



# Culturally Speaking!

Volume 4, Issue 3

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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.

### WCHS

#### Screening Success!

As of March 23, 2007, Wayne County Head Start has screened an average of 94% of all children for health, developmental, and dental services. This is the result of real teamwork between staff and parents. We are still striving to reach our goal of 100% completion and are confident that our efforts will not be in vain.

#### Percentage of Children with Completed Screenings

|                  |       |
|------------------|-------|
| Physical         | 99%   |
| Vision           | 95%   |
| Hearing          | 96%   |
| Hemoglobin       | 92%   |
| Lead             | 89.4% |
| Dentals          | 93%   |
| Blood Pressure   | 96%   |
| Hgt/Wght         | 94%   |
| Denver II/ESI    | 97%   |
| Social Emotional | 97%   |

Tonia Franks, Hlth /Nutrition Specialist  
WCHS

## "Home-Based Services for Immigrant and Refugee Families"

To improve their lives and those of their children, many come to our community as immigrants and refugees. Often, they have lost much of what constituted their daily lives. Family, community, and cultural framework are diminished. This is especially true for their familiar parenting practices.

Families find themselves living in urban environments, unable to speak the language or negotiate cultural norms and expectations. Parents are expected to care for their children in ways that are unfamiliar. They may be discouraged from using parenting practices from their homeland.

Mothers who remain at



home with young children can become socially isolated. The isolation can contribute to stress and anxiety that make it difficult for them to provide children with emotional security.

Immigrant and refugee families benefit the most from home visitation and home-based services. The home visitor provides sup-

port, education, role modeling, and friendship. The home visitor can guide parents in making housing arrangements, scheduling medical appointments, or securing legal advice for immigration issues.

Home visitors who are bilingual or bicultural can help mothers consider both traditional and American health and parenting practices—using those that are appropriate and effective.

Most important is the relationship that the home visitor establishes with families, as they serve as nurturer, mentor, teacher, and advocate. Through collaborations, the home visitor can link parents to their new community.

## "Early Childhood Mental Health"

The mental health needs of children are critical. As research points out, development that occurs in the first five years of life brings great opportunities and vulnerabilities. Healthy social/emotional development is particularly de-

pendent upon the quality of relationships. Young children who manifest problems in relationships are more likely to have difficulties with peers and adults, as they mature. Parents of children with emotional disorders recall that, al-

though they knew "something was wrong" before their children turned five, they did not receive early intervention services. Head Start builds systems for healthy emotional development.

Lisa McFolley, MH/Disab. Spec., WCHS

## “ The Value of Parent and Family Involvement”

Throughout the school year, parents and family members continue to be sources of information about children that strengthens curriculum individualization, enriches understanding of children’s assessment data, and supports rewarding home-school relationships.

Over time, teachers have the opportunity to invite parents and family members to reflect upon the growth and development of children, as they share accounts of children’s learning within the home, community, and classroom environments.

Use of information from parents assists

teachers in the on-going design of learning activities that capture children’s imagination, celebrates their exploration and discovery, and promotes inquiry and problem-solving.



Learning of children’s experiences from home and community life gives teachers a view of the whole child—a view that acknowledges the role and efforts of parents and family members as “first teachers”. Sharing awareness of the whole child with parents supports the working relationship between families and educators.

Encouraging and maintaining parent and family involvement in the early childhood years motivates families to continue their involvement in their children’s education, as children enter kindergarten and the elementary grades.

## “Welcoming African Families”

Posted in a Head Start site, “unu abia” is a sure sign of “welcome” to Igbo-speaking families.

Wayne County Head Start is servicing an increasing number of families from the Af-



rican continent.

Wayne County’s population of African-born persons has nearly doubled in the past ten years to 5631, per 2005 U.S. Census data. They come from such African nations as Nigeria, Kenya, Ghana, Ethiopia, Cote d’Ivoire, Eritrea, and South Africa.

Many of the African –born immigrants are well-educated with 50% of those

over age 25 having one or more university degree. They choose to live in the Metro Detroit area for educational and professional opportunities.

As educational degrees and credentials from homeland institutions may not result in immediate high-paying employment, newly arrived immigrant families can find support in Head Start. A welcoming environment will encourage their full program involvement.

## “Igbo for Classroom Labeling”

Igbo is one of the four official languages of Nigeria. It is spoken by about 18 million people. Some of those who speak Igbo are Head Start children.

Although there are many Igbo dialects, there is a standard written form of Igbo. Teachers may find the following list of Igbo translations helpful for labeling and making the classroom environment welcoming to Igbo-

speaking children and families:

|              |                    |
|--------------|--------------------|
| Block Area   | <b>Egwu okwe</b>   |
| Housekeeping | <b>Megherie</b>    |
| Quiet Area   | <b>Ebe di jii</b>  |
| Small Group  | <b>Otu ntakiri</b> |
| Large Group  | <b>Out nnukwu</b>  |
| computer     | <b>computa or</b>  |
| crayons      | <b>nzu</b>         |

|             |                        |
|-------------|------------------------|
| music       | <b>egwu</b>            |
| paint easel | <b>lbibi ome nka</b>   |
| scissors    | <b>mma mkpa</b>        |
| toothbrush  | <b>ihe eji asa eze</b> |
| water       | <b>miri</b>            |
| water table | <b>egwuruegwu miri</b> |
| Welcome     | <b>unu abia</b>        |
| Hello       | <b>kedü</b>            |

## “Exploring the World of Economics”

Low-income families and families that have immigrated recently to the United States may need support in understanding basic financial principles and American economic systems. The Verizon Literacy Network has developed resources for teaching Basic Intergenerational Financial Literacy (BIFL) to adults. The resources include ideas for engaging young children in economic concepts and intergenerational activities.

Family Money Matters is a project developed through a collaboration between Verizon and the National Cen-

ter for Family Literacy (NCFL). It offers on-line materials and strategies that can be used with parents and young children. Family Money Matters provides teachers with sample curriculum ideas to introduce basic financial concepts and vocabulary through children’s books. There are interactive games for parents to play with children that encourage discussion about money and economics.

Some economic concepts and vocabulary can be introduced to young children through discussion of family ac-

tivities, books, and dramatic play experiences. Vocabulary words include: “choice”, “consumer”, “goods”, “money”, “producer”, “scarcity”, “services”, “supply”, and “trade”.

Classroom experiences can be reinforced within the home, if parents are made aware of how these words and concepts can be used in everyday life.

More information on Family Money Matters and financial literacy can be found at the Verizon website <http://literacynetwork.verizon.org>

## “Children’s Books Highlighting Economics”

A BUSY DAY AT MR. KANG’S GROCERY STORE (1996) by Alice K. Flanagan. Children’s Press.

ALEXANDER, WHO USED TO BE RICH LAST SUNDAY (1978) by Judith Viorst. Atheneum Books.

CANDY SHOP (2004) by Jan Wahl. Charlesbridge Publishing.

CRAYONS FROM START TO FINISH (1999) by S. Woods. Blackbirch.

FRANNIE’S FRUITS (1989) by Leslie Kimmelmam. Harper & Row.

I LOST MY DAD (2001) by Taro Gomi. Kan/Miller Books.

JALAPENO BAGELS (1996) by Natasha Wing. Atheneum Books.

OUR GARAGE SALE (1984) by Anne Rockwell. Greenwillow Books.

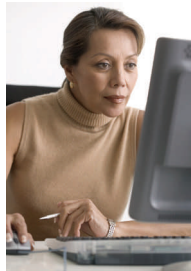
SOPHIE’S ROLE (1992) by Amy Heath. Four Winds Press.

YOU CAN’T BUY A DINOSAUR WITH A DIME (2003) by Harriet Ziefert. Blue Apple Books.

## “Internet Resources”

The internet can be a guide to a variety of resources that can enhance the knowledge and skills of teachers and family service providers.

Learn about the Metro Detroit area’s growing population of African-born residents at [www.metrotimes.com/editorial/story.asp?id=9800](http://www.metrotimes.com/editorial/story.asp?id=9800)



Georgetown University Center for Child and Human Development  
Research and resources in the areas of Early Childhood, Mental Health, and Cultural/ Linguistic Competence.  
<http://gucchd.georgetown.edu>

IgboNet: The Igbo Network  
Learn about the Igbo language and cultures of Nigeria’s Ibo people.  
<http://ilc.igbonet.com>

National Center for Family Literacy (NCFL)  
Resources and services for family literacy and adult ESL instruction.  
[www.familit.org](http://www.familit.org)

Zero to Three  
Resources, training, and advocacy for parents and professionals who support infant/toddler development.  
[www.zerotothree.org](http://www.zerotothree.org)

Look for our next edition  
in Fall, 2007

Send Your Contributions To:  
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30712 Michigan Avenue, 2nd Floor  
Westland, MI 48186  
Or email [kcraftern@co.wayne.mi.us](mailto:kcraftern@co.wayne.mi.us)

Phone: 734-727-7620  
Fax: 734-727-7640  
Toll Free: 866-534-5437

We are on the web!

[www.waynecounty.com/hcs/hstart](http://www.waynecounty.com/hcs/hstart)



**Robert A. Ficano**  
County Executive

## Dramatic Play for Early Childhood Financial Literacy Education

Social studies and economics can be integrated into the curriculum through children's creation of a store and dramatic play.



Learning objectives can include:

- Developing awareness of basic economic vocabulary.
- Recognizing the relationship between supply and demand and that we depend upon others for what we need.
- Understanding how to use objects of trade and how to use money to buy things.
- Sorting items, labeling them, and assigning value.
- Understanding of the various roles people play in commerce.

Wayne County Head Start

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## "A Community Resource for Refugee Families"

Freedom House  
2630 W. Lafayette St.  
Detroit, MI 48216-2019  
(313) 964-4320

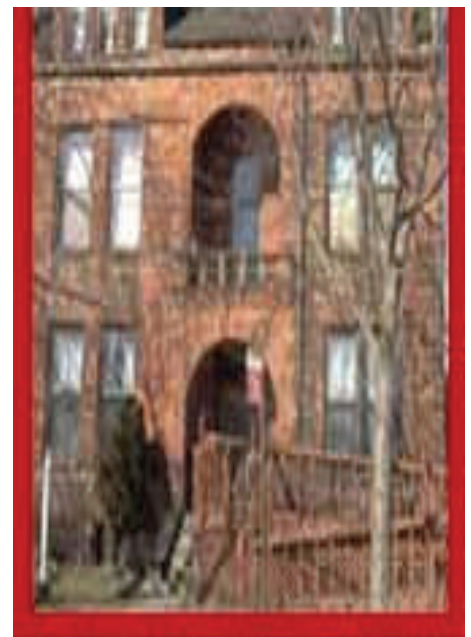
Email:  
[freedomhousemi@sbcglobal.net](mailto:freedomhousemi@sbcglobal.net)  
Website:  
[www.freedomhousedetroit.org](http://www.freedomhousedetroit.org)

Established in 1983, Freedom House is a shelter for refugees who are seeking asylum in the United States or Canada. At any given time, the shelter is home to individuals and families. They come from such countries as Rwanda, Cameroon, Uganda, Columbia, Guatemala, and Honduras.

Freedom House offers food and shelter, legal services, referrals, recreational activities, educational/job training coordination, and transitional housing.

The goals of Freedom House are to offer a continuum of care and services to persons living in their shelter, as well as to other refugees in need, and to advocate for systemic change which more fully recognizes the rights of refugees and asylum seekers.

Freedom House works with a variety of agencies and institutions as ACCESS, the International Institute of Metro Detroit, Wayne County Community College, Wayne State University, and Henry Ford Hospital.



Freedom House  
Detroit, MI