
Halloween Tips from the American Heart Association

- Have a meal first. What kid doesn't want to eat their favorite candy right when it goes into their trick-or-treat bag? Having a filling nutritious meal BEFORE your kids go trick-or-treating can reduce their temptation to snack while walking or to overindulge, because their tummies will be full.
- Bag the monster bag. Choose or make a smaller collection container for your child and steer clear of the pillow case method. If you encourage kids to only take one piece of candy from each house, they'll be able to visit more houses in the neighborhood.
- Get moving. Make Halloween a fun family activity. Walk instead of driving kids house to house. Set a goal of how many houses or streets you'll visit, or compete in teams to do as many as you can. Bring a bottle of water and a flashlight, and wear comfortable shoes for walking.
- Look before you eat. Check expiration dates and inspect all food items before allowing children to eat them. Don't let children eat anything with questionable or unknown ingredients, especially if they have food allergies.
- Have a plan. Halloween, and Eat Smart Month in November, can be a great time to talk with kids about moderation and making fulfilling eating choices. Plan in advance how much candy they'll be allowed to take at each house, keep, and eat. If they're old enough, let them help decide what to do with excess candy.

Halloween Fruit Snacks



Instructions:

Using a non toxic, washable marker, let your kiddo draw and decorate their oranges and bananas for a fun halloween craft and snack!

Jack-O-Lantern Quesadillas

Ingredients

- Tortillas (Spinach or tomato tortillas will add a fun pop of color to your quesadillas)
- Shredded cheese of your choice
- Any fruits or veggies you like! (Olives, bell peppers, tomatoes, pineapple, onion, beans)

Instructions

- Preheat oven to 400°
- Cut your tortillas.
 - You can cut them into a pumpkin shape like pictured or leave the tortillas whole to save on time.
 - Make sure you only cut the jack-o-lantern into the top tortilla so as not to have cheese spilling out the bottom.
 - You can cut out the shapes, or use cookie cutters to make the shapes (your kiddos can help with this part too!)
- Put in your fillings!
 - Place the bottom uncut tortilla onto your baking sheet.
 - Add your cheese and other fruits or veggies you would like
 - Place your top "carved" tortilla onto your quesadilla
- Bake for 10 minutes or until the cheese is melted.
- Remove from the oven, let cool, and enjoy!
- You can serve with your favorite dip like guacamole, salsa, or sour cream.



5 Ways to Support Children's Development at Home

By playing games and doing activities with your child, you both will be transformed by the joy and bonding that magically happens when you take the time to intentionally connect!

1. Play Together

It is challenging for me as a parent to take the time to get on the floor and play when I am thinking about all of the tasks I need to accomplish during the day! Yet, every time I do, I feel closer to my children, knowing I have entered into their world and tapped into their amazing imaginations. (Plus, playful interactions increase their creativity, social-emotional competencies, and vocabulary!)

2. Read Together

Sharing books is not a "have to," it is a "get to!" There is no single activity that has prompted more joy, bonding, and conversation in my home than reading together.

3. Talk Together

Between work, school pick-ups and drop-offs, dinner, laundry, etc., it is remarkable how many days I fall into bed and think, "Did I really connect with my kids today?" Great conversations greatly support a child's development.

4. Solve Problems Together

The world is full of problems to solve and young children are always up for solving them. Playing games that solve problems promotes a child's early math and reasoning skills and gives them confidence as problem solvers! Whether it is measuring a table with sugar packets while waiting for food at a restaurant or predicting how far a child can jump as you go for a walk, intentionally solving problems on the go is something all families can be doing.

5. Bond Together

Eye contact, proximity, attunement—these are all part of the secure, bonded relationships that our children need to form with adults.

Policy Council Updates

The Policy Council and the USD 418 board of education are the governing bodies of our Head Start program. The Policy Council is a committee made up of parents who have children in our program. Policy Council provides oversight and program direction along with the USD 418 Board of Education. The Policy Council should be a reflection of our current program structure and should include parents from all of our sites.

Policy Council is addressed in standard 1301.3 of the Head Start Standard. Last year our program was found to be non-compliant in this standard. Starting in February of the 22-23 school year we were able to form a Policy Council that consisted of parents from RES. Due to only having representation from one site and representatives were not voted in we continue to not be compliant with this standard.

What are we doing to correct this?

Information was provided about the Policy Council to all families during home visits and/or back to school nights. Flyers advertising Policy Council Recruitment nights were shared with parents. Policy Council recruitment nights took place at the following sites to recruit families:

- MES: 8/21
- WES: 8/24
- LES: 8/28
- EES: 8/28
- RES: 9/5

At the recruitment nights parents were provided with an opportunity to sign-up for elections for the Policy Council. Each school also posted a link to the Policy Council interest form that parents could complete if they were not able to attend the recruitment meeting.

Ballots were put together and sent out to pre-k parents at each individual school. Elections closed on Monday, September 25th. After elections closed elected Policy Council members were contacted. Elected members of Policy Council are as follows:

- Savanna Coleman: EES
- Mark Taylor: LES
- Nathan Moore: RES
- Isabelle Delgado: RES
- Echo James: RES
- Branton Hutchinson/Samantha Barrett: WES
- Justus Hillard: MES
- Viktoria Boucher: MES
- Jill Larson: HES
- Addie Ehresman: HES

If we did not initially have representatives from some of our sites a spot is left open on Policy Council and if a parent does have interest from those sites that have an open seat parents can interview with the policy council and be elected to Policy Council by the Policy Council. We do have one spot open on the Policy Council for a Head Start family at one of our sites. We will be reaching out to families that qualify for Head Start at that site shortly to try and fill that open spot.

The first Policy Council is October 2nd at RES from 5:00-6:30. A pre-meeting meal is served for Policy Council members and their families from 5:00-5:30 with the meeting going from 5:30-6:30

Policy Council meetings are open from 5:30-6:30 to anyone that wants to attend. If you would like to know more about Policy Council or access meeting materials please click on the following link [Policy Council](#) or go to <http://418earlychildhood.weebly.com/policy-council.html>.

PARENT RESOURCES



STEPMC provides families and community members an opportunity to develop the skills to achieve the climb out of poverty. Hosting classes on Monday's in Moundridge and on Thursday's in McPherson. STEPMC doesn't just tell you what you can do but they empower you to find the root and help you achieve breaking out of the poverty cycle. You will find a community of people that do not judge you for your life and have also lived a similar life. Attending STEPMC can open so many doors for you to gain the knowledge and learned skills to break the poverty cycle. STEPMC offers participants free meals and childcare on meeting nights. Want to learn more visit their website <https://www.stepmc.org/> or ask your Family Advocate for more information.

Locations of meeting are:

Moundridge

[First Mennonite Church of Christian](#)
719 S Christian Ave, Moundridge

Mondays Nights
Meal begins at 5:15 PM
Programming runs from 6:00 - 7:30 PM

McPherson

[First United Methodist Church](#)
1200 E Kansas Ave, McPherson

Thursday Nights
Meal begins at 5:15 PM
Programming runs from 6:00 - 7:30 PM

What is a safe place?

Your child might be coming home from school and saying, “Mommy or Daddy! I went to the safe place today!” You might be wondering what the safe place is. Here is what the safe place is:

What It Is:

- A learning center in the classroom and or home used to teach self-regulation and give children a place they can transform upset into learning.
- A place where children can go to calm down when they feel sad, angry, happy, scared or any other emotion they may feel.
- Children can use the safe place any time during the day
- An adult can be with the child in the safe place or the child can be alone
- You as the parent or caregiver are the child's FIRST safe place, but if you aren't available or the child wants a space to calm down, the physical safe place is an option.



What's in the safe place/calm corner:

- Pillows, blankets, or a soft rug to sit on, feelings buddies and items to help the child calm down like a calming bottle, soft fidget toys, teddy bear or stuffed animal, pictures of family members or a journal.
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What the Safe Place/Calm corner is NOT:

- It is not a time out or a punishment.
- Teachers or parents are not to force a child to go to the safe place/calm spot if they don't want to.
- Teachers will not send a child to the safe place for punishment or make them go to the safe place
- Children are free to come and go any time they want to.

For more information on the safe place, ask your teacher, family advocate, the school social worker (Rachel Boden) or you can go to www.consciousdiscipline.com

Conscious Discipline

In our preschool program, we use Conscious Discipline by Dr. Becky Bailey as our positive discipline. The program has 7 skills. Each month we will share the skill that the teachers and students are working on. This month the skill is Composure.

Composure:

- The willingness to change our internal state from upset to calm and bring our mind to where our body is.
- It is being the person we want our children to become. ,
- It is our job as educators to model composure for our children. The “Do as I say and not as I do” philosophy does not work!

No one can make you angry without your permission.

We achieve composure through active calming when we're upset. Active calming has three basic steps:

1. Take three S.T.A.R. or other deep belly breaths.



2. Reassure yourself, “I am safe, keep breathing, I can handle this.”



3. Wish Well. Wishing well is seeing the preciousness of the other person. This changes the way you view the interaction and helps you see from their perspective.

Wish Well



Employment Opportunities:

Our Head Start program has an opening for a floating instructional aide at Washington Elementary School. The position is for 7.5 hours five days a week. This position would involve supporting both our 3 year old classroom and 4 year old classroom. If interested in applying please click on the following link to apply [Pre-K Instructional Aide](#). If you would like to know more about this position before applying please contact the Head Start Director, David Brock at 620-241-9590 or david.brock@mcpherson.com.

McPherson USD 418 also has a variety of positions open. If interested please click on the following link to view other employment opportunities [USD 418 Job Listings](#).