



# DECEMBER 2025 NEWSLETTER

Picayune School District Early Childhood Programs



Nicholson



**Congratulations**

Our Turkey Scavenger Hunt Winners are:  
Valentina & Gaet (Room 3)



Thank you everyone for your participation!



## EDUCATION -EHS/CCP

Dear Head Start and Early Head Start Families

"Welcome to the festive holiday season, Head Start style!" December is a wonderful time to teach your children about family traditions, share delicious foods, read stories, and enjoy quiet, joyful moments together.

This month, all children will focus on 'Merry Moments Together,' exploring the many ways families celebrate, emphasizing family, friends, and special traditions. We'll incorporate math, literacy, art, language, sensory, and cognitive explorations into exciting seasonal activities.

Head Start children will discover the wonderful world of trees – how we use them, what they provide, and their environmental importance. Early Head Start children will learn about toys and the many cultures that enrich our community.

For great ideas to promote learning and friendship during the holidays, please visit:

- <https://parentingscience.com/kids-make-friends/>
- <https://www.naeyc.org/our-work/families/support-learning-during-holidays>

With all the holiday cooking and eating, remember to check out the Happy Healthy Website from the Mississippi State University Extension Office for hundreds of delicious and economical recipes, fitness tips, and more:

- <https://happyhealthy.extension.msstate.edu/> We're also excited about upcoming adult cooking classes in partnership with MSU Extension – be on the lookout for more information!

We also congratulate our amazing Teachers and Classrooms of the Month: Robertah Rancifer, Wei He, Robby Tramonte, Peggy Lee, Priscilla Aker, Patricia Jones, Carlie Fitzgerald, and Lynn McCrory.



"Wishing all our families, children, and colleagues a joyous and safe holiday season!"

Sincerely,

Jessica Stubbs, Education Director  
Charlotte Nixon, Education Manager, Rosa EHS and Nicholson EHS  
Ashely Veerkamp, Education Manager, Pica-yune HS and Poplarville HS  
Robertte Watts, Education Manager, Annie's & PRCC  
LaKeshia Price, Mentor Coach  
Dinah Thanans, Mentor Coach

## FAMILY SERVICES

### Family Service Department November Newsletter

#### King & Queen Fundraiser

Thank You to Everyone Who Participated in Our King & Queen Fundraiser! We want to extend our heartfelt thank you to all the families, children, staff, and community members who participated in this year's King & Queen Fundraiser. Your enthusiasm, generosity, and support helped make this event a wonderful success!



#### In-Kind Updates Per Site

|               |           |
|---------------|-----------|
| Annie's (CCP) | 11,606.52 |
| PRCC          | 2,751.91  |
| NEHS          | 10,738.05 |
| EHS           | 26,006.03 |
| Pre-k         | 6,493.36  |
| Pica-yune HS  | 24,205.26 |

#### December Patron Waiver Schedule

|   |
|---|
| NEHS – 12/2/2025 (4:00 p.m.)                |
| EHS/CCP – 12/2/2025 (8:00 p.m.)             |
| PRCC – 12/3/2025 (3:30 p.m.)                |
| Poplarville HS – 12/3/2025 (4:30 p.m.)      |
| Pica-yune HS / Pre-K- 12/4/2025 (4:00 p.m.) |

#### Staff Achievement Recognition

##### 2025 MS Head Start Association Aubre Packee Memorial Award



#### Upcoming Events



#### Gifts for All Sites

- Pictures with Santa (Date TBA)
- Christmas Spirit Week (12/15-12/19)
- Poplarville Head Start (Christmas Caroling @ Nursing Home December 15, 2025)

NO SCHOOL (Dec. 22, 2025 - January 6, 2026) Children return on January 7, 2026

"MERRY CHRISTMAS"

## ERSEA



ERSEA invites you to

Meet, Greet and apply

COME TO OUR SPECIAL EARLY HEAD START  
MEET, GREET & APPLY EVENT!

Enjoy a festive atmosphere and take a FREE Picture with Santa Claus!

#### Secure Your Spot:

We'll help you complete the application process on-site to get your child on the list for the next available slot.

#### Discover:

Learn about our comprehensive educational, health, nutrition, and family services that prepare children for their future



Friday December 12,  
2025 10:00 - 12:00 pm  
1620 Rosa St., Pica-yune, 39466



What to Bring to Apply:  
Birth certificate - Proof  
of Residency - Income  
information



## TEACHERS OF THE MONTH



Carlie Fitzgerald,  
PRCC Site



Sholanda Brown, CDA  
Annie's Site



Ms. Lynn McCrory, A.A  
Nicholson Early  
Head Start Site

# MENTAL HEALTH



## Why the Holidays Can Be Emotionally Hard for Kids

While holidays bring excitement, they can also disrupt the predictability children thrive on. Some common challenges include:

- **Changes in routine** – Time off from school, irregular meals, and inconsistent sleep can throw kids off balance.
- **Family stress** – Financial strain, travel or complex family dynamics may be felt deeply by sensitive children.
- **Social expectations** – Children may feel pressure to "be happy" or enjoy gatherings they're not comfortable with.
- **Grief or loss** – Holidays can trigger sadness for children who are dealing with family separation, divorce or the loss of a loved one.
- **Sensory overload** – Lights, sounds, crowds and busy schedules can overwhelm kids, especially those with sensory sensitivities or neuro-divergent conditions, such as autism and ADHD.

## What Parents and Caregivers Can Do

Support doesn't need to be complicated. Small, thoughtful steps can make a big difference.

1. **Maintain Structure When Possible** – Try to stick to regular routines for meals, sleep, and downtime, even during holiday festivities. Predictability helps kids feel safe and grounded.
2. **Communicate plans:** With each activity or outing, let the child know what will be happening ahead of time- who will be there, how long you will be staying, what food to expect, etc. Knowing what will be happening will help decrease anxiety.
3. **Create Realistic Expectations** – Help children understand what to expect from holiday plans and avoid building pressure around "perfect" experiences. Let them know it's okay if things don't go exactly as planned.
4. **Make Room for Emotions** – Let kids express feelings—even if those feelings aren't cheerful. A simple "It's okay to feel sad or overwhelmed" can go a long way. **Share feelings:** If you are feeling stressed, tired or anxious, share your feelings with the child. They will take comfort in knowing that even adults get nervous and stressed during the holidays
5. **Include Them in the Process** – Allow children to help plan or choose holiday activities. Giving them some control helps reduce anxiety and builds confidence.
6. **Encourage Connection, Not Perfection** – Focus on small, meaningful moments like baking together, reading holiday stories or taking a walk. These low-pressure activities can be more nurturing than big events.

# HEALTH

*Ho Ho Holiday Greetings, From the Head Start Health Team*

*Happy December, Little Explorers and Families!* As we dive into the most wonderful time of the year, we're also shining a light on safety. Join us this National Safe Toys and Gifts Month for essential tips to ensure your holiday celebrations are joyful and secure.



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

| Mon  | Tue   | WE   | THU   | Fri  |
|--|---|--|---|--|
| <b>1. Breakfast: French Toast, Applesauce, Milk, Water</b><br><br><b>Lunch: Hamburger on Bun, Baked Sliced Potatoes, Strawberries, Milk, Water</b> | <b>2. Breakfast: Cheesy Grits, Diced Peaches, Milk, Water</b><br><br><b>Lunch: Red Beans and Rice, Spinach, Fresh Baked Roll, Mandarin Oranges Milk, Water</b>                    | <b>3. Breakfast: Chex Cinnamon Cereal, Diced Pineapple, Milk, Water</b><br><br><b>Lunch: Spaghetti &amp; Meat Sauce, Steamed Carrots, Fresh Baked Roll, Blueberries, Milk, Water</b> | <b>4. Breakfast: Oatmeal, Mandarin Oranges, Milk, Water</b><br><br><b>Lunch: Grilled Chicken on Bun, Baked Beans, Diced Pears, Milk, Water</b>    | <b>5. Breakfast: Biscuit with Egg Patty, Diced Peaches, Milk, Water</b><br><br><b>Lunch: Cheese Pizza, Sliced Baked Potatoes, Strawberries, Milk, Water</b>                      |
| <b>8. Breakfast: Oatmeal, Diced Peaches, Milk, Water</b><br><br><b>Lunch: Spaghetti &amp; Meat Sauce, Spinach, Fresh Baked Roll, Milk, Water</b>   | <b>9. Breakfast: Biscuit with Egg Patty, Mandarin Oranges, Milk, Water</b><br><br><b>Lunch: Hamburger Steak w/ Gravy, Green Peas, Fresh Baked Roll, Strawberries, Milk, Water</b> | <b>10. Breakfast: Rice Chex Cereal, Diced Pineapple, Milk, Water</b><br><br><b>Lunch: Grilled Chicken on Bun, Broccoli, Diced Pears, Milk, Water</b>                                 | <b>11. Breakfast: Grits, Applesauce, Milk, Water</b><br><br><b>Lunch: Cheese Pizza, Steamed Carrots, Diced Peaches, Milk, Water</b>               | <b>12. Breakfast: Waffle, Kiwi, Milk, Water</b><br><br><b>Lunch: Hamburger on Bun, Sweet Potato Fries, Applesauce, Milk, Water</b>   |
| <b>15. Breakfast: Cheese Toast, Apple Sauce, Milk, Water</b><br><br><b>Lunch: Chili on Bun, Yam Patty, Strawberries, Milk, Water</b>               | <b>16. Breakfast: Grits, Mandarin Oranges, Milk, Water</b><br><br><b>Lunch: Cheesy Chicken w/Rice, Turnip Greens, Corn Bread, Diced Pears, Applesauce, Milk, Water</b>            | <b>17. Breakfast: Oatmeal, Diced Peaches, Milk, Water</b><br><br><b>Lunch: BBQ Chicken on Bun, Sliced Baked Potatoes, Diced Pineapple, Milk, Water</b>                               | <b>18. Breakfast: Biscuit with Egg Patty, Applesauce, Milk, Water</b><br><br><b>Lunch: Hamburger on Bun, Broccoli, Diced Peaches, Milk, Water</b> | <b>19. Breakfast: Chex Cinnamon Cereal, Diced Pears, Milk, Water</b><br><br><b>Lunch: Baked Chicken Tenders, Fresh Baked Roll, Steamed Carrots, Mandarin Oranges Milk, Water</b> |
| 21.  | 22.   | 23.  | 24.   | 25.  |
| <h1>Christmas Holiday</h1>   |   |  |   |  |
| 29.  | 30.   | 31   | 1.  | 2.   |

**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**