S·A·L COMMUNITY SERVICES

Early Head Start
Child Care Partnership

Newsletter



February 2024 | Early Head Start Child Care Partnership

Cozy Fun at Home

We all know that winter is a great time to stay home, grab a book and snuggle down. But what activities can you do with your child when it's too cold to go outside?

Sensory Bins: Fill a bin with water, sand, toys, cups, stuffed animals, or other items for sensory exploration and play.

Indoor Snowball Fight: Crumple up junk mail into "snowballs" and enjoy throwing them together. You can use a trash can or bucket and encourage your child to try and make a "basket". This also helps develop your child's motor skills!

Cook Together: Let your child help you cook a meal or snack. Can they dump the ingredients into the bowl or help your stir? Cooking builds relationships and memories together while still getting your errands done! Win-win!

Policy Council Spotlight

We would like to thank and congratulate Policy Council Vice President and EHS Parent Nicole Carroll for attending the Head Start Conference in New Orleans in December 2023.



She spent the week learning about child development and how we can improve our EHS program.

Thank you, Nicole!

DadVentures Group

Did you know that Early Head Start hosts a father-figure activity group every other month called DadVentures?

All male identifying EHS caregivers are invited to bring their children and attend the group for fun activities, dinner, and getting to know other Dads in the community.

If you're an Early Head Start parent interested in attending DadVentures, talk to your Family Advocate for information.

Contact Us

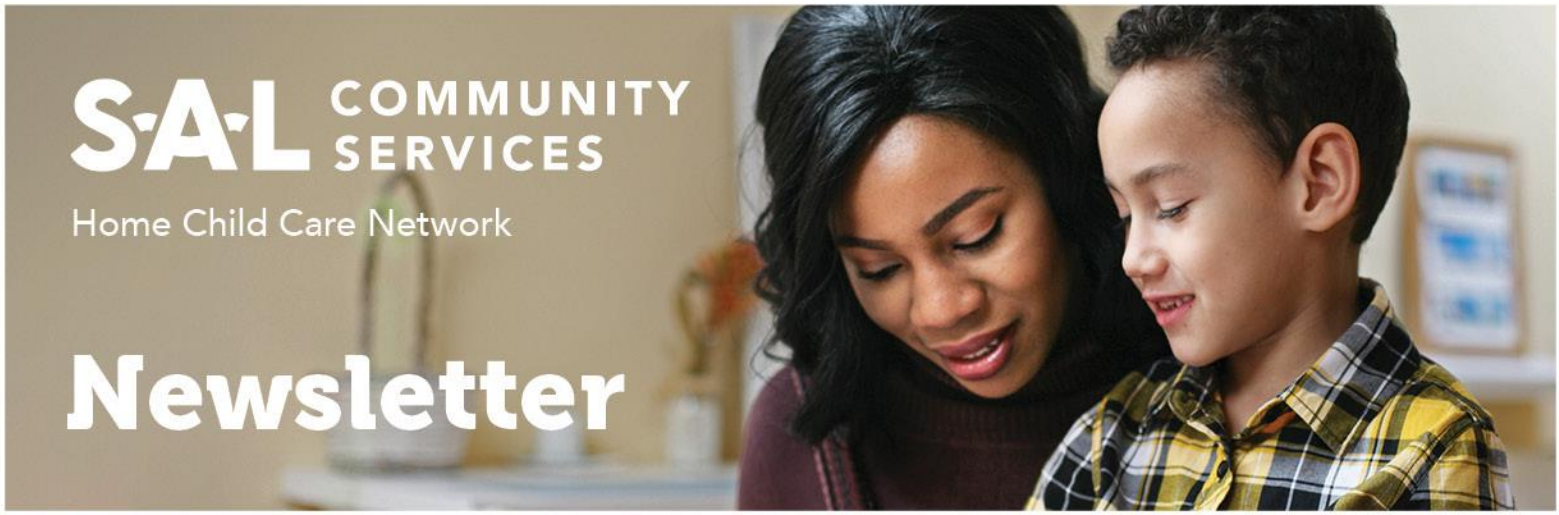
SAL's Early Head Start Child Care Partnership

3800 Avenue of the Cities, Suite #108 | Moline, IL 61265

www.salcommunityservices.org/ehs | (309) 787-9460

We are hiring!

Visit www.salcommunityservices.org/jobs for more info.



February 2024 | Home Child Care Network

Let's Talk About Teeth

February is National Children's Dental Health Month. It is important to teach proper oral hygiene at a young age because children are at a higher risk for cavities and tooth decay.

According to the US Department of Health and Human Services by age 5 about 60% of children will be affected by tooth decay. It is recommended that a child sees their dentist by age 1 or within 6 months of their first tooth.

Here are some simple tips to remember and share with your children from the American Dental Association:

1. Brush your teeth 2x/day with fluoride toothpaste.
2. Clean between your teeth daily with floss.
3. Eat healthy foods and limit sugary beverages.
4. See your dentist at least twice a year.

Red Light, Green Light!

Staying active during the winter months is difficult when the children cannot go outside but it is still important to get them moving.

February is Black History Month; a fun way to celebrate is by playing red light, green light.

African American Garret Morgan was the great mind who invented the automatic stop light!

Did you know, the original stop light only had green and red lights? It wasn't until many years later that a yellow light was added.

Mix N' Squish Hearts

The month of February is filled with lots of hearts. Try this simple and mess free activity!

- Take a zip lock bag and draw a heart on it with permanent marker.
- Then add 2-3 different colors of paint on the inside.
- Close and seal the bag shut.
- Allow the child to squish and mix the paints together.



We Are Accepting New Providers!!

SAL Community Services Home Child Care Network
3800 Avenue of the Cities, Suite #108 | Moline, IL 61265
(309) 764-8192 | www.salcommunityservices.org

We are currently accepting new providers into SAL's Home Child Care Network for the following counties: Rock Island, Knox, Henry, Bureau, Peoria, Tazewell, Stark, Woodford, Fulton, Putnam, and Marshall. For current participating Home Child Care Network providers, if you make a referral and they are signed into the Network you will receive a $200 bonus!



February 2024 | Prevention Initiative

Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD)

What is seasonal affective disorder?
During specific months of the year, some people experience negative, depressive symptoms such as feeling hopeless, irritable, and anxious. Other symptoms include changes in sleep, appetite, and energy levels. There are a wide variety of symptoms that can occur, but the critical factors involved with this disorder are that symptoms impair the individual's ability to function regularly and occur during a certain time of the year.

When does this occur?
It may come as a surprise, but this can occur during the winter months or the summer months! Winter-pattern SAD is more common and more researched than summer-pattern SAD, but both patterns do occur.

Why do people experience this?
Based on research, this disorder is a result of changes in levels of serotonin, vitamin D, and or melatonin. Shorter daylight hours in winter months can cause vitamin D to decrease. Decreased serotonin levels are shown to occur in both winter and summer pattern. Melatonin levels may increase or decrease, resulting in too much or too little sleep during certain months of the year.

What can you do improve the effects of seasonal affective disorder?
Vitamin D supplementation, light therapy, antidepressant medication, and psychotherapy are all treatment options. Self-care activities are also critical in reducing the negative symptoms experienced with this disorder.

Information provided by
Joe Martens, PI Mental Heath Specialist

Family Activities

In partnership with SAL Early Head Start, SAL Prevention Initiative will be hosting a Literacy Event on Saturday, February 10, 2024, at the Moline Public Library. The literacy event will be held from 10:30am-12:30pm.

We invite all Prevention Initiative families to join us. Please RSVP to your child's teacher/provider. We look forward to seeing you.

Establish Healthy Habits as a Family

Some ways to promote healthy habits with your children:

- Create a regular routine for your family. Routine bedtime schedule, brushing teeth, reading, mealtimes, nap times.
- When it comes to meals: Be a role model for healthy eating, encourage your children to be involved with meal preparation, let them set the table.
- Give choices when possible (ex. Do you want an apple or a banana?). Make sure they are choices you are okay with.
- Encourage everyone to be active when possible. Jumping Jacks, pushups, sit-ups.

Contact us

SAL Community Services Prevention Initiative
3800 Avenue of the Cities, Ste. 108 | Moline, IL 61265
309-764-3724

Monday - Friday
8 a.m. – 4 p.m.

SKIP-A-LONG CHILDHOOD CENTERS

PART OF S-A-L COMMUNITY SERVICES

Newsletter



February 2024 | Skip-a-Long Childhood Center - Moline

Staff Spotlight

Erica



Hello, my name is Erika Martinez. I am a teacher in the Monkey's classroom. I work with children ages two to three years old. I have been working at Skip-a-Long Childhood Center for just over 2 years.

My favorite part of engaging and working with two-year-old children is watching their language skills and growth in development (such as fine motor, social, and emotional) continue to progress.

In my free time, I enjoy hiking with my dog, raising chickens, and spending time with my family.

Favorite quote:
"Be there for others, but never leave yourself behind."
~Dodinsky

News from Director

Eating Right
How Parents Can Teach Their Children Good Eating Habits

The best way to encourage healthy eating is by setting a good example. You can offer fresh foods to avoid preservatives and all the added salt, sugar, and fat often found in processed foods. You can also plan for the family to eat together at home as often as possible.

More ideas:

1) Offer a variety of foods and let your child help with food choice and preparation.
2) Encourage your child to try new foods.
3) Serve small portion sizes, with seconds available.

Classroom Feature

Puggles



It looks like Malcolm and Adalynn are thoroughly enjoying their spaghetti, green beans, and applesauce!

Mealtime is not only about good nutrition but includes socialization with peers and teachers.

You can also clearly see they are working hard on their fine motor skills.

Contact Us

Skip-a-Long Childhood Center – Moline

Monday through Friday
7:00 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.
Phone: 309-764-8110 | Fax: 309-764-8281

Please contact the center prior to 9:30 a.m. if your child will be absent.



February 2024 | Skip-a-Long Childhood Center – Davenport

Staff Spotlight

Meet Isabella



Please join us in welcoming one of our new assistant teachers at Skip-a-Long Childhood Center – Davenport!

Isabella (Izzy) joined our Front Ducks team in November 2023. Izzy was born and raised in Bettendorf but recently moved back after living in Chicago for some time.

She has a beautiful black lab mix, Bentley. She enjoys spending time with family, weightlifting, and reading.

News from Director

Outdoor play in Winter

Playing outside in autumn, winter, and early spring, each present their own unique opportunities for exploration and learning. Therefore, outdoor play should be embraced in all types of weather, as it is crucial for children's ongoing development.

Through outdoor play in the winter, children learn to see their environment through a different lens. Changes in weather give children a chance to experience different environments and practice different physical skills.

Here's some fun ideas of activities you can do with your children outside during these cold winter months! https://extension.psu.edu/programs/betterkidcare/content-areas/environment-curriculum/activities/all-activities/outdoor-play-on-winter-days

Classroom Feature

Dragonflies

Our PreK room has been enjoying spending time outside exploring the snow!



Contact Us

Skip-a-Long Childhood Centers - Davenport
3520 Crow Creek Road | Davenport, IA 52807
Phone: (563) 441-9998 Fax: (563) 424-6650
Email: jilll@skip-a-long.org

Follow us on Facebook



February 2024 | Skip-a-Long Childhood Center - Milan

New Staff Spotlight

Welcome, Ivy!



Hello, my name is Ivy! I am currently enrolled in the Child Development Associate program.

I am the oldest of six children and I have many cousins. I have always loved working with children.

I am so excited to be here at Skip-a-Long Childhood Center in Milan!

In my spare time I like to draw, write, play video games, do yoga and go hiking. I like to spend most of my free time with my kitty Prompto.

From the Director

Hello Everyone,

Winter often finds our children antsy from spending a great deal of time indoors. There are several items that you have around your house that can be used for boredom busters.

Rolled up socks for snowballs. Make an obstacle course. Have a scavenger hunt. Build a fort out of blankets. Use masking tape to make a hopscotch or tick tac toe. Fill a tub with snow and bring inside. Add bath toys. Have a great month!

Jessica Carlson
Director

Classroom Feature



The Ladybugs were learning about farm and farm animals. We read books, did farm related artwork, and explored in a corn and farm animal sensory bin.

Two-year-olds do best when the play has no set routine, and they can explore freely in a safe and loving environment.

Contact Us

Skip-a-Long Childhood Center-Milan
1800 West 1st Street | Milan, IL
Phone: (309)787-6303

www.facebook.com/skipalongchildhoodcenters

SKIP-A-LONG CHILDHOOD CENTERS

PART OF S-A-L COMMUNITY SERVICES

Newsletter



February 2024 | Skip-a-Long Childhood Center – Rock Island

News from Director

Regulation Strategies for Young Children

When practiced regularly, regulation strategies can enhance capacity for emotional regulation in the brain making it easier to return to a regulated state when big feelings happen.

Just Breathe: The simple act of taking deep breaths sends signals to the brain and body for calm and regulation.
Co-regulated breath: Sit close to child to match the rate and pattern of a child's breathing and then gradually begin to take deeper and slower breaths as the child's breath follows your lead.

Breath through play:
•Bubbles- Who can blow the biggest bubble? Breath needs to be long and slow.
•Blow a long note on a musical instrument
•Pinwheel – Keep it spinning using a count: Breath 1, 2, 3 blow 4, 5, 6.
•Cotton ball and straw- Take a deep breath in and blow cotton ball down a long table. Can you get it across the finish line?

Guided Breathing:
Rainbow breathing: Breath in- arms go up straight overhead; breathe out – arms go down to your sides making a rainbow

Child and adult lay on floor with stuffed animal on their belly. Breath in and out and watch animal rise and fall.

Birthday Breathing: Smell the yummy birthday cake baking - Breath in through your nose; blow out the candles – Breath through your mouth

Daniel Educational Services. 2022
www.DanielEducationalServices.com

Staff Spotlight



Hi, my name is Angel Winfrey. I am from Chicago, but moved to Rock Island for a better future for me and my 4 children.

Having my own children and seeing them grow has sparked my interest in child care. I am a new staff member at Skip-a-Long. Since I've been working here, I have truly been blessed. I love taking care of children and learning new things every day.

For me, this is a wonderful opportunity, and I am thankful and grateful for it all.

Classroom Feature: Blue Room

Bundle Up and Get Outside:
Why Kids Should Play Outdoors in Winter

When the weather drops into the single digits, it is common for parents to want their children to stay indoors to play. Before you go and curse the cold weather for keeping your playful children indoors all winter, let's consider the benefits that cold weather has when it comes to children's health, development, and well-being.

After the change in season or the first snowfall, children view their environment through a different lens: fallen leaves, brown grass, snow, ice. This new lens enables them to imagine the outdoors differently and to be creative and play in different ways. Check out this article to find other benefits.

https://www.fix.com/blog/keep-kids-playing-outdoors-in-winter/



Contact Us

Skip-a-Long Childhood Center – Rock Island
1609 4th Street Rock Island, IL 61201
Phone: (309) 788-0426 | Fax: (309) 788-8727

Email: pata@skip-a-long.org



February 2024 | Child Care Connection of Central Illinois

Code for America

Who is Code for America?
We are a nonprofit technology firm that works with community organizations to **build digital tools and services, change policies, and improve programs that alleviate poverty and advance equity.**

Why are we working in Illinois?
We are working with the Illinois Department of Human services (IDHS) and the Illinois community to build a **best-in-class online application experience** for the child care assistance program (CCAP) that is **simple, accessible, and easy for families and providers to use.**

Our goal is for the web application to complement the existing paper form with an online and mobile-friendly version which can be completed in 20 minutes or less, is accessible in plain language, is multilingual, and where it's easy to upload any required eligibility or supporting documentation.

We are also hoping to reduce the time and labor required by eligibility specialists when processing applications.

CCAP News

The team at **Child Care Connection of Central Illinois** continues to work diligently at maintaining date of mail processing at 12 business days or below.

During the months of November and December, the CCAP Department experienced processing delays that exceeded 12 business days and we understand that this can cause hardships to families and providers.

It is our number one priority to review and make eligibility determination on CCAP documents quickly and correctly.

Our Statewide System

Did you know?
The system of Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies is comprised of 16 service delivery areas covering all 102 counties, supporting families, providers and communities.

Strengthening Families, Providers, and Communities
CCR&R
Representing 16 Local Agencies Across Illinois
Child Care Resource and Referral System

The Illinois Department of Human Services has selected the CCR&R System to be the hubs of technical assistance and support to licensed homes and centers applying for the Smart Start Work Force Grants.

Contact Us

SAL Child Care Connection of Central Illinois
Resource and Referral Service
3425 N. Dries Lane, Peoria Il 61604
309-686-3750 1-800-421-4371
Email: Hello@salccc.org

Monday – Friday 8:00 am – 4:00 pm



S-A-L COMMUNITY SERVICES

Child Care Resource & Referral of Midwestern Illinois

Newsletter

February 2024 | Child Care Resource & Referral of Midwestern Illinois

Email/Fax Updates

When a client or provider sends our office a document using email or fax, they will need to wait until the next business day if they wish to confirm the document has been successfully received by our office.

Documents received by our office must be logged and scanned by our support staff into state systems in the order they are received. This process typically occurs right away, but it can take until the following business day for any mail (including emails and faxes) to be logged and scanned. Until the document is logged and scanned, an Eligibility Specialist cannot efficiently access or review the document to confirm it is complete and legible.

As faxing can be unreliable, our office recommends our clients and providers use email to submit any documents.

Our office strongly encourages our clients and providers to submit all required documents well before the date the documents are due to avoid processing delays and ensure documents are complete and legible.

Time-sensitive documents should be submitted in person to our Moline Office, located at:
3800 Avenue of the Cities, Suite 102
Moline, IL 61265

Payment Updates

To allow our Eligibility Specialists to best utilize their time processing documents, our office will no longer look up payment information for providers unless it has been more than 5 business days since a billing certificate was issued.

Providers may call the payment hotline (800-804-3833) or go to www.illinoiscomptroller.gov to get information about any of their payments. Providers who believe there is an error in their processed payment should call our office to confirm the payment's accuracy.

After 5 business days, if the provider still does not have an update on their payment, they may contact our office at that time.

Dress for Success

A common phrase in the child care world is "There is no such thing as bad weather for outdoor play, just inappropriate clothing." The recent snowstorms in our area, however, appear to challenge that idea. While winter can be a wonderful time for children to explore the changes of the season, outdoor play can pose unique challenges for both families and child care providers.

It is important for families to have appropriate clothing for their children to safely explore the outdoors, even if only for brief periods at a time. For more extreme cold, children should be bundled in layers.

This winter season, please keep your children dressed for success.

February Training: Engaging in Engagement

Our office is inviting child care providers to join us in February for a very special training. This workshop will explore ways to create a positive and nurturing environment for children that promotes growth and development inside the classroom using engagement.

Engaging in Engagement
Date: 02/20/2024 (registration deadline 02/20/2024, 12:00am)
Time: 6 to 8 p.m.
Location: Zoom



February 2024 | Welcoming Center

Upcoming Events

SAL Community Services Welcoming Center hosts a monthly workshop for immigrants, refugees, and English language learners (ELL).

Each month, the workshop covers a different topic.

In January, Mrs. Loredia Nunn-Dixon, Director of SAL Welcoming Center, presented a workshop on Steps to Become United States Citizen.

The SAL Welcoming Center also hosts a monthly diaper give away for our immigrant and refugee families.

To learn more about the SAL Welcoming Center or monthly workshops, please call our office at (309) 793-8201.



New Staff Member

SAL Community Services Welcoming Center is excited to announce the return of a staff member to our team. The staff members bring a wealth of experience in immigrant and refugee services, and we are thrilled to have her join our team, again.

Please join us in welcoming **Karen** to the SAL Community Services Welcoming Center team!

News to Know

Thanks to the generous support of our community and our partnership with Modern Woodmen of America for the Winter Clothing Drive, our immigrant and refugee families received coats for the winter season.



Contact Us

SAL Community Services Welcoming Center
1609 4th Street | Building 2
Rock Island, IL 61201
(309) 793-8201

Partner with IDHS