

December 2017

Program of Excellence
Mid Florida Community Services, Inc.

Volume 1—Number—4

Choosing the Right Toys for the Right Age

Age-appropriate toys can still be fun, while being safe.

By Christina Frank/From the Webmed Archives

Keep them simple.

Toys that do too much don't allow a child to use her own imagination. Dolls and stuffed animals that talk or sing or direct kids to press certain buttons essentially take charge of the play situation when the child should be the one directing the action. "When a toy is too specific, it's limiting and it denies the child the ability to use her imagination," says Panaccione. "The best toys are often the simplest ones -- like blocks -- because they allow children to be creative and spontaneous."

Set limits on electronic toys and video

games.

We live in an electronic age, and any parent who thinks she can keep her child -- even a toddler -- away from computers and the like forever is kidding herself. But for young kids, especially, it's crucial to set limits. Research has suggested that electronic toys pose several possible dangers for children's health and development, including hearing loss (from loud toys), weight gain (from being inactive while playing), and language and developmental delays. One recent study at Temple University showed that toys that don't require a child to do anything but watch promote a passive learning style, which can interfere with learning to think independently.

Electronics can also affect a child's attention span, says Linda Crowe, PhD, a professor in the Communication Scienc-

es and Disorders Program at Kansas State University. "Toys that have flashing lights and constant changes and movement don't require a child to pay attention to any one thing for very long. Kids who use these toys frequently can find it difficult to focus on something like a book or non-moving toy."

According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, kids under age 2 shouldn't watch TV or play computer games at all; kids over 2 should have their "screen time" limited to 1-2 hours per day.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

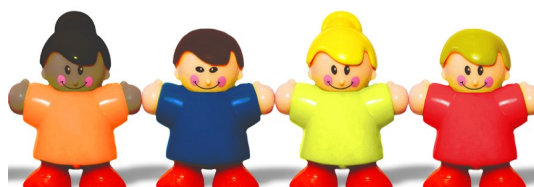
From Your CDS	2
Classroom News	2 & 3
Home Activity	4
IMIL	4
Policy Council Report	5
Parent Engagement	5
Book of the Month	6
Nutrition Activity	7
Parent Meeting Minutes	8
Family Advocates Update	9
FA's Update/Spanish	10
Pictures	11

Important Dates in December

Dec. 5—Parent Committee Meeting at 1:30 p.m.

Dec. 9. - Brooksville Christmas Parade

Dec. 25—January 8, 2018 - No School/Holiday



From Your CDS

By Ronjaneen Harris,
Child Development Specialist for Hernando Head Start

The holidays are a time for giving and receiving. However, it is so nice when a child learns to give at an early age. Unfortunately, we are not able to buy everything our children desire to have all the time, and helping young children to understand the value of money can be tricky. Not only do they need to learn to recognize the various forms and denominations of a currency and the value of each individual unit but also how to count it (and eventually to add, subtract, multiply and divide it), why money is important and how it is used in everyday life. The complex and abstract nature of these concepts means children need plenty of time and lots of opportunities to talk about, to play with and to meaningfully use money with the help of an adult.

Learning to save and learning to give are also important money lessons that are much easier for children to take into adulthood when the foundations are laid in childhood. However, they are also not easy lessons for a young child to learn or understand.

For the holidays, have children make gifts and/or cards. These are everlasting memories they will treasure forever.

For ways on helping your child learn to give, visit <http://hildhood101.com/2012/10/helping-children-learn-to-give/>

Classroom News

Room 301

This month, we will continue learning our letters and numbers. We will be learning about cultures around the world and how they celebrate the holidays. Please watch out for flyers for this month's parent engagement activity. We hope everyone will come and join us and make fun holiday memories with the children. We would like to thank all our families for such a wonderful year so far, and we hope that all of you have a safe and wonderful holiday!

~Mrs. Elayne and Ms. Salyna

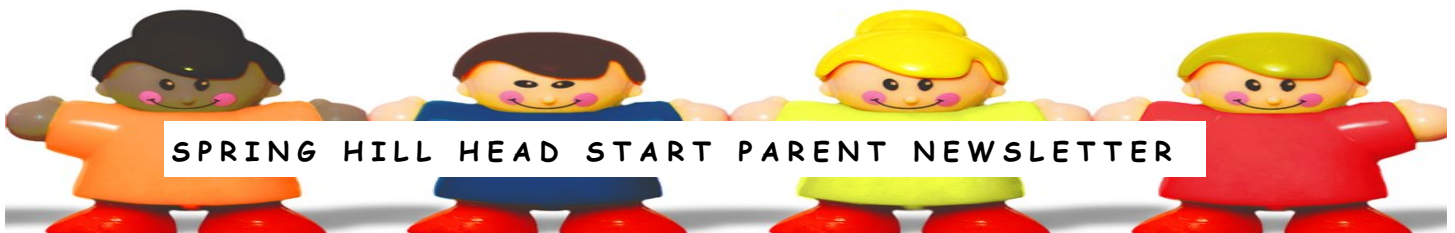
Room 302

I hope everyone had a wonderful Thanksgiving last month. Speaking of being thankful, Mrs. Theresa Nunez gave birth to a beautiful baby girl last month. I hope everyone had a family filled relaxing break full of memories. Thank you to all our family and friends that came out to last month's parent engagement activity. We appreciate your great support and we look forward to seeing you at this month's parent engagement activity. This month, we will be talking about different types of weather and appropriate clothes to wear. Please look out for flyers for our December activities.

~Mrs. Theresa and Ms. Mandy

Room 401

Wow, I can't believe that the year is almost over. We have had a lot of fun this year and it will continue in 2018. This month, we will be doing a lot of holiday activities and getting ready for our winter break. We will be learning about The colors of fall, we will have our monthly nutrition activity with cantaloupe, and so many trees. We will be having a winter concert and crafts for our family engagement. We will continue working on letters, shapes and num-





bers. We will be doing homework to make an ornament for our class tree and also for making a gingerbread man. Also, please remember that we will be on winter break from December 22- January 9. We will see you all when we get back in the new year.

~Mrs. Nancy and Ms. Olena

Room 402

This month, we will be working with letters; A, C, G and E. Children will be learning about different Christmas traditions from around the world and their music. Our parent engagement celebration will be on Wednesday, December 20, at 2:00 pm. We will be making snow globes. Please make sure to sign your communication log daily and turn in home activities.

Hope everyone has a safe and wonderful holiday.

Best wishes and a happy new year!

~Ms. Talia and Ms. Rebeca

Room 501

We will be making ornaments with our families for parent activity this month. Mykayla will be 5 on December 27th. Happy Birthday Mykayla! We will be busy talking about fall and its colors this month. We planted our pea seeds and they are starting to sprout. We will plant spinach next and

watch it grow and discover what a plant needs to survive and compare it to what our bodies need to survive. We will be making a fruit salad for our nutrition activity this month. The children will measure, pour, compare and use their five senses as we create a tasty snack. We will graph who liked cantaloupe and who did not and talk about more and less. We will place cantaloupe seeds in a wet paper towel and see what happens through a Ziploc bag hanging in the window.

~Mrs. Suzanne and Ms. Sandra

Room 502

Happy Holiday, From Ms. Jeannie and Ms. Mallori classroom

As the holidays approach, we are excited about all of the special surprises we have in store. Our colors will be red and green, shape is a circle and our letter that we will be primary focusing on will be C-G-and V. Our parent involvement will be at 1pm on the 13 of December. A special surprise will be planned for that day and I hope everyone can come. We will have no school the week of December 25-January 9 for the holiday celebration. Please make sure you remember your red communication folder daily. This is a great way to communicate with us and receive weekly communication log and other important information regarding your little one. Please use the communication folder to contact us or feel free to call our

class room if you have any questions or concerns 352-556-4800 ext: 2502.

Thank you,

~Ms. Jeannie and Ms. Mallori

Room 601

This month, we are going to be learning about Winter Holidays Around the World. The children will learn about six different countries and the winter holidays they celebrate. We will continue to learn about our feelings, the importance of exercising and make good nutritional food choices to keep our bodies and minds healthy. Reminders: We would like to give special thank you to all our parents for attending our monthly parent meetings and our family engagement activities. We look forward to seeing you at this month activities.

Mrs. Sara and Ms. Lucia

Room 602

This month, we will be learning all about Holidays around the World. We will include Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanza and others. If your family has a special celebration, please let us know so we can include those as well. In Second Step, we will learn about strong feelings and how to manage disappointments appropriately. Our USDA Nutrition will be all about cantaloupe. We hope you and your family have a safe and happy holiday season! Love to all of you.

~ Miss Shelley and Miss Wanda





Home Activity

Help your child write a letter to Santa out. You can take it to him on a visit or mail the letter.

<http://>



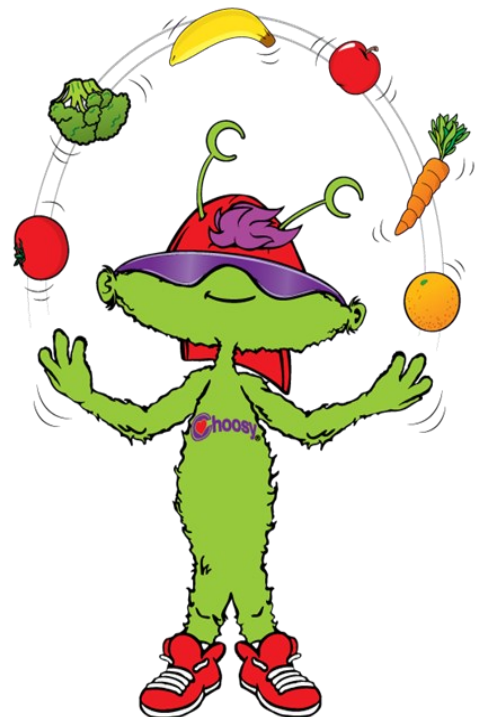
If you have online access, try typing it in and you will get an instant reply to your child's letter for free that you can print

www.letter4santa.com/

I Am Moving, I Am Learning (IMIL)

For little kids, toys are essential to growth, learning, and development. When you choose toys for children this age, make sure you select some active toys along with ABC books and cuddly buddies for pretend play.

Active toys help build motor skills and encourage kids to get their daily dose of physical activity. Many of these top toy picks can be used indoors or out and are appealing to both boys and girls.





Policy Council Update

The **November Policy Council meeting training** was held on Thursday, November 16th at 10:00 am via video conference. A quorum was established. Thirteen policy council members were present.

The following reports were reviewed and approved: *Budget, Credit Cards, Enrollment/Attendance, Meals and Snacks, Service Areas and Centers.*

The results of the election of officers conducted at the October meeting were reviewed. Council members were advised that the person elected as chairman was not eligible for election to an office as he attended the meeting as an alternate and alternates are not eligible for nomination to an office. The official policy council representative from a center is the only person who can be nominated for or elected to a policy council office. The previously elected vice chairman, Sheila Ramos (Representative from Coleman Center in Volusia) was nominated to now become the chairman. There was a unanimous vote in favor of Ms. Ramos. Ramon Ayala was nominated for the office of vice chairman. There was unanimous vote in favor of Mr. Ayala.

Candidates for the following job vacancies have been approved for hire:

Hernando: Substitute Teacher III

Volusia: Substitute Teacher III, Blue Lake Elementary Blended Classroom

Family Advocate, Jo Sheppard Early Head Start

Family Advocate, Holly Hill Head Start

Teacher Assistant III, Blue Lake Elementary Blended Classroom

Substitute Teacher Assistant

Full Time Extended Day Teacher Assistant, EVEC

Nutrition Coordinator

Budget training is postponed until next month due to the hospitalization of the Mid Florida Community Services, Inc., Chief Financial Officer - Kris Bates.

A maximum of 25% for food expenses was agreed upon per Parent Activity. All parent activities have to be submitted, in advance, to the Family Advocate for forwarding to the Family Engagement Coordinator for approval. The cost of food items that serve as materials to help teach a specific parenting skill during a Parent Activity is not included in the food expense.

The School Readiness Committee update was provided. The committee met on Nov. 15th. Topics of discussion included children arriving late at centers, behavior concerns and curriculum.

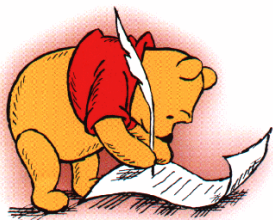
The Selection Criteria for 2018 – 19 was approved.

Special appreciation was extended to Robin Bowman from WVEC for her recent participation on the interview panel for Family Advocate interviews.

The Program Specialist from our regional office and an Early Childhood Specialist from our regional office visited several of our sites during the week of Nov. 13th. They complimented the consistency of documents on parent boards and health boards in each classroom they visited and recognized the high level of teamwork among staff.

The following committees are looking for parent volunteers: Community Needs Assessment, ERSEA (Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment and Attendance) and School Readiness. Any parent interested in serving on any of these committees can contact the Family and Community Partnership Manager in their county. Volusia county parents can contact Cindy at 386-736-1325. Hernando/Sumter parents can contact Jaclyn at 352-754-2464.

The December meeting will be held on Thursday, December 14th. The meeting will be conducted via video conference. Participants will meet at the conference room of the administrative office closest to their county.



Parent Engagement/Winter Reading

Parents, ask your preschool child to choose a book about winter for you to read. Explain to him / her that some places have cold weather and snow in the winter while other places are sunny and warm in the winter. After reading the story, together act out the story. Take turns, with your youngster, playing different roles.

If you don't have any winter books at home take your preschooler to the library. If your library has preschool winter stories on tape, both you and your child listen to a tape. Then help your child choose some books about winter.

Mid Florida Community Services, Inc. Head Start School Readiness Goals



Parent to Parent

Parents,

If you have anything you would like to share with other parents and families, please see your family advocate so they can assist you with getting information in the newsletter. We look forward to hearing from you.

Book of the Month



Approaches Towards Learning

ATL 1. Show curiosity, creativity and an eagerness to learn and experience new things

Language and Literacy Development

LLD 1. Increase English language communication skills

Social and Emotional Development

SED 1. Express and manage feelings appropriately
SED 2. Develop and maintain positive relationships

Cognition and General Knowledge

CGK 1. Demonstrate an increased knowledge of pre-academic skills
CGK 2. Develop life skills and independence through everyday routines and interactions

Physical Well-Being and Motor Development

PMD 1. Demonstrate control of large and small muscles
PMD 2. Develop and practice healthy and safe habits



Teachable Moments: Inside the Meltdown

Source: Empoweringparents.com

The way kids think really has a lot to do with *why* they melt down—and why it's so hard for them to calm down. Kids use a lot of negative self-talk and faulty thinking. Negative self-talk includes fantasies about power. Kids will think, "I'll show *her* who's boss," or "This will teach her to tell me what to do." They think about how unfair things are, how mean they think you are, and how little you understand them, to name a few examples. These flawed thoughts and mental images of being in control fuel their rage. It's important to realize that kids, especially pre-teens, might not be very aware of their mental processes, though, and how these impact their behavior. What's more, once the negative self-talk starts it's very hard for them to stop or change it—which is part of what it takes for them to calm down. (I'll be telling you how to do that in a minute.)

It's also important to understand that if you've ever given in to your child during a meltdown, then meltdowns take on a purpose—to wear you down so that you'll give in again. It's hard to get kids to calm down from a tantrum if a tantrum has had a positive payoff, even once in the past. There's nothing appealing to your child about calming down when they can gain control by appearing to lose it. (This is the slot machine effect we've talked about before—kids will keep pulling the lever over and over until they hit the jackpot.)



Check out our
Product and Safety News



1

Cascadian Farm Organic Cinnamon Raisin Cereal

Undeclared almonds

2

Whole Foods 365 Everyday Value Raisin Bran

Undeclared peanuts

3

Publix, Weis Markets, and Fit & Active Fresh Ground Turkey

Possible presence of metal shavings

Recipes for Fun

Inexpensive fun recipes that parents and their preschool children can mix up together. Lots of learning takes place as young children help prepare these easy to follow

recipes for art materials. Measuring, pouring and mixing ingredients provide preschoolers with math experiences. When children observe the changes in texture etc. science skills are developed. Creative art experiences begin when children (and their parents) actually use the materials that they have created from everyday household ingredients.

Homemade Playdough



www.nettime2bored.blogspot.com

No Cook Playdough

2 cups boiling water

3 cups flour

1/2 cup salt

2 tbsp. cooking oil

3 tsp. alum

food coloring

Preparation: In a large bowl, mix ingredients listed above. After mixing, knead well. Add food coloring as desired. Store in an airtight container or heavy plastic bag for up to six months.

Kids love helping out in the kitchen, and they will enjoy making this No-Bake Chocolate, Peanut Butter, and Oatmeal Cookies with you.

Ingredients: 8 tablespoons (1 stick) butter, 1½ cups packed light brown sugar, ½ cup heavy cream, ⅓ cup unsweetened cocoa powder, ½ cup creamy peanut butter, 1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract, 3 cups old-fashioned rolled oats (not quick-cooking), 1 cup dry roasted peanuts

1. **Directions:** In a large saucepan, melt the butter over medium-high heat. Stir in the brown sugar, cream, and cocoa, then boil for 1 minute.

2. Remove the saucepan from heat, add the peanut butter and vanilla, and stir until smooth. Stir in the oats and peanuts.

Drop heaping tablespoonfuls of the batter onto wax paper-lined baking sheets, spacing them 1 inch apart, and let cool until set, about 20 minutes.





**Parent Committee
Meeting
Spring Hill Center
November 7th, 2017**

Mission Statement

Mid Florida Community Services, Inc. is a partner in which low-income people are supported in their efforts to become self-sufficient.

1. Meeting started promptly at 1:30 p.m. by chairperson, Nick Locicero.
2. Mr. Nick introduced officers, new Early Head Start Family Advocate, Celina Degollado and Assistance Director of Early Learning Programs, Mrs. Carol Coffee.
3. Mrs. Roth proceeded to an icebreaker game to help parents learn each other names.
4. Mrs. Roth discussed attendance concerns specifically late arrival and early pick up. She reminded parents that after 8:35 is considered late arrival and early pick up will be anything before 2:30 p.m. Some parents had concerns that sometimes the drop off process takes longer due to health checks, signing in traffic, washing hands, etc. Parents had also concerns that some classes do not scan and what time is used. Family advocates explained that they go by the time they sign in. Parents were reminded that Head Start regulations look for individual and classroom attendance to be over 89%. Parents can also bring child after appointments or sign out and back in if an appointment in between.
5. Parents were reminded of Parent Activity on January 12th. The activity will be held at the Strike City on Mariner. No children allowed.
6. Mrs. Harris reminded parents of the benefits of using Galileo and if needed help to log in to see her. She will have a raffle for two pillows with those parents that log in the most.
7. Ms. Nancy teacher in 401 spoke to parents about what is going on in the classrooms this month. She mentioned the day for the Parent Engagement activity for each classroom and what they are doing.
8. Parents were reminded of the future events for November and December.

- *Parent teacher conferences by November 30th
- *School closed on November 10th for Veterans Day.
- *School closed November 20-24th for holiday break
- *Next Parent Committee Meeting December 5th, 2017
- *Christmas Parade in Brooksville December 9th
- *Last day of attendance before winter break-December 22nd
- *Students will return on January 9th, 2018
- *It's a Health Thing - January 11th

9. Family Advocates spoke about holiday gift information and reminded parents that each classroom will have a sponsor and also to apply for Toy for Tots.

10. Mr. Nick opened the meeting for questions and concerns. Several parents had questions and concerns that were addressed either by Family Advocates, Mrs. Harris or Mrs. Coffee.

11. Perfect attendance certificates were distributed.

12. Turkey raffle completed.



News from your Family Advocates



Head Start
Mid Florida Community Services
Early Head Start

We would like to thank our parents who attended our Parent Committee Meeting! Thank you to Deputy Roy McLaughlin for coming out to read to our children. Be sure to attend our December Parent Committee Meeting for your chance to **win a Holiday Wreath** created by the Lockhart family!

Things to Remember

Don't forget to **call** if you are going to be absent (Family Advocate) or late (Teaching Team). The phone number for the center is 352-556-4800.

Room 301.....Ext. 2301
Room 302.....Ext. 2302
Room 401Ext. 2401
Room 402.....Ext. 2402
Room 501.....Ext. 2501
Room 502.....Ext. 2502
Room 601.....Ext. 2601
Room 602.....Ext. 2602

Child Development Specialist:

Ronjaneen Harris...Ext. 2209

The phone number for the Family Advocate's office in Brooksville is 352-754-2464. The extension for your advocate is:

301 and 302	Lynn Woerner	2203
401 and 402	Nitza Jerez	2204
501 and 502	Joanne Roth	2201
601	Joanne Roth	2201
602	Nitza Jerez	2204

Warning:

Law enforcement may ticket you if you do not have a handicapped license plate or placard!



Dates to Remember

12/05/17Parent Committee Meeting at 1:30

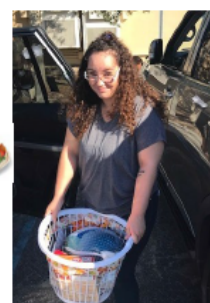
12/9/17Brooksville Christmas Parade

12/25/17 -1/8/18No School/ Holiday

Deputy Roy McLaughlin reads to several classrooms!



Winners of our Turkey Dinner Baskets: Families of Christian Santiago and Xavier Melendez



News from your Family Advocates



Head Start
Mid Florida Community Services
Early Head Start

We would like to thank our parents who attended our Parent Committee Meeting! Thank you to Deputy Roy McLaughlin for coming out to read to our children. Be sure to attend our December Parent Committee Meeting for your chance to **win** a **Holiday Wreath** created by the Lockhart family!

Things to Remember

Don't forget to **call** if you are going to be absent (Family Advocate) or late (Teaching Team). The phone number for the center is 352-556-4800.

Warning:

Law enforcement may ticket you if you do not have a handicapped license plate or placard!



Room 301.....Ext. 2301
Room 302.....Ext. 2302
Room 401Ext. 2401
Room 402.....Ext. 2402
Room 501.....Ext. 2501
Room 502.....Ext. 2502
Room 601.....Ext. 2601
Room 602.....Ext. 2602

Dates to Remember

12/05/17.....Parent Committee Meeting at 1:30

12/9/17.....Brooksville Christmas Parade

12/25/17 -1/8/18.....No School/ Holiday

Child Development Specialist:

Ronjaneen Harris...Ext. 2209

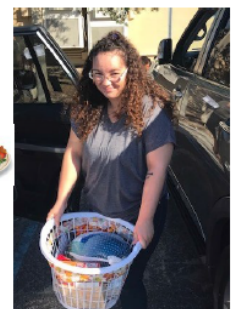
The phone number for the Family Advocate's office is 352-556-4800. The extension for your advocate is:

301 and 302	Lynn Woerner	2203
401 and 402	Nitza Jerez	2204
501 and 502	Joanne Roth	2201
601	Joanne Roth	2201
602	Nitza Jerez	2204

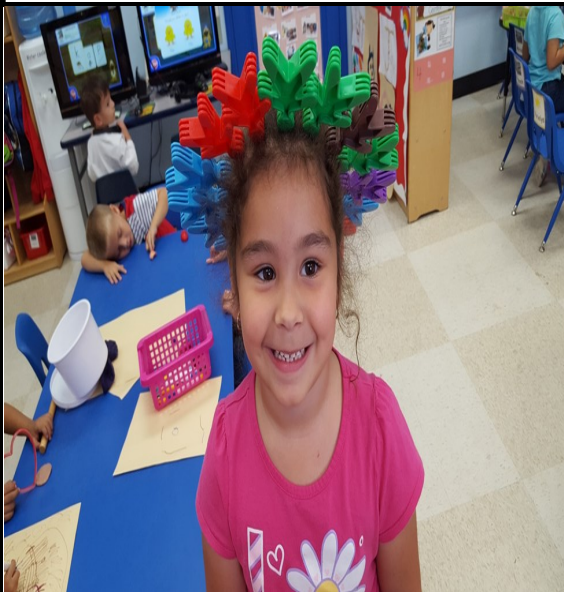
Deputy Roy McLaughlin reads to several classrooms!



Winners of our Turkey Dinner Baskets: Families of Christian Santiago and Xavier Melendez



Classroom Pictures



Ja'Rianna Breban and her mother at classroom 501 November frame making activity.



Classroom 602



Deputy Roy McLaughlin reads to the children

