Join Us On Policy Council!

I am writing to invite you, to join our Early Head Start Policy Council.

**What is Policy Council and why do you want me on it?**

The Policy Council is a group of EHS parents and community members who work together to make our program the very best it can be for you and your children.

As a member of Policy Council, you will:

- **Share your ideas about what EHS does well and how EHS can be better**
- **Be on interview teams when we hire new EHS home visitors, managers and other EHS staff**
- **Help decide how EHS provides EHS services and help to oversee our budget**
- **Keep our EHS program focused on what parents of infants and toddlers really want and need from EHS**

**How do I learn what to do?**

Policy Council members and EHS staff, including me, will help you learn everything you need to know!

All you need to do is to show up ready to meet some new friends and to share about your experience in Early Head Start and about living in your community.

**Sounds great, but do you pay for gas and child care?**

Yes! Policy Council members are reimbursed for their mileage at $.575 per mile and are reimbursed for child care. You are also welcome to bring your child or children with you.

**When and Where Do You Meet?**

We meet one day each month. Policy Council members decide on the days, times and locations of the meeting.

**I have more questions, who do I call?**

Please call Ray Roberts, our EHS Parent and Community Engagement Manager, with any questions you have. Ray is at every Policy Council meeting and he can answer all your questions. You can reach Ray at 509.359.3157 or toll free by calling 1-800.776.9136 extension 3157.

Hope to see your name on the Policy Council nominations list soon!

Carolyn Sola
EWU EHS Director
The EWU EHS Policy Council elections are coming up soon!

It’s time for EHS parents to nominate people to be Parent and Community Representatives on the Policy Council.

Nominating is Easy!

All you need to do to nominate someone for Policy Council is fill out the bright yellow nomination sheet (there’s one inside this newsletter) and get it back to EWU EHS by 5 p.m. on Friday, April 24.

Elected Representatives will serve a 1-year term starting in July 2015—June 2016.

Who Can Be on Policy Council?

Parents and guardians of children enrolled in EWU EHS on May 31 are eligible to be Parent Representative candidates. Each EHS Home-Visitor has 1 Parent Representative.

There are also 4 Community Representatives, one for Ferry County, one for Pend Oreille County, and two for Stevens County.

Community Representatives are people who are not currently enrolled EHS parents and who live, work or regularly volunteer in the county they represent.

Questions?

You can ask your Home-Visitor for more about Policy Council or contact EHS Parent and Community Engagement Manager Ray Roberts at 509.359.3157 or toll free by calling 1-800.776.9136 ext. 3157.

How To Nominate Yourself Or Others:

Please fill out the bright yellow sheet inside this newsletter and turn it in to your Home-Visitor or mail it in to the address at the bottom of the sheet by 5 p.m. Friday, April 24th.
Growing Minds By Supporting Exploration and Problem Solving

Babies are born ready to learn! Given healthy prenatal development, they come into the world as curious, motivated learners, seeking meaning, wired to learn language, and strive to build relationships with those who take care of them. Though the base of learning begins with genetics, a child’s experiences and environment shape the brain and their ability to use it.

This natural inclination for learning is best supported when all areas of development (intellectual or cognitive, social, emotional, language, and motor) are engaged and this is most likely to take place during play.

When playing, children work on cognitive development (or the growth of knowledge and thinking, remembering, imagining, creating, solving, and making generalizations) by: building language, problem solving, perspective taking, representational skills (even babies recognize their favorite brand symbols), memory, and creativity.

Play is the most natural, convenient, and efficient place to provide this kind of learning environment, but what kind of play is best? How do adults play with children in ways that support this natural inclination toward cognitive learning?

- **Provide an environment that offers many opportunities** to interact actively with their environment. When running errands walk through the grass rather than using the sidewalk to look for bugs or notice the softer texture of the surface. Take along a few toys so that your child will have something to do while waiting.

- **Encourage your child to explore toys and materials in different ways** by touching, banging, stacking, and shaking.

- **Turn everyday routines into playful learning moments.** For example, bath time is a chance to learn about ideas like sinking/floating and wet/dry.

- **Follow your child’s interests.** Children learn best through activities that excite them. Add to their attempts by naming objects an infant looks at or talking about what is happening, or getting down on the ground to investigate a beetle with a three year old.
And Discover During Play!

- **Ask your child questions that get them thinking and talking.** Ask your infant how they feel and what they notice. Ask children nearing age 3 what they think will happen next.

- **Model thinking by saying your own attempts to problem solve or your thought process out loud.** Talk about how you took another way home because you thought the traffic would be backed up with road construction. Many adults notice their own curiosity and drive for learning grows as they “wonder” along with children.

Parents can also encourage intellectual growth by being aware of a child’s present level of development, the limits of her understanding, and her unique skills and capabilities.

It is important to present material and experiences to your child that are intellectually challenging yet not beyond an appropriate level of difficulty. The quality and number of experiences a child has can either encourage or slow their emerging cognitive growth. High quality, challenging experiences encourage cognitive development. Low quality experiences, (that are too easy or too hard), can be frustrating and slow or even stop a child’s exploration and ability to problem solve.

Judging if an activity is too challenging can be tricky. A child frustrated by one that is too hard may look very similar to a child with an activity that is too easy and is under stimulated such as: losing interest quickly, or not even attempting to play.

It can take some practice assessing the difficulty of a task. Watch your child for cues that tell you what is too easy and what is too difficult. When things are too easy, offer some additional challenge. When things are too hard, offer some assistance until your child can try on their own. Your Parent Child Educator can help you select activities that are challenging but not frustrating for your child.

With some careful observation; reflection about your observations with family, friends or your home visitor; and following through with your ideas for playing, your child will have the quality and quantity of exploratory experiences to grow their Cognitive Development to its fullest potential.

*Adapted from Parents as Teachers Foundational Curriculum.*
What's Happening

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 Play & Learns this month in Colville and Newport!
Don’t miss out! At EWU EHS Play & Learns in April we’ll be focusing on:

- Exploration and Problem Solving—Child Discoveries
- Parents Are Their Child’s Best Advocate—Getting What Your Child Needs
Seven Policy Council members and the Head Start ECEAP representative met on Thursday, March 5. The Executive, Budget, Ad-Hoc Socializations, Policy & Bylaws, Hiring and Elections Committees all met before the general session.

EHS Director Carolyn Sola provided program information and updates including:
- EHS continuing to be fully enrolled with a wait list.
- EWU EHS Budget is currently underspent with EHS Management and Budget committee work being done to reallocate funds to other categories.

Policy Council Members reviewed and acted to approve:
- The Policy Council Elections Process and Timeline
- The Medically Underserved Area Designation Request
- 2015-2016 EWU EHS Federal Grant Budget
- 2015-2016 EWU EHS Federal Grant Application

The next Policy Council meeting is scheduled for Thursday, April 9, 2014.

Complete Policy Council meeting minutes are posted at all EWU EHS Centers and can always be obtained by requesting them from any EWU EHS staff person, or by calling 1-(800) 776-9136 ext. 2957.
Parents are constantly looking after their child’s best interests. And EWU Early Head Start strongly believes that parents are the best advocates for their children.

Here are some things to keep in mind when you are making decisions for your child.

**You Have Rights!**

Parents have rights. You have the right to:

- Make decisions about your child
- Enough information to make a good decision for your child
- Have those decisions respected
- Have your concerns about services heard
- Have confidential information kept private

**You Make the Decision!**

As your child’s parent, you need to be comfortable about decisions you make for your child.

You should not feel pressured or forced into a decision that you do not agree with.

That is true when you deal with EWU EHS and with other community agencies or schools.

**We Are Here to Help You!**

EWU Early Head Start is here to help you be a strong advocate for your child.

Please talk with your child’s home visitor and let them know what you want for your child. The more we know about what you want, the more we can help!

Our staff can help you by:

- Talking about your choices
- Giving you information about community resources
- Providing tips and advice about how to work with other agencies
- Supporting you as you work with other agencies
- Coordinating services with other agencies

**It’s Confidential!**

EWU EHS keeps information about your child confidential. We can only discuss information with other agencies or groups if you sign a release of information form.
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**DATES TO NOTE**

- The Nomination Period For EHS Policy Council Representatives Is **APRIL 1-24**

- **FREE CPR CLASS**
  Covers Infant, Child and Adult CPR + AED
  9 am - 12 pm at Providence Mount Carmel Hospital
  Contact Heather Judd at (509) 685-5450 for more information.
**CHILDREN DON’T COME WITH INSTRUCTIONS!**

PARENTING IS HARD WORK... BUT YOU AREN’T ALONE...
LET EWU EARLY HEAD START HELP YOU TODAY!

DO YOU HAVE QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS ABOUT YOUR CHILD’S BEHAVIOR?

TEMPER TANTRUMS - BITING - SLEEPING - TOILETING
DISCIPLINE - FEEDING CONCERNS - SEPARATION ANXIETY

WOULD YOU LIKE HELP WITH THESE, OR OTHER CONCERNS YOU HAVE FOR YOU OR YOUR CHILD?

WE CAN HELP!

TALK TO YOUR CHILD’S HOME VISITOR AND THEY CAN GET YOU CONNECTED WITH

JENNIFER LAWRENCE - EHS Child Development and Disabilities Manager

OR

MOLLY PHILLIPS - Licensed Mental Health Professional Specializing in Family Therapy and Infant/Toddler Behaviors
If you are a currently enrolled EHS family, EWU EHS will pay the cost for you to attend the Love and Logic classes. Just let Claudia Blackman know you are an EHS Family and she will send us the bill.

Ask your home-visitor for more details.
Save the Date and Plan to Come Join Us For Our

6th Annual Stevens County

Community Resource and Summer Safety Fair!

Friday, May 8th from 12:30 - 3:30 p.m.
at the EHS Colville Center, 146-D Buena Vista Rd.

It’s FREE and OPEN TO EVERYONE!

Come join in the fun! Meet staff from many community agencies and learn more about the help available to you and your family, and about summer safety and outdoor activities for young children and families.

Call Sharon Sundheim For More Details:
(509) 685-1815 (option 1).

WE REALLY HOPE TO SEE YOU THERE!
This sheet is provided to nominate people as EWU Early Head Start Policy Council Members.

**Nominations must be received by EWU EHS no later than 5 p.m. on April 24, 2015.**

Current or former Eastern Washington University staff, subcontractors or their employees, or members of their immediate family may **not** nominate individuals for or serve on the EWU EHS Policy Council.

**I would like to nominate the following person(s) to be on the 2015-2016 Policy Council:**

- **Me:**
  - Name: __________________________
  - I can be contacted best at these phone numbers: __________________________
  - The best time to call at the above number(s) is: __________________________

- **Other:**
  - Name: __________________________
  - They can be contacted best at these phone numbers: __________________________
  - The best time to call at the above number(s) is: __________________________

**My Name Is:** __________________________

**My Family's EHS Home-Visitor Is:** __________________________

There are **14 Parent Representative positions** on the EWU EHS Policy Council – one position to represent the families of each of the 14 EWU EHS Home-Visitors.

There are **4 Community Representative positions** on the EWU EHS Policy Council (1 Ferry County, 1 Pend Oreille County and 2 Stevens County positions).

The 4 Community Representatives are **not** enrolled EHS parents and represent the communities and citizens of the county that they live, work or regularly volunteer in.

You can submit your nomination by:
1. Giving it to an EWU EHS staff person, or
2. Mailing it to: EWU Early Head Start, 202 E. Spokane Falls Blvd. #202, Spokane, WA 99202

**THE DEADLINE FOR NOMINATIONS IS 5 p.m. FRIDAY, APRIL 24, 2015.**

Questions regarding the Nomination Sheet or Policy Council Member nominations?
Call Ray Roberts at: **(800) 776-9136 ext. 3157**
HEARTSAVER CPR COURSES
FREE TO OUR COMMUNITY

Providence Mount Carmel Hospital is pleased to offer CPR/AED Training Courses free to members of our community. This course covers CPR/AED techniques for Infant, Child, and Adult. An AHA HeartSaver CPR AED card is issued upon completion.

Courses are held at Providence Mount Carmel Hospital on the third Saturday of each month from 9:00am – 12:00pm.

Registration is required as space is limited. To register, contact Heather Judd at heather.judd@providence.org or 509.685.5450