

# ICS HEAD START

## Parent Engagement Newsletter

November Edition



### From the Executive Director's Desk

Parents are essential to the growth and development of their children. Head Start offers new experiences and challenges to children and parents. As a parent, you are accustomed to making decisions to help your child grow, develop, and learn in appropriate ways. Head Start is designed to help you with this process. It is our goal to provide you with information such as contained in this newsletter to make sound decisions. You will find ways to manage time and stress, child's language development, and how to become an advocate for your child.

Remember all parents have to work to ensure the best possible experiences for their child. It starts with you. By working together, we can create positive Head Start experiences.

**Eloise McClinton**

### YOU CAN DO IT

Parents, we want you to be a strong advocate for your child. Here are some strategies and suggestions you can use to help you speak on behalf of your child.

- Don't be afraid to ask questions.
- Be prepared for meetings. Have a list of issues and concerns to discuss with your child's teacher.
- Work with someone in Head Start who is familiar with your culture and language.
- Be aware of the goals, services, and strategies of your child's IEP, if your child has one.
- **Remember you are the best advocate for your child.**

### Hickory Flat Fatherhood Program

Marion Caldwell, Center Director

### Great Men Make Great Parents



# TIME TO BREATHE: MANAGE TIME AND STRESS

**The following are key practices that relate to managing time and stress:**

- Mindful S.T.O.P.
  - Stop
  - Take a few deep breaths
  - Observe your experience
  - Proceed with something that will support you in the moment
- Practice gratitude
- Determine needs-what is working well? What makes you feel stressed?
- Ask yourself questions like,
  - “What am I thinking and feeling?”
  - “How might these thoughts influence my behavior?”
  - “How can I shift to more positive thoughts?”

**Here are some easy ways to relieve stress:**

- Put on some music and dance around
- Use the stairs rather than an elevator
- Park your car in the farthest spot in the lot and walk the rest of the way
- Pair up with an exercise partner and encourage each other as you workout
- Walk for at least 30 minutes each day

**Unhealthy ways of coping with stress:**

- ✚ Smoking
- ✚ Drinking too much
- ✚ Bingeing on junk or comfort food
- ✚ Zoning out for hours in front of the TV or computer
- ✚ Withdrawing from friends, family, and activities
- ✚ Using pills or drugs to relax
- ✚ Sleeping too much
- ✚ Taking out your stress on others (lashing out, angry outbursts, physical violence)

[www.helpguide.org/articles/stress-management.htm](http://www.helpguide.org/articles/stress-management.htm)



## Language Development

Although crying is a child's primary means of communication at birth, language immediately begins to develop via repetition and imitation.

### **Between three and 12 months babies may begin to do the following:**

- Listen when spoke to
- Recognize words for common objects and names of family members
- Respond to simple requests
- Understand "no"
- Understand gestures
- Associate voices and names with people
- Know their own names
- Babble both short and long groups of sounds and two syllable words
- Use sounds other than crying to get attention
- Repeat sounds
- Use most consonant and vowel sounds
- Engage in much vocal play

**Toddlerhood:** By the age of 12 months, most children use "mama/dada" appropriately. Between 12 and 15 months children begin to do the following:

- Recognize names
- Understand and follow one-step directions
- Laugh appropriately
- Use four to six intelligible words, usually those starting with "b," "c," "d," and "g," although less than 20 percent of their language is comprehensible to outsiders
- Gesture and speak "no"
- Ask for help with gestures and sounds

[www.healthofchildren.com/L/Language-Development.html](http://www.healthofchildren.com/L/Language-Development.html)

## Common Problems

**Language delay** is the most common **developmental delay** in children. There are many causes for language delay. Early intervention often helps other children to catch up to their age group.



Common circumstances that can result in language delay include the following:

- Concentration on developing skills other than language
- Siblings who are very close in age or older siblings who interpret for the younger child
- Inadequate language stimulation and one-on-one attention
- Bilingualism, in which a child's combined comprehension of two languages is equivalent to other children's comprehension of language

Here are some recommendations for encouraging language development in infants:

- Talking to them as much as possible and giving them opportunities to respond, perhaps with a smile; short periods of silence help teach the give-and-take of conversation
- Using one-or two-syllable words and two to three-word sentences
- Speaking slowly, drawing-out vowels, and exaggerating main syllables
- Addressing the baby by name
- Asking questions
- Singing songs
- Use gestures that reinforce words
- Gently repeat correctly any words the child has mispronounced, rather than criticizing the child

[www.healthofchildren.com/LLanguage-Development.html](http://www.healthofchildren.com/LLanguage-Development.html)

Editor: Fergenia H. Hood - Parent Engagement Director

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