discipline in the classroom and as a parenting curriculum, we are working hard to create the school family. This means developing a family-like relationship and getting to know you and allowing you to know the staff that work in your child’s center.

The program provides many opportunities to build the school-family relationships. You can visit your child’s classroom to assist with daily activities, eat lunch or snack, help with outdoor playground activities and so much more. Stop by your child’s center and ask your center director or community worker how you can become involved. We are looking forward to seeing you and having a great school year!
Getting Your Child Ready For School

Starting preschool is such an exciting and momentous occasion! When children are 3-years-old, they are no longer toddlers. They are “big kids” ready to start preschool. As parents, you can help your children prepare for this next big step.

The children who are most ready often have parents who do these 5 things:

**Read!**
Read every day. Have books in every room, in your purse, and in the car. Read favorite books so often that you and your child have them memorized. Visit the library often.

**Talk!**
Developing your child’s oral language skills is a crucial part of preparing them for preschool. Turn off the movie in the car and engage your child in a discussion about the world around them. Ask questions. Talk about nature, colors, letters, and feelings. Put down your phone and listen when your child talks to you. Encourage your child to make eye contact and greet others with a “Hello” and “Good Bye.”

**Play!**
Spend time every day on the floor playing with your child. Encourage pretend play and role playing. Get messy! Laugh and have fun together. Offer your child time to play by herself, giving her the opportunity to decide what to do.

**Encourage Independence!**
Children who are able to take care of some of their personal needs do better at the beginning of preschool than children who rely on adults for everything. Make sure your child has shoes that she can put on herself. Allow extra time before you need to leave the house each day so that your child can put on her own shoes. Support your child in taking care of her own bathroom needs. If they ask for help with their pants or with wiping, try talking them through it rather than doing it all for them. Teach them to wash their own hands and flush the toilet. It’s not glamorous, but these are important skills in preschool!

**Practice!**
Give your child time away from you. Practice separating and giving your child a little bit of space. Leave your child with a family member while you go to the grocery store or to run errands. Before you leave, make sure to tell your child where you are going and reassure them that you will be back.

*Source: https://playtolearnpreschool.us/ready-for-preschool/*

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**Contact us:**

618-453-6448  
headstart.siu.edu  
SIU Carbondale Head Start
Conscious Discipline in the Home:
How do I handle my child’s temper tantrums?

“The core skill that will help you through a temper tantrum is keeping your cool. Your upset will only fuel your child’s fire. Instead, use active calming techniques such as deep breathing to help manage these difficult, but developmentally normal fits.

As in any conflict situation, focus on what you want your child to do, model this behavior or state yourself, and notice any hint of success. In terms of tantrums, the behavior or state of being that you want from your child is “calm.” Your job is to focus on “calm” and model calmness yourself. This may sound particularly difficult in the face of a screaming 3-year-old, but can we really expect a 3-year-old to keep his cool if we can’t stay cool ourselves? Here’s an example:

Your child wants a bag of candy he’s spied in the grocery aisle. You say, “No.” He crashes to the floor, screaming. You’re feeling angry, embarrassed, exhausted and at your wits end. You feel like everyone’s looking at you.

First, take three deep breaths to help calm the stress response in your body. Then, discipline yourself with the affirmation “I’m safe. Keep breathing. I can handle this.” Way to go! You’ve just set the internal foundation needed to teach your child how to handle frustration and become calm! Now you can address your upset child.

Be encouraging. Get down at eye level with him and say, “You can handle this. Breathe with me. You’re safe.” Scoop him up, hold him in your arms and breathe deeply with him. When his body relaxes a little, say, “There you go, you’re calming down.” Then tell him he has a choice, “You can sit in the cart and hold the list, or you can sit in the cart and hold your truck.” Once he makes his choice, celebrate your success together, “You did it! You calmed yourself down and that’s hard to do.”

— from “Easy to Love, Difficult To Discipline” by Becky Bailey

Hearing and Vision Screenings

A child’s ability to hear and see in the classroom is so critical to success in school. Per Head Start regulations, we have 45 days to screen your child’s hearing and vision. These tests will begin immediately and are performed on site at your child’s center. Results will go home in each child’s backpack immediately after testing. If any concerns are detected, it will be noted on the results page. If you need assistance seeking follow up services, please contact your Community Worker or the Health Specialist.
Recipe of the Month: Trail Mix

**Parents:** Please join your child on September 19th for some tasty Train Mix with this month’s Nutrition Activity! Listed below you will find the recipe that you could make with your child at home.

**Ingredients:**
- Pretzels
- Raisins
- Other dried fruit
- Small crackers (any brand like gold fish, graham crackers etc.)
- Cereal (Chex-style mix or any other brand of cereal)

**Directions:** Scoop the ingredients into small bags in small amounts and then shake to mix, and serve.

Book of the Month: David Goes to School by David Shannon

Read the book aloud or watch the story being read on YouTube:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kYN684gQJvM

**Activity:** Work with your child to retell the story and focus on what the rules of David’s school are and why they have those rules. For example, David must keep his hands to himself so he does not get the little girl dirty. Make a list of the rules that David follows at school. Next, talk to your child about what the rules are for their Head Start classroom and why they have these rules. Once you have both sets of rules, talk to your child about how the two sets of rules are similar and different.

**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 understand and follow classroom expectations, routines, and directions.