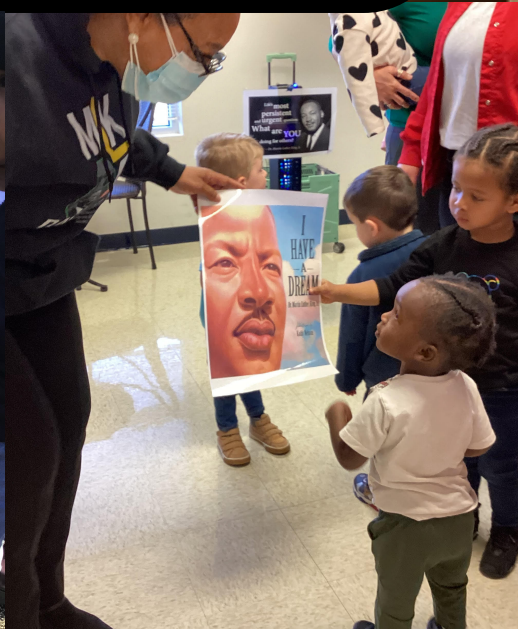
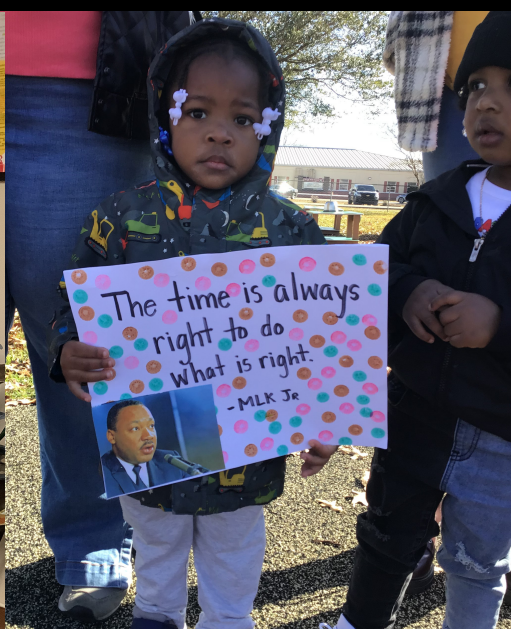




# FEBRUARY 2025 NEWSLETTER

Picayune School District Early Childhood Programs





# EHS – EHS-CCP Education

Greetings from the desk of the Early Head Start Educational Staff,

As we enter the month of February, we want to share some exciting dates and reminders for you! We hope your child's educational experience with us thus far has been wonderful! Your involvement in your child's educational journey is of the utmost importance and we are grateful for your continued commitment to their growth and development. Our Winter assessment period has come to a close, so be looking for your child's teacher to be getting with you to set up this year's second Home Visit!

We are half way through the school year and our children are learning so much, including how to communicate with others. Learning to communicate is a unique process and specific to each infant, toddler and family. Effective communication and language skills are important to young children's self expression, their development of social relationships, and to their learning. Foundations for these skills begin during the earliest of months and years after birth. When families and caregivers engage in and sustain interactions based on an infant's or toddler's development and interests, they help strengthen their role as a partner in communication.

In infants and toddlers, language development is often best done through the use of play. Here are some fun and interactive language activities you can use at home to develop your child's skills:

**Sing Songs:** From "Itsy, Bitsy Spider" to "Wheels on the Bus", children love singing simple songs and nursery rhymes. Not only do they provide some great family bonding time, but songs can build vocabulary and help children learn and recognize the natural rhythm of speech. Best of all, there are so many opportunities to break up boring activities with enjoyable songs, such as during long car rides or bath time.

**Play the Telephone Game:** This favorite game should be an active part of playtime. You can get a toy phone or, if you are feeling ambitious, make and decorate one to appeal to your child's imagination. Pretend that the phone is ringing and have your child "answer". Whether they are just babbling into the receiver, or using simple language like "hello", this activity will help set the foundation for early conversation skills.

**Label Objects:** It is important to remember that everyday activities, such as going for a walk, brushing teeth, and prepping for bed, are all opportunities to incorporate language. One simple way to do this is to name objects in your environment and have your child practice repeating new words. While you don't want to overwhelm your child with new vocabulary every waking moment, try to find opportunities to introduce them to themed or categorized words in each location. For example, next time you go to the grocery store, focus on labeling fruits or vegetables. Or, if you go outside for a nature walk, point to different types of plants or wildlife.

**Curl up with a book:** Children take the first steps toward reading and writing in infancy, so it's important to establish a reading routine and build good habits what will last a lifetime. Make reading fun by choosing books that are enjoyable and stimulate their imagination. Make sure to point to and label the pictures. You can even ask questions throughout the book, "What do you think may happen next?". This will improve your child's comprehension and expand their vocabulary.

If your child has started to speak, encourage them to respond in full sentences when you ask them a simple question. This will help your child string words together and better express their thoughts.

Thank you for your continued support and partnership in your child's education!

Early Head Start and CCP Education Team  
Charlotte Nixon, EHS Education Manager  
Tonya Spiers, NEHS Education Manager  
Robette Watts, CCP Education Manager

# TEACHERS OF THE MONTH



Cathy Lilles, CDA  
EHS Rosa Site



Mauna Burkett, A.A.  
EHS Rosa Site



Faith Burns, CDA  
Annie's Kindergarten & Daycare



Lynn McCrory, CDA  
EHS Nicholson



Heidi Roberts, CDA  
Picayune Head Start

# EDUCATION – HS/PRE-K

Dear Head Start and Pre-K Families,

Young children love to draw and create, but often get frustrated by their inability to produce something that resembles the vision in their head. Their art becomes representational – it morphs into something else entirely. A piece of "Process Art" is created. Process Art is exactly what you think – it's all about the process and not the finished product. It doesn't have to resemble anything you've ever seen before. Process Art is developmentally appropriate for preschoolers and Kindergarteners who have yet to acquire the fine motor skills and self-awareness to represent objects accurately. You can encourage Process Art at home with your child by offering a variety of tools and materials such as colored paper, recyclables, scissors, glue, tape, paint, yarn, crayons, clay, etc.

It is February so it is the perfect time to create a work of art with your child to give to their friends. There is no better way to receive a Valentine than to receive a handmade creation made with love. Your child will enjoy making it and their friends will be so happy when they receive it. When you're preparing Valentine's Day crafting with your child, set up an open-ended process art experience that allows your child to make choices and feel creative. Here is how you can make Process Art Valentine's Cards with your child:

Look at examples of Valentine's Cards or read a book about Valentine's Day.

- Set up some basic Valentine's materials – Doilies, Red and Pink Paper, Glitter, Glue
- Scissors, and/or Markers.
- Provide materials in a color scheme that will make the end product look cohesive (red, pink, white, and silver).
- See where it takes you without prescribing how the child should make their card.
- Gift them, hang them, or repurpose them.

Finally, we would like to congratulate our Teacher of the Month, Heidi Roberts, from Picayune Head Start! We appreciate all of your hard work and dedication. Thank you for all that you do!

Ashley Veerkamp, Education Manager  
Dinah Thanars, Teacher Mentor Coach  
LaKeshia Price, Teacher Mentor Coach

# ERSEA

Dear Parents,

The ERSEA service area is currently coordinating dates for the re-enrollment process for students returning next school year, as well as those transitioning from Early Head Start to Head Start. We have sent home transition packets containing the necessary forms for the health services area. Included in the packet is Kaylin Richards' business card with her contact information to assist you with providing updated income documentation (such as your SNAP card, tax forms, check stubs, etc.).

Please also remember that if there have been any changes to your child's original birth certificate, Social Security card, or Medicaid card, or if you don't have a copy, you will need to order one and provide us with a copy. Thank you for your attention to this important process. Wishing you happy holidays filled with love, joy, and warmth!

Your ERSEA Coordinators  
EHS/CCP: Jhoanny Vargas, M.S.  
HS/PreK: Kaylin Richard, B.S

## Family Service Department February 2025 Newsletter

Family Service department thrive to keep our families informed of upcoming events, important dates and resources that can support the child's development and enhance family engagement. It is my privilege to update you with the Family Service edition of the newsletter.

### Spotlight

Congratulation, **Candis Murray** on receiving your certificate from **Hema Phlebotomy Training School** in "Phlebotomy", Picayune Early Head Start and thank you for your accomplishment. Keep striving for a better future.

**SHOUT OUT to Mr. Ronnie & Ms. Ashante** (Classroom 10) for being Santa and Elf on the Shelf for the students' holiday pictures. We appreciate you all!!!

**SHOUT OUT to Ms. Ashli Herrera** (Classroom 10) for donating books to all of our students at Early Head Start on Rosa Street. We appreciate you!

### In-Kind Totals

EHS	Amount	Head Start	Amount	CCP	Amount
EHS Rosa	9,558.65	Picayune HS	11,409.63	Annie's	6,736.16
NEHS	9,860.29	Poplarville HS	1,495.87	PRCC	844.76
		Pre-K	8,022.90		

### Upcoming Events

- Annie's:** Black History Celebration (3rd)  
Classroom Valentine Party (14th)
- EHS:** Black History Celebration (3rd)  
Classroom Valentine Party (14th)
- NEHS:** (7<sup>th</sup>) American Heart Awareness- Wear (13th) Father/Daughter Dance (TBD)  
(14th) Valentine's Day Classroom Parties (17th - 21st) Black History Dress Up
- PRCC:** (19<sup>th</sup>) 100 Days of School (14<sup>th</sup>) Valentine Party  
Mardi Gras Activities (Shoebbox float contest)
- Poplarville HS:** Valentine Dance Red & White Day Valentine Party (14<sup>th</sup>)  
Mardi Gras Parade
- Picayune HS:** Black History Program (TBA)  
Honoring Heart Association (wear red) (7<sup>th</sup>) Valentine Party (14<sup>th</sup>)
- Pre-K:** Black History Program (TBA)  
Honoring Heart Association (wear red) (7<sup>th</sup>) Valentine Party (14<sup>th</sup>)

### Parent Meeting Information

The purpose of parent meeting is to provide the parents of an enrolled child with the opportunity to receive up-to-date information on all component service of the program and assist in the development, as well as assist in the decision making of program planning. All parents must attend the meetings are have someone to represent in their place.

### Parent Meeting Schedule

- NEHS (February 4, 2025) 4:00 p.m.
- EHS/Annie's (February 4, 2025) 5:00 p.m.
- PRCC (February 5, 2025) 11:00 a.m.
- Poplarville Head Start (February 5, 2025) 4:00 p.m.
- Picayune Head Start (February 6, 2025) 5:00 p.m.



ReGenesis Health Care  
My Family. My Doctor. My Choice.

January is National Birth Defects Prevention Month

HAPPY NEW YEAR! January is Birth Defects Prevention Month. We know that not all birth defects can be prevented. But, you can increase your chances of having a healthy baby by doing what you can to be your healthiest self both before and during pregnancy. What is best for you is also best for your baby.

"Making Healthy Choices to Prevent Birth Defects - Make a PACT for Prevention." We know that not all birth defects can be prevented. But, we also know that women can increase their chances of having a healthy baby by managing health conditions and adopting healthy behaviors before and during pregnancy. Please encourage all pregnant women and those who may become pregnant to make a **PACT** to:

- **P**lan ahead
  - Get as healthy as possible before becoming pregnant.
  - Get 400 micrograms (mcg) of folic acid every day.
- **A**void harmful substances
  - Avoid drinking alcohol, smoking and doing drugs.
  - Be careful with harmful exposures at work and home. (Ex. cleaning products)
- **C**hoose a healthy lifestyle
  - Eat a healthy diet that includes fruits, vegetables, whole grains, low-fat dairy, and lean proteins.
  - Be physically active.
  - Work to get medical conditions like diabetes under control.
- **T**alk to your healthcare provider
  - Get a medical checkup.
  - Discuss all medications, both prescription and over-the-counter.
  - Talk about your family medical history.

Health Team

**Your Health Team**

EHS/CCP Manager: Neterior McCormick, BS, RMA  
 HS/PRE-K Manager: Pamela Frazier, RN  
 Site Nurses: Rosa/Annie's: Yvette Burton, LPN  
 Nicholson/ PRCC: Chelsea Dennis, LPN



**Managing Childhood Anxiety**

Childhood anxiety involves worries or fears that interfere with a child's daily life for extended periods of time. Research says that 1 in 5 children will receive a medical diagnosis for anxiety. Childhood anxiety differs from normal child fear because it involves extreme avoidant behavior and bigger emotional outbursts. Children with severe anxiety issues often try to escape uncomfortable situations, hide, and overly focus on the danger of things they encounter.

It's important to address childhood anxiety due to the complications that could come later in life. Children with anxiety are at increased risk for depression and substance abuse disorders, likely because they can't cope with always being on edge. They often struggle with school due to social difficulties and they're also at higher risk of suicide or suicidal thoughts.

As a parent these risks may sound scary, but the best source of prevention is to take immediate action by educating yourself on what to improve in your parenting techniques to support your child's anxiety and seeking help when the situation seems too advanced or overwhelming. Here are some helpful tips to support your child:

-Emotional Validation: Always acknowledge and try to understand your child's feelings or needs without judgment.

-Don't be forceful: Forcing things can worsen anxiety and hinder development. Move slowly or at their pace, provide coping strategies, and be supportive with every amount of progress.

-Cognitive Restructuring: Help your child change any negative or irrational thoughts by focusing on their strengths over weaknesses.

For any questions involving mental health, the Headstart staff will be happy to assist you:

Rewa Haralson, EHS Mental Health Coordinator @ 601-799-4702

Ma'Quira Dantzer, HS Mental Health Coordinator@ 601-799-1716

Bianca Pierce, Behavior Intervention Specialist @ 601-799-1716

For more information on managing childhood anxiety:

<https://www.verywellmind.com/what-is-emotional-validation-425336>

<https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/conditionsandtreatments/fear-and-anxiety-children>

<https://www.concordia.ca/cunews/offices/provost/health/topics/stress-management/cognitive-restructuring-examples.html#:~:text=Source%3A%20Health%20Services,that%20do%20not%20produce%20stress.>

<https://www.concordia.ca/cunews/offices/provost/health/topics/stress-management/cognitive-restructuring-examples.html#:~:text=Source%3A%20Health%20Services,that%20do%20not%20produce%20stress.>

Greetings Parents, friends and family:

February is Random Acts of Kindness Month and here at Picayune Head Start (PHS) and Early Head Start (EHS) we are committed to creating an inclusive environment that welcomes and supports children with disabilities. February is an opportunity to express appreciation for the special people in your life and create cherished memories. However, you choose to celebrate, make it a month filled with love, kindness, and joy.

PHS and EHS offer individualized support for children with disabilities that may include specialized instruction and accommodations to foster development, services like physical, occupational and speech therapy, and assistive technology. We include our collaborative Partnerships in our activities so they can get to know our staff, parents and all children in our center. By working together, we are able to better support the unique needs of our children and their families.

Get involved!

We ENCOURAGE our parents to ACTIVELY ENGAGE with the children, teachers, and our community partners. We encourage our parents to contact us with concerns or issues so that we can help and/or assist with a solution.

We CELEBRATE achievements and progress of children with disabilities in our program. Through individualized goal-setting and continuous assessment, we have witnessed remarkable growth in their abilities and overall development. We are proud of their accomplishments and the hard work of our dedicated staff.

Family Resources and educational opportunities are available to any family who are seeking workshops, training sessions and support groups!

Thank you for your continued support and dedication to the children and families we serve. Together, we are making a difference in the lives of all young learners.

Peace and blessings,

Ann Brock

Disability Coordinator for Early Head Start

[abrock@pcu.k12.ms.us](mailto:abrock@pcu.k12.ms.us)

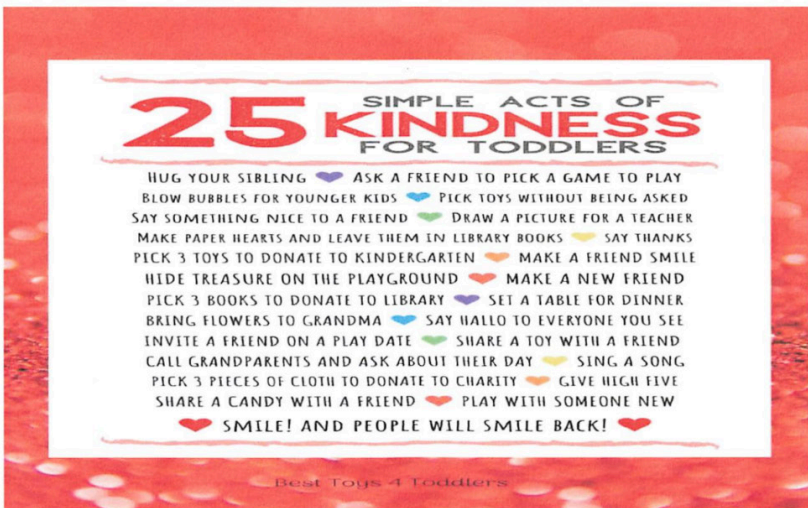
601-749-3306

Sonya Lather-Newkirk

Disability Coordinator for Head Start

[slather@pcu.k12.ms.us](mailto:slather@pcu.k12.ms.us)

601-799-1716



What are some of the benefits of inclusion:

- Higher expectations for all
- Meaningful friendships
- Respect for all people
- A feeling of connectedness and support
- Improved persistence in the face of obstacles
- Additional access to peer role models for academic, social and behavioral skills
- Opportunities to meet and learn about the experiences of families with a different story
- Preparation for adult life in an inclusive society
- Increased appreciation for diversity and difference
- Greater academic outcomes for both the children with and without disabilities
- Diverse and shared play opportunities



# Feb 2025 (Head Start / Early Head Start Center-Based Menu)

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
<b>3. Breakfast: Cheese Toast, Apple Sauce, Milk, Water</b>  <b>Lunch: Chili on Bun, Yam Patty, Strawberries, Milk, Water</b>	<b>4. Breakfast: Grits, Mandarin Oranges, Milk, Water</b>  <b>Lunch: Cheesy Chicken w/Rice, Turnip Greens, Corn Bread, Diced Pears, Applesauce, Milk, Water</b>	<b>5. Breakfast: Oatmeal, Diced Peaches, Milk, Water</b>  <b>Lunch: BBQ Chicken on Bun, Sliced Baked Potatoes, Diced Pineapple, Milk, Water</b>	<b>6. Breakfast: Biscuit with Egg Patty, Applesauce, Milk, Water</b>  <b>Lunch: Hamburger on Bun, Broccoli, Diced Peaches, Milk, Water</b>	<b>7. Breakfast: Chex Cinnamon Cereal, Diced Pears, Milk, Water</b>  <b>Lunch: Baked Chicken Tenders, Fresh Baked Roll, Steamed Carrots, Mandarin Oranges Milk, Water</b>
<b>10. Breakfast: French Toast, Applesauce, Milk, Water</b>  <b>Lunch: Hamburger on Bun, Baked Sliced Potatoes, Strawberries, Milk, Water</b>	<b>11. Breakfast: Cheesy Grits, Diced Peaches, Milk, Water</b>  <b>Lunch: Red Beans &amp; Rice, Spinach, Fresh Baked Roll, Mandarin Oranges, Milk, Water</b>	<b>12. Breakfast: Chex Cinnamon Cereal, Diced Pineapple, Milk, Water</b>  <b>Lunch: Spaghetti &amp; Meat Sauce, Steamed Carrots, Fresh Baked Roll, Blueberries, Milk, Water</b>	<b>13. Breakfast: Oatmeal, Mandarin Oranges, Milk, Water</b>  <b>Lunch: Grilled Chicken on Bun, Baked Beans, Diced Pears, Milk, Water</b>	<b>14. Breakfast: Biscuit with Egg Patty, Diced Peaches, Milk, Water</b>  <b>Lunch: Cheese Pizza, Sliced Baked Potatoes, Strawberries, Milk, Water</b>
<b>17. Breakfast: Oatmeal, Diced Peaches, Milk, Water</b>  <b>Lunch: Spaghetti &amp; Meat Sauce, Spinach, Fresh Baked Roll, Milk, Water</b>	<b>18. Breakfast: Biscuit with Egg Patty, Mandarin Oranges, Milk, Water</b>  <b>Lunch: Hamburger Steak w/ Gravy, Green Peas, Fresh Baked Roll, Strawberries, Milk, Water</b>	<b>19. Breakfast: Rice Chex Cereal, Diced Pineapple, Milk, Water</b>  <b>Lunch: Grilled Chicken on Bun, Broccoli, Diced Pears, Milk, Water</b>	<b>20. Breakfast: Grits, Applesauce, Milk, Water</b>  <b>Lunch: Cheese Pizza, Steamed Carrots, Diced Peaches, Milk, Water</b>	<b>21. Breakfast: Waffle, Kiwi, Milk, Water</b>  <b>Lunch: Hamburger on Bun, Sweet Potato Fries, Applesauce, Milk, Water</b>
<b>24. Breakfast: Cheese Toast, Apple Sauce, Milk, Water</b>  <b>Lunch: Chili on Bun, Yam Patty, Strawberries, Milk, Water</b>	<b>25. Breakfast: Grits, Mandarin Oranges, Milk, Water</b>  <b>Lunch: Cheesy Chicken w/Rice, Turnip Greens, Corn Bread, Diced Pears, Applesauce, Milk, Water</b>	<b>26. Breakfast: Oatmeal, Diced Peaches, Milk, Water</b>  <b>Lunch: BBQ Chicken on Bun, Sliced Baked Potatoes, Diced Pineapple, Milk, Water</b>	<b>27. Breakfast: Biscuit with Egg Patty, Applesauce, Milk, Water</b>  <b>Lunch: Hamburger on Bun, Broccoli, Diced Peaches, Milk, Water</b>	<b>28. Breakfast: Chex Cinnamon Cereal, Diced Pears, Milk, Water</b>  <b>Lunch: Baked Chicken Tenders, Fresh Baked Roll, Steamed Carrots, Mandarin Oranges Milk, Water</b>

## Picayune School District Early Childhood Programs - (601) 799-4702

- Early Head Start - Rosa ● Early Head Start – Nicholson ● EHS CCP – Annie’s Kindergarten & Daycare
- EHS CCP – Pearl River Community College Child Development Lab School ● PSD Pre-K Program ● PSD Head Start – Picayune ● PSD Head Start – Poplarville