

Community Action, Inc. of Central Texas

HEAD START

MONTHLY REPORT OCTOBER 2021



From the Desk of the Head Start Program Director: As we approach the holiday season, let's remember to slow down and enjoy the small stuff. Don't let the stress of the Black Friday sales and gift giving frenzy take away from the more important things like spending quality time with your loved ones and enjoying a nice cup of hot chocolate in your robe.

Take time to enjoy the simple things in life with those you love.

Policy Council: Our Policy Council is fully staffed and they have elected officers for the 21-22 school year. Our Executive Officers are as follows: Policy Council Chair-Joshua Romero, Bonham, Vice Chair-Breanna Perez, A. Washington, Secretary-Amanda Rivers, Hemphill EHS, Translator-Lydia Ramirez, Hemphill HS, CAI Board Representative-Bianca Castillo, LBT. Three Community Representatives were also selected, Ms. Lana Wagner from the San Marcos Housing Authority, Ms. Flora Amaya, former HS Parent from Lockhart, and Mr. David Gonzales, parent at Henry Bush. We are gearing up for an amazing Policy Council this year!

COVID Prevention: The number of COVID cases we are experiencing is slowing down! We are closing fewer and fewer classes down for quarantine. Let's hope the worst of the spread of COVID amongst our children is behind us. We will continue to take every precaution recommended by the CDC to remain germ free. Now that vaccines are available for children, we highly encourage you to try and get your older children who are eligible vaccinated. This will greatly reduce the rate of exposure for our little ones.



**EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS
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Health: During the month October the Health-Management team had our Bi-Annual Health Advisory Meeting. A variety of health topics were discussed such as Flu symptoms vs. COVID symptoms. Guidance was provided by Dr. Harrison from Corridor Primary Care Pediatrics.

The Health Coordinator met with parents virtually as a Guest Speaker to discuss the importance of early detection of vision and hearing concerns as well as the expectations of Office of Head Start to keep children up to date with all immunizations, physical and dental appointments.

The Henry Bush staff provided a Health Fair for the families they serve. Families were able to meet with a local dentist office and Health Providers who were able to answer questions regarding the coverage their plans provide.

Head Start Office Manager:

We had a great turn out at our Policy Council Luncheon on October 25th at Casa Maria. Thank you to all who attended.

We have also enjoyed delivering pumpkins to our sites for the children to participate in fall activities. Please look for those coming home soon! Looking forward to cooler weather and all the fall changes to come! Stay safe and Happy Fall!



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School Readiness: At the beginning of October, our Head Start Management Team and Center Directors conducted Head Start CLASS observations. Our Early Head Start classrooms are finishing up their first wave of DRDP observations, while our Head Start classrooms just started their first wave of CLI Progress Monitoring on October 15th. Both of these are tools we use to assess child progress.

Professional Development: The education team provided a CLASS refresher training for all of our teaching staff (including floaters and support staff) based on the age group they serve, infant, toddler, or Preschool. All of our teaching staff also received training on the individual observation process as well as documenting health concerns. Community Action also hosted our annual All Staff Day for the entire agency. All staff were able to attend a keynote speaker on “The Simple Truths of Service”. Staff also had the opportunity to choose a breakout session to attend from the following options: Wellness/Self-care, Canva, Yoga, or Nutrition.

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Mental Health and Disabilities: Head Start Performance Standards set a 45 day deadline for us to complete health, developmental, and social emotional screenings for all of the children we serve. We were able to complete all our Developmental Screenings (ASQ-3) and our Behavioral Screening (DECA). We are now addressing any concerns that have been identified on these screenings. We are attending ARD meetings to develop and update (IEP) Individual Education Plans and Individual Family Service Plans(IFSP). We have updated our Memorandums Of Understanding(MOU) with our Early Childhood Intervention(ECI) programs: Any Baby Can and Bluebonnet Trails. Our Mental Health Consultant has been conducting observations and addressing any behavioral concerns with strategies and recommendations for our teachers. The Mental Health and Disabilities Coordinator has been attending targeted training with a specialist from the Office of Head Start Region VI to make sure we are following all of the Head Start Performance Standards related to Mental Health and Disabilities and that all our Mental Health and Disability Procedures are aligned with the standards.

We are currently serving 23 EHS children and 37 HS children with an IEP/IFSP which exceeds the minimum 10% requirement of the OHS.



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ERSEA & Transitions: Enrollments are still underway to fill slots at a few sites. The good news is Henry Bush CDC is now fully enrolled after Classroom 3 officially opened back up. Please continue to talk to friends and family about the program and encourage them to apply. Family Advocates have started Attendance Success Plans to support families with poor attendance. A child missing more than 10% of school will get a Success Plan. I will begin presenting to families in November about the importance of regular attendance.

Our current enrollment for the 21-22 school year is as follows:

EHS 148 out of 171 (23 slots still available)

HS 340 out of 362 (22 slots still available)



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Head Start Operations & Safety: The reconstruction is still in progress for Hemphill Early Head Start Building B with a projected completion date of December 2021. Diaper supplies and virtual instruction are offered to the families that are in need due to the building remaining closed.

The Operations Coordinator and Operations Specialist are completing the program's safety checklist for the 2021-2022 school year.

Janitorial supplies and equipment are being ordered and delivered to sites. The Operations Coordinator is requesting quotes for repairs that are needed at various sites.



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Nutrition: The Program Nutritionist and the Nutrition Specialist have completed their first round of Nutrition Observations. During these observations, mealtime processes and procedures are observed as well the compliance of Head Start and Child Care Licensing standards. Feedback is given to the Center Director and teachers if there is room for improvement. A Halloween-themed nutrition activity was conducted at all center-based head starts during snack time on October 27th. Children created “Banana Ghosts” with their teachers during their designated snack time. The winter menu for center-based head starts will begin Monday, November 15th. Some items that are on the winter menu include Chili & Cornbread, Chicken Pot Pie, and baked cinnamon-spiced apples.



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Family Services: During the month of October the Family Advocate Team continues to work on meeting the 90 day Head Start deadline for ensuring all children have current physicals and dental visits. Their efforts to ensure all children's immunizations are current continue year round. In addition, Family Advocates must meet with every single family we serve to conduct a Family Assessment and set a family goal. At the center level we are hoping it will be safe enough to resume face to face parent meetings and family engagement activities. We miss interacting with our families in person.



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