



The Family Times



Head Start/Early Head Start

February 2009

Important Dates



February 16: Professional Development Day. Centers Closed. No Home Visits.

February 18: Policy Council Meeting. 6:30 p.m. Wentzville Center. Child care and dinner are provided. Transportation is available upon request.

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

February: Please see flyers and talk to your teachers, home visitor and managers about the dates and times of socializations, Parent Committee Meetings, and other parent involvement activities.

Reminder: Watch Channel 5 News for school weather closings. Youth In Need will be listed as YIN/(your site).

Parent Education Meetings/Parent Teacher Conferences will be held this month!

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 and the American Academy of Ophthalmology.

***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.

Child Development/Curriculum News

Parent Teacher Conferences aka Parent Education Meetings

Parent-teacher conferences, also known as Parent Education Meetings in Head Start/Early Head Start, are an opportunity to establish better communication between parents and teachers/home visitors. These meetings occur, at least quarterly (unless parent request more), and should be viewed positively. These conferences enable the parent to gain vital information about their child and how he or she is doing in school, both academically and socially

Since children are different at home and in school, both the parent and the teacher gain in understanding the child and can, therefore, be more effective in helping him or her.

Benefits of Parent Education Meetings/ Parent-Teacher Conferences

- This is a time when parents and teachers discuss goals for the child. Parents and teachers can learn if they are both on the same page in regards to the child's academic expectations--as well as emotional and social expectations.
- This is a great time for the lines of communication to be opened up between the parent and teacher. Becoming familiar with the teacher will help to make the parent more comfortable in approaching the teacher if a problem or issue arises at a later date.

What to Do Before the Meeting/Conference

- Talk to your child to see if he or she has any special concerns or questions that he or she would like you to discuss or clarify with the teacher/home visitor.
- Make a list of things you would like to discuss. This will help a nervous parent who may forget a question he or she wants to ask.
- On this list, you should put things in order of importance. If time is cut short, this will ensure that the most important issues were addressed.

In partnership with your child's teacher/home visitor, you will review/update the following:

- Child's Journal/Portfolio
- Your child's outcomes and any screenings or assessments
- Teacher/Home Visitor Observations
- IEP/IFSP goals and progress (if applicable)
- Family Interest and Needs Assessment
- Family Action Plan (family goal sheet)
- Agencies and Groups Our Family Uses Form (List of resources you use or have been referred to by staff)
- Transition Plan (if applicable)
- Parent Involvement Opportunities

Working with your child's teacher or home visitor, you will create education/developmental goals for your child.

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 interview.

From the Directors

Well, here we are, cruising right along into 2009. 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 getting 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 funding, with a new Administration in place, our upcoming Federal Peer Review, and the challenges that remain before us. Our Policy Council, under the leadership of Tracy LaMartina, spearheads a parent involvement and advocacy committee, for now more than ever, your voices must be heard!

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 1301
drothman@youthinneed.org



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 events and other school events. Get to know the teachers and other school personnel. Listen to their plans, and know what they hope to accomplish with your child. Voice your goals, and work with staff to see that these goals are met.
- Attend Parent Teacher Conferences. Voice your hopes and concerns for your child and for the school/program.
- Offer to volunteer in classrooms/socials 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/social, 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.

100 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. Please detach this coupon and give it to your teacher or home visitor to obtain your **100 trading post points**. Thank you!

Expires: April 1, 2009

The Health Hub

Keeping Your Child's Teeth Healthy

When to Start Caring for a Child's Teeth

Proper dental care begins even before a baby's first tooth appears. Remember that just because you can't see the teeth doesn't mean they aren't there. Teeth actually begin to form in the second trimester of pregnancy. At birth your baby has 20 primary teeth, some of which are fully developed in the jaw.

Running a damp washcloth over your baby's gums following feedings can prevent buildup of damaging bacteria. Once your child has a few teeth showing, you can brush them with a soft child's toothbrush or rub them with gauze at the end of the day.

Even babies can have problems with dental decay when parents do not practice good feeding habits at home. Putting your baby to sleep with a bottle in his or her mouth may be convenient in the short term — but it can harm the baby's teeth. When the sugars from juice or milk remain on a baby's teeth for hours, they may eat away at the enamel, creating a condition known as bottle mouth. Pocked, pitted, or discolored front teeth are signs of bottle mouth. Severe cases result in cavities and the need to pull all the front teeth until the permanent ones grow in.

Parents and child care providers should also help young children develop set times for drinking during the day as well because sucking on a bottle throughout the day can be equally damaging to young teeth.

Preventing Cavities

The American Dental Association (ADA) recommends that a child's first visit to the dentist take place by the first birthday. At this visit, the dentist will explain proper brushing and flossing techniques (you need to floss once your baby has two teeth that touch) and conduct a modified exam while your baby sits on your lap.

Such visits can help in the early detection of potential problems, and help kids become accustomed to visiting the dentist so they'll have less fear about going as they grow older.

When all of your child's primary teeth have come in (usually around age 2½) your dentist may start applying topical fluoride. Fluoride hardens the tooth enamel, helping to ward off the most common childhood oral disease, dental caries, or cavities. Cavities are caused by bacteria and food that are left on the teeth after eating. When these are not brushed away, acid collects on a tooth, softening its enamel until a hole — or cavity — forms. Regular use of fluoride toughens the enamel, making it more difficult for acid to penetrate.

Although many municipalities require tap water to be fluoridated, other communities have no such regulations. If the water supply is not fluoridated, or if your family uses purified water, ask your dentist for fluoride supplements. Even though most toothpastes contain fluoride, toothpaste alone will not fully protect a child's mouth. Be careful, however, since too much fluoride can cause tooth discoloration. Check with your dentist before supplementing.

Brushing at least twice a day and routine flossing will help maintain a healthy mouth. Kids as young as age 2 or 3 can begin to use toothpaste when brushing, as long as they are supervised. Kids should not ingest large amounts of toothpaste — a pea-sized amount for toddlers is just right. Parents should always make sure the child spits the toothpaste out instead of swallowing.

As your child's permanent teeth grow in, the dentist can help seal out decay by applying a thin wash of resin to the back teeth, where most chewing occurs. Known as a sealant, this protective coating keeps bacteria from settling in the hard-to-reach crevices of the molars.

Although dental research has resulted in increasingly sophisticated preventative techniques, including fillings and sealants that seep fluoride, a dentist's care is only part of the equation. Follow-up at home plays an equally important role. For example, sealants on the teeth do not mean that a child can eat sweets uncontrollably or slack off on the daily brushing and flossing — parents must work with kids to teach good oral health habits.



Male Involvement



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



Community Resources

Free Tax Preparation

2009 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.**

You can also find the nearest **free** tax preparation site to you and what you need to bring to have your taxes prepared by visiting https://locator.aarp.org/vmis/sites/tax_aide_locator.jsp Tax preparation sites are available in Lincoln, Montgomery, St. Charles, Warren, St. Louis Counties, and more.



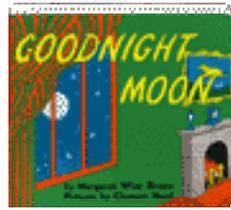
United Way
of Greater St. Louis

Read With Me

Early Head Start:

Goodnight Moon

By Margaret Wise Brown

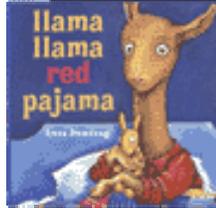


A sleepy bunny bids goodnight to all the objects in his room, in this classic bedtime story. The singsong rhythm, familiar objects and whimsical rhymes make this a perfect way to teach literacy.

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 2008-09 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

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.**

