



The Family Times



Head Start/Early Head Start

February/March 2008

Changes to the Newsletter



We are excited to announce the *Family Times* is under new development. We have started with revising the "Program Happenings" section. In the past, "Program Happenings" has featured information from your site each month. Future "Program Happenings" will feature a new Head Start/Early Head Start site each month. This will allow you to learn more about the different program options Youth In Need HS/EHS has to offer.

Communication about your child and their learning experience is of the highest importance, and you will continue to receive individualized child and site information through your Parent Committee teacher/home visitor reports, flyers, bulletin board postings, one-on-one contacts, and Parent Education Meetings.

We are excited about the changes to "Program Happenings", and we are looking forward to making the newsletter as entertaining and educational as possible. **Please help us in improving the *Family Times* by submitting your feedback in the parent survey attached to the back of the newsletter.** By completing the survey, you receive 100 Trading Post points. You may pass along your completed survey to your teacher, home visitor, center or area manager. Thank you for all your help!

Program Happenings

Wentzville Home Base



We have five Home Visitors at our location, and each one has 12 children on their caseload. Our Home Visitors are Anna Leighton, Tracy Raita, Jane Colburn, Marge Lehan, & Carolie Lewis. Our Area Manager is Angie Mueller. Our County Director is Beth Heisse. Many employees on our team have been with Youth In Need/Head Start for several years. In the Home Base program Home Visitors go to families homes to do a visit once a week for 90 minutes per child. A Home Visitor's job is to work with the child **and** parent/guardian during visits. Their primary responsibility is to assist parents in fostering the growth and development of their children. All of our Home Visitors are Parents As Teachers certified. Each home visit is individualized to the child and their needs. In addition to the educational piece, Home Visitors also assist with social service needs. We offer two socializations a month. A socialization is an opportunity for the children in the Home Base program to come to a classroom type setting with their parents for two hours to interact with other children. Home Visitors put together a lesson/socialization plan for each socialization, so that the children can get a "classroom" type structured experience. Parents are encouraged to facilitate or help facilitate the socializations. We also encourage parents to help with ideas for socializations. In the two hour time frame we have small and large groups activities, music and story time. We fit in free play and outside time when time allows. We also have a family style snack at each socialization.

Home visiting is a rewarding experience. You get to learn so much from your families. The Home Visitor is able to individualize more since they go into the home. If you or someone you know may be interested in the Home Base program please contact your local HS/EHS office for more information. You can refer families to HS, and if the family completes the HS/EHS application, you receive 200 Trading Post points.

We wish you and your family well.



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Special Needs Spotlight

Vision and Learning



Vision is very much related to a child's success in school and in learning. Not only is it important for children's overall health to have good vision, it is also a critical piece for development and learning. When children have difficulty seeing things, they may become frustrated and their ability to learn may also be affected. This is why it is so important to have children's vision checked so that they have the full opportunity to see and learn successfully. There are some situations in which vision loss may lead to blindness. It is important to know this also, so that alternative methods for learning may be introduced, such as the use of Braille, large print that makes reading easier and other methods that include a child's other senses such as touch, smell, and hearing.

Below are guidelines for children's vision health as recommended by the organization, **Prevent Blindness America**. Prevent Blindness America recommends a continuum of eye care for children to include both [vision screening](#) and [comprehensive eye examinations](#). All children, even those with no signs of trouble, should have their eyes checked at regular intervals. Any child who experiences vision problems or shows symptoms of eye trouble should receive a comprehensive eye examination by an optometrist or an ophthalmologist.

Listed below are suggested timetables for children's eye health, based on key children's health organizations are:

Newborn infants should have their eyes checked while still in the hospital nursery. This examination in the nursery should be for general eye health and include a red reflex test. This examination can help detect several congenital eye problems, some of which can be very serious and permanently threaten vision.

During regular well baby exams, from birth to 2 years of age, pediatricians should use history and a vision evaluation to see if vision problems exist. Beginning at well child exams at age 3 and continuing through 10 years of age, vision screenings should be performed assessing visual acuity and ocular alignment.

If a child fails a vision screening or there is any concern of an eye or vision problem the child should be referred for a comprehensive professional eye examination. This combination of primary care physician eye examinations and vision screenings with referral for a comprehensive professional eye examination are the recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Academy of Ophthalmology, and the

Strabismus. *Prevent Blindness*, America's voluntary expert panels, continually review new scientific information and make appropriate recommendations.

***This statement was approved by the Prevent Blindness America [board of directors](#) on 3/7/04, and may be found on [Prevent Blindness America's website](#).*

For more information on your child's sight, email us at info@preventblindness.org [Contact us online: \[www.preventblindness.org\]\(http://www.preventblindness.org\)](#) Call Prevent Blindness America at **1-800-331-2020**.

Nutrition News



Brain Food for Preschoolers

Your preschooler's brain is growing at a most impressive rate, and she's soaking up everything around her. In order to keep your happy little sponge extra absorbent, she needs to get the vitamins and nutrients that aren't found in jelly and mac-n-cheese.

The brain grows fantastically when given plenty of fatty acids, iron, protein, and zinc. DHA or docosahexaenoic acid is a vital nutrient that facilitates the development of synapses that are used to transport information from one cell to the next to the brain. Our babies thrive when receiving a healthy dose of DHA, which is naturally found in breast milk.

To supply this to your children as they grow, look for foods containing omega-3 fatty acids, including fish, eggs, yogurt, or sprouted breads. Iron rich foods include fish, meat, nuts, and cheese.

Whole grains, milk, fruits and veggies, such as peas and bananas, contain B-vitamins that help keep the brain healthy and their energy levels on full speed.

Make sure your preschooler is continuing to drink low-fat organic milk, yogurt, and cottage cheese for calcium and protein. It's important to promote your tot's ability to learn.

Filling her belly with the right ingredients is important for your rapidly growing child, it also ensures her brain is getting the right stuff to keep up!

Talk with your pediatrician about your preschooler's healthy diet.

The Health Hub



Employment Resources

Tips for Successful Interviews

- Do some research on the business before the interview. (See "How to Find a Job," "Research the Employer.")
- Practice interviewing.
- Go alone. Do not take children or friends.
- Arrive on time or early!
- Greet the employer with a firm handshake.
- Make frequent eye contact.
- Smile, be polite, and try to relax.
- Listen carefully to the questions asked. Ask the interviewer to restate a question if you are confused.
- Answer questions as directly as possible.
- Be upbeat and make positive statements.
- If you've worked before, talk about what you learned from it.
- Use examples of how you're best for the job.
- Bring the telephone numbers and addresses of your references and former employers.
- Write a thank you note to the interviewer within two to three days after the

Bedtime Basics

Kids need plenty of sleep to rest their growing bodies and minds. But for many kids, bedtime is no fun, and for many parents, getting kids to go to bed – and stay there – can be frustrating.

Quick Tips!

- Keep a consistent bedtime and soothing routine for getting to bed.
- Turn off the TV, video games, and computer at least 30 minutes before bedtime.
- Praise your child for staying in bed.

Heading Off Bedtime Troubles

Make sure your child has everything he or she needs to get a good night's sleep, including:

- a regular bedtime
- a reminder to start winding down, about 30 minutes ahead of bedtime
- a trip to the bathroom to use the toilet, wash up, and brush teeth
- a consistent bedtime routine that includes soothing activities, such as storytime
- a place to sleep with comfortable temperature, ventilation, and a nightlight
- a bedroom without a TV or video games
- a reminder to stay quiet and in bed, and a final goodnight from you
- praise the next morning for staying in bed



When Your Child Won't Stay in Bed

- Return your child to bed right away.
- Find out what your child is afraid of – nightlights and monster checks can make kids feel safer.
- If your child cries or protests, wait a few minutes, then go back to check on him or her.
- If your child continues to cry or call for you, wait a little longer each time before you go to check.
- Remind your child that it's time to go to sleep, and if your child stays quiet, you'll come back to check on him or her in a few minutes.

Note: All information is for educational purposes only. For specific medical advice, diagnoses, and treatment, consult a doctor. Review this with a doctor prior to use.

Reviewed by: W. Douglas Tynan, PhD
Date Reviewed: June 2007

Family Language Development



Free English Language Learning Classes!

Free English as a Second Language (ESL) classes for non-native speakers are available for all proficiency levels from St. Charles Community College. These classes help beginning, intermediate, and advanced students improve English skills in reading, writing, speaking and understanding (listening). The classes are directed at improving English conversational skills for home and workplace literacy.

Classes are currently being held in Cottleville, St. Charles City, Wentzville, and Troy! **For more information about any of these classes, call 636-922-8411 or e-mail shumes@stchas.edu.**

From the Directors



Well, here we are, cruising right along into 2008. Time flies when you're having fun! We ARE having fun here at Youth in Need Head Start and Early Head Start, but of course, our goals don't end there. We take very seriously the commitment to providing high level, quality care, and one of the many ways we monitor that, is through our annual Self-Assessment, a process which is currently underway and which many parents are participating in. We greatly appreciate your help and support! When we have our results, we take the next steps of assessing then implementing how we may improve our program accordingly.

Keep your eye out for several Head Start advocacy and legislative updates that we'll continue to send your way—remember, you have a voice, and it matters! A lot of the updates will be focusing on Head Start Reauthorization, and the challenges that remain before us. Our Policy Council, under the leadership of Jennifer Jackson is organizing a parent advocacy committee, for now more than ever, your voices must be heard! Make sure you are registered to vote, and educate yourself on what candidates stand for.

February is also Black History Month. As always, we value and celebrate diversity, and these lessons enrich our children's lives and development. It is also National Children's Dental Health Month. We will be providing information and resources on the vital importance of good dental care.

As always, thank you for being part of our program, and for your invaluable support.

Until next time,

Daryl Rothman
VP Head Start
4-County Area
Youth In Need
636-946-5600 x 101

Linda Armstrong
VP Head Start
East
Youth In Need
314-353-5298 x 103

Parent Involvement



How can I be more actively involved in my Child's school?

Here are a few tips for getting involved in Head Start and/or primary school:

- Attend orientations, student exhibitions and other school events. Get to know the teachers and other school personnel. Listen to their plans, know what they hope to accomplish with your child, and understand why they chose these goals.
- Attend Parent Teacher Conferences. Voice your hopes and concerns for your child and for the school. Help organize parent-teacher meetings around your interests.
- Offer to volunteer in classrooms with reading to children, leading projects, sharing your culture, talents, or hobbies, or assisting with meal times.
- If you are uncomfortable in the classroom setting, volunteer with office work or assist teachers with projects, such as making file folder games or sanitizing toys.
- Agree to serve on parent and community advisory groups, such as Parent Committee and Policy Council. They may consider everything from school policies and programs to the kinds of parent involvement activities the program plans.
- If you are unable to volunteer in the school, look for ways to help at home: completing Take Home activities, creating ideas for take home activities and lesson plans, or writing a class newsletter. If you are bilingual, help translate school materials or interpret for non-English speaking parents in your school.

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: April 1, 2008

Male Involvement



Male Involvement Success in Head Start

Warren County's Parent Committee has formed a Male Involvement Group. A couple dads decided to put together a men's group with the purpose of spending more time with their children, building male camaraderie, educating the community on the importance of men in children's lives, and extending support to children without involved male figures. This group is open to all men involved in HS that care about children, including fathers, uncles, grandfathers, and friends. The Warren County Male Involvement group has gone to the pumpkin patch, park, Starbucks, Winter Night Lights, and Bowling. They are challenging other counties to mimic their efforts by beginning their own Male Involvement groups. For more information on how you can start your own Male Involvement group, please speak with your county director or call Jane Bass at 636-332-0265 ext. 124.

Written For Men, By Men: Fathers and Mothers United in Discipline

There's a good chance you can relate to Henry's problem—that is, if you have a wife/significant other and kids....

It began with Henry asking his son a simple question about the boy's grades. His son gave him an elusive answer, and well, one thing led to another, emotions flared, and they argued for over an hour. It ended when Henry's wife sided with the son, and as he walked out of the room in anger, Henry told the boy what privileges he'd be losing. Not a pleasant scene.

Now there are a lot of issues we could address, and we did try to encourage Henry in several areas. For example: balancing high expectations with love and acceptance; or making sure the child feels the responsibility for making good grades and solving his problems; and, then there's the topic of conflict resolution, and setting a good example when things get tense.

But perhaps the most important issue here is being united with your wife/significant other in the area of expectations and discipline. Kids need to see a consistent purpose behind what both of you do. So, if you haven't yet, I encourage you to sit down with your wife/significant other—now, before a touchy situation arises—and decide together how you want to approach certain issues in your parenting. Find an approach you can both agree on. Then, when things get heated, abide by what you've discussed.

When situations do come up, it's important that you not contradict, but support each other. Make sure you two aren't going at each other in front of the kids. That creates a lot of insecurity in the home. If you do disagree, even if you're convinced that you're right, let it go for now. Give in on this battle, and discuss your disagreements later, in private. You can always go back to your child together and say, "Son, we talked it over, and we didn't handle this in the best way." And then take whatever steps are appropriate.

And kids are clever. If the two of you aren't united, they'll always find ways to exploit the situation and pit you against your wife/significant other. And that only multiplies the problems. But a mom and dad who appreciate each other's unique approach and learn to work together will bring great blessings to their kids—and to each other.



Written by Dads at www.fathers.com

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE 2008 MISSOURI HEAD START AWARD WINNERS!

The following individuals were nominated by Youth In Need HS/EHS staff and parents and won awards at the state level for their dedication to children and families in Head Start/Early Head Start during the 2006-2007 program year:

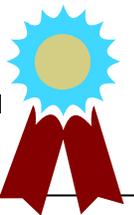
Demian Cook, Head Start Teacher at Marvin Marks Child Development Center- won MHS A Phyllis J. Jones Memorial

Michelle Copeland, Head Start Teacher at New Florence Center- won MHS A Ann Phipps Memorial

Maria Hine, Head Start Parent- won MHS A Beating the Odds Award

Jeremy Veninga, Past Head Start Parent- won the MHS A Father of the Year Award

Sts. Joachim and Ann Care Center, Social Service Organization- won the MHS A Outstanding Partnership Award



Child Development/ Curriculum News



Family Meetings

Meetings are used in the classroom to create social and emotional competence. Family Meetings can be a very successful method of enhancing family cooperation and closeness. Here are some ideas for the format of a family meeting.

Hold the meeting once a week at a time when everyone in the family can attend. Keep this time sacred -- don't keep changing it at everyone's convenience. Mark the time on a calendar and make it as important as a business meeting.

Take the phone off the hook so there are no interruptions. This helps your children see how valuable the meetings are to you also.

Decisions should be made by family consensus, not majority vote. If an agreement cannot be reached after a discussion, table the decision until the next meeting.

Elect a new leader and secretary at each meeting. The leader runs the meeting and calls on members. The leadership should rotate every meeting. Other members should be encouraged to support the leader. The secretary can take notes on what was discussed and what decisions were reached.

Begin the meetings with compliments to each family member. Use words like, "I love you because....," or, "I'm grateful for you because....," Teach children to say thank you after they receive a compliment.

Keep an "agenda" list on the refrigerator and discuss it at each family meeting time. As problems come up during the week, write them down to be discussed at family meetings.

Go on to problem solving. Does anyone have a problem they would like to bring up? Teach your children that if she complains, it is helpful to think of a solution. A person who is not part of the solution is part of the problem.

Coordinate everyone's calendar for the next week and plan some activities together as a family.

For more productive meetings, sit at a cleared table and chairs versus the family sitting room. Don't have this meeting during a mealtime.

Always end the meeting by allowing the leader to pick a fun way to close it. Suggestions are choosing a bedtime snack for everyone, delaying dessert until after the meeting, playing a game, etc.

Source: *"Redirecting Children's Behavior" Workbook*



Community Resources

Free Tax Preparation

2008 Gateway EITC Community Coalition Free Tax Preparation Sites

Why pay to get your own money back when you don't have to? Have your tax returns prepared and e-filed for free and receive up to \$4,716* additional cash back when you claim the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC). You can even open a checking or savings account on site and start saving money immediately.

To learn if you qualify, **call the United Way by dialing 211 or 1-800-427-4626 in Missouri. In Illinois, call 1-800-427-4626.** You can also find the nearest **free** tax preparation site to you and what you need to bring to have your taxes prepared.

Your household income must have been \$40,000 or less in 2007 to qualify for this service.

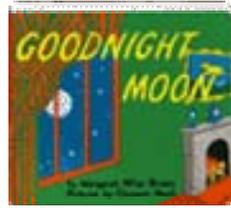


Read With Me

Early Head Start:

Goodnight Moon

By Margaret Wise Brown

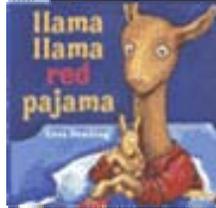


A sleepy bunny bids goodnight to all the objects in his room, in this classic bedtime story. The singsong rhythm, familiar objects and whimsical rhymes make this a perfect way to teach literacy.

Head Start:

Llama Llama Red Pajama

By Anna Dewdney



Baby Llama immediately starts worrying when Mama Llama goes downstairs at bedtime, and his soft whimpers turn to hollers. This infectious rhyming read-aloud with bright art is easy to relate to, especially if you have a little one who beckons after being tucked in. This book is great for comforting little ones at bedtime.

Just for Fun

Creating a Safe Place



“Safe Place” is a Conscious Discipline tool that is used in classrooms and socializations. It can also be used in your home.

What is a “Safe Place”? A “Safe Place” is a place where your child can choose to go to become calm, regain composure and maintain control when upset, frustrated, or angry. It is also a place where your child can find healthy alone time. It can serve as the center for anger management in your home.

How do I implement a “Safe Place”? This is a place you introduce to your children when they are calm, and you allow them to enjoy this place as they choose. When your child becomes upset, you can calmly ask your child if they would like to go to their safe place. This is never a place you force children to go. It is not a time out spot; instead it is a place where your child feels in control, and when they are calm, they can better solve problems and conflicts. Children may not initially choose to go to their safe place, and that is ok. They will eventually want to go to this place if it is presented correctly, and they need security and safety. If your “Safe Place” is unsuccessful look at moving it to a new location, redecorating, and evaluate how you present this unique place to your child.

You can use the following materials to create a safe place in your home: bean bag chairs, soft blankets, cozy stuffed animals, a small children’s indoor tent, books, your child’s art work, relaxing music on headphones, and/or lotion to use for calming hand rubs.

Family Literacy



Tips for Successful Reading at Home and School

Below are some fun and practical ways to make reading a normal and natural part of family life and encourage kids of varying ages to get reading-ready as they head back to the classroom and prepare to dive into books all year long.

Book graffiti wall - Put up a piece of poster paper and label it the "Great Book Graffiti Wall." Have your children draw a pattern on the paper to make it look like a brick wall. Then encourage them to draw pictures and write recommendations based on the books they have read or are reading.

Record your child's favorite book - A cassette recorder is one way to enable younger children to enjoy a favorite book again and again. Grandparents, parents, older brothers or sisters can record their favorite stories on tape or the whole family can join in and play different characters.

Share your stories - Telling stories from your personal life is a fun way to teach values, pass on family history and build your child's listening and thinking skills. Your child might someday want to write the stories down in a book for a class project.

A special nook - Create a special place for you and your child to read. It could be a favorite chair, a couch, a child's bed, or outside under a tree or by a lake.

For all ears - Read aloud to your children, even after they've learned to read on their own and are attending school. Young readers enjoy listening to many books that they can't yet master and teenagers like to hear old favorites. Encourage kids to describe the pictures or take turns reading aloud with you. Even though kids may also read books in class, spending additional time reading their favorite literature with you is also important.

Regular intervals - Set aside a special time each day that you and your child devote to reading. Before bed, at breakfast and before dinner are common times for many families with busy school and activity schedules. For example, your child can read to you while you wash the dinner dishes or you can read to your child from the newspaper as she eats her breakfast. Even if it's only 15 minutes a day, you're encouraging lifelong reading.

Caught in the act! - Show your child that reading just isn't for the classroom. Let your kids catch you reading whenever possible. Try making a game of it. One way might be to create "I caught you reading!" coupons. Each time they "catch" a family member reading they present them with a coupon. At the end of each week, hold a drawing to award a family member with a prize.

Social Emotional Review



What is "Temperament"?

We hear a lot about temperament. At Youth In Need, we screen for temperament. But what is it? Temperament is a child's built-in behavior and your child's built in response system. Temperament is present at birth, just like a child's skin tone and body parts. Temperament is seen by a pattern of behavior over time, not judged by single actions or occasional behavior. Temperament is important to understand not only just for the child. A parent also needs to look at their own temperament, in order to guide the parenting of the child. If the parent's temperament is not a good "fit" with the child's, the parent will have a lot of work to do in regards to changing their parenting style to fit with the child's social/emotional needs.

Temperament can be broken down into 9 different traits.

1. Activity level- How active are you compared to your child?
2. Mood quality- What is your child's normal mood? What is your normal mood?
3. Shy or Outgoing- Does your child like do new things and meet new people or do they withdrawal and refuse?
4. Rhythm or Sporadic- Is there a pattern with your child's normal body functions (hunger, tired, bathroom times)? Do you have a consistent schedule for yourself?
5. Change is okay or not okay- Does your child have an easy or hard time with change in, food, routine clothing, activity? What about you?
6. Sensory reactions- Does your child strongly react to loud sounds, wet feelings, light, or touch? Do you?
7. Emotional Reactions- Does your child have strong emotional reactions or do they allow things to not affect them? Do over react to things or stay calm?
8. Focused or Distractible- Is your child able to focus on something for any amount of time, or does everything distract them? What about you, did that noise distract you from reading?
9. Persistence- Can your child get over a want or a feeling, or do they continue to ask, request or throw and tantrum? Can you get over things and move on?

It is important to know these things about your self and your child. If you notice a section where you and your child are complete opposites, take some time to think about ways you can plan to handle situations where you may get upset due to your differing temperaments. Also when situations occur where you and your child are reacting differently be a STAR-Stop, Take a breath, And, Relax.

If you would like to learn more about the temperament of your child, how to deal with it 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

Bailey, B.A. (2000). *Conscious Discipline: 7 basic skills for brain smart classroom management*. Oviedo, FL: Loving Guidance, Inc.

Thank You



- 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

How far you go in life depends on your being tender with the young, compassionate with the aged, sympathetic with the striving and tolerant of the weak and strong.

-George Washington Carver,
African American Agricultural Scientist

Important Dates



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

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

February: Black History Month and National Children's Dental Health Month

March 5: Policy Council Meeting. 6:30 p.m. Wentzville Center. Child care and dinner are provided. Transportation is available upon request.

March 14: Professional Development Day. Centers Closed. No Home Visits.

March 21: Spring Holiday. Centers Closed. No Home Visits.

February: 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.