



MAY 2025 NEWSLETTER

Picayune School District Early Childhood Programs



EDUCATION -EHS/CCP

Family Service Department May 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



Haley Crawford

Nicholson Early Head Start would like to shine the Spotlight on Ms. Haley Crawford for completing the Occupational Therapy program at Pearl River Community College. She will be graduating on May 8, 2025. We are super proud of her accomplishments and wish her well on her future endeavors.

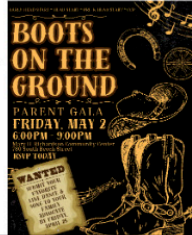
Congratulations Ms. Leslie Young on completing the requirements set forth by the National Health career Association as a Certified Medical Assistant. We are so proud of you!

In-Kinds

EHS	Amount	Head Start	Amount	CCP	Amount
Early Head Start	8,583.66	Picayune HS	3,740.77	Annie's	4,750.50
Nicholson	3,389.99	Poplarville HS	1,180.62	PRCC	1,015.79
		Pre-K	5,755.79		

Upcoming May Events

- Transition Ceremonies:**
 - PRCC – May 2nd @ PRCC's CTE Building 6:00pm
 - Early Head Start/ Nicholson/ Annie's – May 13th @ Picayune Auditorium 6:00pm
 - Picayune Head Start – May 14th @ Picayune Auditorium 6:00pm
 - Pre-K – May 15th @ South Side Cafeteria 6:00pm
 - Poplarville – May 16th @ Poplarville Head Start 9:00am
- Teachers Appreciation Week:** May 5th – May 9th (Celebrated at All Sites)
- School Nurse Appreciation Day:** May 8th (Celebrated at All Sites)
- Parent Curriculum:** May 14th, 2025 @ 10:00am Via Zoom
- Poplarville Events:**
 - Muffin with Moms - May 6th
 - Donuts with Dudes - May 13th
- NEHS Events:**
 - Mommy & Me Picnic- May 9th @ 10:00 a.m.
 - Pancakes w/ Pops - May 16th @ 9:00
- Head Start Events:**
 - Muffins w/ Mom – May 8th
 - Donuts w/ Dad – May 19th



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 and have someone to represent in their place.

Parent Meeting Schedule

- PHS / Pre-K (May 1, 2025) 5:00p.m.
- NEHS (May 6, 2025) 4:00 p.m.
- EHS/ Annie's (May 6 2025) 5:00 p.m.
- Poplarville HS (May 7, 2025) 4 p.m.

Summer time is upon us! It is essential to engage children in enriching activities during the summer to ensure that they continue to learn and grow, even when they are not in the classroom. Summer learning loss is a phenomenon that occurs when children lose the knowledge and skills they gained during the school year because they are not engaged in educational activities throughout the summer. Engaging children in enriching activities during the summer can help prevent learning loss and ensure that they are ready to succeed when they return to school in the fall.

Here are some **Imaginative Summer Activities** to do with your child.

Water Play: Water play is a classic summer activity that children of all ages love. It can be as simple as filling up a shallow basin with water and providing some cups for them to play with. You can also set up a sprinkler or a small inflatable pool for them to splash around in. Water play is a wonderful way to help children develop their fine motor skills, hand-eye coordination and sensory play.

Outdoor Art: Art activities can be done outdoors in the summer. It can provide children with a unique and inspiring environment to create in. You can set up an art station with chalk, crayons, paper and other materials for infants and toddlers to use. Encourage them to create using natural materials like flowers, rocks or leaves. Enriching summer activities, like outdoor art, provide children with the opportunity to express themselves. By exploring different materials and techniques, we are helping them to develop their artistic skills and creativity.

Sensory Bins: Sensory bins are a great way to provide toddlers and infants with a fun and educational activity. Try filling a large bin with sand, rice, beans or other materials, and provide them with cups, spoons and other tools to explore and play with. Sensory bins are an extraordinary way to help children develop their hand-eye coordination; fine motor skills and sensory exploration.

Picnics: Picnics are a wonderful way to enjoy the outdoors with your toddler or infant. Spread out a blanket and offer a few snacks and drinks for your child to enjoy. Try incorporating some nature exploration by having a scavenger hunt for things like, flower, leaves or rocks, naming the items as they find them. Outdoor activities, like picnics can help children to develop empathy and emotional regulation skills, which are crucial for their long-term success.

Music and Movement: Music activities are a spectacular way to help promote infant and toddlers physical development, language skills and coordination. Play some music and encourage your child to move around, dance, sing and clap their hands. You can even use items like ribbons, scarves and other materials to create a movement and sensory experience.

Nutritional Summer Activities: Summer is the season for delicious fruits like peaches, watermelon and berries. Try cutting up some watermelon and other fruits, providing a healthy snack for your little one. You can easily use fruits in a cognition game by getting pictures of the different fruits and helping your child to match the picture to the fruit they are eating.

Hands-On Gardening: Gardening is a wonderful way to teach toddlers and infants about nature and encourage physical development. You could plant some vegetables or flowers and involve your child in watering and caring for them. You could also incorporate some sensory exploration by allowing your child to touch and smell the different plants.

We want to encourage Social and Emotional Development, enhance Physical Development and encourage Creative Expression. These activities can boost children's self-esteem and confidence as they discover new talents and abilities.

As always, we would like to thank each of you for your continued support and partnership with your child's education! We hear at Early Head Start hope you and your family have an amazing summer break!

Early Head Start and CCP Education Team

Dr. Jessica Stubbs, Education Director

Charlotte Nixon, EHS Education Manager

Tonya Spiers, NEHS Education Manager

Robette Watts, CCP Education Manager

TEACHERS OF THE MONTH



Aliyah Morrison, CDA
Annie's Kindergarten & Daycare



Sherry Young, A.A.
Picayune Head Start



Jamilya Frazier, CDA
EHS Nicholson Site

EDUCATION – HS/PRE-K

Dear Head Start Families,

It is that time of year. The school year is coming to an end. Make the summer count by not only spending quality time with your child, but also learning with them. There are many ways you can provide learning opportunities for your child. Here are some things that you can do with your child at home this summer:

- Add some soap to water in a small plastic pool and make giant bubbles using a hula hoop. Getting inside the bubbles sounds like the kind of summer activity preschoolers would have fun with. Parents will have fun with this too!
- Grab your sidewalk chalk and create a work of art outside. The kids always enjoy this activity. Express your creativity together!
- Go on a nature scavenger hunt. The kids can collect anything that they would like, or they can put together a list ahead of time. Ask questions about what you found and engage in meaningful conversations with your child about those items.
- Make and decorate kites for flying on breezy summer days for some gross motor activity fun.
- Make water balloon pinatas. Hang them up and burst them to both play and cool down in the summer heat.
- Go on a water balloon hunt. It is a great cross between a scavenger hunt and a water balloon fight. You and your children will have a blast with this activity!
- Get painting and create a paper plate watermelon craft. You could even use real watermelon seeds and enjoy a healthy snack too!
- Collect rocks and decorate them with paint, stickers, markers, or anything else that you or your child might want to use. Turn your creations into pet rocks, gifts for family members, or garden ornaments to brighten your garden at every time of the year.

Sincerely,

The Education Team

Ashley Veerkamp, Education Manager

Dinah Thanars, Mentor Coach

LaKeshia Price, Mentor Coach

ERSEA

E.R.S.E.A May Newsletter

Dear Head Start Parents,

We want to invite **YOU** to be a part of something powerful! As proud Head Start families, **your voice matters**—and it can help us reach more families in need of the support and care we provide here at **Head Start Picayune**.

Help us spread the word by **sharing a positive message** about your experience in the program. A short post, video, or even a flyer on your social media can make a big difference! Share what the program has meant to your family—how it has helped your child grow, learn, and feel supported, and how it's made an impact in your own life.

Let's show our community all the amazing benefits Head Start offers:

- Safe and nurturing early education
- Support for families
- Health and nutrition services
- And so much more!

We especially want to reach families who are most in need—so they too can have the chance to thrive.

You are the heart of this program, and with your help, we can continue to make a difference. If you're willing to share your story or help us promote Head Start in our community, please connect with your Family Advocate—we'd love to support you!

Together, we celebrate **60 years of Head Start** and look ahead to many more years of empowering families and children 🤝

Thank you for being such an important part of our Head Start family!

With appreciation,

HS/EHS ERSEA Coordinators

Jhoanny Vargas, M.S.

ERSEA Coordinator
Picayune School District
1670 Reas Street
Picayune, MS 39466
(P) 601.799.4702 Ex 2704 (F) 601.799.5448
(E) jvargas@psd.k12.ms.us

DISABILITY SERVICES

Disability Monthly Newsletter

May is National Speech, Language, & Hearing Month

8 Speech and Language Skills to Practice With Your Preschooler at Home



Strong speech and language skills help prepare children for kindergarten and get them ready for reading and writing. Parents and caregivers can help build their child's speech and language skills with some simple activities at home. Below are eight key communication skills for children ages 3-5, along with suggestions for how you can help your child develop these skills.

1) Following Directions

Teach or practice following directions throughout the day. Get your child's attention, make sure they're looking at you, and go over the steps they should take to get dressed, wash their hands, brush their teeth, or clean up their toys. You can even create a picture or a sign with the list of steps for common daily tasks. Some other at-home practice ideas include the following:

- **Cooking and baking.** Pick a simple recipe, and have your child help gather the ingredients. Some cookbooks have pictures of ingredients, making them easier to find. Talk about what you do first, second, and so on. Kids can also learn about numbers and measurements while cooking.
- **Scavenger hunt.** Hide 10 toys throughout your home or yard, and create a checklist. Can they find and mark items off the checklist of pictures or words as they find them? Help them as they look for all 10. You can give clues like "move five steps closer" and "move forward."
- **Classic games.** Games such as *Simon Says* or *Red Light, Green Light* help your child listen, pay attention, and move while following one- and two-step directions.

2) Learning Songs and Rhymes

Young children love music. Singing nursery rhyme songs like *Row, Row, Row Your Boat* and *Wheels on the Bus* teaches them about different sounds and words. Singing songs and hearing rhymes will help children learn to read.

3) Building Vocabulary and Describing Objects

The more words a child is exposed to, the more words they'll know! Keep the conversation going all day long. Chat in the car, at bedtime, and while running errands. Some fun activities for building vocabulary at home include the following:

- **Puzzle time.** Have your child pick out a puzzle. Talk about the pictures on the box. What new words can be found in the puzzle? Find puzzles that have different themes, like holidays, animals, or foods.
- **Arts and crafts.** Set up a station with art materials, and talk as you make a craft. Discuss what they want to make, the colors they're choosing, and the feel of the materials (like Play-Doh® or clay).
- **Nature walk.** There is so much to talk about outside! What do they see and hear? Do they feel a breeze? How do flower petals smell? How many colors do they see? What are the birds and squirrels doing? Ask them to tell you more.

4) Telling Stories

Set the stage for a story by naming a place, a character, and an activity. Encourage your child to create a story from those details and to make up adventures for their character. The funnier or wilder, the better.

You can also pick a familiar book and have them describe how the characters feel. Magazines are also great for this activity. Make up a story about a picture, and describe what happens. Let them act out a character, and then you can take a turn.

5) Describing Emotions

Help children to express their own feelings and to talk about how others might be feeling. Some ideas include the following:

- **Host an arts-and-crafts show** for family members or neighbors, and display your child's creations. Use household items (e.g., coffee filters, paper towel rolls, or Q-Tips®) or items from outdoors (e.g., sticks, leaves, rocks) to create the crafts. Ask your child to describe their art, why they chose their subject, and how it makes them feel.
- **Show your child photos of family gatherings or events**, and talk about the people in the pictures. Who is who, what are they doing, and how is everyone feeling? How can they tell? Talk about how it feels when you are with friends. What makes a good friend?
- **Use dolls, or make puppets** out of household materials. Put on a show. Use funny voices, and talk about the characters—who they are, what they like or want, and how they feel.

6) Sequencing and Predicting

Sequencing is breaking down something (like a task or story) into steps or parts—and then putting them in a logical order. Ask your child to select a favorite book. Read it together, and then talk about it. What came first? Next? Last? Have them draw a picture to show you. As you read, you can also ask them what they think will happen next, or what they think the story is about before you read it by looking at the cover (this is called **prediction**).

7) Persuading

Children use many strategies to get their way. Although these strategies may include crying or whining, you can help them learn to persuade with their words. Have them draw a picture of their favorite book and tell you about it—are they able to convince you to read it? Or if they want to watch a TV show or movie, ask them to persuade you: to give you good reasons why they should get to watch the show.

8) Summarizing

Schedule a call or video chat between your child and their grandparent or another loved one to talk about their daily activities or a book they've read. Can your child talk briefly about the highlights of the day or the main events in a book?

Remember, you are your child's first and most important teacher!

You can help your child build strong communication skills by exposing them to lots of language, reading to them every day, and playing with them. Try to limit screen time [PDF]—when it's for entertainment purposes—as much as possible. Children can keep themselves occupied with toys, coloring, and plenty of interactive play. The American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) can help you learn more about the milestones you should expect your child to meet in their first 5 years.

Here at Playcure Head Start and Early Head Start, we are committed to creating an inclusive environment that welcomes and supports children with disabilities. **ALL CHILDREN**, regardless of ability, are provided with equal and fair access to learning and growth opportunities.

1. Inclusion

-We continue to have an inclusive and accessible environment for all children in our program. These initiatives include staff training on disability awareness, the implementation of assistive technology, and the creation of individualized support plans for children with disabilities.

2. Collaborative Partnerships

-We continued to strengthen our partnerships with local organizations and agencies that provide services to children with disabilities. By working together, we are able to better support the unique needs of each child and ensure they have access to the resources and support they require.

3. Parent Engagement

-Our team has been actively engaging with parents and caregivers to ensure they are informed and involved in their child's development. We organized virtual workshops and webinars on topics such as advocating for their child's rights, accessing community resources, and promoting inclusive practices at home.

4. Professional Development Opportunities

-We facilitated various professional development opportunities for our staff members. These included workshops on best practices for supporting children with disabilities, strategies for managing challenging behaviors, and updates on the latest research and trends in the field of disability services.

5. Celebrating Achievements

-We celebrated the 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.

We are committed to providing the highest quality of care and support to all children in our program, regardless of their abilities. If you have any questions, suggestions, or would like to share your success stories, please don't hesitate to reach out to us. We value your feedback and input.

Ann Brock
Disability Coordinator for Early Headstart
abrock@pscu.k12.ms.us
601-749-3306

Sonya Lather-Newkirk
Disability Coordinator for Headstart
slather@pscu.k12.ms.us
601-799-1716

MENTAL HEALTH



MAY 2025 Mental Health Month

end the stigma

Who can benefit from
Mental Health
Awareness Month?
Everyone !!



Theme:

"In Every Story, There's Strength"

Everyone! Nearly one in five adults in the US has a mental health condition. But that one person has family, friends, and others whose lives are touched by their condition, even if they don't themselves suffer from one. You might be surprised by the prevalence of mental health conditions in adults in the US:

Turn Your Struggles into Strength—
Let's Build Hope Together

Every challenge you've faced has shaped you into who you are today. By embracing and sharing your experiences, you empower others to do the same. Together, we create a movement of courage, healing, and connection. Share your mental health story with us by sending in a video, a message, a quote, or using #MyMentalHealth on social media.

<https://www.nam.org/get-involved/awareness-events/mental-health-awareness-month/>

Importance of Early Intervention:

Untreated mental health conditions can have long-term consequences.

Early intervention can help children develop coping mechanisms and improve their overall well-being.

Parents and caregivers should be aware of the signs of mental health problems and seek professional help if necessary.

Promoting Children's Mental Health:

Create a supportive and nurturing home environment.

Encourage open communication and emotional expression.

Provide opportunities for social interaction and play.

Teach healthy coping mechanisms (e.g. exercise, relaxation techniques).

Seek professional help if needed.

Remember, mental health is just as important for children as it is for adults.

HEALTH

Asthma & Allergy Awareness Month



Let's work together for a
better tomorrow



Hello Parents!

It's May National Asthma & Allergy Awareness Month. Asthma is a long-term condition that affects breathing for about 25 million people in America. Do you think your child might have Asthma? Take these Steps:

Does your child sometimes wheeze? Are they short of breath? Experiencing coughing? Complaining of chest tightness or pain? If so, they may need to see a healthcare provider to determine if they have Asthma. Asthma affects the airways, or tubes that carry air in and out of the lungs. In people with asthma, inhaling an irritant causes the airways to become inflamed and the airway muscles to tighten, making it harder to breathe. Asthma is the most common long-term health condition in children. It usually starts before age 5.

Some common asthma triggers include dust, mold, pollen, pest like cockroaches or rodents, and pet hair. Avoid cigarette smoke.

If diagnosed with Asthma have your healthcare provider set up an asthma action plan.

1. Know and track your symptoms
2. Identify and manage your triggers

If you have any questions, please contact a member of the Health Team

May 2025 (Head Start / Early Head Start Center-Based Menu)

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
			1. Breakfast: Biscuit with Egg Patty, Applesauce, Milk, Water Lunch: Hamburger on Bun, Broccoli, Diced Peaches, Milk, Water	2. Breakfast: Chex Cinnamon Cereal, Diced Pears, Milk, Water Lunch: Baked Chicken Tenders, Fresh Baked Roll, Steamed Carrots, Mandarin Oranges Milk, Water
5. Breakfast: French Toast, Applesauce, Milk, Water Lunch: Hamburger on Bun, Baked Sliced Potatoes, Strawberries, Milk, Water	6. Breakfast: Cheesy Grits, Diced Peaches, Milk, Water Lunch: Red Beans and Rice, Spinach, Fresh Baked Roll, Mandarin Oranges Milk, Water	7. Breakfast: Chex Cinnamon Cereal, Diced Pineapple, Milk, Water Lunch: Spaghetti & Meat Sauce, Steamed Carrots, Fresh Baked Roll, Blueberries, Milk, Water	8. Breakfast: Oatmeal, Mandarin Oranges, Milk, Water Lunch: Grilled Chicken on Bun, Baked Beans, Diced Pears, Milk, Water	9. Breakfast: Biscuit with Egg Patty, Diced Peaches, Milk, Water Lunch: Cheese Pizza, Sliced Baked Potatoes, Strawberries, Milk, Water
12. Breakfast: Oatmeal, Diced Peaches, Milk, Water Lunch: Spaghetti & Meat Sauce, Spinach, Fresh Baked Roll, Milk, Water	13. Breakfast: Biscuit with Egg Patty, Mandarin Oranges, Milk, Water Lunch: Hamburger Steak w/ Gravy, Green Peas, Fresh Baked Roll, Strawberries, Milk, Water	14. Breakfast: Rice Chex Cereal, Diced Pineapple, Milk, Water Lunch: Grilled Chicken on Bun, Broccoli, Diced Pears, Milk, Water	15. Breakfast: Grits, Applesauce, Milk, Water Lunch: Cheese Pizza, Steamed Carrots, Diced Peaches, Milk, Water	16. Breakfast: Waffle, Kiwi, Milk, Water Lunch: Hamburger on Bun, Sweet Potato Fries, Applesauce, Milk, Water
19. Breakfast: Cheese Toast, Apple Sauce, Milk, Water Lunch: Chili on Bun, Yam Patty, Strawberries, Milk, Water	20. Breakfast: Grits, Mandarin Oranges, Milk, Water Lunch: Cheesy Chicken w/Rice, Turnip Greens, Corn Bread, Diced Pears, Applesauce, Milk, Water	21. Breakfast: Oatmeal, Diced Peaches, Milk, Water Lunch: BBQ Chicken on Bun, Sliced Baked Potatoes, Diced Pineapple, Milk, Water		

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