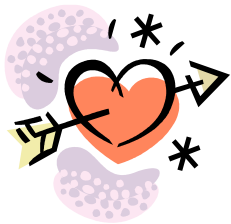

UAMS/KIDS FIRST Focus on Fort Smith

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February is National Heart Month

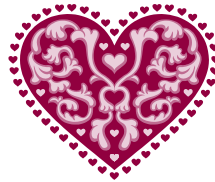
February has been named National Heart Month by the American Heart Association. You may wonder how heart disease impacts preschoolers, but the habits and practices we establish now determine the future health of our children. In the past 30 years, the occurrence of obesity in children has doubled and it is now estimated that one in five children in the U.S. are overweight. Childhood obesity has become the most prevalent nutritional disorder of U.S. children and one of the most common problems seen by pediatricians. Both the short term and long term effects of childhood obesity are a concern because of the negative psychological and physical health consequences in childhood. These consequences include, but are not limited to, poor body image, risk of eating disorders, type 2 diabetes, hypertension, sleep apnea, and high cholesterol. Further, obese children are more likely to be obese adults and are at increased risk of stroke, cardiovascular disease, hypertension, and diabetes.



There are ways to help establish healthy eating patterns with your children. Parents should choose

what the children can eat. Fruits and veggies should be readily available at home and limit high calorie snack food, which is usually loaded with high fat and high sugar. Serve and eat a variety of foods from each food group. Remember, a colorful plate is usually a more healthy plate! Serve small portions. Large portions can be overwhelming and you can always serve kids seconds if they are still hungry.

I know we live in the south, but bake, broil, roast or grill meats instead of frying. Limit the use of high calorie jellies, jams, and syrups. Be active as a family. Go for a walk, bike ride, swim, etc. Limit TV time and avoid eating in front of the TV. Limit high calorie drinks such as soda or sports drinks. Limit fruit juice to 2 servings or less per day. Many parents allow unlimited juice intake because it is healthy. However children who drink too much juice may be consuming too many calories. For good or bad, children imitate what we as adults do. Remembering to set a good example when it comes to food



DIRECTOR'S CORNER

Dear Families,

Already Valentine's Day is just around the corner. This year it is on Sunday, February 14th. It amazes me when my husband asks "When is Valentine's Day?" Do not let the opportunity slip by - tell your spouse, your family and your friends how much you love them and how you couldn't get through life without them. Do this before it's too late!

Happy Valentines Day!

Karen Tyler, Administrative Director, M.Ed.

helps our children and may help us be a little more healthy! For more information on childhood nutrition check with your pediatrician or ask our nurses for information from the KIDS FIRST nutritionist.

CHILD SAFETY SEAT GUIDELINES

We get questions all the time about what type of car seats are appropriate for different age and size children. These guidelines come from the website at Arkansas Children's Hospital. Here are the basics:

- Infants must be rear facing in the back seat

until at least 1 year old and at least 20 lbs.

- Children over 20 lbs. and 1 year of age may then be forward facing, still in the back seat until he/she is 80 lbs. and about 4'10" tall.
- Before being allowed to use only the regular vehi-

cle lap and shoulder seat belt, the child should be able to sit up with knees bent at the edge of the seat, the seat belt shoulder strap should fit com-



fortably across the chest, not the neck, and the seat belt lap strap should fit tight across the upper thighs.

To learn more go to www.ach.uams.edu/community_outreach.

PROJECT NURTURE

FUN WITH FOOD

Storytelling:

Storytelling is a fun and fundamental part of childhood. Through it, children build their vocabularies, foster a love for reading, and begin to understand how stories unfold. To make a story come alive, substitute the names of the characters with the names of your children. This allows them to feel like they are actually part of the plot.



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Questions? Comments?

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Heart-A-Stack Sandwiches

The red of the jam/cranberries goes with our valentine theme. These sandwiches have a sweet, but tangy zip.

You will need a heart shaped cookie cutter large enough to use up most of the bread. The crust can be torn up and fed to the birds.

You'll need:

8 slices of bread

1/3 lb. of turkey

Cream cheese

1 can cranberry sauce or raspberry jam

Start by cutting the heart shapes with the cookie cutter. Lightly toast the bread. (it makes it easier to spread the cream cheese) Spread a thin layer of cream cheese on one slice of bread and jam on the other.

Cut the turkey slices with the cookie cutter. Place on top of cream cheese. Put both sides together and enjoy.

Perfect Attendance

Winter weather wreaked havoc on perfect attendance in January. Still, ten children managed to make it to school every day. Those with perfect attendance are: Malachi E, Emerson S, Ella T, Zayden E, Clyde S,

Daniel D, Micah W, Wilson T, Alejandro O, and Michael



S. The winner of the perfect attendance prize is Alejandro. He will receive a selection of books. Congratulations to Alejandro and all of our children who make it to KIDS FIRST every day.

EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH

This month's Employee of the Month is Terrye McGuire. Terrye has worked for KIDS FIRST for 5 years and is one of the caregivers in Eeyore's Hideout. Terrye is married with 4 children, and is a new grandma!



Terrye's son Aaron and his wife, Tiffany welcomed their first child and her first grandchild last month. Make sure to congratulate "Granny T" when you see her!

Be sure to check your child's cubby in the coming days for information on Valentine's parties and number of children in their class for Valentine's exchange. Children who ride the bus will have their list sent home with them.



February Birthdays

This month we have several birthdays to celebrate!! Birthday children include, Marcus E, Irvin G, Chris G, Tiffany M, Kalie Q. and Dawn S. Staff celebrating birthdays are: Nurse Zorana, Miss Erica in Ol' Owls Nest, Miss JoAnn in the Kitchen, speech therapists Miss Cara and Miss Michelle. We would like to wish a very Happy Birthday to all the children and staff born in February!