



## Westside Head Start April's Newsletter



We seem to finally be enjoying some warm weather. "April Showers brings May Flowers!" This month our lesson plans will include the following exciting activities: Country Life, To Market to Market, Busy Busy City and our USDA Nutrition activity will be "Peach Muffins with Oatmeal Topping." We will be conducting Parent Conferences this month to share your child's progress with you. Please set up a date and time that will be good for you.

Parents we thank you for your continued support of our many ongoing parent involvement projects and meetings. Your dedication to this program and to your child's success is greatly appreciated.



### Calendar Events:

- Parent Involvement: April 12<sup>th</sup> - 12:30.p.m.
- Parent Meeting: April 12<sup>th</sup> – 1:00 p.m.
- Picture Day: April 12th- 8:00 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.
- Field Trip: April 28<sup>th</sup> - 8:00 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. "Zoo"
- Kindergarten Trip: Date to be determined see Teacher
- Parent Activity: April 26<sup>th</sup> 12pm "Nutrition"

### Perfect Attendance for March

\*Toquya Brown  
\*Treasure Larmond  
\*Iva Poole

\*Latraile Collins II  
\*Ahnaztazyia Owens  
\*Niah Poole



## Parent Minutes

**Day: 08 Month: 03 Year: 2017.**

- Parent Meeting started at 12:51pm.
- Parents were greeted by: Teachers.
- The Pledge of Allegiance was led by: N/A.
- Minutes from last Parents Meeting were given by: Eleonore Owen.
- Policy Council Representative, reported Policy Council Minutes:  
Yes: X. No:       .

• **Parents were notified of upcoming Important Dates:**

-March 10<sup>th</sup> no school, March 13<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> no school spring break, March 23<sup>th</sup> and March 30<sup>th</sup> early release days, April 12<sup>th</sup> at 12pm family engagement, 1:00pm parent meeting, Transition Meeting on March 22<sup>nd</sup>, April 12<sup>th</sup> Pic day 8:00am please get on time.

**Ms. Cynthia and Ms. Sue spoke about:**

Health Check information

Absentee-ism: we start at 8am. After spring break meals will be in cafeteria, if you are going to be late you have to go to the office for visitor pass and report to cafeteria. Those children that are going to kindergarten will not get nap after spring break

Summer VPK: 8:30am to 5:30pm.

**Meeting adjourned at: 1:15 pm**



## March Policy Council Update

The March Policy Council meeting was held on Thursday, March 23rd at 10:00 am. It was a video conference meeting. Policy Council members from Volusia County met at the Volusia Administration Conference Room in Deland. Policy Council members from Hernando and Sumter counties met at the Hernando Head Start Conference Room in Brooksville. Thirteen policy council members (9 parents and 4 community partner members) were present.

Two persons were approved for hire.

The following reports were approved/accepted: January 2017 Budget and Credit Cards, Enrollment/Attendance, Meals and Snacks, Service Area and Center.

An overview of the *Second Step Curriculum* was provided by Damaris Conner, Education Manager. Parents are encouraged to ask their children about the puppets in their classroom.

Our Quality Assurance Manager - Jeff Heyne presented the proposed Early Head Start program selection criteria. He explained the additional points available for foster care, homelessness and sibling in Head Start.

Heidi Rand announced that the program has been notified of its selection as an Early Head Start Grant Recipient. The grant will allow us to provide quality child care services to 112 children between birth and 3 years old. This funding will allow for new positions. The first phase of the program expansion will include opening 3 classrooms in Hernando and two classrooms in Volusia.

The next Policy Council meeting is scheduled for Thursday, April 27<sup>th</sup> at 10 am. It will be a face to face meeting at Holiday Inn Express in Leesburg, Florida.



## Family Advocate's Corner



-Registration for the new school year 2017-18 are already open, please contact your Family Advocate Ms. Tiwanda 386-238-8455 Ms. Betsy 386-238-8815

-Summer VPK start soon, please contact you Family Advocate as soon as possible.

### Increasing Awareness about the Common Characteristics of Autism

Whilst no two people with autism will have the same set of symptoms, there are common characteristics found in those with this complex disability. Briefly, these characteristics include:

**Social Skills** people with autism have problems interacting with others; autistic children do not have adequate playing and talking skills. Mild symptoms on one end of the spectrum may be displayed through clumsy behavior, being out of sync with those around them and inappropriate or offensive comments being made. At the other end of the spectrum an autistic person may not be interested in others.

**Empathy** is the ability to recognize and understand the feelings of another person. People with autism find it harder to show empathy to others although they can be taught to acknowledge the others feelings.

**Physical** Contact in some cases, autistic people do not like physical contact such as hugs, tickling or physical play with others.

**Sudden Changes to Their Environment** a sudden change in the surrounding environment may affect a person with autism. There could be a loud noise, a change in intensity of lighting or even a change in smell.

**Speech** can be affected in people with autism. 'Echolalia' is a typical speech symptom in which the person repeats words and phrases that they hear. The speech tone of an autistic person may be monotonous. Where symptoms are more extreme the person may not speak.

**Changes to Behavior and Routine** people with autism often display repetitive behavior in which they repeat the same action many times over. For example, a person with autism may repeatedly pace around a room in a certain direction. Any change to their behavior or routine can be unsettling for them. This could be a reordering of daily activities such as when a person brushes their teeth, takes a shower and has breakfast when they get up in the morning.

*Betsabe Glenn*





## From the Desk of: Crystal Hill, CDS

### Day after Day after Day...



Children thrive on routines. The daily routine carried out in the classroom helps children feel safe, secure and happy because they know what happens next.

**A written schedule is posted in each classroom**, and outlines a time frame for the day's events. The schedule includes a balance of activities like arrival time, large group, small group, meals and indoor/outdoor play. Written schedules are critical for managing the day, but they are only a guide.

**A picture schedule is available for the children.** This helps them understand the routine and that certain things happen every day at school.

“Transitioning” in the classroom, or moving from one activity to the next throughout the day, can cause stress and mistaken behavior in children. To help, a successful teacher will have some creative transition ideas in her bag of tricks and will allow a child to move at his or her own pace whenever possible.

Classrooms that I consider “evolved” often seem loud and chaotic, but a closer look will reveal that the children know the routine, are independent and are working in their own way to achieve a common goal or to arrive at a certain point in the day.

Ask your child's teachers about transitions! They'll be happy to share some really clever ideas that may even help you keep things running more smoothly at home. Then children are beginning their transition into Kindergarten this month. There are many things that will be changing, ask your children about this as well.

