

EASTCONN Head Start

October 2021



Dear Head Start Families,

I cannot believe we are heading into October and a change in the seasons. We have started the school year with a smooth transition back; many Head Start classrooms continue to be at low enrollment while our Early Head Start are full. Home-based in Tolland and the Northeast are seeing growing enrollments but still on the lower side. Staff are finding the class and group sizes a nice way to help children into the routine and schedule of the day. If you have an interested friend or family member please let us know.

Our first Policy Council of the new year was held on September 21. Suzanne Michaud, our Family Service Manager, wrapped up her Policy Council info sessions and was able to bring a few new families to our meeting. We hope to see more parents as our October 19 meeting will be an opportunity to hear about our new Head Start grant submission, annual report of the program, and school readiness goals for children. Please reach out to you Family Advocate for more information and to get on my email list.

Please remember you can always contact me directly with questions or concerns. kmansfield@eastconn.org

Fondly, Kim Mansfield, Director of Head Start

*"The greatest gifts
we can give our
children are the roots
of responsibility and
the wings of
independence."*

—Dr. Maria
Montessori



Staff Updates:

Please help me welcome the following:

- Yeimy Bonilla is the new Teacher Aid in Putnam
- Heather Standish Smullen is a new Home Visitor. "Hello! In addition to working with families in their homes, I will be planning and arranging weekly Family Connection Times- stay tuned, as these will begin shortly! I recently have taught preschool at a center for 6 years. I am excited for this opportunity to work more closely with families in this role!"
- Our new Education Manager, Emily Hayden, grew up in Woodstock. She recently returned to this area after living in Atlanta, GA for almost 20 years. In Atlanta, she founded and directed a non-profit Montessori preschool. She has two children, Oliver (10) and Willa (7).

Announcements

Family events are in full swing!

We are collaborating with Lapsley Orchard, 403 Orchard Hill Rd, Pomfret Center. We will be having an all family meeting there on Sept. 29th. They are giving us a discounted rate of \$3 per bag for the children. We will also be giving out new fall books to all the children that night as well.

We are also collaborating with United Way and the Plainfield FRC to schedule a potty training workshop for All families in Oct. Date will be released soon.

Westcott just finished 4 sessions with the NOW (Northeast Opportunity for Wellness). The children and staff will enjoy 30 min sessions every Tuesday with music and movement activities outdoors. We look forward to continuing this activity for October as well.

October 7th at 10am, KHS has a special visit from our Service Coordinator, Louise Broder. We are making apple butter for a nutrition activity next month after going to the orchard. We will be teaching children the changes in the physical world with all the fall changes. October is also fire safety month so we plan to have the fire department visit on October 12th.



Westcott EHS: We will be learning about Pedestrian Safety/Community Helpers (how to safely walk outside, holding a grownup's hand, seatbelt safety, etc.). We will be sending home a pedestrian safety packet to parents. We will also have a local Fire Department come to visit our site and talk about safety with our children and staff! We will also be preparing our garden beds for the fall time; children will help with pulling out the old flowers and plants.

Moosup HS classroom is taking a Reggio approach to learning this year. This approach views young children as individuals who are curious about their world and have the powerful potential to learn from all that surrounds them. We have been diving into provocations (open-ended activities) with loose parts. We have been learning about the life cycle of plants while caring for our 25 plants in the classroom.

Shout outs!

Recruiting with WIC at the Putnam Farmers Market in August as a follow up to our Farm to Table Grant.

Thanks to Town Managers, Town Administrators and First Selectmen for supporting us in finding town property locations for us to place our Head Start recruiting signs in the northeast.

A special thank you to the Brooklyn Public Library for purchasing a book for their library that we were in need of to read to our children that was not available via the state interlibrary loan (ILL) program.

Plainfield HS: We are having our first visit from Heather Logee for science experiments. Later this week we will be making applesauce with the children using apples given to us by our new neighbors (the senior center :)). We also have been engaging in a lot of social emotional learning.

Family Connection Time for Home-based families is starting back up! This year, we are working to make locations more accessible to families by rotating between towns in the Northeast: Killingly, Putnam, and Plainfield, and biweekly meetings in Windham. To do this, we are reaching out to local libraries and parks to collaborate. Our first Family Connection Time is scheduled for Wednesday, October 6th from 12:30-2:00pm at the Willimantic Public Library.

Putnam is focusing on lessons around apples! We had an apple pie bakery, apple blocks, and apple pie playdough. The kids loved and it and were fully engaged as they prepare for their trip to the apple orchard.

Plainfield EHS: We will be having many activities and materials that will help the children explore the world around them. We are continuing to support children as they build attachments to adults and other children and as they begin to learn about different emotions.

Home Visitors will be at the Children's Book Fair sponsored by Willimantic Public Library. Oct. 2nd 10am – 2pm.

Recruitment events: Stafford Trick or Treat on Main Street, October 30th from 4 to 6 and Pumpkin Festival in Putnam on 10/16.

