

Head Start Improves Academic Performances

Ever wonder why somebody doesn't do something about improving poor academic performance? Head Start, a nationwide program for young children of low-income families does just that! Not a give-away or welfare program, Head Start provides social and educational experiences where it really counts—with young children. The family, which is perceived as principal influence on the child's development, must be a direct participant in the program as well. So the children quite often, even four or five years old, become teachers themselves. Because one thing we often forget is how much education a small child can bring home to a parent who may not have ever been blessed with the opportunity to read a good book, to hear good music, or to feel their own worth among other human beings.

October has been designated as Head Start Awareness Month. Programs across the nation will be celebrating Project Head Start's 17th Anniversary. This is our opportunity to emphasize the positive impact that Head Start has in each community on the lives of

children and families. Thus, the theme—Touching Children, Reaching Families, Involving Communities—supports and proclaims our mission.

Project Head Start is administered by the Administration for Children, Youth and Families within the Department of Health and Human Services. Nationally, Head Start has received considerable attention due to research findings documenting the program's lasting effects on children. Twelve major studies found that children enrolled in Head Start and similar programs 12 years ago are far less likely to be held back a grade or assigned to special education classes than low-income children who did not attend an early childhood program. Children who had gone through Head Start and other similar programs—many of them now in college—also scored higher in math, had stronger self-concepts and parents with greater expectations of their children's potential.

Over the past 17 years, Head Start has launched a series of experimental programs to im-

prove series to families, some of which have been adopted by local programs. These demonstrations include centers for families with children from infancy to age three; programs that use home visitors to work with parents and children at home; projects that enroll the entire family; and programs linking Head Start centers to elementary schools.

Across the nation, there are currently 1,262 programs in operation. This includes 37 Parent and Child Centers, 93 Indian and 24 Migrant Programs. In 1981 there were 387,300 children served by the project. A total of 8,269,400 children have been served since 1965.

Since 1972, Head Start has also mounted a major effort to serve handicapped preschoolers reaching 45,430 or 12 percent of all children enrolled in full-year programs in the 1980-81 program year.

Head Start is currently serving approximately one out of five of the eligible low-income pre-school children. At least 90% of those enrolled are from families who have incomes at or below the Federal poverty

level. The fact is however that there are an estimated 1.5 million other children who should be served but won't until budgetary constraints are lifted.

Grants are awarded by the Department of Health and Human Services Regional offices and the Indian and Migrant Program Division to public agencies, private non-profit organizations and school systems for the purpose of operating programs at the community level.

Head Start is concerned with the "whole child" and his family. There are five component areas that provide direct services. They involve health services including medical and dental screenings and needed treatment, nutrition, mental health services, services to the handicapped, parent involvement and training, social services, and education.

However, Head Start is only partially funded by the Federal Government and depends on local resources, volunteers, or contributions. Recent data show that nearly 46% of the children are enrolled in the Medicaid program which pays for their

medical and dental services.

Programs also use the USDA Child Care Food Program which reimburses Head Start for much of the costs in providing food and food services.

Countless referrals are made to other agencies for assistance the Head Start programs are unable to provide also.

Equipment, building space, volunteer time in the classroom and consultation and assistance from doctors, dentists, mental health specialists, experts on handicapping conditions, and educational professionals are among the donated services that count toward the 20% share of the program costs required of the community. The federal grant covers only 80% of the cost of the operation of a program.

The Cleveland County Head Start program is sponsored by Kings Mountain District Schools. The Executive Director is William F. Davis, Superintendent. Head Start Director for Cleveland County is Ms. Patti Scism.

The program serves a total of 140 children county-wide. There are 20 children per classroom. A teacher and aide are in every classroom and there should be a third adult present at all times, if possible. This person can be a parent volunteer, community volunteer, or student. For 1982 it is projected that Head Start will employ 73,170 paid staff and will receive assistance from about 494,300 volunteers nationwide.

Classrooms are located at the following schools in our county: Marion Elementary - Shelby, Elizabeth Elementary - Shelby, North Elementary - Kings Mountain, Grover Elementary - Grover, Polkville Elementary - Polkville, Lattimore Elementary - Lattimore, and Washington Elementary - Waco.

There is a total of 20 Head Start staff including Director/Education Coordinator, Health/Nutrition Coordinator, Social Services/Parent Involvement Coordinator, Handicap/Mental Health Coordinator, Family Services Aide, Secretary/Bookkeeper, 7 teachers and 7 teacher aides. The program also employs a Speech Therapist on a contractual basis.

The Cleveland County program operates 12 months a year but school schedules are followed for the children.

Ms. Patti Scism, the program's director, states that they rely very heavily on resources and officials from all three local school

systems, particularly Kings Mountain District Schools. She explains that the valuable services, consultation, and support provided by these professionals is vitally needed to make the program work effectively.

Ms. Scism states that she feels young children are our greatest natural resource and that proper guidance for them is one of our best guarantees for a better America and a brighter future. Ms. Scism believes in the Head Start philosophy that every child should have a chance to have a productive and useful life. She is aware of the difficulties which are overwhelming for a child to master alone if his family is poor, his cultural and social opportunities meager and his medical care inadequate.

She explains that the local program will be celebrating Head Start's 17th birthday with a treasure hunt—but this one has a unique twist—you're the object of the hunt! Some of your friends and neighbors are already helping. If you have the time to offer or if you can donate equipment or supplies, you can help too. There are many ways you can help.

Head Start is still an unfinished story. There have been pitfalls, disappointments and cutbacks along the way, but there have been countless success stories too. Not only for children and families but for many volunteers, including parents of enrolled children, Head Start has provided an opportunity for career advancement. Some community residents who started out as volunteers have become paid classroom aides and gone on to earn college degrees through staff training programs. Nearly 30 percent of Head Start classroom staff across the nation are current or former Head Start parents.

Persons interested in becoming involved with Head Start should contact Ms. Scism at 739-8816 or 739-8156. The Head Start office is located at 500 West Parker Street in Kings Mountain at the Kings Mountain District Schools Administrative office building.

When was the last time you felt really needed and appreciated? "At Head Start we really appreciate volunteers because we know their work with children today continues to affect lives tomorrow. Our children are holding the future." Ms. Scism says, "You may be just the treasure we're looking for!"

County Fair Opens Friday For Nine Days

The 1982 Cleveland County Fair begins a nine-day run Friday.

Fair gates will open at 3 p.m., the midway will begin operation at 4 p.m., and the official opening ceremony will be held at 5 p.m. Miss North Carolina, Elizabeth Williams of Shelby, will be special guest at the opening ceremony. Invocation will be given by Dr. Joseph Reeves of Shelby Central United Methodist Church. Robert Morgan will conduct a brief memorial service in memory of Paul P. Limerick, who had served as public relations director for the fair since 1964.

General admission tickets during the fair are \$2.50 for adults, 50¢ for children 12 and under, and parking is free. (Advance ticket sales at reduced prices will end September 30.) Senior citizens, 65-74, will be admitted to the fairgrounds every day for one-half price, and those 75

years of age and over will be admitted free.

Fair Manager Joe Goforth stated that Reithoffer's King Reid Show on the midway at this year's fair will feature 40 rides and shows. The King Reid Show has the popular Sea Dragon ride—a 40-passenger family-type "Viking Ship" ride with free fall action from 56 feet high, The Super Loops Coaster, the Himalaya, the Flying Bobs, the Zephyr, plus all the standard rides. And, for the younger midway fans, there will be many favorites, including the Mini Honda Travel Bike, Race Cars, Merry-Go-Round, and many others.

Persons interested in entering an exhibit at the fair are reminded to check the fair catalog for the listing of the many items that can be exhibited, and also for the entry deadline dates for the various departments.

Grover Rescue Squad Fun Run Scheduled

The Grover Rescue Squad will sponsor a big fun run for all ages Sat., Oct. 16. Warmups will begin at 8 a.m. and runs start at 9 a.m. in front of the rescue building.

There will be a 3 kilometer and 10 kilometer run. Entry fee is \$5 and all who pre-register will receive T-shirts.

To register, obtain an entry form from the rescue squad or any of its members.

Trophies will be given for the first, second and third place finishers, both men and women, in the 10-kilometer run. Age divisions are 0-25, 26-35 and 36-up.

Trophies will be given to the top two finishers, both men and women, in the 3 kilometer run. Age divisions are 0-25 and 26-up.

Refreshments and first aid will be available.

El Bethel United Methodist Church will sponsor a country breakfast Saturday from 6 until 10:30 a.m. at the church. Take out orders are available.

Proceeds from the runs will go toward the purchase of much-needed equipment and supplies.

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