



Culturally Speaking!

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Wayne County

Head Start



The mission of WCHS is to optimize the potential and diverse strengths of children, families, and communities for a better tomorrow.

Family Literacy Services in Head Start

* The term "family literacy services" means services that are of sufficient intensity and of sufficient duration to make sustainable changes in a family and integrate all of the following activities:

- Parent-child interactive literacy activities
- Parenting education
- Adult education
- Early childhood education

* Family literacy services reflect some of the fundamental services offered to families which are outlined in the Head Start Program Performance Standards. It is evident all staff play a role in these areas and must work together to coordinate efforts in a mutually supportive manner.

"PEP Conference 2005"

The first Annual Parents Empowering Parents (PEP) Conference was held on Saturday, September 24, 2005. Policy Council members, volunteering parents, and Head Start staff planned and facilitated a half-day conference at the U of M Fairlane Center.

The conference featured a keynote address by Ms. Lydia Velez, Fatherhood Advocate. She was "right on target" in addressing issues of advocacy, empowerment, and fatherhood. Previously, Ms. Velez presented at the June 2004 Head Start Bureau Fatherhood Institute and March 2005 MHSA Fatherhood Conference. She will continue as an important

Lydia Velez



resource person for the fatherhood efforts of Wayne County Head Start.

Ten workshops were offered to parents. The topics included "Stress Management", "Special Needs Advocacy", "Starting Your Own Business", "Science Made Easy", and "Living Literacy".

During the conference, health screenings were available to all adults in attendance and administered by staff members of Oakwood Hospital.

Parents' responses to conference evaluations were overwhelming, very positive, and extremely complimentary. Many considered the conference, by far, as one of the smoothest and well conducted in which parents and staff participated.

Every parent walked away with something to use with their family. Not only did

(continued on page 2) mentary totebags for their workshop materials, but gifts from participating community agencies such as

"The Diversity Committee"

As a result of strategic planning for 2006-2009, a Diversity Committee was initiated. The committee is composed of grantee and delegate staff, parents, and community members. The committee meets quarterly to identify and share resources to enhance Head Start's

comprehensive services for diverse populations of children and families.

Committee members are working to develop a plan to support staff awareness and responsive services toward the differences that exist among children, families,

and communities Head Start serves. This is important in light of the newly adopted mission of Wayne County Head Start.

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"PEP Conference" (continued)

parents receive complimentary tote-bags for their workshop materials, but gifts from participating community agencies such as SEMCA, AAA, Liberty Tax Services, and Michigan First Credit Union. A raffle ticket drawing was held at the end of the conference which allowed all parents present to win from an array of items - gift certificates to a microwave oven.

Parents responded to the Conference Evaluation with comments that spoke to their increased awareness of the role of fathers, the value of positive reinforcement in child discipline, strategies

to support their children's learning, and a stronger commitment to volunteering and involvement with Head Start as well as their community. The Saturday morning conference appeared to have a significant impact on parents.

As the conference closed, parents were thinking already about the PEP Con-



ference for 2006. They offered ideas and suggestions for conference planning that will be considered.

The conference required a lot of work, but it was well worth the time and effort of Head Start parents, staff, and community volunteers.

John Fort, Program Monitor/
Fatherhood Lead

"The Diversity Committee" (continued)

It is also important to note there are over twenty (20) standards in the Program Performance Standards that specifically refer to the home language, the learning of English, or the cultural background of families and children.

The Diversity Committee met in July to amend a professionally developed self-assessment tool for delegate staff use. The tool, "Promoting Cultural and Linguistic Competency", is a product of

Georgetown University. It was administered to delegate staff to allow them to reflect upon their practices in serving families of diverse cultural backgrounds. The results of the self-assessment continue to be analyzed.

To date, the Diversity Committee has cited the following areas for further attention:

- Provide parents with a written explanation of routine Head Start forms in their home language.

- Strengthen teacher training efforts on multicultural/anti-bias education.
- Encourage oral storytelling in classrooms by parents.

Kimberly A. Crafton, EECD Assistant Specialist

"Words for Family Relationships"

English language learning (ELL) children benefit from teachers' use of a few words in the child's home language. Teachers can learn and use a few words relative to daily classroom experiences.

Spanish is the home language of an increasing number of WCHS families. The following Spanish words may be helpful for teachers. Teachers must realize that there are dialects of Span-

ish and vocabulary words can be different depending upon the country of origin.

Parents **los padres** (pah-drehs)
Family **la familia** (fah-mee-lee-ah)
Father **el padre** (pah-dreh)
Mother **la madre** (mah-dreh)
Grandfather **el abuelo** (ah-bweh-loh)
Grandmother **la abuela** (ah-bweh-lah)

Aunt **la tía** (tee-ah)
Uncle **el tío** (tee-oh)
Sister **la hermana** (air-mah-nah)
Brother **el hermano** (air-mah-noh)
Son **el hijo** (ee-hoh)
Daughter **la hija** (ee-hah)
Relatives **los parientes** (pah-ree-entes)

“Supporting Father Involvement in Family Literacy”

Getting fathers and other males involved in family literacy activities can be a challenge. The following strategies can be kept in mind as programs plan and implement family literacy activities:

1. Expect fathers will want to be involved in their child's early learning and promoting school success.
2. Help fathers to feel and understand their importance in promoting early literacy development.
3. Introduce fathers to good literature for young children.
4. Provide information about and

models of story reading skills.

5. Share information about typical developmental sequences for literacy in young children.
6. Introduce fathers to books for young children that focus on positive role models of fathers and males.
7. Support informal and simple literacy activities that are connected to fathers' interests and activities.
8. Make men visible.
9. Find out about fathers' needs and

interests.

10. For hard to reach fathers—make an extra effort with personal invitations.



Source: The Minnesota Humanities Commission
www.minnesotahumanities.org

“Exploring Family Meals and Language Development”

Mealtimes are about much more than the physical act of eating—they are also about enjoying the company of others, nourishing human connections, and participating in meaningful social interactions. Mealtime is a perfect time to support children's communication and language skills. This is true for all children, including those with disabilities.

The following children's books depict

mealtimes and provide opportunities for children to talk and develop their vocabulary and language skills:

Dooley, N. & Thornton, P. (2002) *Everybody Bakes Bread*. Carolrhoda Bks.

Falwell, C. (1995). *Feast for 10*. Houghton Mifflin.

Hutchins, P. (1997). *Don't Forget the Bacon*. Clarion Books.

Monk, I. (2001). *Family*. Carolrhoda Books.

Park, L.S. (2004). *Bee-bim Bop!* Clarion Books.

Rylant, C. (1993). *The Relatives Came*. Simon & Schuster.

“Professional Resources”

Head Start staff may find the following resources helpful in servicing children and families, especially those with disabilities.

Breaking Bread, Nourishing Connections: People with and without disabilities together at mealtime.

Schwieb, K.M. & Stewart, E.S. (2005). Brookes Publishing.

Online Resources:

Circle of Inclusion

This website offers early childhood teachers and families demonstrations of and information about effective practices of inclusive educational programs. Information is available in Spanish, Korean, Japanese, and Mandarin.
www.circleofinclusion.org

Ethnologue: Languages of the World
An on-line encyclopedic reference work cataloging all of the world's 6,912 living

languages.

www.ethnologue.com

Food for Thought: Mealtime Strategies for Children with Special Needs
This website is offered by the Provincial Integration Support Program.
http://pacificcoast.net/~twendorf/strategies22.html

**Look for our next edition
in Winter, 2006**

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We are on the web!
www.waynecounty.com/famServ/hstart



Robert A. Ficano
County Executive

"Shaking Hands"

(Apparent in many cultures)

Why is it that people always shake hands

when they meet upon the street?

Why isn't shaking their noses or ears

the proper way to greet?

Why do people shake and nod

their heads for yes and no?

Why not wiggle their belly buttons,

or tickle their own toe?

Why do people raise their hands

when they want to give an answer?

Why not shout or spit or pout

or spin 'round like a dancer?

Where did people learn these rituals?

in Iceland or Hong Kong?

Who was the first to try them out,

and how did they catch on?

Well, it's time for me to go,

so it's time to wave goodbye.

My hand is wobbling in the air,

but I'm still not quite sure why.

Contributed by Mylon Reynolds,

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Wayne County Head Start

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"Community Resources"

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Mitsuyo Delphia, Director
Ted Delphia, Business Manager

The Wayne County Head Start Diversity Committee is pleased to have as a member Ted Delphia, Business Manager and Founder of the Himawari Preschool. Mr. Delphia and his wife, Mitsuyo Delphia, are former Oakland County Head Start parents.

Mr. and Mrs. Delphia opened the Himawari Preschool during the summer of 2004 in response to the needs of Japanese families with preschool-age children living temporarily in the Metro Detroit area. Himawari offers an early education program developed by Japan's Ministry of Education. The

program is conducted entirely in Japanese with weekly "Fun with English" sessions for the children.

Located in Roosevelt School, the preschool is fully licensed and serves 27 children from ages 2 1/2 years to 6 years. The full-day, five day educational program is "play based" - reflecting Japan's adoption of a more developmental early education philosophy in 1992.

Mr. Delphia recognizes involvement on the Diversity Committee may support his goal of establishing a bilingual Japanese-English school to educate children from both language communities together. Until then, he and Mrs. Delphia continue to collaborate with Livonia Schools to engage children from Roosevelt School with the Himawari preschoolers.

