



The Family Times



Head Start/Early Head Start

April 2008

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Program Happenings

Marvin Marks Child Development Center

Marvin Marks Child Development Center is located in Warren County. This center has Early Head Start, Head Start and Commercial Child Care slots offering services to seventy-six children and their families. Sixteen dedicated full time staff work at this location to provide quality care and ensure best practices in these programs. This center is licensed by the State of Missouri and is accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Everyone at Marvin Marks is a part of our school family. We work very hard to make everyone a part of our learning and growing community. Wishing friends, families, and classmates well is a daily ritual that takes place in the center. This keeps everyone connected to friends and families while they are away from each other. The children in classroom 5 hang foam shapes (heart, flowers, etc.) on hooks next to the absent children's names on the word wall. The child with the Well Wisher job for the day points to friends names on the word wall and hangs a shape next to friends who are absent. They also have an opportunity to wish well any members of their families or other friends. They then sing the "We Wish You Well" song from I Love You Rituals, Vol. II. They have added a routine to welcome children back who have been absent and have returned. Children who were absent are asked to stand while the groups sing "You were gone and you were missed, where would you like your welcome back kiss?" (sang to the tune of Twinkle, Twinkle Little star.) They can then point to where they want a kiss with "potato head" lips.



There is a "Be Well" Basket full of items that will help us to feel better when we need a boost. It contains noise putty, sensory balls, stress balls, water tubes, stuff animals and bubbles. It is wonderful to observe children thinking of their friends and family, and to see the power wishing others well has!



Marvin Marks has very active parents who are busy completing many projects. Currently the Parent Committee is working on raising money for the Dollar per Child Campaign. Together the parents and children made a rocket to remind families to shoot for the stars and pull together to reach their goal of seventy-six dollars to help the campaign. The rocket is located in the entrance of the center and families can drop change into the rocket. Currently they have raised forty-two dollars and are over half of the way to their goal! They are also planning for the end of the year Carnival. They have been busy meeting and working with the children at the center to plan and coordinate this big event to celebrate the year we have shared together.

Several dads from Marvin Marks have started the Male Involvement group. This group has been very active this year and has had several successful outings. The latest outing was a trip to the bowling alley for a fun afternoon of knocking over pins together! This group was featured in the Warrenton Journal and had the opportunity to tell the community about their vision for their group and the important role that males play in the lives of our children.

Special Needs Spotlight

What is Autism?

April is National Autism Awareness Month. So, we wanted to take this opportunity to briefly talk about what Autism is and some ways to interact successfully with a child with Autism.

Autism is a disorder that may affect approximately 1 in every 500 children. It is also called Autism Spectrum Disorder because each child with autism is affected in a different way and at different levels (some may not speak at all, while others speak very well and interact with peers). Imagine the different colors of a rainbow, they are all colors but are different in their own way. Children may be born with autism or develop it in the first few years of life. We currently do not know the cause of autism. While there is no cure for autism, there are many strategies that may be used to help children with autism develop more successfully as they grow.

Autism affects the brain and its ability to interpret things in the environment. One common effect of autism is a person's ability to understand different sights, tastes, smells, touch and hearing. The different senses can be too sensitive or not sensitive at all and this is different for each person with autism. Another area that is affected is the ability to communicate. This also is different with each child, some children with autism may not talk at all while others may have very good communication skills.

10 Quick Strategies to use when interacting with a child with Autism:

1. Simplify your language
2. Give ways to cope with sensory problems (provide calming experiences)
3. Use written words to communicate during stressful situations if child can read
4. Provide a visual and oral schedule of daily activities
5. Use a calendar for special events
6. Use the "First...Then..." strategy. For example, "First brush your teeth, then watch a video"
7. Use the phrase, "The rule is _____", when teaching a rule.
8. Catch the child "being good" or doing the right thing and give praise
9. Be consistent
10. Give choices when appropriate, for example play outside or with play dough

We have additional resources on Autism within our Lending Library, please ask your teacher or home visitor for more information if interested. Also, please feel free to contact me with any questions.

**Information included from www.futurehorizons-autism.com
Children's Book: *My Friend with Autism*

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Family Language Development



Building a Relationship and a Cultural Identity by Using the Home Language

Even before birth, a baby is part of a relationship with her family and community. The baby's birth is anticipated, and there are expectations about what this child will be like. Once born, babies seem to be naturally programmed to continue intensifying the attachment with their family to ensure their survival. Furthering this relationship is one of the overarching major tasks for infants and toddlers. They use all of their senses and their motor and pre-verbal capacities to bond.

Language is central in the process of relationship building. Family members often get close to the mom and talk to the unborn baby as if it could hear and understand the meaning of the spoken words or sounds. Singing, humming, reading, and even caressing the mother's stomach are all attempts to communicate with the unborn baby. These are instinctive and effective communicative and culturally appropriate strategies used by families and communities to signal to the growing fetus that there are people waiting for it to be born.

More direct strategies are used by family and community members to communicate with the newborn. When speaking, they face the baby and get close to cue the baby that the spoken words, hand signs, and facial gestures are meant for her and carry an important message signaling that a bond exists between them. It can be said that language connects with the child's heart and lays the foundation for emotional well being. The language that signals this earliest connection is the home language of the family and the cultural community. Through the home language, the messages of attachment are transmitted to infants and toddlers.

The early experiences and memories formed by very young children as they interact in the family's communication system are the basis of their identity and their socio-emotional well being. An infant may not understand the individual words spoken to her, but the sounds, rhythm, cadence, and pitch of the language and even the use of silence and nonverbal cues are elements of language use that convey to a child the message of belongingness. Thus, how the family and community use the language as well as the language itself are means through which the infant develops a sense of cultural identity.

Nutrition News

Calcium and Your Child



Milk and other calcium-rich foods have always been a must-have in kids' diets. After all, calcium is a key building block for strong, healthy bones. But more than 85% of girls and 60% of boys ages 9 to 18 fail to get the recommended 1,300 milligrams of calcium per day.

That's not surprising when you consider that many kids now drink more soda than milk, which is one of the best sources of calcium. And teens who smoke or drink soda, caffeinated beverages, or alcohol may get even less calcium because those substances interfere with the way the body absorbs and uses calcium. But at every age, from infancy to adolescence, calcium is one nutrient that kids simply can't afford to skip.

What Does Calcium Do?

During childhood and adolescence, the body uses the mineral calcium to build strong bones — a process that's all but complete by the end of the teen years. Bone calcium begins to decrease in young adulthood and progressive loss of bone occurs as we age, particularly in women.

Teens, especially girls, whose diets don't provide the nutrients to build bones to their maximum potential are at greater risk of developing the bone disease **osteoporosis**, which increases the risk of fractures from weakened bones.

Calcium plays an important role in muscle contraction, transmitting messages through the nerves, and the release of hormones. If blood calcium levels are low (due to poor calcium intake), calcium is taken from the bones to ensure normal cell function.

When children get enough calcium and physical activity during childhood and the teen years, they can start out their adult lives with the strongest bones possible. Although there isn't definite scientific proof yet that taking in these amounts of calcium will result in stronger bones when kids grow up, these are the current recommendations:

- toddlers ages 1 to 2 years — 500 milligrams of calcium daily
- kids ages 4 to 8 years — 800 milligrams
- older children ages 9 to 18 years — 1,300 milligrams

Family Recipes: Frozen Yogurt Pops

Prep time: About 1 to 2 hours

Ingredients: 1- 8 oz. container of your favorite flavor of yogurt

Directions:

1. Pour yogurt into small paper cups. Fill them almost to the top.
2. Stretch a small piece of plastic wrap across the top of each cup.
3. Using a popsicle stick, poke a hole in the plastic wrap. Stand the stick straight up in the center of the cup.
4. Put the cups in the freezer until the yogurt is frozen solid.
5. Remove the plastic wrap, peel away the paper cup, and eat your pop!



From the Directors

Hard to believe, but we're hitting the stretch run for this school year!

It continues to be our great pleasure and privilege to be a part of your children's growth and development.

April is a very special month for children. It is Child Abuse and Neglect Awareness Month, and, while this is an issue to focus on throughout the year, we will indeed take some extra opportunity this month to share information and supports in an effort to help protect all of our children.

The Week of the Young Child is April 13-19. You can go online for some great information, and we will also share resources, activities and tidbits during this week.

As always, we thank you for entrusting us with your most precious commodity, and we look forward to continuing to partner with you as we finish off a great program year!

Daryl Rothman
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Youth In Need
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VP Head Start- East
Youth In Need
314-353-5298 x 103



Parent Involvement

Dollar per Child

\$1.00

What is the Dollar per Child Campaign?

The National Head Start Association's goal is to raise \$1 for every child enrolled in Head Start. The Dollar per Child campaign specifically supports the National Head Start Association's advocacy activities for your Head Start/Early Head Start program and programs around the US. This year's campaign runs until June 2008.

What is the National Head Start Association ?

The National Head Start Association (NHSA) is a private not-for-profit membership organization dedicated exclusively to meeting the needs of Head Start children and their families. It represents more than 1 million children, 200,000 staff and 2,700 Head Start programs in the United States.

How does my donation help Head Start and Early Head Start?

The Association provides support for the entire Head Start community by advocating for policies that strengthen services to Head Start children and their families; by providing extensive training and professional development to Head Start staff; and by developing and disseminating research, information, and resources that enrich Head Start program delivery. Your donations will assist NHSA's efforts in supporting and strengthening your child's program!

Facts:

- Head Start is the most successful, longest-running, national school readiness program in the United States.
- Head Start has helped over 25 million children since 1965!
- Head Start and Early Head Start has lost 12-11% of funding to inflation over the last 3 years.
- Head Start was reauthorized December 2007, however no increase in funding was given.
- **Your local program has been directly impacted by loss of funding, and NHSA politically advocates for increased HS funding from the federal government!**

The Health Hub

10 Ways to Help Prevent Child Abuse



- ❖ **Be a nurturing parent.** Children need to know that they are special, loved and capable of following their dreams.
- ❖ **Help a friend, neighbor or relative.** Being a parent isn't easy. Offer a helping hand take care of the children, so the parent(s) can rest or spend time together.
- ❖ **Help yourself.** When the big and little problems of your everyday life pile up to the point you feel overwhelmed and out of control – take time out. Don't take it out on your kid.
- ❖ **If your baby cries...** It can be frustrating to hear your baby cry. Learn what to do if your baby won't stop crying. Never shake a baby – shaking a child may result in severe injury or death.
- ❖ **Get involved.** Ask your community leaders, clergy, library and schools to develop services to meet the needs of healthy children and families.
- ❖ **Help to develop parenting resources at your local library.**
- ❖ **Promote programs in school.** Teaching children, parents and teachers prevention strategies can help to keep children safe.
- ❖ **Monitor your child's television and video viewing.** Watching violent films and TV programs can harm young children.
- ❖ **Volunteer at a local child abuse prevention program.** For information about volunteer opportunities, call **1.800.CHILDREN.**
- ❖ **Report suspected abuse or neglect.** If you have reason to believe a child has been or may be harmed, call your local department of children and family services or you local police department.

Male Involvement

Written For Men, By Men:

What's the one thing that all dads of infants and preschoolers need?

At the National Fatherhood Center, we isolated one hundred men in the early stages of fathering and asked them, "What is the biggest struggle you face in wanting to be a good dad?" The two most common answers were A) the sacrifice of time involved in "being there for my children" and B) **a lack of patience.**

When mothers have a baby, it's common for the hospital to send them home with a diaper bag or a car seat. If I could send new fathers home with anything, I'd give them a good dose of patience.

Patience is crucial because your child moves at a different pace, and operates at a different size than you. And that's all happening while your upwardly mobile career aspirations are digging into your family time. Realize quickly that kids are going to slow you down. A simple trip across town can become a major operation. Did you remember the diaper bag, baby bottle, pacifier, playpen, car seat and high chair? Did you remember the baby? It takes patience. Patience for the 3:00 a.m. feedings; patience for teething; patience for toilet training; patience for the dreaded "terrible twos"; patience for your child's first outright defiant act.

And then, they learn how to talk: "Daddy, why do birds fly?" "Daddy, what's in your briefcase?" "Daddy, where do babies come from?" Patience will help you treat these questions with respect, giving them brief, confident answers and showing your child that you consider him important enough to take time and listen.

You'll also need patience when it comes to your wife. Her body has undergone profound changes-physically, mentally, and chemically. All her energy goes into chasing a toddler. You'll need to be patient when she has no energy to cook dinner, or go for walks, or even ... well, just be patient. Cut her some slack, dad. It isn't easy being a mother and wife during this stage, either.

Fathering young children involves sacrifice. You'll be asked to change or put on hold some of the things you have enjoyed in the past. But, believe me, it's worth it. Through patience, you are laying the groundwork for a lifetime of intimacy with your kids.

Written by Dads at www.fathers.com



Employment Resources

What can the Missouri Career Center do for me?

Missouri Career Centers are "one-stop shops" for all employment and training needs. Businesses, job seekers, and those with special needs can visit any one of our Missouri Career Centers throughout the state and receive valuable workforce services. Located in many communities across the state, Missouri Career Centers represent a partnership of federal, state, and local employment and training organizations that are tailored to reflect the specific needs in each local community. Located in each Missouri Career Center are resource areas equipped with computers, fax machines, telephones, and other resources to assist with locating employment or employees. Contact this free resource, and begin your career path today!

Missouri Career Center St. Charles County

212 Turner Boulevard
St. Peters, MO 63376-1079
Phone Number: (636) 278-1360

Lincoln, Montgomery, and Warren Counties

111 Steinhagen Rd.
Warrenton, MO 63383-2103
Phone Number: (636) 456-9467



Child Development/ Curriculum News



Singing as a Teaching Tool

It doesn't take an experienced musician to sing with young children. Anyone can sing "Row, Row, Row Your Boat," and make the motions of rowing a boat. Parents and teachers can lead many singing and musical games, even if they consider themselves nonmusical.

Music is a great way to engage young children because it is a natural and enjoyable part of their everyday lives. Children hear music or sing while watching television, riding in the car, at school, and as part of bedtime rituals. We often hear children creating their own songs and incorporating music in their play. Music is a socially engaging way to learn, and especially appropriate for the developmental levels of young children.

The concept of using music to teach is not new. Many young children learn to recite the alphabet by singing the ABCs, and educational television programs for young children, such as Sesame Street, use a lot of music in their programming. Researchers have found that music can help children learn multiplication tables and improve early literacy skills. Many adults still remember lessons connected to music from their childhood.

Music helps many children break information down into easily remembered pieces or associate it with previously known information, such as a familiar song. One study found that using familiar melodies helped five-year-olds learn phone numbers at a faster rate than using no music or unfamiliar melodies.

Singing with children can be an especially fun and valuable experience. When you sing with young children, you can adjust the speed and volume to fit their abilities. You don't need to sound like a professional singer. As long as you are enthusiastic, young children will enjoy it, and want to sing along.

You can also pair singing with movement or visual aids that stimulate the senses. This allows children to not only hear the music, but also feel and move to the rhythms, and see, touch, and play the instruments.

Singing also gives you lots of opportunities to teach new words to young children. By taking familiar songs, such as "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star," "Frere Jacques/Are You Sleeping?," "Three Blind Mice" or other songs from your childhood, and changing or adding words, you can introduce new vocabulary in a way that makes it easy for children to follow along.

You can create individualized songs that will engage children and boost their memories. Fill your songs with people (for example, family members, teachers or friends), objects (clothing, furniture, cars or bikes), daily rituals (brushing teeth, bedtime), and special events (holidays, going on a field trip) that are an important part of children's lives.

While music is a great way to introduce new words, it can also contribute to children's progress and learning in many different areas. Music supports self-expression, cooperative play, creativity, emotional well being, and development of social, cognitive, communication, and motor skills. Music and singing are a fun and effective way to help young children learn.

Excerpted from "Music as a Teaching Tool: Creating Story Songs" by Shelly Ringgenberg - an article in the NAEYC journal, *Young Children*.

Early Years Are Learning Years™ is a regular series from NAEYC (www.naeyc.org) with tips for parents on giving young children a great start on learning.

200 Trading Post Points

We want to thank you for taking the time to read "The Family Times" by rewarding you with 100 trading post points, and to celebrate the season we are giving you an additional 100 trading points! Please detach this coupon and give it to your teacher or home visitor to obtain your **200 trading post points**. Thank you!

Expires: May 1, 2008

Community Resource

WIC (Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infant, and Children) is a nutrition education and supplemental food program to assist women, infants, and children who are at nutritional risk.



Benefits of WIC include nutrition education and guidance for you and your children, breastfeeding education and support, nutritious foods to supplement your diet, such as infant formula, iron-fortified infant cereal, milk, cheese, eggs, juice, etc. WIC also provides referrals for health care. All services are offered at no cost to you.

WIC is for women/teens who are pregnant, infants, women/teens who are breastfeeding, children up to the age of five, and women who have had a baby less than six months ago.

Make an appointment today by calling your local WIC office. You can locate your local WIC office by calling toll free 1-800-TEL-LINK (800-835-5465). If you have any questions or concerns, please talk to your home visitor or center manager.

Family Literacy

Literacy Guidance for Preschoolers



Good Tips for Grown-Ups

- Talk about the book as you read. Ask your child to describe pictures, answer questions, repeat phrases and predict what will happen next.
- Take books everywhere you go (the car, bus, doctor's office), and make the most of every minute.
- Don't worry if your child can't sit for an entire story. Some children listen better while drawing or playing with a toy.

Great Books for Preschoolers

- ABC and counting books help preschoolers learn about letters and numbers.
- Choose nonfiction books about things your child likes, such as animals, dinosaurs, or insects.
- Pick stories with one or two sentences per page. As your child's skills increase, introduce longer stories.

Fun Ideas for Together Time

- Tell a story. This will help your child learn new words, use his imagination, and think about what comes next, all skills that your child will need for reading.
- Have fun introducing the letters of the alphabet, starting with the ones in your child's own name. Make letter-learning fun with markers, magnets, glue, and glitter.

Just for Fun

EHS: Peek-a-Boo 101

A child's first year of life is filled with so many developmental changes. In their first months, babies explore with their eyes, ears, hands, feet, and mouth. At about seven months, babies begin sitting alone -- freeing up their hands for more active and exciting exploration. Look out -- pretty soon they'll begin crawling.

Who's calling me?

Infants love to look at human faces and eyes, bright primary colors, and simple designs. In their first few months, babies develop enough muscle control to lift their heads. A baby will hold his head higher and keep his eyes moving (or at least try to) when you do the following activities together.

What you need: Just you, a baby, and a brightly colored object.

The activity: Lie down on your back holding the baby tummy-down on your stomach. Call his name and lift your head to see him. At the same time, raise him a little, encouraging him to lift his head. You can also place the baby on his tummy on the floor. Hold a brightly colored object in front of him, encouraging him to lift his head. Turn him over and move the same object slowly in front of his eyes to encourage him to follow the object visually.

HS: Indoor Obstacle Course

As you design your obstacle course, keep in mind the ages, abilities, and number of children involved as well as the space you have. Make the course simple at first and change the stations as they're mastered. If you like, time the kids to see who can complete the course fastest. Below are a few ideas to get you started. Ten stations is a good number for most kids.

Directions:

1. Crawl under or over a row of chairs.
2. Crawl under a string stretched between two chair legs.
3. Jump into and out of a Hula-Hoop five times.
4. Walk on a balance board.
5. Throw a beanbag into a laundry basket.
6. Run while balancing a beanbag on your head.
7. Do a ring toss.
8. Play one hole of Newspaper Golf.
9. Ride a tricycle along a predetermined route.
10. Somersault from one point to another.
11. Do a handstand.
12. Skip in place while reciting a jump rope rhyme.
13. Do ten jumping jacks.

Social Emotional Review

Spring Back to Heal April Showers



Last month we all set our clocks forward hour, now I would like us to set our minds back on when we were children. Below is a list of activities/ memories you may have from your childhood. I hope this article will bring a smile to your face, and inspire you to relive your past and share a memory/ activity from your past with your child or children. One way to cheer yourself up is to think back to a different time and try to remember the good times and the fun that you have experienced. Share those joys and experiences with your children.

(Stress relief tip- Remember when life used to be fun and full of life for you. What was happening then that is not happening now? Start by deciding to change one small thing and continue to make that change for 2 weeks. After the 2 weeks- think about how you feel and continue to make more changes so that you feel "ALIVE" and enjoy the way that you feel.)

Hide and go seek at dusk-Sitting on the porch-Hot bread and butter-Red light, Green light (the game)-Chocolate milk-Lunch tickets- Penny candy in a brown paper bag -Hopscotch-butterscotch-double-dutch-Jacks-kickball- Mother, May I? (the game)-Hula Hoops-Sunflower Seeds,- Jaw breakers,- Blow Pops, - Sugar Daddy's (the candy), Running through the sprinkler - Catchin' lightning bugs in a jar, - Red Rover- When around the corner seemed far away- And going to the store seemed like going somewhere- Climbing trees,- A million mosquito bites and sticky fingers- Cops and Robbers-, Sittin' on the curb, -Jumpin' down the steps, -Jumpin' on the bed-Pillow fights -Being tickled to death- Runnin' till you were out of breath- Laughing so hard that your stomach hurt -Being tired from playin'- When a quarter was a decent allowance, and another quarter a huge bonus. - When you got your windshield cleaned, oil checked, and gas pumped, without asking, for free, every time. And, you didn't pay for air-. When it was considered a great privilege to be taken out to dinner at a real restaurant with your parents. - Decisions were made by going "eeny-meeny-miney-mo." -Mistakes were corrected by simply exclaiming, "do over!" -"Race issue" meant arguing about who ran the fastest.- Money issues were handled by whoever was the banker in "Monopoly."- Catching the fireflies could happily occupy an entire evening.- It wasn't odd to have two or three "best" friends.- Being old, referred to anyone over 20. - The worst thing you could catch from the opposite sex was cooties. -It was unbelievable that dodge ball wasn't an Olympic event. - It was a big deal to finally be tall enough to ride the "big people" rides at the amusement park. -Getting a foot of snow was a dream come true. -Abilities were discovered because of a "double-dog-dare."- Saturday morning cartoons weren't 30-minute ads for action figures. -No shopping trip was complete, unless a new toy was brought home. -"Oly-oly-oxen-free" made perfect sense. -Spinning around, getting dizzy and falling down was cause for giggles. -The worst embarrassment was being picked last for a team. -War was a card game. -Water balloons were the ultimate weapon.- Baseball cards in the spokes transformed any bike into a motorcycle. - Ice cream was considered a basic food group.- Older siblings were the worst tormentors, but also the fiercest protectors. -

If you would like to discuss more ways to lessen stress, deal with some emotional showers, or if you would like to discuss any other behavioral or emotional concerns that your family is experiencing, please feel free to contact me.

Stephanie Flake, Mental Health Director West
636-946-0101 ext 312



Thank You



Thank you to the Missouri Lion's for completing Amblyopia Screenings on our EHS and HS children. We greatly appreciate your dedication to preserving healthy vision!

Thank you to all the parents and community members who volunteer in centers and socializations. You help with child care and office assistance is greatly appreciated.

Thank you to all the parents who attend Parent Committee Meetings and Policy Council. Your creativity and support help shape your child's HS/EHS program. Your dedication and team work are making the 2007-08 Program Year a success!

Monthly Motivation

Don't worry that children never listen to you; worry that they are always watching you.

-Robert Fulghum



Important Dates

April 2: Policy Council Meeting. 6:30 p.m. Wentzville Center. Child care and dinner are provided. Transportation is available upon request.

April 18: Professional Development Day. Centers Closed. No Home Visits.

April 13-19: Week of the Young Child

April: National Autism Month, National Child Abuse Prevention Month

April: Please see flyers and talk to your teachers, home visitor and managers about the dates and times of socializations, Parent Committee Meetings, and Male Involvement activities.