



Huntington Beach

City School District



September 1st, 2015

Greetings!

Fall is right around the corner, and that often means many transitions for all of us, including young children. This issue will take a look at some strategies for easing children into new settings, and will also highlight Family Day 2015. We have included a reminder about the importance of reading aloud to children each and every day, and you will also find the new Learning Link calendar and information on the THINK Together program; both programs will be held on the campus of Perry Elementary.

Easing Into New Environments



Can you remember the last time you started a new job, new educational adventures or began attending a new group or activity for the first time? While people adapt to new environments and settings at different rates and with different mindsets, many feel a multitude of emotions during planning and the days leading up to the transition. These emotions might include excitement, wonder and hope, or possibly fear, anxiety and apprehension. Children may feel these types of emotions (and others) when encountering new situations, and we may notice behavioral shifts as they continue to acquire the skills necessary to articulate their feelings. There are many things we can do to help all young children ease into these transitions successfully. These include:

Preparation:

Prior to the first day in a new school or new classroom, make it a priority to visit the campus. While you are there, it might be a good opportunity to ask your children what they are most excited about and if there is anything that makes them feel nervous. Encouraging children to talk about all of their feelings helps to give them a sense of security and builds trust and attachment. It is important to leave our adult feelings out of this particular conversation, as the goal here is to discover more about how our child is feeling.

There are many books that can be explored at home during these transitions as well.

A few of our favorites include:

[The Kissing Hand](#), by Audrey Penn

[I Love You All Day Long](#), by Francesca Rusackas

[Mouse's First Day of School](#), by Lauren Thompson

[What to Expect at Preschool](#), by Heidi Murkoff

[Look Out Kindergarten, Here I Come](#), by Nancy Carlson

[My Kindergarten](#), by Rosemary Wells

Routine:

Develop both bedtime and morning routines to help your child clearly understand what your expectations are and what is coming next. This helps to instill a sense of security and can help alleviate challenging behaviors. Discuss these routines with your child often, and invite them to help you develop a visual tool that they can follow. Walking through the routine (as practice) with your child and taking pictures of them completing those tasks is an idea that might help to make the visual more personal to them.



Goodbye:

It will also be important to quickly establish a consistent goodbye routine. For some children, a hug, a kiss and a "have a great day!" might be sufficient. For children who may initially struggle with separation difficulties in new settings, you may want to

consider getting to school earlier in order to read a book or explore an activity together.

For additional tips from the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), click here: [12 Ways to Help Children Say Goodbye](#)

Family Day: September 28th, 2015



*Connect with your
family... one meal
at a time*

Join the Family
Dinner Project »

Family Day started back in 2001 as a national call to families to focus on the many benefits of frequent family dinners. With goals as wide-reaching as the prevention of risky substance abuse in children and teens, we know that these important ideas of routines and engagement set in the early years play a key component in future decision making skills.

Find out more about the Family Dinner Project here: [Family Dinner Project](#)

Find out more about Family Day here: [Family Day 2015](#)

Download a Coat of Arms for your family: [Coat of Arms](#)

Download a Good Deed Flower: [Good Deed Flower](#)

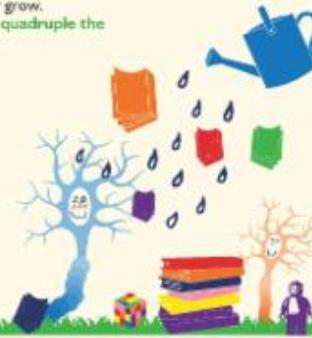
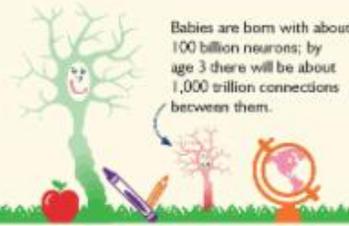
Download a Checkerboard Challenge Activity: [Checkerboard Challenge](#)

Read Aloud

Parents, it's up to you!

The first few years of life are critical in your child's brain development. Make the most of this window. If you wait, it's too late.

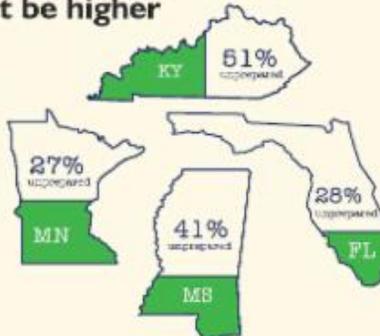
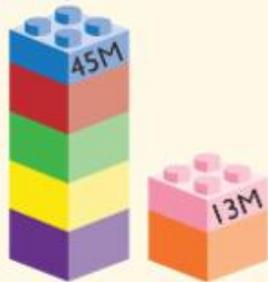
- Your baby's brain is making literally **trillions of connections** during the first few years, the fastest it will ever grow.
- Children are rapidly learning language. They often **quadruple the number of words they know** between ages 1-2.
- Babies learn best through interactions. **There is no substitute for YOU.**



The stakes could not be higher

Dodge the word gap

Some children will hear 30 million fewer words than their peers before age 4. Studies have shown the number of words a child knows when entering kindergarten is predictive of future learning success. Hart and Risley 2003

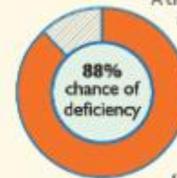


Get ready to learn

Too many children in the U.S. are **not prepared to learn** when they enter kindergarten. Studies show that those who fall behind are likely to stay that way.

Geography.com - The Middle Learning Center | Education.state.mn.us | Wisconsin Statewide - Beckwith and Phillips 2000 | Carnegie Foundation 1991

Avoid the slippery slope



A child not reading at grade level by the end of first grade has an **88% chance of not reading at grade level** by the end of fourth grade.

Those not reading proficiently by third grade are four times more likely to drop out of school.



Light up your child's brain!



Read aloud 15 MINUTES every day from birth to:

- Grow vocabulary and knowledge
- Bond and provide enriching engagement
- Foster a love of books and learning

You are your child's first and most important teacher. Read Aloud every day, from birth, for **at least 15 MINUTES** and light up your child's brain.



If you wait, it's too late.



Graphics by Jason Knudsen

Website of the Month!



Parent Toolkit

"This toolkit will help you navigate your child's journey from pre-kindergarten reading through high school. It is designed to help you track and support progress at each stage."

The site includes tips and guide and growth charts in the areas of academics, health and wellness and social/emotional development. Additionally, there are ideas and strategies that you can implement at home in order to foster growth in the areas mentioned above. It also includes an area to sign up for e-mail updates for your interest topics.

Find out more about this resource here: [Parent Toolkit](#)

Early Childhood Opportunities in the HBCSD



THINK Together

Teaching Helping Inspiring and Nurturing Kids

Learning Link 2015-2016

We look forward to offering the Learning Link on the campus of Perry Elementary, in Portable #33, beginning the first week in October. If you have a child between the ages of 0-5 and you have some time on Friday mornings between 9:00am-noon, we hope you will join us! This is a no-cost program that operates on a drop-in basis. If you have questions about this program, feel free to e-mail us at earlychildhood@hbcasd.us. Please find our 2015/2016 Calendar here: [Learning Link Calendar](#)

THINK Together Early Literacy and Math Program

Our partners at THINK Together will be offering a no-cost program that specializes in Early Literacy and Math for children between the ages of 3-5. This is a participatory program with a Parent Education component and that follows the research-based High Scope curriculum for children.

Please find out more, including contact information, here: [THINK Together Flier](#)

We hope you have found this information to be of value. It was sent to you because you provided your e-mail address to the Huntington Beach City School District in order to receive periodic updates and information related to Early Childhood Education. The content provided within this e-mail is for informational purposes only and does not constitute an endorsement of any person, program, agency or organization. The Huntington Beach City School District (HBCSD) is not responsible for the accuracy or content of information provided. If you would like to forward this on to others, or if you do not wish to receive future e-mails, please use the links below.

The way we
talk to our
children
becomes their
inner voice.

Sincerely,

Jenn Kinkel

Director of Early Childhood Education, Huntington Beach City School District

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