



# PARENT newsletter

VOLUME 12 // ISSUE 3 // JAN - FEB 2014



- HEAD START
- EARLY HEAD START
- HOME-BASED EARLY HEAD START
- EXPECTANT MOMS' PROGRAM
- SPECIAL EDUCATION
- EARLY INTERVENTION
- WIC PROGRAM
- FACILITATED ENROLLMENT
- HEALTHY FAMILIES
- PROJECT REACH
- FITNESS CENTER

## YVY to Partner with Maimonides Medical Center to Prevent Childhood Obesity

Dr. Ravi Saksena of the Maimonides Medical Center Division of Pediatrics was the featured guest at YVY's biannual Health Advisory Committee Meeting. Dr. Saksena is the principal investigator for a New York State Department of Health grant to monitor obesity in children and to develop strategies to prevent childhood obesity. As many as 30% of children in the YVY community are considered overweight, which brings with it a host of problems that linger and are often exacerbated in adulthood.

The committee was also pleased to welcome Dr. Shoshana Haberman, Director of Maternal and Fetal Medicine at Maimonides, who was able to rejoin the YVY HAC as a result of the expansion of her practice. Dr. Haberman noted that problems with obesity often begin prenatally and that obesity in an expectant mother can negatively affect her developing child. Dr. Haberman and her staff will be working with Dr. Saksena and YVY to raise community awareness of the problem of obesity

*(Continued on page 4)*

### Intensive Training Addresses Implementation of YVY School Readiness Goals

A training session on practice-based coaching was the centerpiece of a two-day workshop attended by all YVY Education Directors.

One particular domain of the Head Start Child Development and Learning Framework, Mathematics Knowledge and Skills, was also addressed at the workshop.

Another workshop addressed data analysis. YVY Head Starts monitor outcomes for all children and families. Future planning is based on analysis of these outcomes. The training session

*(Continued on page 8)*



*Dr. Ravi Saksena and Barbara Lowell, RD, Maimonides Medical Center Department of Pediatrics, were guest presenters at the YVY Health Advisory Committee meeting. On the right is YVY Director of Health Services Dr. Garey Ellis*

# YELED V'YALDA

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## YVY Hosts Visitors



1. The NYC Fire Department visited YVY We Care to teach parents and children about Fire Safety. 2. Engine Company 156 visited YVY Silver Lake Head Start I on Fire Safety Day. The children learned about safety and had fun with the fire truck, and the parents got instructions on fire safety and free carbon monoxide detectors. 3. Snow White visited Silver Lake II!



## In the Classroom



1. We, too, appreciate the importance of literacy! YVY Early Head Start, Center-Based. 2. Chanukah workshops call for using all sorts of skills. 3. We learn to brush out teeth at our desks!



## Going on Trips

1. YVY Silver Lake Head Start children pose after an outing to Clove Lake Park. 2. YVY Learning Center Center-Based Early Head Start visited Prospect Park to collect fall leaves





## Enrolling in Obamacare

1. YVY Healthcare Marketplace's Faigy Chaskelson assists a client at the kickoff event in Brooklyn's Borough Hall.

## YVY's New Policy Council



1. YVY's new Parent Policy Council poses after its first meeting of the year, together with PC liaison Estie Knoll. The PC is involved in all facets of governance for the agency. 2. YVY CEO Solomon Igel (left) welcomed the parents.



## School Readiness Training



Amy Flynn, Early Childhood Education Specialist, NYS Training and Technical Assistance, trains YVY Education Directors in assessing School Readiness outcomes data

1. YVY Assistant Teachers underwent training to receive the Child Development Associate credential. This prestigious nationwide credential raises the professional level of YVY Assistant Teachers. Here, some of the candidates register before taking the CDA exam, with Lauren Len, the CDA representative.

## EHS Trainings



1. Early Head Start Home Visitors pose with their instructor and the diplomas they were granted after receiving certification to teach Infant Massage. 2. YVY Hosted all Brooklyn center-based Early Head Starts for a workshop on Transitions. 3. Early Head Start Center-Based Caregivers attended a workshop on Critical Thinking.



## CDA Certification



**Childhood Obesity** (Continued from page 1)

in both young children and their parents. YVY Health Coordinator Janie Friedman, RN, and YVY Director of Nutrition Services Dina Lipkind, MS., RD. CDN will represent YVY in this joint effort.

The committee also heard from Dr. Jeffrey Teitelbaum, Medical Director of Ezra Medical Center, who discussed the expansion of Ezra's services to meet the needs of the community and Dr. Eli Wagshall, Dental Director of Ezra Medical Center, who reported on the success of the dental screening program done by Ezra's Mobile Dental Van in all YVY Head Start sites.

Post partum depression continues to be a problem in the YVY community, and a subcommittee was formed to discuss how YVY can help alleviate this problem, both for the woman who is suffering and for her family.

The committee will reassess all these efforts at their annual spring meeting.



*Ezra Medical Center School-Based Dental Director Dr. Meryl Hersh works on a YVY Project REACH child. The Ezra Mobile Dental Van screens all YVY Head Start and Early Head Start children within 90 days of enrollment.*

## January 2014

### ONGOING ACTIVITIES

#### Aerobics

99 Heyward Street,  
Sundays, January 5, 12, 19, 26  
Thursdays January 2, 9, 16, 23, 30

#### Fitness for Men

99 Heyward Street, Jan., 8, 15, 22, 29

#### Parenting Workshops

1257 38 St. Monday, Jan. 13  
99 Heyward Street, Wed., Jan 15  
6012 Farragut Rd., Thursday, Jan 17

#### Parenting teleconference with Sara Chana Radcliff

#### Mommy & Me Yoga

99 Heyward Street, Tuesday, Jan 14

#### Expectant Mom's Program

#### Aerobics and Childbirth Education

#### Parenting Skills for Postpartum Moms

1257 38 Street, Sundays, Jan. 12, 26  
99 Heyward Street, Mondays, Jan. 6, 20

### SPECIAL ACTIVITIES

#### Fruit Workshop

99 Heyward Street, Tuesday, Jan. 7

#### Separation Anxiety

99 Heyward Street, Tuesday, Jan. 28

**Policy Council Meeting** January 26

#### Mind-Body Connection

1257 38 Street, Wednesday, Jan. 15

#### Knit One Pearl Two

1257 38 Street, Wednesday, Jan. 29

### PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

#### SEIT Teleconference

### Staten Island

### ONGOING ACTIVITIES

#### Home-Based Socializations

Fridays., Jan. 10, 17, 24, 31

#### Parent Committee

Wednesday, Jan. 22

#### Fathers in Action Breakfast

Wednesday, Jan. 29

### SPECIAL ACTIVITIES

#### Kindergarten Fair

Wednesday, Jan. 16

#### Family Literacy Day

Monday, Jan. 6

#### Transitioning to Kindergarten

Thursday, Jan. 23 (Spanish)

Thursday, Jan. 28 (English)

## YVY Assesses Outcomes for first School Readiness Checkpoint

All YVY Head Start and Early Head Start children are assessed three times a year to monitor their progress in the different domains of the Head Start Framework. For assessment, YVY uses the Teaching Strategies GOLD tool – which measures children's attainments in each domain in comparison to the widely held expectations for their age group.

For this first marking period, the great majority of Early Head Start children met the widely-held expectations for their age group in almost all the six measured essential domains (social-emotional, physical, language, cognitive, literacy and

mathematics). Almost half of four-year-olds met the widely-held expectations for their age group in almost all the essential domains. Three-year-olds, most of whom are first entering school, lagged behind somewhat at this first checkpoint. The lowest scores overall were in the area of Mathematics, which was addressed in the workshop mentioned on page 1, and literacy. Teachers will be utilizing their new training in mathematics to improve scores for the next checkpoint period. Instructional strategies to support children's learning in the literacy domain will also be emphasized during the latter half of the year.

### For more information on any of Yeled V'Yalda's services, please call the following numbers:

Headstart.....	718.686.3700 *3
Special Education.....	718.686.3700 *1
Early Intervention.....	718.686.3700 *2
Fitness Center.....	718.686.3700 *7
Early Headstart.....	718.514.8600 *1
ABA Program.....	718.514.8600 *3
Project REACH.....	718.514.8600
Ezra Medical Center.....	718.686.7600
WIC Program.....	718.686.3799
Facilitated Enrollment.....	718.686.2189
Healthy Families.....	718.686.2132

### YELED V'YALDA STATEN ISLAND:

#### Silver Lake Headstart I

10 Gregg Place.....718.815.4488

#### Silver Lake Headstart II

20 Park Hill Circle.....718.720.0090

### YELED V'YALDA SUPPORT LINES:

All calls are confidential.

#### Yeled v'Yalda 311

for comments/concerns.....718.686.3700 \*311

# PARENT magazine

VOLUME 12 // ISSUE 3 // JAN - FEB 2013

## School Readiness: *Science Knowledge & Skills*

OVER THE LAST TWO YEARS, the **Yeled v'Yalda Parent Magazine** has featured numerous articles in relation to School Readiness. One of the important aims of a preschool program is to prepare children so they are ready to learn once they enter elementary school. On the national level, standards (Common Core) have been set for the knowledge that children should have at each grade level. Common Core requirements have also been set for preschool to assure that children have a proper base for learning once they enter elementary school.

The domains and domain elements of the Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework are aligned with the national Common Core requirements. This Framework guides all aspects of program development and implementation in each Head Start classroom. This includes both curriculum and assessment.

Previous articles in the **YVY Magazine** have covered the domains of literacy

and language development-- both on the preschool and toddler level, mathematical knowledge, health and nutrition, and different aspects of social and emotional development. This issue deals with another important Head Start domain, Science Knowledge and Skills.

YVY Head Start recognizes that parents are children's first teachers. Cooperation between the Head Start classroom and parents is crucial for

children's optimal growth. By being informed about what their children are learning and how they are learning, and by extending children's learning at home, parents help their children attain the proper level of school readiness so they can succeed once they leave Head Start.

All previous issues of the **YVY Parent Magazine** are available on the YVY website, [www.yeled.org](http://www.yeled.org).



## Skills Children Acquire when Learning Science

The knowledge that children gain when learning science is certainly a sufficient motivation for parents and teachers to encourage scientific exploration on the preschool child's level. However, Head Start teachers have noted that there are additional benefits to children learning science. Science can be the foundation for learning many other skills.

1. Children love to learn about the world around them. Science responds to this need.
2. Language and literacy are centerpieces of children's learning. Science strongly supports these domains in various ways.
  - A good science curriculum is rich in language. Children's vocabulary is expanded as they learn new words in the best possible way – in context. For example, children may learn about the different parts of a tree - the trunk, the branches, twigs, bark, etc.
  - Books about science become a foundation for conversation between children and adults. (Look at the different colors on this bird. What is his nest made of?)
  - Listening comprehension is fostered as children listen to the teacher or parent read about and discuss the science activity or book.
  - Expressive language is fostered as children learn to explain what they observe.
3. The scientific approach of trial and error welcomes error. Making a mistake and learning from it is the way science is done. This is an important lesson for children. Children also learn to focus on learning, rather than on avoiding mistakes.
4. Problem-solving skills that science encourages can be applied to social situations. Children learn that when they have a problem, they can think of possible solutions, predict what might work best, try the solution they think might work, and report on the outcome. If the first solution doesn't work, they can then try another.

Based on *Science at the Center of the Integrated Curriculum: 10 Benefits Noted by Head Start Teachers*.

# Science & the Preschool Child

## What do we mean by science education in preschool?

**Young children are often called natural scientists.** What do we mean by this? Children have a natural, innate curiosity about the world around them. All parents know that one of the favorite questions children have is the word "why." They want to know why the leaves are changing color, why they are falling off the trees, why the birds are all flying together in one direction. For young children, science means exploring the world in which they live and beginning to learn to understand what is happening around them. A child wants to find out, as the Common Core introduction to this unit puts it, "what works, why it works, how it works, and what's in it that makes it work."

**Science for young children, then, is based on exploring their own environment and the day-to-day phenomena that they experience.** But children cannot do this on their own. Research has shown that young children learn best when their initial explorations are guided by a caring adult. When adults talk to children about their interests and discoveries, they help them with the vocabulary they need to express their ideas and model for them ways of thinking and talking about their experiences.

**Science for the preschooler, therefore, has two components.** Both the Common Core and Head Start Framework divide the science domain into two elements. The first, Conceptual Knowledge of the Natural and Physical World, relates to what most of us think of when we think of science, a body of knowledge that scientists use. The child is learning facts about the world in which he or she lives. This entails, to start, observation, description, and discussion of materials and living things. Children can, for example, gather rocks, seashells or leaves, describe what they look like, and notice the differences and similarities in each group.

**Children can also observe natural processes and transformation of substances.** They can, for example, watch how a lima bean immersed in water and then put into soil grows into a plant. They can see how snow melts and turns into water. These activities call for observing, comparing, organizing and classifying, which are all developmentally-appropriate processes for young children. They can then talk about what happens,

describing the different steps and how they occur, which encourages expressive language and use of new vocabulary.

**But merely knowing and describing things is not enough.** The second component of the science domain is called Scientific Skills and Method, and this is often a neglected portion of science education for young children. Children need not only to observe and collect information, but they need to use the information to ask questions, make predictions, and draw conclusions. Like a scientist, the child can learn to form hypotheses, gather observations, and form generalizations. Children need opportunities to reflect on what they have found, to think about how they found it, and to consider how their own findings compare to the ideas of others and to what they previously thought.

**On a preschool level, this might look like this: children love to play with blocks.** Sometimes, though, the structures that they build will topple over, while others remain stable. With a little guided help, preschoolers can figure out which structures fall, and which will not. They can make predictions and replicate their experiments. Some objects float and some things sink. Children can observe which items float and which sink and try to

predict how new objects will behave. They can then test whether their predictions come true. Getting the right answer is not as important as allowing the children to observe, think about what they saw, predict, and check their predictions against what happens.

**Parents can encourage children to learn scientific skills and methods by modeling curiosity, inquiry and investigation.** If parents are curious about what is happening around them, children will follow their lead. Parents also need to listen to their children and ask about what they are seeing, hearing and thinking. When children are encouraged to talk, they are more likely to notice and wonder about what is around them.

**And, of course, parents need to encourage children to ask questions.** If they do not know the answers to the questions, they can discuss with their child the best way to find out, perhaps by using the skills of observation, prediction and experiment. Following up with a book on the subject is a wonderful way to round out a meaningful activity with a child.

**Even very young children can benefit from being exposed to the natural world.** Babies love to explore new things, to touch, to taste, to grab. Opportunities to experience nature stimulate a child's senses and encourage parents to label objects and explain their characteristics.

**Naturalist Rachel Carson talked about keeping alive a child's "inborn sense of wonder"** at the "joy, excitement and mystery of the world we live in." Together, parents and teachers can help children retain this "sense of wonder" as they explore our beautiful world.

## Science Activities for Parents and Children

*In addition to encouraging children to ask questions and encouraging them to talk about what they see, there are concrete things parents can do to enhance their children's appreciation of the world and their acquisition of scientific knowledge and skills.*

**Observe nature** – this can be done when walking with children in a park or other natural habitat. Listen for the sounds of birds. Watch the squirrels. Look for the creeping worms. Encourage touching so the child can feel different textures of leaves or tree bark. Have the child describe what he sees, hears and feels. Try to have the child connect what he sees to previous knowledge.

**Talk about the weather** – on a walk, point out the color of the sky and the different kinds of clouds. Discuss what this might mean. When it is raining, have your child look out the window and notice whether the rain is light or heavy. Have the child listen to the roll of thunder.

**Go on trips** – Visit the zoo, the aquarium or the botanic garden – expand your children's horizons by showing them things they would not ordinarily see. In the zoo or aquarium, read the captions so you can point out distinctive features of the animals – or elicit these from the child. In the garden, point out the different colors and shapes of the flowers. Smell the flowers. Most of all, let your child react to what he sees and exclaim, explain, and ask questions.

**Grow plants** – have your child help you water your plants. Plant seeds of the fruits you eat and observe how (and whether!) they grow.

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Based on Alice Honig, *Exploring Nature With Your Baby*, scholastic.com.





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## Attention All YVY Head Start and Early Head Start Parents!

Remember to register with your site Family Worker for a free pass to the YVY Fitness Center.

**School Readiness** (Continued from page 1)

focused on how to implement data-driven planning to enhance these school readiness outcomes.

YVY wishes to welcome Amy Flynn, YVY's new Early Childhood Education Specialist from the New York State Technical Training and Assistance Center, who so ably facilitated the workshops.

### Yeled V'Yalda Health Plan Marketplace

Eligible applicants can now enroll in the new Health Plan Marketplace (Affordable Care) through Yeled V'Yalda. YVY's main Marketplace office is located at 1265-38 Street. YVY representatives are also available at the Boro Park YMHA, 4912 14 Avenue; at COJO 1523 Avenue M; and the Crown Heights JCC, 387 Kingston Avenue. The YVY Head Start site in Canarsie, 6012 Farragut Road, will soon host another Brooklyn site. A site in Staten Island will be opening in the near future.



Watching the ducks in Prospect Park. YvY Learning Center Early Head Start Outing