

 **UAMS** | Head Start/
Early Head Start
Staff Newsletter, Fall 2020

Dear Team:

I have received a lot of positive feedback around your participation in the Conscious Discipline trainings and Coaching Sessions! I am very proud of each of you for interacting, engaging and implementing Conscious Discipline strategies within your classrooms and buildings, keep up the great work!



I would also like to thank you for your patience as we navigate through these trying times. UAMS has seen a spike in quarantine cases for UAMS team members, most of which have stemmed from exposure within the community. Dr. Westfall UAMS Vice-Chancellor stated that every one of our hospital-acquired transmissions has occurred because of a lapse in eye protection or masking.

We want to continue to keep staff and children safe, so it is imperative that you wear your mask **AND** eyewear protection; wearing your PPE is key!

It is also imperative (and another measure of safety) that you take your time each morning completing the health survey and answering the questions honestly. The survey needs to be completed daily Monday-Friday, even if you call-in sick you must still complete survey and answer questions. The only time you **do not** have to complete the survey is when you have requested vacation or planned sick day for doctor appointments or on holidays.

Please note that the definition of contact/exposure is considered: Being within 6 feet of a person who tested positive, without wearing proper PPE, for more than 15 minutes. This means that if you wear your mask stay 6 feet or more away from each other then we have a very good chance even if someone tests positive.

All children 2 and up must start their day wearing masks, it is our responsibility to keep children safe. Take the time to teach children how to wear a mask throughout the day this is something that you will have to teach over and over again up front but, in the end, they will learn and not need any assistance.

Teach them how to identify when to take their mask off when eating, sleeping and during physical activity. Teach them how to store their masks safely during these timeframes, we purchased small sandwich bags for staff and children to store their masks when not in use. We have seen other creative ways our teachers are teaching children to wear and store masks!



Remember that children with asthma or other respiratory conditions, children who cannot safely wear a mask due to a disability or for medical, developmental or behavioral reasons as specified by parent/guardian and or physician must not wear a mask.

Please Remember:

- Wear a mask at work and in public. 100% consistency is key.
- Maintain proper social distancing at all times.
- Avoid social gatherings, and do not frequent places where social distancing and mask wearing is not being followed.
- If you are a supervisor, make sure members of your team wear a mask and eye protection as appropriate, and that these are always being worn correctly.
- Wash hands frequently and thoroughly.

Designation Renewal System Changes in 2020

On August 27, the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) released three changes to the conditions used to determine whether local Head Start grantees have to compete for continued funding. These changes will not only provide a consistent, stable target for Head Start programs to work toward, they will also encourage programs to approach this work through a quality improvement framework, ensuring the highest level of quality for children in Head Start.

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Here are a few noteworthy highlights:

- Two deficiencies instead of one trigger for competition
- Two fiscal components instead of one (audit finding of going concern still exists and the new component to the fiscal condition is if you have two or more audit findings of material weakness or questioned costs associated with Head Start funds, then that would also trigger a need to compete)
- Established Quality Thresholds (all programs a minimum ES:6-CO:6-IS:3). Quality thresholds do not trigger competition but use thresholds as an opportunity for growth and will receive T/TA
- Removed the bottom 10% criterion from CLASS® condition
- Raised CLASS® competitive thresholds (Triggers for competition now are a 5 for emotional support, a 5 for classroom organization, and instructional support. Up until July 31, 2025, that threshold will be 2.3. So below a 2.3 would be cause to compete. But after Aug. 1, 2025, 2.5 will be implemented)
- High-quality interactions remain important at Head Start
- Importance of strong site leadership to constantly support quality instruction and quality classroom organization
- Regular feedback promotes teacher growth when it comes from site leaders



To learn more about these changes and watch webinars released by the Office of Head Start, [click here.](#)



Fall Updates

From the Deputy Directors- Candice and Michelle

PTC enjoyed spirit week during the week of October 26-30. Children and staff dressed with crazy socks, dressed like cowboys and cowgirls, in sports team attire and had a costume day. The week ended with a drive through trick or treat event. What fun!

Kennedy, St. Augustine, and FDC Early Head Start classes began a new study about bags! The children explored all kinds of bags in varying sizes. The unit ended with using bags to create pumpkins. The pumpkins were combined, and it created the best pumpkin patch in Head Start!

Sherwood head start children went on a nature walk for their Tree Study. They identified different kinds of trees and items that fall from the trees. Leaves, acorns, and pine needles were discovered and analyzed.

Metro head start children learned the finger play 5 Little Pumpkins. They enjoyed acting out the finger play and creating an art project to match the rhyme.

Chicot: Bags and Fall Festivals! The children at Chicot have been learning about bags and all the different things they can do with them. They have looked at different types of bags and decorated bags. Chicot plans to end the week with a socially distant Fall Festival on Friday. The children will decorate pumpkins and play fall games in their classrooms.

Home Based: All positive hope is not lost even though we are currently experiencing a pandemic. The home visitors are working hard enrolling new families in the home-based program. Many families still want to provide high quality education services to their child, and because we offer a home-based program high-quality home-based services are just what our families are receiving.

MCH: The children at MCH are excited about their upcoming Fall Festival! In the spirit of social distancing the children will enjoy fun and games in their individual classrooms.

Southwest: The staff and children at Southwest have enjoyed spirit week. There were several staff who wore their comfy pajamas and dressed up to take part in spirit week!

Congratulations for years of service to the
employee's below:

Tonia Holloway—20 years

Rhonda Perkins—20 years

David Scott—20 years

Latrina Thomspon—20 years

Denise Steen—15 years

Kathy Bubin—10 years

Mary Boykins—5 years

Viola Freeman—5 years

Deana King—5 years

Terri Lloyd—5 years

Allison Martin—5 years

Camia Moore—5 years

Sandra Morales Acevedo—5 years

Charlice Robinson—5 years

Christina Sanders—5 years

Maria Washington—5 years



Hello Team UAMS,

UAMS Head Start teachers and staff had an opportunity to attend a 2-day virtual CLASS training in May. We had several staff to participate in this training. The staff completed 14 hours of Pre-K CLASS observation training and earned 1.4 CEU's . During this 2 day training, participants gained in-depth knowledge of the CLASS Assessment scoring system. Thanks for all that participated in this training.

Please join me in congratulating the following staff for obtaining CLASS reliability: Cassandra Roy, Maria Grasse, Anjacette Harris, Latoya Jackson, Mary Masching, Lajoy Montgomery, Shana Araujo, Linda Cole, and Tracy Lawrence. These ladies have demonstrated proficiency in observing and coding classroom interactions and reliability using CLASS measures.

ReadyRosie is up and running!

We are excited to announce that ReadyRosie invitations have gone out to our families! We have seen a positive response in families getting connected! Each week our Deputy Directors will send out playlists full of awesome modeled moment videos with activities and games for our families to play. This is a great way for connect what we are doing in the classroom to home. You can help us by promoting ReadyRosie with families and encouraging them to follow 3 easy steps! 1 Watch the video, 2 Do the Activity, 3 Share their experience with us!



Zoom, Zoom, Zoom!

We are all using Zoom to connect with families, teach classes, and professional development! If you are in need of support for how to set up a zoom meeting help is available! Hilary Mayfeild, FES at Southwest Head Start has developed a step by step guide to help walk you through the process. If you need a copy of the guide please email Jennifer Pinkston (JPinkston2@uams.edu) to request a copy. Thank you to Hilary for putting this resource together for our staff!

Policy Council Update

Thank you to all of the sites that have elected Policy Council Members for the 2020-2021 school year. This year Policy Council Meetings will be held virtually. We will be working with the new members to determine the best dates and times for those meetings. The Policy Council is very important to UAMS Head Start/Early Head Start! We value parent feedback and participation in our program! Serving on the Policy Council is a way for parents to learn advocating skills, develop a deeper understanding of Head Start and also to share information on behalf of families in our program!

Human Resource Connection



September / October



This month we have had interviews for Teacher and FES positions. We are happy to announce we have 3 new teachers and 2 FES staff who will join our Head Start Family.

Jasmine Taylor – Early Head Start

Jasmine Scott – Early Head Start

Alexis Gaston – Head Start

Yazmin Santillan – FES

Jessica Diaz Barriga – FES

Performance evaluations are one of the most important communication tools an organization can use. They need not be complicated; they need to be done and the employee should receive a copy after both employee and supervisor has signed and dated. A copy is given to the HR Manager for the individuals personnel file. Performance evaluations benefit both employee and employer. It is a time to provide feedback, recognize quality performance and set expectations for future job performance. It is also a time to have candid conversations about performance that is lacking and how performance can be improved. Ongoing performance discussions can assist in avoiding serious problems in the future.

A few basic tips make evaluations successful. Conduct evaluations on all employees on a regular schedule, at least annually, so employees know it is a regular part of their employment. Prepare in advance looking back at the employees' performance over the entire review period so you can discuss their performance in a meaningful way. Give employee notice so they can also be prepared to discuss issues or concerns. Share the floor by allowing the employee equal time to talk. Don't dread the process, enjoy the opportunity to talk with your employees about how both. Always remember to share the positive interactions or work the employee has shown over the school year.

“Children have more need of models than critics”

Joubert

UPDATE

Communication and Quality Assurance Updates:

Please join me in wishing Jamie Mullins the best as she transitions to a new job. She has been a great asset to our program. We are in the process of hiring 2 new Admin Assistants who will assist with HR and Technology/Social Media.

TSG Updates:

If you have children who need to be removed from TSG, please submit a request to your Ed. Leader with the children's names to the Internal Help Desk. Thank you everyone for not adding children or classrooms to TSG. Things have been running very smoothly this year.

Hatch Updates:

1. Please remember to wipe down Hatch tablets and headphones between children using them.

You can check each child's status on Hatch, by going to the reports at www.hatchearlychildhood.com and entering your email and password. You can access this website from your Hatch tablet, surface pro, desktop computer or iPad.

If you have any children that are not showing up in your class list on Hatch, please have your supervisor put in an Internal Help Desk request for me to add them. Thank you for continuing not to add your own children to the devices.

How to Help Parents with Hatch:

If you have parents who need help with Hatch follow these steps to help them:

1. Have them check their email inbox and junk/spam folder for an email from Hatch.
2. Make sure their tablet is connected to their Wifi.
3. Use their email address and the password from Hatch to log into their Hatch tablet.
4. If they can't find the email, please find out their email address and let me know, so I can make sure it matches what we have in the system. I will then resend them an invite.

*Note Parents can also access Zoom from the Hatch tablet to participate in virtual meetings and learning.

Surface Pros:

As you know, our Surface Pros are very delicate. Please take extra caution when using them in the classroom. Due to limited numbers, I cannot guarantee that I will have an additional Surface Pro if yours gets broken.

MyPeers:

There was great use of MyPeers during school closure. Please feel free to continue using MyPeers. You can join additional communities to network and learn.

Recorded Trainings:

I will be sending out updated lists of recorded Zoom trainings to Managers. These trainings are available for you to watch anytime if you need a refresher or missed a training. Please also use these to onboard any new staff.

MBI:

We are planning to start having monthly MBI meetings virtually to discuss the data. Be on the lookout for an invite!

ChildPlus:

I am planning to start having monthly ChildPlus Users Group Sessions. I'd like a representative from each center to join us virtually to discuss any programmatic issues and address training needs. Dates to be determined.

Enrollment Update:

While engaging with families, please avoid answering questions on enrollment. Specifically around vacancies in classrooms and centers. All enrollment discussions and decisions need to be referred to Cugini Madison, Enrollment Program Specialist. Please forward any families questions about enrollment openings or availability to her. Remind all parents when they complete an application they will be put on the waitlist which is prioritized based on the needs of the family.

THANK YOU!

We Love Head Start and Social Media

Our Head Start/Early Head Start program now has a Facebook account AND a Twitter account!!! Follow us on Facebook at UAMS Head Start/Early Head Start and on Twitter at UAMS Head Start. We make posts daily and will keep staff and families updated on what is going on at Head Start and Early Head Start.

We encourage staff and families to share your Head Start stories with us. We want to hear how our programs have made a positive impact on your life and/or your child's life. You can share your stories on either of our social media accounts.



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