
KHSA Newsletter, Fall

Fall Edition, 2011



There are lots of exciting happenings in Kentucky! Governor Beshear has appointed the statewide Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC), which includes some familiar faces including Bob Wilcher, KHSA's Executive Director, Aubrey Nehring, CEO of Audubon Area Community Services, Anna Shepherd, Floyd County Head Start. I am also honored to serve as a member of this group. Terry Tolan, who spent fifteen years as the Executive Director of United Way, Kentucky has been named the Executive Director of the Governor's Office of Early Childhood. Terry brings much experience and knowledge of Early Childhood systems to this office. One of the first matters of the ECAC is to assist in the development of Kentucky's Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge Grant. If funded, our state is eligible for \$60 million. The group is looking into systems, collaboration, assessment and best practices in Early Childhood Education in Kentucky. We will keep you posted on the progress of the group. It seems like every time I write an article, I am talking about somebody who is retiring from our ranks. This time, it is Earl Trevor, our Collaboration Director. Earl has been a tireless advocate for Head Start and will be greatly missed. It seems very appropriate to me that Earl has decided his last day will be Halloween and he is planning to come to work that day as a Klingon. Classic! I, for one, will miss his knowledge, dedication and his humor. I hope you will be able to join us in wishing Earl a happy retirement. Live long and prosper, Earl!

Inside this Edition...

- ◆ Letter from the KHSA President
- ◆ Ashland
- ◆ Audubon
- ◆ Big Sandy
- ◆ Middle KY

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Enhancing Technology

Big Sandy Head Start is dedicated to serving the children and families in our area and we want to make every effort to make Head Start a wonderful experience. When most families get the letter that their child has been accepted into Head Start, they usually don't know exactly what to expect. Many have preconceived notions that are not true of Head Start, and many do not know of the services that we offer to families. We want to get this information to parents as soon as possible rather than letting them find out as they go. We have begun to create videos that will be put on our website or be sent home on DVD (for those without internet access). The videos are to

consist of information about dental visits, Education Home Visits, classroom environment, outside play, curriculum, cafeteria, our goals, family services, and more. Some of these videos will be narrated, talking about the importance of the activities and what children are learning. We have just filmed our first video by teaming up with Big Sandy Health Care. This is the fourth year that this agency has come to our Model City Head Start site to perform much needed dental examinations and cleanings. This team consists of the dentist, Heather Whitt, DMD and dental hygienist, Terra Moore. We would like to thank them for all their hard work and for participating

in this video. The video was set up to help children become more comfortable with and reduce the amount of anxiety associated with visiting the dentist. It consists of children brushing the teeth of some animal pals as they wait to see the dentist. Then the dentist talks to the child about what they are going to experience and what tools she will use to look at and clean their teeth. We hope to have these videos available by next summer. You will be able to view them on the **new** Kids and Families page on our website: www.bsacaphheadstart.com



Points of Interest...

- ◆ *Enhancing Technology*
- ◆ *Facilities*
- ◆ *Outdoor Classrooms*
- ◆ *KHSA Conference*
- ◆ *Contest Winner*
- ◆ *Staff Morale*

New Facility

During the summer of 2011, *Ashland Head Start/Preschool's* long-term plan of relocating to a new facility became a reality. Ashland Head Start/Kentucky Preschool is now on top of the hill at 1820 Hickman Street. We occupy one half of a school formerly known as Hatcher Elementary and our Ashland Independent School District central offices is housed on the other side. Many renovations have occurred to accommodate our preschool children. After several weeks of unpacking and rediscovering misplaced items our offices and classrooms, everything has come together in making this building our new home.

In a long entrance hallway, one of our artistic teachers painted a mural on the wall behind our new fish tank

with all of our new fish friends. We have six large classrooms, each with a beautiful window view of real trees, green grass and a brand new playground. The classrooms are large and bright and each has a unique personality.

This picturesque description is a dream come true for our program.

Our funded enrollment has been met for this school year and we are still enrolling children as their files become complete.

We have already celebrated our annual grandparent's day with great attendance and much success. We are busy getting ready for all of our future fall activities. Nothing is prettier than the fall foliage of Eastern Kentucky. As a matter of fact, whenever you are

up our way, please feel free to stop by and we give you a tour of our facility. We love to show it off.



The Farmer in the Dill

Middle Kentucky Head Start has received grant funds from Personal Responsibility in a Desirable Environment (PRIDE) for the design and implementation of an outdoor classroom.



The children at the Breathitt County centers planted a small garden that consisted of corn, sweet potatoes, tomatoes and radishes. The children observed the vegetables and charted their growth and watched as the seeds sprouted into plants. Several of the children who participated in this ac-



tivity have gone on to kindergarten and were not able to partake of the



bounty. The returning children however had the opportunity to "shuck" the corn, dig the sweet potatoes, pick the tomatoes and pull the radishes.



The children were able to enjoy the 'fruits of their labor' by eating the radishes and tomatoes and sweet potatoes. This activity promoted self-help skills, math skills, enriched their language development and provided experiences relative to our Appalachian culture.

Contest Winner

Audubon Area's preschool teacher **Angel McDonald** and her class won an Elmer's Glue Crew Recycling Program nationwide contest. By winning, the preschool class was awarded \$1,000 to be used in the classroom and 1,000 trees will be planted in honor of the elementary school.

Focusing on saving empty glue containers, the program teaches children the importance of recycling, a necessary step in taking care of the environment. McDonald was eager to use it not only in her classroom, but

throughout the entire elementary school.

"We always teach our students that recycling is important. We want to take care of the planet, and I knew that this would be a great way for my preschoolers to really understand by involving them and other students, and teachers as well," McDonald said.

McDonald's class well surpassed its goal of 50 containers by collecting 250, a feat that helped her group win the Elmer's Glue grand prize. All 29 of McDonald's preschoolers from last year, as well as the rest of CCES,

were treated with an early morning assembly where Ellmer's Glue Senior Manager of Communications Terri Brown congratulated them on a job well done.

Besides the schoolwide award, McDonald's preschool students each received backpacks filled with art supplies and of course, Elmer's Glue.

"It's exciting for us because these students have worked hard, making sure that containers were recycled in our box that we kept," McDonald said. "They were very serious about it, counting every container. I could-

KHSA ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Mark your calendars! The KHSA annual conference will be here before you know it.. The 2012 annual conference will be held at the largest meeting and convention center in the area, Louisville Galt House Hotel. The conference is scheduled April 30-May 3. The theme for this year's event is "Head Start Heroes." There will be a wide range of training topics offered by trainers who will support you with expert knowledge, coaching and motivation.

The Staff Who Plays Together, Stays Together!!

The *Bourbon County* Preschool Head Start staff has always felt like a family but this year a greater effort has been made to incorporate time where staff can share their talents and enjoy getting to know each other better!

During the month of September the children have always worked with their families on an "All About Me" poster to hang in their classroom. This year Director Melinda Malin, asked the staff to make "All About Me" posters to hang in the hallways outside their classroom or work area. The children and parents have loved looking at these posters and learning about the staffs' families, hobbies and favorite things. This has been especially fun for the staff. Many of the posters were fairly predictable, but some staff members' posters have

given everyone very, interesting insight to their life outside of preschool! It has also been a great way for newer staff to share more about themselves.

Another idea that has been implemented is to have a "Food Day" once a month. In September one day was designated for bringing in their favorite salad to share with everyone. This gave everyone the opportunity to enjoy eating together during lunch and break times and to share favorite recipes. In October there is a "Muffin/Cupcake" day and the week before Halloween the staff is getting together one evening to decorate Halloween/Fall cakes and cupcakes. There have been many great ideas for the rest of the year, such as doing Yoga or

Zumba classes together in the evenings which will be needed by everyone after all the sharing of such great food!

Melinda understands the importance of staff building relationships with each other outside of work as well as inside. This in turn helps to build and reinforce teamwork while working with our most precious gifts, our children and families.

