

The objective of the Head Start program is to enhance the cognitive, social and emotional development of income-eligible children through the provision of comprehensive health, educational, nutritional, social and other services and to involve parents in their children's learning.

Head Start, a program of Community Action Partnership of Mid Nebraska (Mid), provides comprehensive service to 10 families in Chase County.

Chase County Head Start is now taking applications for the 2013-2014. The home based model is parent-focused and works with the adults in each household to work with their child as the child's first and primary teacher.

Head Start enhances children's physical, social, emotional and intellectual development while helping parents with a goal of achieving self sufficiency through the family partnership and goal setting process.

HS creates an environment that builds upon and responds to the unique strengths and needs of each child and family, including: high quality early education at bi-monthly group socializations; weekly home visits; on-going parenting enhancement services; comprehensive health services; nutrition; and ongoing support to parents through case management and peer support groups.

Why do I need Head Start?

Head Start is needed to supplement pre-school, not replace it. Head Start is about teaching you to teach your child and learning that everything you do, even the most common activities, are learning experiences.

When you drop your child off at preschool, you rely on others to teach your child, and you surrender control over what and how they learn. We are fortunate to have excellent preschools in this area, but this teaches you, the parent, nothing and there is no way you can gauge exactly how much your child has learned and retained.

As a Head Start parent, you will know exactly what your child has learned and retained, and you will have control over what your child will be taught.

If you believe that there is an area where your child needs more practice learning, it is your choice to concentrate on that area until you are satisfied that the skill has been mastered. With a variety of activities, we can concentrate on strengthening the weak areas and advancing the areas where your child excels. Parents have the control.

Parents also say they are too busy for Head Start.

Being busy is exactly why parents should consider Head Start. By participating in the program, you purposely set aside time to concentrate on your child each week. You purposely take the time to spend time seeing exactly where your child's learning skills are and what you can do to make sure they are prepared for kindergarten.

A positive kindergarten experience is the first step to a successful education. It also purposely sets aside the time for you to learn new skills and to practice them with your child.

Due to the limited number of families the program can work with, it is important that parents make an appointment as soon as possible to fill out an application for the 2013-2014 year.

If you have questions or have a preschool child, age three or four (by July 31), contact Keta Rinne, Community Action Partnership Head Start Chase County Head Start Family Educator, at the following address or phone number: 1000 Wellington Street, Imperial, NE 69033, 308-882-3904.

For more information see www.communityactionmidne.com for all Mid Head Start and Early Head Start center contact information.

Head Start celebrates ‘Week of Young Child’ with open house

Chase County Head Start asks Imperial, Champion, Wauneta and Enders communities in Nebraska to come together for children during the Week of the Young Child, April 14-20.

As part of the national Week of the Young Child celebrated across the country, Chase County Head Start is honoring young children and all those who make a difference in children’s lives.

“All young children need and deserve high-quality early learning experiences that will prepare them for life, and this is a great opportunity to do our part to help young children. Week of the Young Child is a time to recognize that early years are learning years for all young children,” said Keta Rinne, Chase County Head Start Family Educator.

To celebrate, an open house will be held at the Chase County Head Start Office in the Wellington School from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Friday, April 19.

Children’s projects will be on display as well as a door prize drawing for a mystery box, and other items donated for prizes. Stop by and drop your name in for the drawing and visit with the Family Educator if you have questions.

Week of the Young Child, sponsored by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), is an opportunity for early childhood programs across the country, including child care and Head Start programs, preschools and elementary schools, to hold activities to bring awareness to the needs of young children.

Young children and their families depend on high-quality education and care, which help children get a great start and bring lasting benefits.

Week of the Young Child is a time to recognize the importance of early learning and early literacy, and to celebrate the teachers and policies that bring early childhood education to young children.