

March Events

Some of these dates and times are tentative. Stay tuned on Facebook or the website (www.knoxheadstart.org) for changes.

Centerburg

3/11 - Classroom event for families, 9 a.m.
3/16 - School Family Meeting, 5 p.m.

Danville

3/11 - Classroom event, "Math and Aunts/Uncles" 3 p.m.
3/24 - School Family Meeting, 4:30 p.m.

Fredericktown

3/29 - Family Fun Night with a math focus, 4:30-6:30 p.m.

New Hope Early Education Center

3/16 - School Family Meeting, "Kindergarten Transitions," 4:30 p.m.
3/17 - Policy Council meeting, 5:15 p.m.
3/18 - Classroom event for families, at pick-up time

Northgate

3/18 - Classroom event for families, at pick-up time
3/22 - School Family Meeting, 8:15 a.m. (for morning classes) and 12:15 p.m. (for afternoon classes)

Parent Training

3/15 - "The Magic of Connecting," New Hope Early Education Center, 6-8 p.m. Parents will learn why building a healthy connection with their infant/toddler is important to all areas of their child's development and about the ingredients essential to building those healthy relationships. Dinner and free childcare are available. Register by calling Belinda at 740-397-1344.



Home Visits are Important!

Parent/Teacher Conferences are a great opportunity for you to meet with your child's teacher at school; however, at Head Start, we also complete home visits which is your chance to meet with your child's teacher in your home. It is so helpful for the teachers and family advocates to see a child in their own environment. This bridges the gap between school and home for the child, family and KCHS staff. Please welcome our teachers into your home!

Kindergarten Registration Info

Please contact the appropriate school and get scheduled to complete kindergarten registration for your child. Registering in the spring is much easier than waiting until late summer because your child may have to complete additional paperwork, get a physical or dental exam, and/or finish up immunizations. If you register in the spring, you have the summer to complete these items. Don't wait until August! **Watch for more information soon on upcoming KCHS kindergarten transition meetings with parents and teachers.**

MOUNT VERNON CITY SCHOOLS			
Columbia	May 13	By appointment only	740-393-5975, ext. 6100
Dan Emmett	May 2	By appointment only	740-393-5950
East	May 6	By appointment only	740-393-5985
Pleasant Street	May 11, 12	By appointment only	740-393-5990
Twin Oak	May 4, 5	By appointment only	740-393-5970
Wiggin Street	May 3	By appointment only	740-427-4262
COUNTY SCHOOLS			
Centerburg	April 12, 14	By appointment only	740-625-6488
Danville	April 5, 7	Walk-ins	740-599-6116
East Knox	May 4, 5	By appointment only (pre-register by April 4)	740-599-7000, ext. 3002
Fredericktown	April 29	By appointment only	740-694-2781

Learning Corner: The Library

The library is a very important part of our classroom and of your child's life. It is where children gain the foundation for reading and writing. It is also a place where children can relax and enjoy the wonderful world of children's books.

What you can do at home:

Research has shown us the important role families play in helping children learn to read and write. The single most important thing you can do is to read to your child every day. When your child sits next to you as you read, he or she begins to connect books with good feelings. Here are a few more things you can do with your child:

- Encourage your child to talk about the stories you read together.
- Use prompts like "I wonder what will happen next" or "I wonder why..."
- Try to relate the story to something in your child's life ("That dog looks a lot like grandpa's").
- Visit the library and check out books that interest your child.



- Give your child paper and pencils, pens, or markers. Let him/her experiment with writing. Don't worry if your child's writing isn't perfect!

If you'd like some help with choosing books or guidance about how to read with your child, please talk with us. To keep your child's home library stocked, you can borrow books from the public library. When you take time to read to your child every day, you are doing the very best thing to help your child become a successful reader.

KNOX COUNTY HEAD START, INC.

This newsletter is produced by Knox County Head Start for parents and caregivers. If you have ideas for the newsletter, please contact Carrie Haver at chaver@knoxheadstart.org.

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Connect with us!



Head Start Made the Difference to Our Family

By Donald Bovinett, Head Start Parent Ambassador

Thinking back to 2012, I never would have dreamed my family would be where we are today. I was depressed, in pain and barely making any money as a freelance web consultant. I felt like I was toxic to my child. Even though I stayed with him at home every day, I felt each moment he spent with me was wasted. I felt I was not a good parent, and I certainly didn't feel like a provider.

From the beginning, KCHS helped us find a better way. On our first visit, the family advocate showed us the classrooms and told us about the curriculum, the teachers, credentials, and meals. One of the most significant parts was when she explained they used Conscious Discipline and how this meant teaching instead of punishing—to provide a reason, not just a rule. The goal of Conscious Discipline is to teach, so, for example, they would say "Use walking feet to stay safe" instead of "Stop running!"

That was a rather profound moment for me. It clicked. Working with my son, I always felt conflicted before. I felt there was a better way, but I knew no other way than the traditional style where punishment was common and explanations for why were scarce. How could I teach a child not to yell by yelling at him to go to his room?

Because Head Start's focus is on the whole family not just the child, we were offered an opportunity to learn this new way. Throughout the Conscious Discipline parenting classes offered at Head Start, I was able to find that better way. I may not be

perfect, and I still fall back on the ways I grew up with, but my son knows I love him. I feel connected to my son. I no longer feel toxic to my child, but find that every opportunity is a moment to teach if I choose to see it as such. The confidence that Head Start gave me as a parent was beyond anything I could have hoped for.

When my son was diagnosed with epilepsy and later ADHD, staff was again helpful. Instead of finding an excuse to have us find another provider, they took the problem head on. They worked with me and my son's doctors to make sure that he was always safe. They encouraged me to advocate for my son, and to continue to seek help. Without their help, it would have felt like just one more reason to give up for good. But, again, because they teach the whole family, my son was able to be better cared for at home as well as at school. The parent trainings on what to do when your child is sick were invaluable. While we were aware of his seizures, it helped reassure us about the other illnesses in his life. While we could easily have overreacted to every little thing, we were able to reduce our trips to the doctor, care for him at home and actually keep him in school far more often than we would have otherwise. As he has transitioned to kindergarten, the training has allowed us to identify early signs of illness as well as ways to help him while his body recovers.



Don (third from left) is pictured with the other Ohio Parent Advocates with Senator Sharrod Brown (back, center).

But it goes beyond my parenting skills, because they also helped see the best in me. When we entered the program, I had still not recovered from the job I lost just months before my son was born, and struggled with the fallout from that. While I made some money and worked from home, it wasn't enough. Our family advocate helped us set goals and outline the needs of our family to help us figure out where we wanted to go—to find a way, no matter what, that would work for us. She helped us realize we could do a lot where we were, and to keep going.

That led me to where I am today. I'm an outspoken advocate for Head Start. I have served on state and regional boards. I have a job that pays well.

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You're Invited to Upcoming Parent Trainings

KCHS invites you to attend these upcoming parent trainings, funded by United Way of Knox County:

NEW! ONLINE! FREE! Active Parenting Now

Designed for parents of school-age children (ages 5-12), this training is available online from the convenience of your home at your pace! By following the 5 easy steps below, you will begin learning new skills and growing as a parent. You will learn about preventing power struggles, communicating with your child, and much more! To register, call Tami or Dolly at 740-397-1344, ext. 208 or email Dolly at dbenins@knoxheadstart.org. Those who complete the training will receive a \$25 Walmart card. More details will be shared when you register.



The Magic of Connecting - March 15, 6-8 p.m., NHEEC

In this fun, two-hour training, parents will learn why building a healthy connection with their infant and toddler is important to all areas of their child's development and about the essential ingredients that are necessary in building those



healthy relationships. Participants will explore some of the things they may already be doing that are contributing to their healthy connection with their child and learn new ways they can enhance their connection by doing "I Love You Rituals" with their child throughout their daily routine. Dinner, free child care, and a \$10 gift card for all attendees.

Handling Your Toddler's Fussing & Fits - April 12, 6-8 p.m., NHEEC

Disciplining your toddler or two-year old can be very challenging. Your sweet little baby has grown to be a lively toddler and is starting to exert his/her independence. Often, a toddler's strong feelings are expressed through tantrums and power struggles. What is a parent to do? In this two-hour interactive training, parents will learn how to handle "the fussing and the fits" by learning about what typical toddler behavior looks like, ways to avoid engaging in power struggles, and how to set up your toddler and yourself for success as you travel through this developmental stage together. Dinner, free child care, and a \$10 gift card for all attendees.



Attendees receive dinner, child care, and gift card. Must register by calling Belinda at 740-397-1344, ext203.

Cover article, cont'd...

We welcomed our daughter into the world February 19. And, for the first time since the turmoil from losing my job, my family feels capable of being normal.

The skills that I have learned from the parenting classes, including Conscious Discipline, "What to Do When Your Child is Sick" and many others, will no doubt prove helpful in the coming years. Instead of running to the doctor for minor issues and staying home for things that didn't seem important, we can feel confident in caring for my daughter. Instead of yelling at my son because of his jealousy from a new sibling, I can take the time to find what he is truly communicating, and reassure him that I love him.

Head Start went above and beyond what any other preschool would have done. There are plenty of great preschools out there, but they are often there for you during business hours only. At Head Start, we knew each day they were not only going to help our son, but help our family as well.

Because of everything they have done for me, I volunteered to take part in a program called Parent Ambassadors, which is an initiative by the Ohio Head Start Association, Inc. (OHSAI). This program is designed to cultivate strong leaders and advocates for Head Start throughout Ohio so that it can be preserved for the years to come.

The Parent Ambassadors got an opportunity the first week of February to go to Washington, D.C., to advocate for the continued support from our elected officials. The trip was very successful, and the Parent Ambassadors represented the state very well. I met with aids from Bill Johnson (6th District, in SE/E Ohio), Bob Gibbs (our District) and Senator Portman. We met in person with Senator Sharrod Brown about the importance of Head Start. I enjoyed being able to advocate, and even help moderate the discussion where all the parents from throughout the United States talked about a common theme – that Head Start Works.

To say we got a lot from Head Start is a bit of an understatement. Without Head Start seeing the best in my child and my family, we'd be in the same rut we were in 2012. I am eternally grateful and I will forever stand as a reminder that Head Start Works. For me, for my son, for my family's future.



Tips for Eating Healthy

March is Nutrition Month. If you guessed this article is about nutrition and healthy eating, you were right! We have learned about the 5-2-1-0 program before and this is a great time to refresh our memory as we take a look at some helpful tips for eating healthy.

5-2-1-0 Program

- 5** - Eat at least 5 fruits and vegetables a day.
- 2** - Keep screen time (like TV, video games, computer, phone) to 2 hours or less per day.
- 1** - Get 1 hour or more of physical activity every day.
- 0** - Drink 0 sugar-sweetened drinks. Replace soda pop, sports drinks, and even 100% fruit juice with milk/ water.

Starting good eating habits early in a child's life will help them grow lifelong healthy eating habits. Remember... you are your child's first teacher. If they see you eating healthy meals/snacks, they will try to do the same.

Everyday Helpful Ideas!

Encourage your child to eat **fruits/vegetables**. Let them help pick out vegetables/fruits at the store and let them help make healthy meals/snacks. They will be more likely to try the healthy meals/snacks if they have helped in some way. Make dips for vegetables/fruits (something as simple as yogurt or ranch dressing), children love to dip (so do adults) so it may make eating vegetables/fruits more fun. They also make great snacks.



Try keeping healthy **snacks** like sliced apples and peanut butter (peanut butter is great with celery, too), carrots, fresh fruit, or string cheese in your kitchen. You can grab those instead of chips, cookies, and candy.



Milk and water are the best drink choices. Keep a pitcher or jug of water in the refrigerator so you have icy cold water at hand along with your cold milk. Soda, sports drinks, and 100% fruit juice add extra unneeded calories and sugar that can harm everyone's teeth.



Try to grill, bake, or broil your **meat/fish** instead of frying. Frying adds extra calories that we don't need. It's also a nice way to cook fresh vegetables, too. It gives them a nice flavor and more of the vitamins stay in the vegetables. When we boil vegetables, we lose many of the vitamins.



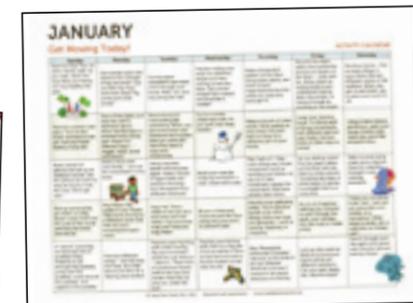
Remember, any steps you take toward healthier eating for you and your family are steps in the right direction. Start by changing one thing at a time. It's easier than changing everything all at once.

Additional Resources for Your Family



"Nutrition Nuggets" newsletter sent home with students monthly

"Color Me Healthy" website:
www.colormehealthy.com



Monthly "Get Moving" calendar of activities sent home each month



www.gethealthyknox.org
(and on Facebook)



www.knoxhealth.com
(and on Facebook)



FREE Income Tax Prep and File!

United Way of Knox County, in partnership with the Ohio Benefit Bank, is offering free tax preparation assistance. Save your money and avoid using your refund to pay for someone to prepare your taxes. Refunds in as few as 8 days! Staff will assist you with the process and it is very user-friendly.



Please call 740-397-5721 to schedule an appointment. Located at 110 E. High St., Mount Vernon.

If you'd like more information about nutrition or making healthy choices, please contact Candy Thomas, LPN, Knox County Head Start's Health Services Specialist, at 740-397-1344, ext. 335.