

## NEWS RELEASE

The Armstrong County CAA Head Start program is now recruiting children and families for the fall program. The center based option provides a preschool experience with classrooms that run either 4 or 5 days a week. Also, a Pre-K Counts program is located in Ford City. This classroom runs 5 ½ hours a day, five days a week and serves families up to the 300% poverty guidelines.

Head Start is a comprehensive child development program that serves low-income children and their families. Ninety percent of the children enrolled meet federal poverty guidelines; ten percent are mandated special needs; and a 10% allowance is provided for over-income families. The program thus provides disadvantaged children a preschool experience they would not otherwise be able to afford - an opportunity for equal education. In Armstrong County, Head Start is the only preschool program to mainstream children with disabilities. Individual Program Plans are written by Head Start staff for all children, and special services are provided in order for the children to participate to the best of their ability and potential.

Parents always have been and continue to be the most important asset the program has. They are given many opportunities to participate in the program: at the center level, volunteering in the centers; and at the county level as members of the governing body, the Policy Council. Parents not only participate but make decisions about the kind of preschool program they want their children to have. Applications for preschool children ages 3-5 and their families may be obtained by calling the Head Start office at (724) 548-3414 or 1-800-405-6252.