



Staff and Family Newsletter, Summer 2021

## A Message from the Director

A year ago, COVID-19 was declared a worldwide pandemic and forever changed our lives. This past year or so has put into perspective the resiliency of UAMS Head Start staff, children and families. There are many lessons learned but most of all, we learned that any challenge we face can be handled when you have dedicated people willing to take things on, bounce back and persevere.



As with many schools, we too have had our share of short-term closures and staff/children in quarantine. We will continue to follow strict health and safety measures including masks, hand washing, sanitizing etc. throughout the summer and into the fall.

Speaking of fall, we look forward to August! As we prepare for the upcoming school year the intention is to return to as close to normal classroom sizes (following CDC recommendation of three feet apart) and services. Recruitment is in full force for both Head Start and Early Head Start Center Based and Home-Based program options.

At this time, we have decided not to offer virtual services unless schools/classrooms must close for any natural disasters or quarantine. The Office of Head Start has made it clear to grantees that all programs will need to offer in-person services for children/families. Word of mouth from our community and parents is our best recruitment tool, please help us get the word out that we are now taking applications for the 2021-2022 school year, you can visit us at <https://headstart.uams.edu/>.

This year and a half has been challenging and we are eternally grateful to our dedicated staff, families and community for their resiliency and commitment to our program! We hope everyone has a safe and relaxing summer break!

*Tyra Larkin*

Program Director

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# Education: Summer Learning Activities

The 2020-2021 school year has ended and students are on summer vacation. During this time of fun and relaxation, we want to encourage parents and children to keep their brains active during the summer! Our Education and PFCE Team put together summer


learning packets full of learning games, reading activities and resources to keep students actively engaged during the summer months. Some material included in the packets: Summer Resource Guide, ReadyRosie flyer with

playlist, & Summer Soar Gameboard. As well as being fun, the activities included in the packets promote playful investigation, and learning. These activities are perfect for keeping children learning all summer long.





## Kindergarten Readiness Indicator Checklist for Parents



**Arkansas's Definition of School Readiness:** School ready children have the social and academic knowledge, skills and behaviors for school success and lifelong learning. School readiness occurs when families, schools and communities support and serve ALL children, so they are successful in school and in life. This list of indicators identifies skills, knowledge and behaviors that will help your child be prepared for that special day – going to kindergarten. The checklist is NOT a test. It is a tool that you can use to help your child make the transition to kindergarten.

**SOCIAL & EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

- ☐ Separates from caregiver to another trusted adult
- ☐ Shares, takes turns and plays cooperatively with other children
- ☐ Expresses basic emotions such as happy, sad, mad or scared
- ☐ Responds sympathetically to others' distress with words and actions
- ☐ Recognizes similarities and differences in self and others (for example, boy or girl, hair and skin color)

**COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT**

- ☐ Is curious, interested and willing to try new things
- ☐ Completes a task such as working a puzzle
- ☐ Adapts to new situations
- ☐ Focuses and pays attention during an activity such as story time
- ☐ Engages in memory games such as "What's Missing" and simple memory matching card games

☐ Uses number- and letter-like forms and/or drawings to represent ideas or feelings

**PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT & HEALTH**

- ☐ Gallops, slides, hops, leaps and skips
- ☐ Steers a tricycle, balances on beam or sandbox edge
- ☐ Catches a ball with both hands
- ☐ Tosses or throws balls
- ☐ Kicks moving ball while running
- ☐ Pours liquids without spilling and builds with Legos® or blocks
- ☐ Uses a 3-point finger grip on pencil, crayon or paintbrush
- ☐ Makes a variety of lines and shapes such as C, \_ , +, □ and △
- ☐ Uses scissors correctly to cut simple shapes and pictures
- ☐ Buttons, zips, laces and buckles

☐ Names a variety of foods and begins to classify food items as either fruits or vegetables


☐ Is aware of safe behavior and follows basic safety rules and routines

☐ Takes responsibility for personal self-care routines such as hand washing, brushing teeth, dressing and toileting

☐ Can express own health needs such as, "I'm hungry," "My head hurts," and "I'm tired"

**LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT**

- ☐ Understands an increasing number and variety of words for objects, for actions, and to describe things
- ☐ Comprehends who, what, why and where questions
- ☐ Performs up to three-step directions
- ☐ Uses four- to six-word sentences
- ☐ Tells increasingly detailed stories or ideas
- ☐ Communicates clearly enough to be understood by most people
- ☐ Takes turns in conversation with others
- ☐ Responds to the English language
- ☐ Speaks and expresses self in English



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Adapted by the Arkansas Early Childhood Commission on 1/17/17

Click here to visit our Resource Library. You'll find activities and tips to help you prepare your child for life.

We also included the Kindergarten Readiness Indicator Checklist for Parents (English & Spanish) so parents can continue working with transitioning students during the summer break.


Click on the checklist to open a larger version.

## Child Tax Credit

Did you know that the expanded Child Tax Credit could potentially cut infant-toddler poverty by 43 percent? Take action today to help make it happen. Following passage of the American Rescue Plan in March, new monthly payments for families with children are set to begin in July through the expanded Child Tax Credit. The full benefit, set to expire at the end of 2021, is now \$300 per month per child under age 6 and \$250 per month per child between ages 6 and 17. Visit [ChildTaxCredit.gov](https://www.childtaxcredit.gov) for all the information you need on the new Child Tax Credit, including Q&As and easy steps to receive payments.



## The Child Tax Credit



**\$3,000 to \$3,600 per child**  
for nearly all working families



**Automatic monthly payments**  
for nearly all working families

[CHILDTAXCREDIT.GOV](https://www.childtaxcredit.gov)



# Enrollment 2021-2022

Registration for the 2021-2022 school year is open. You can apply at our website <https://headstart.uams.edu/for-families/enroll/> or pick up a paper application from one of our sites.

**Please note: if you have applied to our program before for any of your children, you will need to complete a paper application for this year.** You will not be able to complete an online application. You can find

applications to print on our website or stop by any of our locations to pick on up.

We serve children 6 weeks to 5 years old and Pregnant Women.

The UAMS Early Head Start Pregnant Women program helps families by providing quality prenatal and postnatal education to expectant mothers and their new babies using the Partners for a Healthy Baby Curriculum and assisting pregnant women in obtaining prenatal care.

The Early Head Start Home Based Program helps families provide quality early childhood education to their children through interactive child development activities including: weekly home visits, family events, and comprehensive services.



Infant in our Home-Based Program exploring textures.

## Health Team Announcements

# Preventative Health

It 's summer time, but that doesn't mean that you can't prepare for next year. Parent's, be sure to schedule your child's physical and dental exam for the new school year as soon as possible. It is vital that you get these completed because it helps our program continue to be funded and ensures we are serving all children and families properly.

## Vaccinations

For any families or staff who want to be vaccinated, but are having issues finding sites or transportation, **you can text**

**your ZIP Code to 438829 to find Covid19 vaccine sites near you.** The reply message will even ask if you need a ride!

## Car Seats

If you are in need of a car seat for your child and do not have the funds to get one, you can call the safety Division at Arkansas Children's Hospital at 501 364-3400 and leave your name and number and say that you need a car seat and they will schedule you an appointment to come and get your child fitted with the most appropriate seat for your child

at no cost to you.

We hope that you have a safe summer and can't wait to see all of you in the fall!

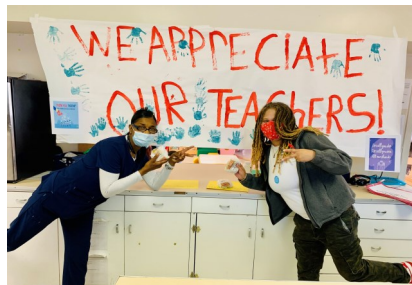
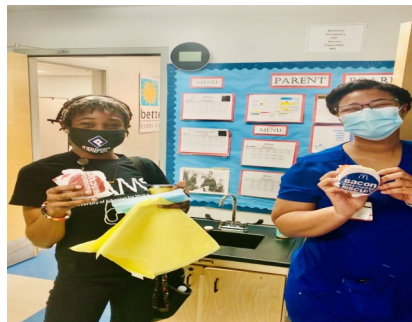




# Teacher Appreciation Week

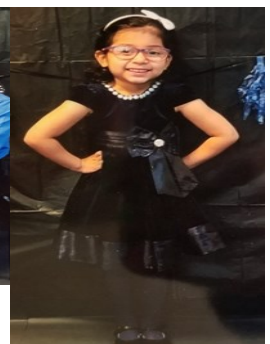
Teacher Appreciation week was celebrated from May 2—8. During the week, staff were provided breakfast, lunch, and other surprises from our sites to show how they are valued for all of the incredible work that they do for our children and families.

Please thank the hardworking staff at your child's program next time you see them. They put their heart into working with you, your child and your family.



## Transition to Kindergarten

This is a very bittersweet time of year. Many children and families that we have grown to know through their time in our program are moving on as they transition to Kindergarten. We are so proud of you and wish you well.



4 and 5 Year Old's celebrate their transition from Head Start to Kindergarten.

## Stay Up to Date

Follow us on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/UAMSheadstart](https://www.facebook.com/UAMSheadstart)

to stay up to date with community resources, announcements, and special events.



You can also follow go to our website at [headstart.uams.edu](https://headstart.uams.edu) for all the updates, announcements, and upcoming events.

