



HEAD START



Write Start

A NEWSLETTER FOR THE LACOE HEAD START AND EARLY LEARNING COMMUNITY

Executive Director's Message: Home At Head Start

As L.A. County continues to experience a homelessness crisis, did you know that more than half of the children in homeless shelters are under five years old? Or that homelessness is associated with an 87 percent greater chance of dropping out of school?



Keesha Woods

Children experiencing homelessness are automatically eligible for Head Start. For 2019-20, let's make a concerted effort to reach them. One key first step is understanding that anyone lacking "fixed, regular, and adequate" housing qualifies, per the McKinney-Vento Act. Using this definition of "homeless" is one of the few regulations that the Office of Head Start and California Department of Education have in common. It can include families staying with friends, in a hotel, or frequently moving from place to place.

I am asking that every delegate agency make it a priority to have homeless families represent 10 percent of funded enrollment in both Head Start and Early Head Start. Homeless liaisons at your local school district can be a great resource, as can *the Supporting Children and Families Experiencing Homelessness* training at eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov.

At the same time, please also keep reaching out to children in foster care, who are also automatically eligible. Thanks to our partnership with the Department of Children and Family Services, we have wonderful opportunities to reach the roughly 8,000 L.A. County children from birth to five in foster care.

Moving from recruitment to the other end of the Head Start experience, we will soon be hosting the full-day Bridging Head Start to Kindergarten Transitions Symposium on Saturday, June 1. As Head Start providers, we are called on to prepare children, parents, and schools for kindergarten transitions, so that our kids may continue to grow and thrive even after they leave Head Start.

In this symposium, we will bring together Head Start and kindergarten parents, teachers, and administrators from across the county to exchange experiences and

expectations. We will also have a special opportunity to hear from special guest speakers from the Office of Head Start and California Department of Education, who will inspire us to keep reaching higher. I look forward to seeing you there!

Early Care & Education Resource Center Is Open on Select Saturdays

Parents and Teachers—find the perfect book for your child or your class at the Early Care & Education Resource Center! You can also work on arts & crafts projects, play an educational game, or use the space for socialization time or a home visit. The Resource Center will be open on select Saturdays for your convenience. Contact us at: hs_resourcecenter@lacoedu.edu.



LACOE Immigration Resources

LACOE has created a web page that provides resources regarding immigration issues that affect our school communities. Information will be updated regularly

To access the LACOE immigration resources web page, go to: <https://www.lacoedu.edu/Home/Immigrant-Relations>

Resources are also regularly shared on social media at: www.facebook.com/lacoeimrel and twitter.com/lacoeimrel

LACOE Board Recognizes Head Start and Early Head Start Teachers



LACOE Board Head Start and Early Head Start teachers (left to right): Dr. Debra Duardo (Superintendent, LA County Office of Education), Angelica Valenzuela, Ana Heredia, Thomas Saenz (Board President, LA County Office of Education).

On January 15, the Los Angeles County Board of Education presented the fifth annual Head Start and Early Learning Division Golden Apple Award to two of the division’s outstanding early childhood educators. Ana Heredia, Early Head Start teacher from Bassett Unified School District, and Angelica Valenzuela, Head Start teacher from El Monte City School District, stood out as exceptional early childhood educators who demonstrated excellence in teaching and leadership.

Ana Heredia, a former Head Start parent, “takes pride in providing incredibly engaging learning experiences for her children and consistently attends professional development opportunities,” said Rosie Ducoing, Bassett USD Interim Director. She has earned her master’s in early childhood education and a series of certifications that benefit both her students and co-workers. Ana also uses her bilingual skills to develop and provide instruction in both languages.

“She has a deep understanding of different learning styles that helps her individualize her approach to each child, including those with special needs,” said Keesha Woods, LACOE Head Start Executive Director.

The second honoree, Angelica Valenzuela, has been with El Monte City School District for more than 12 years, during which time she “has made a lasting impact on children and families with her positive attitude and engaging personality,” said Queta Morales, El Monte City SD Child Development Supervisor. She ensures that children are motivated to establish positive social and academic attitudes; she has an organized and well-managed classroom; and she implements the curriculum to fidelity.

“Going well beyond the work day, Angelica volunteers to attend professional development events on evenings and Saturdays, as well as taking on leadership roles and providing guidance, training, and direction to new staff. Her dedication serves as an inspiration to all of her fellow teachers,” Woods said.

The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors also honored both teachers on April 30.

The two Golden Apple winners were selected from an elite group of outstanding teachers, including:

- Natalie Casillas (Mountain View SD)
- LaThena Ellison (Pacific Asian Consortium in Employment)
- Sandra Gallegos (Pomona USD)
- Eleanor Hamilton (Children’s Institute, Inc.)
- Juana Hernandez (ABC USD)
- Kimberly Montalvo (Norwalk-La Mirada USD)
- Yuriana Morelos (Para Los Niños)
- Lucy Moreno (Norwalk-La Mirada USD)

Staff Wellness Initiative



On October 29, LACOE HSEL staff (pictured, left to right) Sardis Rodriguez, Jean Raghieb, Patricia Greene, and Cruz Smith participated in the 2018 Rally Round Golf Tournament. Mohammad and Jean Raghieb sponsor and operate this annual tournament and donate all proceeds to the Stramski Children’s Developmental Center, a special needs center that helps children with physical and developmental disabilities and their families. For more information about the Rally Round Golf Tournament, visit: www.rrgt.org.

Policy Council Highlights

- Former Policy Council parent, Executive Committee member, and LACOE Community Rep Alice Lee began employment with LACOE as an Office Assistant on February 8, 2019.
- Five parents and two Policy Council Head Start Mentors attended the Head Start California 2019 Parent & Family Engagement Conference on February 4-5 in Riverside, CA.
- LACOE staff and seven Policy Council parents attended the Thirty-Third District PTA Diversity & Inclusion Conference on March 7 in Long Beach, CA.
- A total of 150 Policy Council members, delegate agency staff, and LACOE staff attended the 23rd Annual Parent Involvement Academy on March 1 in the City of Industry, CA.



The newly elected Policy Council Executive Committee was introduced to the LACOE Board at the February 12 board meeting.



Parent Spotlight:

Xiomara Gamboa,
St. Anne's Maternity Home
Parent and LACOE Head Start Policy Council
Corresponding Secretary

Two years ago, Xiomara Gamboa was looking for a preschool that would meet the needs of her family and curious three-year-old son. At the time, she did not know where to begin her search, but she did remember seeing a Head Start banner in her Echo Park neighborhood. She knew that her stepdaughter had gone to Head Start when she was in preschool, so she decided to look into it. Shortly thereafter, she was able to enroll her son in the St. Anne's Head Start program.



Xiomara Gamboa

Although her now-five-year-old son was only in the program for a year, her two-and-a-half-year-old son is now enrolled in Early Head Start. Xiomara has found that both HS and EHS programs have greatly benefitted her children. "My children have become excellent learners," she said, sharing that reading has now become an enjoyable activity for her sons.

When Xiomara first enrolled her eldest son, she saw that "LACOE offers a lot of opportunities for parents to learn, and it is beneficial to parents if they want it." She immediately took advantage of as many school leadership and learning opportunities she could. To date, she has been involved in the Abriendo Puertas training, community health classes, the Family Development Credential course, various parent academies, the Policy Council, and parent committees.

Xiomara also notes how the program positively affects her family: "My husband has become more involved and makes sure that we are always doing activities as a family and that everything is a learning experience." In addition, her father-in-law is learning how to model better parenting behavior, and their family was chosen to participate in a multigenerational early childhood education commercial.

Xiomara did not imagine that the LACOE Policy Council, and other parenting classes would teach her as much as they have, "LACOE and St. Anne's challenge me with new ideas and different events." She keeps learning more and more, and this gives her more effective tools for parenting and teaching her children.

Now, Xiomara's goals include continuing her education and earning a rewarding position, possibly at LACOE or St. Anne's.

EMPLOYEES of the MONTH

January 2019



Julie Jackson
Division Secretary
Program Design and Effectiveness

"Julie is a team player who steps up to any challenge to make sure the group is successful."

—Excerpt from 2018 Nomination



Linda Praslin
Division Secretary
Planning and Resources Development

"Linda always takes the time to help her colleagues even when they are not a part of the unit she is assigned to support."

—Excerpt from 2018 Nomination

February 2019



Oscar Carmona
Language Interpreter/Translator
Planning and Resources Development

"Oscar not only cares about his own team, but he supports the success of the program by volunteering on the planning committees for several parent engagement activities."

—Excerpt from 2019 Nomination



Bonnie Cowlin
Secretary
Program Design and Effectiveness

"Bonnie is able to see where there may be gaps or areas missed, and follows up to make sure things are seamless. She is the glue that binds us together."

—Excerpt from 2019 Nomination

March 2019



Jean Raghieb
Head Start Delegate Liaison
Team Leader
Program Design and Effectiveness

"Jean participated on the Strategic Planning Team, which is outside of her normative duties. She did so with enthusiasm, often sharing with colleagues her eagerness to be able to contribute, impact and influence the grantee's trajectory towards ongoing improvement and quality programming."

—Excerpt from 2019 Nomination



Jennifer Mora
Bilingual Spanish Senior Typist Clerk
Planning and Resources Development

"Jennifer is super creative, artistic, and a quick thinker! She was instrumental in the creation of the Non-Federal Match/Attendance wall. She came up with the initial idea and helped to bring it to fruition."

—Excerpt from 2019 Nomination

April 2019



Jesus Torres
Head Start Program Development Specialist
Planning and Resources Development

"Jesus is committed to the success of his assigned agencies and LACOE, and this was most evident during Q1 and Q2 as he went the extra mile to provide solid technical assistance and guidance to aid agencies' efforts to meet and maintain full enrollment."

—Excerpt from 2019 Nomination

Spring Home Safety Checklist

Check cleaning supplies

Look for leaking containers and dispose what you no longer use or need at a hazardous waste distribution center.

Install smoke and carbon monoxide alarms

Replace batteries and test.

Visually inspect electrical cords and outlets

Replace worn or damaged cords. Contact a licensed electrical contractor to check loose-fitting outlets.

Maintain air conditioner

Make an appointment with a qualified technician to perform safe and proper maintenance work for your specific unit.

Clean gutters thoroughly

Use a sturdy and reliable ladder and rubber gloves.



Clean and check BBQ

Clean burner ports and tubes and test for hose leaks with a 50/50 water/soap solution.

Store fuel and other combustibles outside

Keep them in a well-ventilated shed or detached garage and away from direct sunlight and other heat sources.

Check recreational equipment

Make sure all playground equipment, bikes, skateboards, etc. are in safe working condition for family use.

Call before you dig

Before starting a garden or outdoor home renovation, contact your local utility company to get your underground utility lines marked to avoid pipeline damage.

This checklist is courtesy of the Canadian Technical Standards & Safety Authority. For more information, visit www.safetyinfo.ca.

Teaching Community Health Advocacy: The Health Champion Program



The Health Champion program is a health advocacy training for parents and staff using the community health worker (promotora) approach to Head Start and Early Head Start health requirements. The program promotes motivation and family health advocacy by training parents and staff on key skills of community health workers to collaborate with enrolled families to bring children up to date with recommended well child exams and oral health care.

This program is a first-of-its-kind offering by LACOE, with more than 30 participants representing parents and staff from eight delegate agencies. Upon completion, enrolled participants will receive a community health worker certification.

Participant quotes:

"Provides the tools to support and empower parents with the knowledge to advocate for their children's future."
—Michele Mapoy

"I have learned about the important role a community health worker has in bridging the gap between the patient and the health care providers/hospital with respect and compassionate care in their communities to improve the lives of families and children."
—Myrna Beit-Ayvaz

For more information about the Health Champion program, contact Ralonda "Rei" Johnson at johnson_rei@lcoe.edu.

2019-24 Strategic Plan for LACOE and Delegate Agencies

Over the past year, LACOE and our delegate agencies reviewed accomplishments, challenges, and lessons learned in this project period, and considered where we want to be five years from now. As a result, we identified five strategic directions and 14 first-year objectives:

Strategic Directions	First-Year Objectives By June 30, 2020, LACOE and its delegates will have...
<p><i>Demonstrating Child & Family Outcomes to Promote School Readiness</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provided services to all families that promote children’s healthy development • Maintained safe environments conducive to learning • Prepared children to meet kindergarten readiness outcomes • Implemented a plan to demonstrate the impact of Head Start on children and their parents by identifying the gains sustained through the end of kindergarten
<p><i>Leveraging Resources to Create Innovative Program Delivery Systems & Space</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developed and implemented “We come to you” innovative programs tailored to improve access for children • Leveraged at least two new resources to support innovative service delivery models • Increased the number and diversity of partnerships that improve/enhance array of services to children and families • Implemented technology-based solutions in program and service delivery
<p><i>Educating Policy Makers to Create More Responsive Service Delivery Systems</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identified how to track enrolled children across California’s data systems • Developed data reciprocity MOUs with partnering entities to mutually exchange data • Established a standing presence at local redevelopment planning meetings/councils
<p><i>Designing Compelling Marketing & Messaging to Attract & Retain Staff & Families</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developed and implemented a marketing campaign plan
<p><i>Strengthening & Sustaining a Culture of Inclusive Planning & Shared Leadership</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implemented “B me 2C” (Be me to see) campaign • Provided additional opportunities for inclusive planning and/or shared leadership

Begin with Sleep



Developing good sleep health is important for individuals to achieve their personal, family, and professional goals. Discover some surprising ways that you might be shortchanging your shuteye in the hours leading up to bedtime—and how to reverse the course.

You eat dinner too late.

Late work hours can lead to late-night dining, but eating as if you're in Europe doesn't make for quality sleep. That's because your body does its best digestion when you're upright. Going to bed with a full stomach makes you seven times more likely to suffer from uncomfortable issues like acid reflux or heartburn that can keep you awake.

You watch TV in bed.

Exercise is great for your sleep. TV marathons, on the other hand? Not so much. Not only does the availability of endless episodes mean serious temptation to keep watching past your bedtime, but the blue light that the TV emits can disrupt your body's natural melatonin production, making it harder to fall asleep when it's time.

You go to sleep with your smartphone.

Phones and tablets bring the same sleep-disrupting blue light into your bedroom as TV, but that's not the only reason they can disrupt sleep. Checking

your e-mail or scanning Facebook or other social media sites before bed can be a recipe for getting riled up with work stress or political posts—none of which is conducive to restful sleep.

Your midnight snack is sugar-central.

Munching on cookies may seem innocent enough, but all that refined sugar can take a toll on your sleep. The inevitable sugar crash may leave you feeling ready to turn in, but excess sugar can also cause middle-of-the-night awakenings. And that sets the stage for bleary-eyed mornings.

If you get the hunger pangs, aim to have a small snack an hour or so before lights out to give your body a chance to digest it. Check out these tasty options...

Celery and Hummus: Celery may help to alleviate acid reflux, and it's also a source of potassium, aiding in muscle relaxation. The blend of protein and complex carbohydrates in hummus will keep you feeling full with stabilized blood sugar levels throughout the night.

Popcorn with Parmesan: At three cups per serving, popcorn can be a filling, satisfying snack. Skip the butter and add a sprinkle of parmesan cheese: parmesan contains tryptophan, which can help you sleep when paired with carbohydrates like popcorn.

You toss and turn for hours.

Staying in bed when you can't sleep doesn't help you get the rest that you need, and it could create an unhealthy association between stress and your bed. Instead, try a breathing or relaxation exercise. If you can't fall asleep after 20 minutes, get up and do something relaxing away from the bedroom, and then try again when you feel drowsy.

Adapted from "Evening Habits That Are Messing with Your Sleep" and "Evening Snacks That Won't Keep You Up All Night" from **sleep.org** by the National Sleep Foundation.



Important Dates to Remember May – July 2019

May 27	Memorial Day—LACOE Offices Closed
June	National Hunger Awareness Month
June	National Safety Month
June 1	International Children's Day
June 1	LACOE Bridging Head Start to Kindergarten Transitions Symposium—Los Angeles, CA
June 3	Mexican Consulate Health Fair—Los Angeles, CA
June 4-6	Region IX 2019 Site Directors Academy—San Francisco, CA
June 11	Policy Council Meeting
June 20	Directors Meeting
July 1	Mexican Consulate Health Fair, Los Angeles, CA
July 4	Independence Day—LACOE Offices Closed
July 5	Board Recess Day—LACOE Offices Closed
July 11	Policy Council Meeting
July 18	Directors Meeting
July 22-25	NHSA Manager and Director Academy—Indianapolis, IN



Write Start Submissions

The *Write Start* welcomes your articles pertaining to Head Start activities and events. Please submit them to thewritestart@lacoedu.edu. The deadline for the next edition is **Friday, July 26, 2019**. You may also fax your submission to (562) 940-1740, Attn: Stephaney Roy.

**Los Angeles County Office of Education
Head Start and Early Learning Division
is now on...**

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Events, parenting tips, developmental milestones, and more... LACOE Head Start and Early Learning Division is your reliable source for early childhood education and early care information.



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