

Family Matters

A Newsletter for Family Service Staff!

Welcome to Family Matters, a newsletter designed for Head Start program staff that provides comprehensive services with an emphasis on families.

February 2009

Sixth Edition

Parent Engagement

Three for Me—A Little Means a Lot

Research shows that a welcoming school community is a key to increasing parent involvement. When parents are more involved, they are better able to support their children's learning, and their children do better in school. Three for Me creates opportunities for parents to be involved in their child's education, both in and outside of the school.

This program is designed to effectively involve parents and families in support of children and their education. Three for Me will help schools, PTAs, parent groups, and other volunteer based organizations reach volunteer hours never thought possible. Learn how to tap into the many talents and skills that parents are happy to offer. For more information on this project, view <http://www.three4me.com/index.htm>

Pre-K Smarties teach your children

Welcome to Pre-K Smarties! <http://www.preksmarties.com/index.htm> a preschool education resource for parents teaching preschoolers with tips for early reading using phonics, parenting articles, family freebies, and deals on the best educational toys.

Family Education

Find helpful advice on [pregnancy](#) and valuable [child rearing](#) resources from infancy through age six. Discover a wealth of information regarding education and [learning](#), and get parent-approved [entertainment](#) ideas for your young child. You'll also find tips on how to handle the many child-related issues that commonly occur in households. To gain a wealth of information view the following: <http://life.familyeducation.com/parenting/early-learning/42858.html>

Parenting Tips

IMAGINE THAT!

Want to expand your kids' imaginations? Talk with them in ways that broaden their thinking. Wonder together. Generate new imaginative explorations.

Scribbles—Creative Beginnings

Tip: When toddlers scribble, they are beginning to gain the muscle control and learn the skills needed to write and draw.

Puppets & Plays Tie the Arts Together

Tip: Children are so imaginative when they make their own puppets, stage sets, and costumes. They can write their own scripts, too! Offer materials for children to work together on their production—and then be part of an appreciative audience!

Texture Is to Touch!

Tip: Go on a texture hunt around the house. Make the exploration into a blindfold game where children use their fingertips and tactile sensations to identify where they are.

Adopted from the following website http://www.crayola.comparents/powercreativity/tips_for_raising-kids.cfm

Positive Parenting: Coping with Everyday Stress

- While the stressors families face every day – from financial problems to personal struggles – can make it challenging to adopt a positive parenting style, there is much parents can do to foster good mental health in their children. Use the parenting techniques below to help promote your child's mental health:
- Help develop social skills in your child. Set good examples, and teach them social skills and behaviors that encourage positive social interaction.
- Take time to talk with your child. When feelings are bottled up, they can explode in the form of temper tantrums, bullying or mood swings. Encourage children to talk openly and let them know that talking through feeling is a healthy way of expressing anger, fear, sadness, and pain.
- Leave the stresses of work at work. When parents bring job-related stress home, they are less tolerant and more prone to argue with their children.
- Avoid “hyper-parenting.” Don't enroll children in too many extra-curricular activities. Children need time and space to be creative, think, and discover things on their own.
- Celebrate accomplishments. Rewarding children for good behavior is more constructive than letting them know when they have behaved inappropriately.
- Use discipline, not punishment. “Discipline” is a method of teaching children acceptable behavior and helping them make wise decisions on their own to act in positive ways.

“Punishment,” on the other hand, involves using physical means or verbal criticisms to address a negative behavior.

Adopted from *the Brown University Child and Adolescent Behavior Letter August 2003, Vol. 19, No. 8*

For Parents! Hot Topics visit <http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/For%20Parents>. This website contains up to date **Head Start resources and materials for parents**.

Health Information to Share with Families

Head Start helps keep kids Healthy

Health, the focus of Head Start is to indeed give children a “head start.” This website includes links for tips on how to promote physical activity in the Head Start programs and fact sheets for parents and Head children. To gain more insightful information, please view <http://www.nhsa.org/program/healthy/health.htm>

Nourish Interactive

WELCOME! Nourish Interactive is your free one stop resource for fun nutrition games for kids, interactive activities, and nutrition tools for parents. Created by nutrition and health care professionals, Nourish Interactive nutrition education website gives children the knowledge and skills they need to make healthy choices for a lifetime. View this wonderful website at <http://nourishinteractive.com/>

Community Resources to Share with Families

United Partners in Kentucky

A Healthy Start in Childcare Programming, Child Care – Sites that provide tips on choosing Quality Child Care, A Parent's Guide to Choosing Safe and Healthy Child Care - Child Care Awareness. Head Start provides comprehensive developmental services for low-income. For more information click on the following: <http://www.up-in-ky.com/pages/Child%20Care.cfm>

Smart Beginnings- United Way Success By 6

Assembled is a list of links offering a wealth of information for parents on a wide variety of childcare subjects. Some sites offer information on more than just the subject that they're listed under, so be sure to check sites under other subject areas. View the following link: <http://www.successby6.net/pages/parentlinks.html>

Attention: If you would like to contribute articles or share information regarding **Family Matters** from your personal or professional experiences; please send it to tony.kirk@STGInternational.com

Have a Great Month

Your children need your presence more than your presents.

~Jesse Jackson