



ICS HEAD START NEWSLETTER

PARENT ENGAGEMENT

210 West Valley Avenue

Holly Springs, MS 38635

662.252.1582

Dear Parents,

By now you and your child should have gained some valuable experiences with ICS. Our goal is to provide some school readiness practices and activities that will prepare you and your child for kindergarten. We will continue to support you as primary educators, nurturers, and caregivers of your child. Whenever centers are open, we want you to visit or volunteer in our classrooms, to participate in decision-making, and to become strong advocates for your children

As part of your agreement with ICS, when centers have face-to-face classes, you are to make sure your child attends Head Start every day that he or she is able to attend and to let staff know if your child cannot attend. Children can be dropped from the program if they miss too many days.

We believe in teamwork. Your involvement is crucial! We are looking forward to working with you as partners and volunteers. When centers are open (ICS is anticipating opening centers on February 1, 2021), we also look forward to seeing you at parent conferences, meetings, and during home visits.

Eloise McClinton

Inside this issue:

Things to Do with Your Child	2
How Can I Help My Child Learn	3
Tax Season 2020 Will Look Different	4



Eloise McClinton
Executive Director

“Making Small Miracles A Great Success”

Advice from a Tree



- ◇ Stand tall and proud
- ◇ Go out on a limb
- ◇ Remember your roots
- ◇ Drink plenty of water
- ◇ Be content with your natural beauty
- ◇ Enjoy the view

Joanne Raptis

These activities are designed for building a strong home-school connection and including activities that children and their families can enjoy together.

LEARN EVERYDAY / THE PRESCHOOL CURRICULUM

Things to Do with Your Child

1. Gather several different kinds of paper (newspaper, printer, magazine, cardboard, etc.) and make paper airplanes. Experiment with different sizes and styles, and see which ones fly best. Then try them on a breezy day and a calm day. When do they fly?
2. Fold some paper in half and staple along the fold (makes a book). Then, cut some photos from a magazine, and glue them onto the pages. Make up a story about the photos.
3. Make some colored ice cubes (food coloring in water, freeze). Then, take the cubes outside and paint with them on white paper.
4. Pick some flowers, and press them between two sheets of paper placed under a heavy book. Carefully peel up the flowers, and then glue them onto a piece of paper that has been cut into a long strip suitable for use as a book mark. To make it last longer, cover the book mark with clear contact paper. Trim excess contact paper.
5. Have a shape shadow experiment. On a sunny day, place a few different household objects so that their shadows fall onto a piece of black construction paper. Have your child trace the outlines of the shadows out, and paste them onto white paper. Ask other family members or friends if they can guess which object produced each shadow.
6. Take a bucket of water and some brushes outside and “paint” driveway, a fence, or any waterproof surface.
7. Place a large loop of yarn on the grass, and look through a magnifying glass at what’s inside the loop
8. Take a walk in your neighborhood or a park, and listen for as many different sounds as you can hear.



How Can I Help My Child Learn?

Health

Good health begins before birth. Mothers must get regular medical check-ups when they first realize they may be pregnant. A mother's health before delivery can determine the child's health for the rest of its life.

Doctors now know that breastfeeding is better for baby than the bottle. So if you can breast-feed, you are doing your baby and yourself a favor.

The right foods are important. Children need plenty of fruits and vegetables and home-cooked meals eaten with the family.

Eating together regularly gives family members a chance to talk to each other and to bond together. These children feel closer to their parents and to each other as they tell about their day and their feelings. The family bonds and is more likely to stay together.



Read to Your Child Why Read?

Children tend to value what their parents value. If your children see you reading, then they are more likely to want to read.

Even better, read to your children from birth. Choose simple books and read them with expression. Point to the pictures as you read. Soon your child will be reading the pictures.

This early reading plants a love of books in your child. The child who loves books does better in school than the child who does not love books.

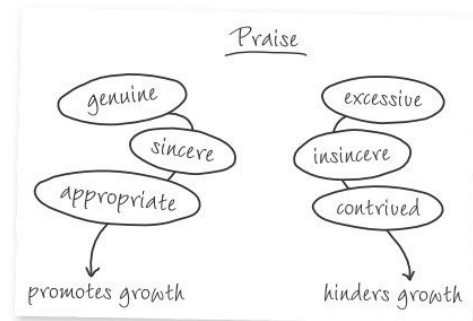
Activities for Parents

TALK to your child as you as you go about your daily routine. No baby talk. Talk about what you are doing. Give simple directions. Make your child feel important to you.

Studies show that 3-year-old children who had been talked to regularly had much higher IQ scores than 3-year-olds who had not been talked to.

Praise Your Child

Praise your child for trying. Say something like, "Good job! You tried really hard! I'm sorry you didn't quite get it, but I am proud of you for trying. Next time you'll do it."



Turn Off The TV



This is a hard one, but you must decide what you want for your child.

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends no TV or even educational DVDs for the first 2 years of life. Researchers found that "for every hour per day the babies watched educational DVDs, they understood six to eight fewer words than babies whose caregivers kept the TV off completely." (See Sept. 2011 issue of Ebony Magazine for more information on this topic.)



Institute of Community Services

210 West Valley Street
Holly Springs, MS 38635

Phone: 662-252-1582
Fax: 662-252-6637
www.ics-hs.org



The Institute of Community Services, Inc. is an equal opportunity employer/provider. No persons shall be discriminated against because of race, religion, color, sex, gender, age, disability, homelessness or national origin.

Tax Season 2020 Will Look Different: Here's How To Prepare

It's no secret that 2020 has been a tumultuous year. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, many Americans found themselves out of work—at least temporarily—and received unemployment benefits. Others may have experienced employment changes, like working from home or taking on multiple jobs. All of these factors will have even more of an impact come time to file income taxes on tax day, April 15, 2021.

To help you prepare and get the maximum tax refund you deserve, here are some tax tips.

- 1. Understand how unemployment benefits work.** If you received unemployment benefits this year, it may have been for the first time. Make sure you're aware of how they affect your taxes. Unemployment benefits are taxable and must be reported to the IRS on your tax return. Taxable benefits also include any special compensation authorized under the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act earlier this year. That means if you did not withhold enough taxes from your employment benefits, you could see a big tax bill or a much smaller tax refund than you normally receive. Unemployment benefits can affect tax credits. Unemployment is considered unearned income, so it won't count toward certain credits. For example, you must have earned income to qualify for the Child Tax Credit or the Earned Income Tax Credit. Additionally, your adjusted gross income must be below certain levels to get certain credits.
- 2. Set money aside to cover unexpected taxes.** If you received unemployment benefits and did not withhold any federal or state income tax, you'll need to pay tax on that money. To prepare, consider setting money aside now to cover those taxes on your 2020 return and brace yourself for a much smaller refund or no refund at all this tax season.
- 3. Take advantage of possible deductions.** Every taxpayer will get a charitable donation deduction for 2020. Make a list of any IRS-approved donations you made this year and locate any receipts. Whether itemizing or taking the standard deduction, under the CARES Act, all taxpayers are eligible to deduct up to \$300 worth of monetary donations to qualified organizations. And while many Americans have been working at home for months, a home office deduction is not guaranteed. The home office deduction is only available to those who are self-employed.
- 4. Consider major life changes.** Life goes on, even during a pandemic, and life changes can bring sizable tax implications. Some changes that cause the biggest impact include getting married or divorced, having a baby or adopting a child, buying or selling property, retiring, or starting a business. If you experienced any of these events in 2020, know that your return will look different.
- 5. Keep track of important documents.** Even if your taxes won't be affected by unemployment, make sure you gather all your documents, such as W-2 forms and 1099s for interest dividends and even retirement distributions. Remember to include the Notice 1444 you received with your stimulus check for your 2020 tax records. Collect your charitable contribution totals, mortgage interest, property taxes you've paid, and any additional state and local income taxes paid for the year. If you were furloughed and able to pick up a temporary job, gather your W-2s for each job you worked. If you worked a side gig, make sure to keep a record of your income, the miles you drove, and any additional expenses. And if you're not filing single, be on the lookout for family members that may have been impacted to make your tax return more complicated. No matter your 2020 situation, follow these tips to prepare for any unexpected tax implications.

Source: The Crescent-News 1/21/2021