Hello EHS Parents!

Your EWU EHS staff and Policy Council members have been working hard on plans to bring better Play & Learn socialization experiences to EHS families.

Be on the Lookout! A parent survey will be coming to you soon. We want to get your input on socializations and include it in our planning. We really want to hear from you!

Purpose of Socializations

Early Head Start programs operating a Home Based Program Option provide two socializations per month (approximately 24 per year) for infants, toddlers and their parents.

The purpose of socialization experiences for infants and toddlers is to support child development by strengthening the parent-child relationship by:

☆ helping parents to better understand child development;
☆ encouraging parents to share their parenting challenges and joys with one another;
☆ providing activities for parents and children to enjoy together;
☆ offering structured and unstructured learning opportunities for both children and parents; and
☆ modeling successful strategies for engaging children and supporting their development.

Socialization experiences for infants and toddlers support child development by focusing on relationships and are planned to support parents' interaction with their children.

To support the relationship-building focus of socializations, parents and infants are together during socialization experiences. If a socialization includes an activity that is parent-focused, such as a facilitated discussion, parents can participate with their infants nearby.

All socialization experiences are planned to address child development issues, parenting, and the parent-child relationship.

Environments for Socializations

Early Head Start grantees select the setting for socialization experiences with attention to the features that support a high quality environment for infant and toddler exploration and interaction with family members that meets the needs of both children and adults.

For example, adults should have comfortable places to sit that facilitate interaction with their children. Young infants need soft places to sit or lie down, and nursing mothers should have comfortable accommodations for breastfeeding. Mobile infants need safe places to crawl and surfaces to pull up on, while toddlers require adequate space to run and climb.

We look forward to hearing your thoughts and input on EWU Early Head Start socializations!

Carolyn Sola
EWU EHS Director
Please join EWU Early Head Start in welcoming Beth Gilmer as the newest Parent Child Educator!

Beth began with EWU EHS on October 27, 2014 and is providing home-based services to families in South Stevens County.

Beth comes to us by way of Bradenton, Florida where she was born, and Portsmouth, Virginia where she grew up. She met her husband and moved to Washington in the fall of 2007.

“I am the oldest of three and my younger brother is autistic,” says Beth. “I began babysitting at age 13, with a large portion of that being for autistic children as my mother was the president of the local chapter of the autism society.”

Along with Beth’s babysitting experiences as a teen, she has an eclectic work background that includes everything from child care worker to waiting tables, computer phone support, barista, short order cook and Karaoke DJ. She has been attending school at Spokane Falls Community College since 2011 and is currently working towards an AA degree in Early Childhood Education.

“One of my primary joys is watching young children learn and finding new ways to help them discover the world around them,” says Beth. “I enjoy helping people and love watching them learn. The process of seeing someone physically or mentally grasp a new concept lifts my heart up.”

“Beth sincerely cares about children and families,” says Regional Services Supervisor Cindy Peterson. “Her creativity and understanding of how young children learn make her a terrific home visitor for babies, toddlers and parents alike. She loves to play and often makes me laugh,” adds Cindy.

Beth and her husband live in the Valley area with their two daughters and are excitedly preparing for the birth of their third child due to be born at the end of this coming summer!

Congratulations Beth, and Welcome to the Eastern Washington University Early Head Start Team!!
Oral health is an important part of everyone's overall health, including your child's.

Teaching your child good oral hygiene habits early can lead to a lifelong healthy smile, but did you know that just because babies don’t have any visible teeth, doesn’t mean they can’t get cavities?

A baby’s 20 primary teeth are already present in their jaws at birth. And those baby teeth that begin coming through the gums around 6-10 months of age help set the stage for future smiles by keeping space in the jaw for adult teeth.

It is recommend that children have their first dental visit by their first tooth, or first birthday (whichever comes first).

ABCD (Access to Baby & Child Dentistry) is a great resource available in our area that will help you give your child a healthy start.

ABCD dentists are specially trained and certified by the University of Washington School of Dentistry to perform gentle, yet effective techniques that make “going to the dentist” a comfortable experience for very young children and their families.

**Knee-to-Knee Examinations**

One technique that ABCD Dentists use is a preferred alternative to dental chairs where the dentist sits knee-to-knee opposite the parent or guardian with the child lying across their laps (as pictured here).

With the child’s head in the parent’s lap, the dentist provides information and encouragement while the parent brushes the child’s teeth. Then the child’s position is reversed so the dentist can complete the examination.
ABCD Dental offers **NO-COST** Dental Care for children birth through 5 years of age!

“An ABCD dental exam is more thorough than a standard Medicaid dental exam,” says Tri-County ABCD Program Coordinator Jill Carpenter. “We can help you find the ABCD dentists in your area and all at no cost to you.”

**What this program does:**
- Helps you find a child-friendly, ABCD trained dentist in your area
- Gives your children a great start in life by making sure baby teeth are healthy
- Makes going to the dentist and making it a regular part of your child’s life easier
- Gets children into a dentist by age one, as recommended by the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry
- Provides an easy dental visit with your child in your arms, not in a dental chair

**Who is eligible:**
- Children, birth through 5 years old
- Children with a Medicaid coupon
- Children Living in Stevens, Ferry or Pend Oreille Counties

**Dental benefits:**
- Dental check-ups 2 times each year
- Fluoride treatments 3 times each year
- Family education 2 times each year
- Dental treatment as needed

**Why are baby teeth so IMPORTANT?**
- They help with speech development
- Healthy baby teeth allow for normal development of the mouth
- They guide permanent teeth into place
- They help with chewing for good nutrition
- Because decayed baby teeth cause pain, abscesses, infections and can infect permanent teeth!

For more information or to find out how you can enroll, call **ABCD Coordinator Jill Carpenter** at (509) 685-6106 -or- call Rural Resources Community Action at: (509) 684-8421 -or- on their toll free line at: (877) 219-5542 and ask to speak to the ABCD Coordinator.
Come and invite friends to enjoy the fun activities, learning experiences and great things happening around EWU Early Head Start! Here are some pictures from recent Play & Learns, Home Visits and other EHS activities. Make sure to check the EHS calendar for the times and locations and join us for the events in your area!
Don’t miss out! At EWU EHS Play & Learns in February we’ll be focusing on:

- Social and Emotional Development: Feelings About Self - Learning About Me
- Health and Safety: Healthy Habits for Happy Dinnertimes
EHS Home-Visitor Autumn Longly, Newport/Usk area
EHS families, and everyone at EWU EHS
wish to congratulate Jazmin Fletcher
and big sister Azealia who welcomed
Amarylliz Faith,
the first baby born in Newport in 2015!
She was born at 7 lbs. 10 oz. and 20.25 inches long.

CONGRATULATIONS ~
AND WELCOME AMARYLLIZ!!!

EWU EHS Celebrates More Graduations!

Children graduate and transition out of EWU EHS once they turn 3 years old.
Pictured below left is recent graduate Hunter Coffey with his dad B.J. Below center is Thomas Weinmann with his mom Trea and big brother Eli, and below right is Emahli Wilson

Congratulations & best wishes for the future to Hunter, Thomas & Emahli and their families from all at EWU EHS!
December:
Six members of the Policy Council and Nicki Beer, the newly elected Chairperson of the Head Start ECEAP Policy Council, met on Thursday, December 4.

The Executive, Budget, Ad-Hoc Socializations, Policy & Bylaws, and Hiring Committees all met prior to the general session.

EHS Director Carolyn Sola provided program updates including:
- EHS continuing to be fully enrolled with a wait list.
- Budget expenditures and In-Kind being on track.
- Highlights of December 1 meeting with Region 10 Office of Head Start (OHS) Grants Management Specialist Melissa Calhoun
- Program Improvement Highlights

Policy Council members:
- Approved Policy #306 Curriculum and Philosophy and the EWU EHS Services Plan Part II: Partnering With Parents to Build a Better Future for their Children.
- Reviewed and provided input to the draft July 1, 2012—June 30, 2013 EWU EHS Annual Report
- Reviewed the EWU EHS School Readiness Assessment Data Analysis: Summary Report: July—September 2014
- Made committee appointments for two new members.
- Participated in a discussion to provide input to the EWU EHS Self-Assessment

January:
Eight members of the Policy Council and the newly appointed Head Start ECEAP Policy Council representative Jackie Heib met on Thursday, January 8.

The Executive, Budget, Ad-Hoc Socializations, Policy & Bylaws, and Hiring Committees all met prior to the general session.

EHS Director Carolyn Sola provided program updates including:
- Work continuing on a major program focus area of developing new data tracking & reporting systems.
- EHS continuing to be fully enrolled with a wait list.
- Budget expenditures are currently underspent and In-Kind collection is on track. Program management and the Policy Council Budget Committee will be working on budget allocations and purchases.
- Highlights of meeting with Region 10 OHS Fiscal Specialist and Program Specialist.
- Recent communications activities including running program ads in all Tri-County newspapers and at movie theaters in Newport and Metaline Falls
- Program Improvement Highlights
- Personnel and Hiring Updates with hiring activities for 3 positions: Parent Child Educator pool, Policy Council Child Care provider and Custodian for the EHS Colville Center.
- Upcoming Professional Development activities

Policy Council members:
- Did an in depth review and discussed both the 2014 EWU EHS Program Information Report and the draft July 1, 2012—June 30, 2013 EWU EHS Annual Report

The next meeting of the Policy Council is set for Thursday, February 5.
February is National Children’s Dental Health Month.

Your oral health is an important part of your overall health. Developing good habits at an early age and scheduling regular dental visits helps children get a good start on a lifetime of healthy teeth and gums.

Check out the ABCD Dental information in this newsletter issue (see pages 4-5) and learn more on oral health for you and your child by visiting: [http://abcd-dental.org](http://abcd-dental.org), [http://www.mouthhealthy.org](http://www.mouthhealthy.org) and [www.kidsoralhealth.org](http://www.kidsoralhealth.org).

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- **Newport**
  - Play & Learn
  - EHS Newport Center 1—2:30 pm
- **Colville**
  - Play & Learn
  - EHS Colville Center 1—2:30 pm

**Policy Council in Colville**
- 9:30 am - 2:30 pm

- **Newport**
  - Play & Learn
  - EHS Newport Center 10:30 am—12 pm
- **Colville**
  - Play & Learn
  - EHS Colville Center 10:30 am—12 pm

**Governing Board Meeting in Cheney**
- 9:30 am - 2:30 pm

- **President’s Day Holiday**
- **Professional Development Day**

EWU EHS Curriculum Week — No Home Visits
The Earned Income Tax Credit (also known as the EITC or EIC) is an important benefit to help you keep more of what you earned.

When the EITC exceeds the amount of taxes owed, it results in a tax refund for qualified workers earning less than $46,997 who claim the credit ($52,427 for married couple filing jointly with 3 or more qualifying children). It provides a refundable tax credit to low- and moderate-income taxpayers who have earned money during the year from either a job or self-employment.

And there’s more good news!

For the 2014 tax year (filed in 2015) the maximum credit amount you can receive has increased again!

For qualified workers earning less than the qualifying amounts for their family category EIC can provide more refund money, especially for families with children who are facing challenging economic times.

This year the maximum credit has increased to:
- $3,305 if you have one qualifying child,
- $5,460 if you have 2 qualifying children,
- $6,143 if you have 3 or more qualifying children, or
- $496 if you don’t have a qualifying child.

To qualify, taxpayers must meet certain requirements and file a tax return, even if they did not earn enough money to be obligated to file a tax return.

The EITC has no effect on most welfare benefits. In most cases, EITC refunds will not be used to determine eligibility for Medicaid, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), food stamps, low-income housing or most Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) payments.

You can get more information about this on-line at www.irs.gov/eitc or wherever federal tax forms are available.
Your Child Has Healthcare... Shouldn't You??

LEARN MORE ABOUT HOW TO SIGN UP FOR OR RENEW HEALTH INSURANCE FOR YOU AND YOUR FAMILY

Qualified Health Plan Open Enrollment closes February 15th!

Go to: www.wahealthplanfinder.org or for FREE help contact:

Rural Resources Healthcare Navigator Program:
(509) 685-6077 or 1-(877) 219-5542

Because Your Health Is Important Too!!