

September 2018

Program of Excellence
Mid Florida Community Services, Inc.

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Why Is Preschool Important?

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During play, children learn. Through organized play, they learn social interaction, physical skills, cognitive skills, creativity and self esteem.

One of the most obvious benefits is the socialization your child will get. They will learn how to share, how to take turns, how to share their teacher's attention, how to follow directions from other adults, how to wait in line and how to raise their hands. Your child will learn rules of interaction with others. They will learn what is proper and what is not.

The preschool years are a time when bodies are growing at a rapid pace. Children can do something new everyday it seems. At preschool, they can race with other children to learn how fast their bodies can go. Combine this with jumping, skipping, hopping, dancing, lifting and crawling.

Many parents just look at the cognitive skills their children will be learning when looking at preschools. While these skills are important, they will come along when the child is ready. They will also come along as they participate in planned learning activities at their preschool. All good preschools will teach letters, numbers, shapes and colors. Some start the children on reading and math.

The best way to learn these types of skills is by playing and not by doing worksheets. Doing matching and sorting, sizing and comparing while playing games during preschool teach many cognitive skills. Finding things that begin with a certain letter and counting games are also a great way to learn while playing.

At preschool, creativity is a given. Children get to do a new art project every day. An endless array of materials and ideas are used to get their little minds thinking. There are so many opportunities for them to be creative, such as, puppet play, pretending, finish this story, what do you think about... There is something creative

everyday, every minute of every day while children play at preschool.

Most importantly is children learn self esteem at preschool. Children are taught "I CAN DO IT!" whenever they are able to accomplish something new or something hard. You can't put a price on this confidence. They are challenged beyond what parents can put in front of them. They have teachers that have been trained and they are around their peers.

The importance of preschool cannot be emphasized enough. Through play, children will learn their cognitive skills, build self esteem, get social interaction with their peers and learn ways of being creative.

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Welcome Back!!! Important Dates

- ⇒ Labor Day, No School— Sept. 3
- ⇒ Parent Meeting - Sept. 12 at 1:30 p.m.
- ⇒ Volunteer Training— Monday, September 10, at 8:45 a.m. in the

- Spring Hill office followed by chap-
erone training
- ⇒ Early Release @ Sept. 26 at 1:00 pm

From Your CDS

By Ronjaneen Harris,
Child Development Specialist

Hello everyone, welcome to the 2018-19 school year. My name is Ronjaneen Harris and I am the Child Development Specialist for Spring Hill Head Start Center. We look forward to working with you and your child and providing them with life-long skills and experiences that are necessary for school readiness.

I have met many of you as you bring or pick up your child. As you can see, we will begin working on our garden this month. Please ask your teacher how you can volunteer.

The teachers are working so hard to get your child ready for kindergarten. Since the parent(s) are their child's primary teacher, we are asking you to take part in your child's education and ask questions, volunteer, complete and return your child's educational home activities which are sent home twice a month, attend monthly parent meetings, activities, support the teachers, and bring your child to school daily. Please remember to dress your child in closed toe shoes and bring a set of changing clothes in case of an accident.

You can reach me, Ronjaneen Harris, at 352-556-4800, extension 209. I look forward to seeing you at the September 12 parent meeting.

Classroom News

Class 301

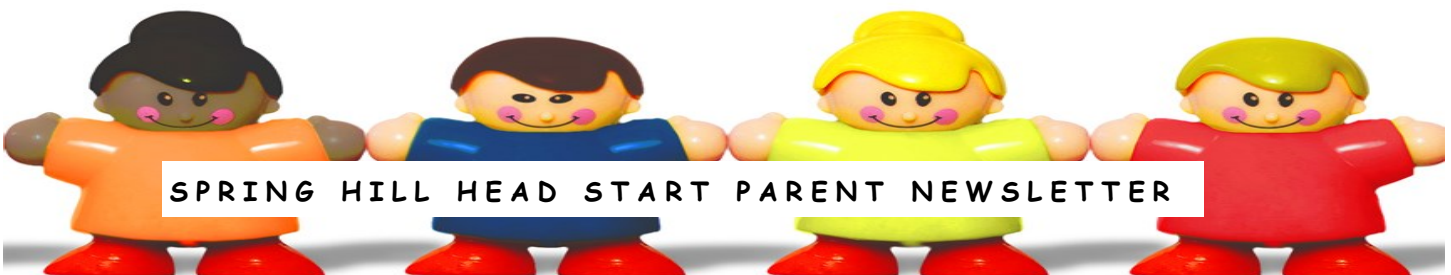
Welcome to our new Head Start year! In 301, we have been having a wonderful time getting to know each other and getting into the routine. We have been learning how to be nice with our friends and why it is important to wash our hands. Soon we will learn about Pedestrian Safety so we can be safe around cars and when crossing the street. Finally, we are mastering the listening rules and why it is important to listen to our teachers so we can learn things we need to know at school. Thank you for all of your support in getting us off to a great start this year!
~Miss Shelley and Miss Olena

Class 302

Welcome families to a year which promises to be full of fun, friendships, learning, and growth. We are excited to begin our preschool year with new adventures and ideas.

All of our learning units throughout the school year will be based on social skills. In the month of September, our focus will be on: Let's be Friends, Our Happy Classroom, and Meet My Family.

During the first couple of weeks, we will begin to do activities to develop gross motor skills, fine gross motor skills, and coordination. We will be talking each day about the weather. For example, hot, sunny, cloudy, and rainy. We will work with play-dough, puzzles, crayons, markers, and more.
~Mrs. Norma and Ms. Mandy





Class 401

Welcome Families to Pre-school Year 2018/2019. Our year will be full of fun, friendships, and learning. We will focus on letter recognition, letter sounds, numbers, shapes, and colors throughout the year while integrating lessons about daily living and environment. Our focus will be on: Let's be Friends, My Family and Healthy Bodies and Healthy Teeth. During the first couple of weeks, we will begin to do activities to develop gross motor skills, fine gross motor skills, and coordination.

Let's have fun!!!

Ms. Jennifer and Ms. Miller

Class 402

This month, we will be working on letters M, J, L and G and their sounds. Also, children will focus on what words start with those letters. We will be doing simple math with numbers 1 to 10 and their recognition. Our themes for September are pedestrian safety which focuses on crossing the roads and traffic signs and their meanings. Children will be focusing on our families and the community around us such as firemen.

~Ms. Amanda and Ms. Talia

Class 501

We have been busy learning the classroom routines and making classroom rules to keep us safe. The children planted pumpkin seeds on August 16. The children will observe the changes in the pumpkin vine as it begins to grow. We have been discussing what a seed needs to grow and we have an experiment in the classroom with a glove, cotton balls, and water and pumpkin seeds. We hope to observe how the roots start and the plant "sprouts".

~Mrs. Suzanne and Ms. Sandra

Class 502

We are thrilled that your child is in our class. We have been busy preparing lots of fun activities for this academic school year. Our first week was a great "success". The children did a great job adjusting to our new routines. Everyday during circle time, we review classroom rules, center rules, indoor rules and voice levels.

Thank you to all the parents who were able to attend our Open House on Friday, August 13. During the upcoming weeks, we will begin to plant "green beans" for the fall. Children will have the opportunity to plant and see how vegetables grow. It's going to be fun.

We appreciate any parent who will provide time to volunteer for one hour to help our class planting. Please contact me for more infor-

mation. We persist in learning to recognize names, letters, numbers and shapes "one step at a time".

~Mrs. Zulma and Mrs. LaDonna

Class 601

We are adjusting well to the new school year. We are settling into a nice routine and schedule; learning the rules and what is expected of everyone. We are learning about our new friends and learning how to play together. We have been talking about using nice words and gentle touches. Also, we are dealing with what to do when someone does something that you don't like or when someone takes toys from you. We are going to have so much fun learning and growing this year.

~Mrs. Amy and Ms. Lucia

Class 602

Hello, new school year! I want to thank all the families for your great attendance last month! We are learning the rules and routines of the classroom and getting to know one another. The children have started the Second Step curriculum and started off with introducing themselves and talking about what they love at school. In literacy, we are working on identifying letters. In math, the children are working on counting and identifying the numerals 0-10. Our upcoming themes are "Pedestrian safety", "What's your job", and "Safety first".

~Mrs. Theresa and Mrs. Wanda



Home Activity



Kids Science Experiment with Apples

Have your child experiment with two plates of sliced apples. On one plate have them pour lemon juice on top and on the other use no lemon juice. Leave it to sit for 30 minutes and go back to see the results of their experiment.

Read more: <http://www.kids-cooking-activities.com/apple->

As we begin the new school year it is time to plan for a successful school year.

ROUTINES: Children will transition more smoothly with routines to help them to know what to expect. Regular bedtime schedules and morning routines are especially beneficial. If your child has extra difficulty transitioning, consider creating a simple chart to hang on the refrigerator with expectations.

CHOICES: When your child has the opportunity to choose, he/she may be more cooperative. For example, you might give the child the choice between brushing his/her teeth first, or getting dressed first, or a choice between two pieces of clothing (blue shirt or red shirt). By allowing your child to choose, you empower him/her to be a willing participant.

EXPECTATIONS: When working toward getting the routine down, remember to take time to hug or express love. We get so busy getting the day started, that we can easily overlook the most important things. Take a few minutes to reassure your child that he/she is valuable to you.

RECOGNITION: Catch your child doing "good" and tell them you noticed. We all enjoy being recognized for what we do well or right and by doing so for your children, you will help to build a healthy sense of self-esteem. It can be a very small thing with a very large reward. For example: "Suzy, I noticed that you were ready to walk out the door before I was, great job getting ready for the day."

I Am Moving, I Am Learning (IMIL)



Getting precoolers moving can be especially helpful on a rainy day when they cannot go outside to play. Additionally they allow students to work on their gross motor and fine motor skills. These games also often involve music and allow students to think creatively.

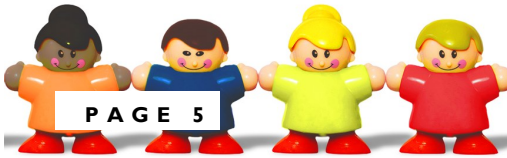
Read more: [Indoor Preschool Movement Games | eHow.com](http://www.IndoorPreschoolMovementGames.com) <http://www.IndoorPreschoolMovementGames.com>

Provide [scarves](#) and a clear space for the students to move around. Play several different types of music, and allow the students to get up and dance or move to the music. As you do this, discuss with the children how the music makes them feel and how they can use their movements to reflect the music.

Have the children form a large circle. Choose one child to stand in the middle of the circle. Put on some music. The child in the middle must perform an action to the music such as clapping, marching or toe-tapping. The rest of the group imitates the action. After about 30 seconds, the child in the middle points to a classmate and

switches places with him. The game continues with the new person in the middle choosing an action. Make the game more interesting by introducing the children to a variety of dance moves throughout the year.

Put a twist on the traditional game of musical chairs. Place [carpet](#) squares around the room. Make sure there is one square for each child. Play music and ask the children to dance around the room. When the music stops, each child must find a carpet square to sit on. Remove one square and play the music again. As the carpet squares are removed, the children must begin sharing them. See how many children are able to sit down when only a few squares are left. Use hula hoops if carpet squares are not available.



Policy Council Update

The August Policy Council Meeting was held on Thursday, August 23rd. Members participated via video conference from the administrative office in their county. Six policy council members were present. Eight staff members were present. Policy Council members who could not attend the meeting were contacted to obtain their approval or disapproval on voting items.

The following **reports were approved**: *Budget, Credit Cards, Meals and Snacks, Service Areas and Centers. Details of the approved Enrollment/ Attendance Report included the following*: The average daily attendance of nine Early Head Start classrooms in Volusia County was below 85% in July 2018 due to family travel or illness.

Heidi Rand, Director of Early Learning Programs, advised the Policy Council members that our agency will return any unused Early Head Start **grant funds** for the current program year to the federal government. The unused funds were originally identified for expenses related to opening Early Head Start classrooms. Several unavoidable factors temporarily delayed the opening of these classrooms. The classrooms are expected to be opened in 2018-19. The return of the funds will not affect the amount of our Early Head Start grant award for the next program year.

New hires for the following positions in Volusia County were approved: 3 Family Advocates, 1 Community Outreach Coordinator, 4 Early Head Start teachers and 1 substitute teacher.

New hires for the following positions in Hernando/Sumter Counties were approved: 1 Family Advocate, 1 Early Head Start teacher, 1 Head Start teacher and 1 part time Extended Day teacher.

Policy council members were asked to encourage parents at their sites to consider **Policy Council participation**. A special request for Policy Council members to help recruit more children and families was also made.

The **next Policy Council meeting** is scheduled for 9:30am on Thursday, September 27th at Lake Sumter College in Leesburg.

I AM SPECIAL (sung to Frère Jacques)

I am special, I am special
You can see, you can see
Someone very special,
Someone very special
Yes it's me,
Yes it's me!

The Benefits of Parent Involvement: What Research Has to Say

Researchers have evidence for the positive effects of parent involvement on children, families, and school when schools and parents continuously support and encourage the children's learning and development (Eccles & Harold, 1993; Illinois State Board of Education, 1993). According to Henderson and Berla (1994), "the most accurate predictor of a student's achievement in school is not income or social status but the extent to which that student's family is able to:

1. Create a home environment that encourages learning
2. Express high (but not unrealistic) expectations for their children's achievement and future careers
3. Become involved in their children's education at school and in the community

Henderson and Berla (1994) reviewed and analyzed eighty-five studies that documented the comprehensive benefits of parent involvement in children's education. This and other studies show that parent involvement activities that are effectively planned and well implemented result in substantial benefits to children, parents, educators, and the school.

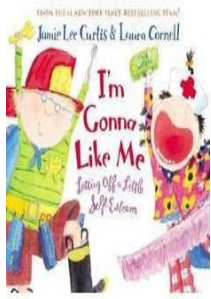


Parent to Parent

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

By Jamie Lee Curtis
From actress and author Jamie Lee Curtis, this feel-great picture book will encourage your child to love his own best qualities. The bouncy text alternates between boys' and girls' points-of-view as they explore their physical attributes and personalities in charming rhymes. The darling illustrations are full of comic details your child will love pointing out when you read the book together.



<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7NPDH0rx34>

Parent News

In the final analysis, it is not what you do for your children but what you have taught them to do for themselves that will make them successful human beings.

-Ann Landers



Grandparent Day

National Grandparent Day is September 9, 2018

Many families in the United States observe National Grandparents Day on the first Sunday of September after Labor Day. This day honors grandparents.



What Do People Do?

Many people honor their grandparents through a range of activities such as gift-giving, card-giving, and for children to invite their grandparents to school for a day where they participate in special lessons or special assembly programs. Many school students take part in story-telling activities that relate to their grandparents, as well as art or poster competitions where children often use a story about their grandparents in their artwork.

About four million greeting cards are sent within the United States each year on National Grandparents Day. This day is also an opportunity for people to appreciate and express their love to their grandparents through kind actions such as making a phone call or inviting their grandparents for dinner. People living in retirement villages or nursing homes may receive a visit from their grandchildren or loved ones on this day.



*Check out our
Product and Safety News*



1

Salt & Straw Chocolate
Goosey Brownie Ice Cream
Undeclared peanuts

2

Hostess Cookies 'n
Cream Brownies
Improperly Labeled Egg

3

Van Oriental Pork Egg
Rolls
Contaminated with plastic
materials

[http://www.safekids.org/
product-
recalls#sthash.6JbMbUKu.dpuf](http://www.safekids.org/product-recalls#sthash.6JbMbUKu.dpuf)

September is National Childhood Obesity Awareness Month and National Fruit and Veggies Month

One in 3 children in the United States is overweight or obese. Childhood obesity puts kids at risk for health problems that were once seen only in adults, like type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, and heart disease.

The good news is that childhood obesity can be prevented. In honor of National Childhood Obesity Awareness Month, Mid Florida Community Services, Inc. Head Start encourages your family to make healthy changes together.

- **Get active outside:** Walk around the neighborhood, go on a bike ride, or play basketball at the park.
- **Limit screen time:** Keep screen time (time spent on the computer, watching TV, or playing video games) to 2 hours or less a day.

Kids Science Experiment: Apples

Have your child experiment with two plates of sliced apples. On one plate have them pour lemon juice on top and on the other use no lemon juice. Leave it to sit for 30 minutes and go back to see the results of their experiment.



Kids love helping out in the kitchen, and they will enjoy making this apple smile recipe with you.

Ingredients for apple smiles: apples, peanut butter or cream cheese, mini marshmallows or yogurt, and almonds

Directions for making apple smiles:

This is an apple recipe your kids are sure to love. Cut an apple into slices. (these are the lips) Have child spread peanut butter or cream cheese on apple slice.

Place mini marshmallows or yogurt covered almonds (these are the teeth) on top of peanut butter and top with another apple slice.



News from your Family Advocates



You have **BRAINS** in your **HEAD**.
You have **FEET** in your **SHOES**.
You can **STEER** yourself any
DIRECTION you **CHOOSE**.
~Dr. Seuss



Welcome back to the 2018-2019 school year! We look forward to learning more about your families as you work toward your goals. Please submit any required medical documentation as soon as possible. Feel free to share any concerns you may have or suggestions you would like to make!

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

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

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



Please reserve the disabled parking spaces for those with disabilities!



Dates to Remember

9/3/18.....Labor Day-No School
9/10/18.....Volunteer Training at 8:45
9/12/18.....Parent Committee Meeting at 1:30



Please let us know if you have an interest in serving on our Policy Council or a part of our Parent Committee!

Arrive before 8:30....

Don't be late!!! Pick up at 2:30.

***Please note** Extended Care children **MUST** be picked up by 5:30 PM!!