

ISSUE 1
2016



CONNECTIONS

Connecting home, school and community

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DIRECTOR'S CORNER

It has been a couple of weeks since your children started preschool. Classrooms are up and running and settling into a routine. You are welcome to visit anytime or become a Room Parent for a day!

When your child comes home from school, I am sure they have many new experiences to share with you. Be sure to ask them questions about their day.

Three and four year old children are just learning to sequence events. A suggestion to help children engage in a conversation might include: "Tell me what happened after breakfast or lunch. What area of the room did you play in first? What is your favorite thing to do at school?"

Parent trainings start this month. Be sure to check the enclosed calendar page to find descriptions of available trainings, dates and times. Head Start is for parents too!

Please mark Family Fun Nights on your calendar for October and March. There will be several activities provided for children and adults to work on together and every family will get a book to take home. We suggest reading with your child each night for 20 minutes.

Don't forget to work at home on LINKS sheets. They reinforce activities and skills the children are learning each day in school.

Research shows that the more a family supports their children's learning and school readiness, the better their children tend to do in school.

~Lucy

Help Your Child Succeed in School: Build the Habit of Good Attendance Early

DID YOU KNOW?

- Starting in kindergarten, too many absences can cause children to fall behind in school.
- Missing 10 percent (or about 18 days) can make it harder to learn to read.
- Students can still fall behind if they miss just a day or two days every few weeks.
- Being late to school may lead to poor attendance.
- Absences can affect the whole classroom if the teacher has to slow down learning to help children catch up. Attending school regularly helps children feel better about school—and themselves. Start building this habit in preschool so they learn right away that going to school on time every day is important. Good attendance will help children do well in high school, college, and at work.

GOOD ATTENDANCE

Is a habit we should build as soon as children start school.





Special Needs

Why are Head Start children screened?

We hear, “How is my child doing?” often. At Head Start, we use the ASQ – or Ages and Stages Questionnaire. This screener helps to identify strengths as well as areas where your child may need some support. The ASQ looks at different areas of development such as communication, gross and fine motor, problem-solving, and personal-social.

You are a great source of information! This is why the ASQ is completed at the home visit. It takes about 15 minutes to complete. The teacher will discuss your child’s results and what it means. This is a great time to share your thoughts, concerns, and goals for your child!

Head Start also requires other screenings. Head Start nurses or the local health department will screen your child for hearing and vision concerns, if it hasn’t been done at the doctor’s office. They also check your child’s hematocrit because it’s important for children to have enough iron so they have energy to play and learn. Head Start nurses will check your child’s blood lead levels. Lead is harmful to children under age six because if it gets into their body, it may affect their development.

We also have Early Childhood Mental Health Consultants who support staff in helping children develop social/emotional skills needed for kindergarten and life. If a child’s behavior or social/emotional development is a concern, they will contact you to discuss strategies and ways to support you and your child.

SLEEP AND YOUR PRESCHOOLER

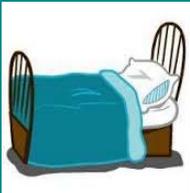
What to expect

Preschoolers need between 11 and 13 hours of sleep each day. Most preschoolers stop taking naps between 3 and 5 years of age. The number of hours a preschooler sleeps will be different for each child. Look for your preschooler to sleep about the same amount of time each day. Some preschoolers continue to awaken during the night, usually as a result of poor sleep habits. All children may wake for a short time during the night. However, a preschooler who has not learned how to fall asleep on her own at bedtime will not be able to return to sleep without help from her parents.

Sleep problems are common during the preschool years, including nighttime fears and nightmares. Nighttime fears and nightmares are a part of normal development. Sleepwalking and sleep terrors are also common during the preschool years.

How to help your preschooler sleep well

- Include a winding-down period during the half hour before bedtime (brushing teeth, reading books or talking about the day).
- Stick to a bedtime, alerting your child both half an hour and 10 minutes beforehand.
- Set fixed times for going to bed, waking up, and taking naps.
- Offering a light snack (such as milk and low-fat cheese) before bed is a good idea.
- Make the bedroom comfortable, dark, and quiet. A nightlight is fine; a television is not.
- Tuck your child into bed snugly for a feeling of security.



Parents sometimes make the mistake of thinking that keeping a child up will make him or her sleepier for bedtime. In fact, kids can have a *harder* time sleeping if they're overtired.

CYBER TIPS FOR PARENTS

JOIN TODAY

It is never too early to talk to kids about Internet safety. These days, children as young as pre-school age are using tablets, cell phones and computers. Parents who talk about safe Internet use with their children on a regular basis are more likely to have kids who understand what is expected of them online. The following tips include simple suggestions for having that dialogue and how to establish good parameters for your child's online experience.

2 – 8 years old

- Sit with your child and supervise them closely while on any device.
- Set clear rules for length of computer time and what sites/apps are appropriate to visit. Allow him or her to only use bookmarked sites. This is a good way to control what sites they can visit.
- Talk about “strangers” that are online and why it is important to not give out any personal information or chat with them in any form.

Michigan's Child Protection Registry

Block adult ads from reaching your child's electronic devices.

Register your child at
ProtectMiChild.com

Cauliflower for Breakfast?

You may have heard your child talk about some *interesting* foods he or she has tried at Head Start. One of our nutrition goals is to serve a wide variety of foods, so that children can become familiar with them and learn to like them, over time. As they say, “Variety is the ‘Spice of Life’.” Variety is also important for good nutrition!

Parents know that young children are sometimes afraid to try ‘new’ foods, and can be very picky eaters. Picky eating is normal at this age. It takes time for children to LEARN to like new foods. How do we deal with ‘picky eating’ at Head Start?

We eat together, ‘family-style’.

This way, children see **adults** eating and enjoying these ‘new’ foods, as well as their peers. This is the single most important way for children to learn to like ‘new’ foods. They also enjoy the friendly mealtime conversations and learning that takes place at the table. Children gain skills in language, independence, cooperation, decision-making, problem-solving and self-help. Children LOVE to eat together!

We talk about the ‘new’ foods and often will ‘explore’ them at circle time, beforehand.

This gives children a chance to become familiar with and excited about trying the ‘new’ food.

We encourage, but do not pressure a child to eat or taste any food.

Pressure always backfires. Studies show that children accept and like foods LESS, when they are pressured to eat them. All you need to do is think back to when your own parents made you eat things you didn’t like. Did this help you learn to like the food? Chances are, it made you dislike the food even more! Adults need to be patient and understand that it might take MANY times of seeing a ‘new’ food at the table before they accept it.

We do not ‘short-order’ cook.

We let children pick and choose from what is offered at the table, but we do not serve them something else if they happen not to like what is offered. Otherwise, children would never learn to like ‘new’ foods.

We let children be involved in meals and simple food preparation.

Children become more interested in foods and meals when they have a part in it. They can help set the table, serve themselves, and even help make some simple snacks on their own. “Doing” rather than “watching” can be a lot more fun for a young child.

So, don’t be surprised when you see some interesting foods offered on our Head Start breakfast/snack menu, such as kiwi, grapefruit, pita bread, grits, and yes, even cauliflower! Also, don’t be surprised when your child tells you, “I liked it”!



FLUORIDE: CAVITY FIGHTER

Children can maintain good oral health in 4 ways:

1
Drink water
that has fluoride

2
Brush twice
a day with the right
amount of fluoridated
toothpaste

3
Eat a healthy diet,
limiting sweet drinks,
sticky candies,
and snacks

4
Talk to your dentist
or doctor about
fluoride treatments

CAMPAIGN FOR
DENTAL HEALTH
Life is better WITH TEETH
ILikeMyTeeth.org

Fluoride is an important mineral
for all children. Talk to your
doctor or dentist to learn more.



DAILY ROUTINES & SCHEDULES

Children thrive in a well-ordered and predictable environment where daily routines such as arrivals and departures, mealtimes, nap times and toileting are dealt with consistently by all adults in their lives. As you and your child explore the classroom, ask the teachers about the daily routine. Each classroom at Head Start and Early Head Start has a daily routine schedule that is posted in the classroom. Daily routines provide opportunities for children to learn more about themselves, the world and other people. Daily routines also offer children a sense of stability, and a feeling of warmth and caring from their teachers. In creating daily routines and schedules, it is also important to provide a healthy balance for children, between group times and more solitary moments, quiet and noisy activities and indoor and outdoor play. The challenge is to develop appropriate daily routines for children which offer them a sense of consistency and security, yet remain flexible and responsive to the individual needs of each child. The daily routine and schedule may change through the program year, as your child is learning and developing new skills.

For more information regarding daily routines and schedule for young children: From Zero to Three: National Center for Infants, Toddlers & Families, Young Explorers <http://www.zerotothree.org/> From the National Network for Child Care, Self-Esteem and Children <http://www.exnet.iastate.edu/Pages/nbcc/Guidance/self.esteem.html>

¿Cómo puedo ayudar con la enseñanza de mi hijo en casa?

- **Los niños aprenden mejor cuando están bien de salud y descansados.** Necesita asegurarse que sus hijos duerman el tiempo suficientemente, visiten con el doctor para las inmunizaciones, mantengan citas con dentistas y asegúrese que sus hijos coman comidas saludables. La clínica de su comunidad les podrá informar como conseguir estos servicios.
- **Los niños aprenden en todas partes.** En casa, puede enseñar a sus hijos los nombres de cosas como muebles, el refrigerador y el teléfono. En la comunidad puede hablarles de cosas como: los autos, las calles, las tiendas y el clima. Los niños estarán aprendiendo vocabulario, construcción de oraciones y muchas otras lecciones de lenguaje. Debería hacer estas actividades en el idioma que sea mas cómodo para usted.
- **Los niños necesitan un ambiente positivo para aprender.** Lleve a sus hijos a la biblioteca, lea con ellos y converse con ellos desde pequeños. Limite el tiempo que sus hijos ven la televisión y si lo hacen, que sean programas educativos. Si sus hijos tienen tarea, ellos necesitan un lugar callado/tranquilo para estudiar. Todas estas sugerencias les ayudaran en su aprendizaje.
- **Los niños necesitan tener una actitud positiva hacia la escuela.** Los niños aprenden actitudes de sus padres. Cuando usted participa en la enseñanza y aprendizaje de sus hijos, ellos se darán cuenta que la educación es importante. Los mensajes positivos que ustedes les dan a sus hijos, tendrá una influencia muy poderosa en el progreso escolar de ellos.
- **Compartan expectativas altas.** Es necesario que desde pequeños se les explique la importancia de un diploma de preparatoria. Quizás usted tenga esperanzas de que su hijo asista a la universidad, sus expectativas altas ayudaran a sus hijos establecer altas metas y alcanzarlas con su apoyo.



Recuerde que usted es el primer maestro de su niño y su hogar la primera escuela!