



September 2021
Ford Heights

From the Desk of



Janet Parker, Site Director

Hello Families,

My name is Janet Parker, I'm the Site Director of the Ford Heights Early Learning Center. I would like to welcome all families returning and new, to an exciting and adventurous school year. I have worked in the field of Early Childhood Education for over 34 years. I received my Bachelor's degree in Early Childhood from Governor State University, and my Master's degree in Early Childhood Administration from National Louis University. My philosophy is that all children should feel respected, valued, and be treated as individuals.

The staff here at Ford Height Early Learning Center is dedicated to building positive relationships with children and their families. The Parent Meeting will be the second Wednesday of each month, your presence is much needed. The meetings will be virtual, if you need assistance, please contact your Family Engagement Specialist.

We are happy to announce that we will be open five days a week this new school year. Although we are faced with many unknown challenges, we here at IAFC know the importance of nurturing and caring for our children and families. We want to assure you that we are continuing to take all precautions to keep your children safe, by social distancing, washing hands frequently, and wearing masks. We are here for you. Please do not hesitate to call the office if you need any assistance. Thank you for choosing the Ford Heights Early Learning Center.

Classroom or Home Educators' Notes

Teachers will be calling to meet each of you over the phone, as well as conducting a home visit with you. Please don't forget to schedule your home visit.

We are requesting that all children have a change of clothing at all times, which will be kept at the site.

We would also like to welcome our newest staff member Ms. Latricia Cool. She will be a Program Aide here. Ms. Cool served on the Policy Council for two years, representing the parents of Ford Heights Early Learning. Welcome Ms. Cool so excited to have you on my team!

Your teacher will be sending weekly At Home Activities for you to do at home with your child. Please complete, sign, and return the At Home Activity forms to your teacher. You will be enhancing your child's learning and will be assisting the Program in meeting federal mandates.

Staff will be in constant communication with you to share resources and to inform you of engagement opportunities

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UPCOMING EVENTS - MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

Special events, Meetings and Highlight dates:

9/6/2021 Closed in observance of Labor Day

9/8/2021 Parent Committee Meeting/Parent Orientation at 2:00 pm

TBD Hearing and Vision Screenings



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.

