



September 2021

Chicago Heights

From the Desk of



Crystal Powell, M. Ed-Site Director

Hello Families,

My name is Crystal Powell. I'm the Site Director of the Chicago Heights Early Learning Center. I am looking forward to meeting my new families and welcoming my returning families back to the site. It has been a tough year, but the staff here at Chicago Heights have preserved and supported the children and families enrolled in our program. As your new Site Director, I would like to give you some information on my background. I have been in the field of Early Childhood Education for over 13 years. I enjoy supporting children and families and watching the whole family grow and develop. I have a Master of Education in Early Childhood Administration from National Louis University. I have been with Illinois Action for Children for 7 years as a Teacher Coach and was promoted to the Site Director position in 2019. Here at Chicago Heights, we value our families and ensure that we provide our families with a safe and trusting environment. I welcome all families and have an open-door policy, so please feel free to contact me at any time.

We are happy to announce that we will be open five days a week for this new school year. Although we are faced with many unknown challenges, we know the importance of nurturing and caring for our children and families. The staff and I want to assure you that we are continuing to take the necessary precautions to keep your children safe, by practicing social distancing, washing hands frequently, and wearing a mask. We are here for you. Please do not hesitate to call the office if you need any assistance.

Classroom or Home Educators' Notes

Hello Families,

Welcome to Chicago Early Learning Center. We would like to remind you that the teachers will be calling you to set up Home Visits to learn more about your children. The Home Visit will allow you and your child to meet your classroom teacher. The Home Visit can be done virtually or at the center. Please let your classroom teacher know your preference as to what type of Home Visit you would like to have.

Staff will be in constant communication with you to share resources and keep you informed of engagement activities.

Continue to be on the lookout for information going home. Check your child's backpack for notices and information about At-Home Activities. The At-Home Activities are sent home every week and are recommendations from your child's teacher of activities to do at home with your child. Please complete the form, sign it, and return it to their teacher. It is very important for your child's learning and the Program's mandates.

UPCOMING EVENTS - MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

Hearing and Vision - TBA

9/6/2021 Closed in observance of Labor Day

9/16/2021 Parent Committee Meeting and Parent Orientation at 2:00 pm. Please note, the Parent Committee Meeting is usually the first Thursday of the month, this month will be the exception.



Notes from:

Catalina Torres, Parent Involvement Coordinator

Family Engagement is basic in our Early Learning Programs. At Illinois Action for Children, the Family Engagement Component Area remained intact, meaning families are still engaged in parental activities, such as e-learning and at-home activities with their child, parent meetings, workshops, family fun nights, parent cafés, and at-home learning activities. Family Engagement also includes working in partnership with Family Engagement Specialists and Parent Educators in the completion of a Family Assessment, establishing a Family Goal Partnership, distribution of resources and services to assist families in meeting their needs and interests, and accomplishing your goals. If you at any time have any needs or interests, please contact your Family Engagement Specialist or your Parent Educator, and they will guide you with resources and services.

Staff is implementing “The Pyramid Model” across all our early learning programs in partnership with families. The Pyramid Model is a framework for teaching social-emotional skills to young children: Social-Emotional brain development occurs between 0-5 years old and positive social-emotional skills are the greatest predictors of success in school or life. By using The Pyramid Model strategies at school and home, children will be taught the social-emotional skills they need to succeed. Our schools will follow behavior expectations for everyone who is in our schools: children, staff, and families. The program-wide expectations include: Be Respectful; Be Kind; Be a Good Citizen; and Be a Participating Family.

You will be hearing a lot more about the Pyramid Model and receiving a lot more information about it soon.

Please plan to participate in Parent Committee Meetings, Parental Activities, and complete and return At-Home Activities weekly throughout the school year.

Around Town/Resources

Join Security Opportunities for Success (SOS) and receive job training at no cost. Certifications offered: Biohazard-COVID-19 clean up, Construction Flagger, Construction Forklift, Environmental Abatement (Asbestos, Lead, RRP and Mold), Home Inspection Certification, OSHA and Safety Trainings, and Unarmed Security. For more details and enrollment assessment call 708-251-4965. For more information and other services visit WWW.CORNERSTONE-CDC.ORG.

Food Pantries:

Bloom Township 425 South Hasted St., Chicago Heights, IL (708) 754-9400

Thornton Township 15340 Page St., Harvey, IL (708) 596-6040 ext 3180

South Suburban Family Shelter provides crisis intervention, resources, short-term emergency shelter for victims and survivors seeking immediate safety (708) 335-3028. They also offer Community Education, Counseling Services, Court Advocacy, Domestic Violence Advocacy, a Partner Abuse Intervention Program, and a Housing Program. Visit www.ssfs1.org for more information.

Pathlights offers services to grandparents raising grandchildren. Among others, they provide free consultation, education, encouragement, and in some cases, emergency funding. To learn more about this and other services they offer, call (708) 361-0219 or visit www.pathlights.org.

CEDA offers Family Support and Community Engagement and assistance with water bills, telephone bills, child care for essential workers, medical supplies and prescription costs, and emotional counseling services.

Call (312) 795-8948 or visit www.cedaorg.net for more information.

Contact your Family Engagement Specialist/Parent Educator for further resources.

