



PARENT newsletter

VOLUME 12 // ISSUE 2 // NOV - DEC 2013



- 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 Awarded Health Benefits Exchange Program Grant

YVY is one of only two agencies selected from among many applicants in Brooklyn and Staten Island to administer the new Health Benefits Exchange program in these boroughs. The award was based on the outstanding track record of the YVY Department of Facilitated Enrollment, which will now be known as the YVY Official Health Plan Marketplace, part of the New York State of Health.

In addition to maintaining its current Boro Park site, YVY will be opening new

enrollment sites in Williamsburg, Crown Heights, Flatbush and Staten Island to more easily accommodate new enrollees in the program. YVY has hired additional facilitators for these new sites. These new employees, along with facilitators who previously worked for YVY Facilitated Enrollment, have been attending intensive training sessions to assure that they can help all their clients navigate this new national insurance system and choose wisely among their available options.

“Is My Teacher Coming Today?”

YVY Project REACH Supports Medically Fragile Preschoolers

Project REACH, YVY's innovative Head Start program for medically-fragile preschoolers, is successfully reaching its target population – preschoolers who cannot attend school because of their medical condition. Project REACH instructors visit children weekly in their homes, or in the hospital when necessary, and engage with them one-on-one to work on skills they would normally attain in a preschool Head Start classroom.

(Continued on page 8)



Learning About Animals from Close Up. Children at several YVY Head Start sites hosted a petting zoo

IN THIS ISSUE: **Early Literacy**

YELED V'YALDA EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER

YVY Silver Lake Head Start I & II, Staten Island

DADS TAKE YOUR CHILD TO SCHOOL DAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 2013



1



2



3

HOME-BASED SOCIALIZATION



4



5

INFANT MASSAGE



6

FATHERS' BREAKFAST



7

1. Community Partnership Coordinator Smyrna Casado welcomes dads and guests. 2. Head Start Region II administrator Joyce Thomas (second from left) and Child Welfare Program Specialist Bronia Ashford (far right) visited Silver Lake Head Start II to observe the special day. Also pictured, from the left: YVY Executive Director Naomi Auerbach, Family Worker Andre Harrison, Education Director Madeline O'Donohue, and Smyrna Casado. 3. Dads join guests for a group photo. 4. Moms and children interact in the reading corner at the socialization. 5. Dads, too, participate in socialization activities. 6. A Silver Lake baby loves the doll her mother uses to practice infant massage. 7. Monthly Fathers' Breakfasts provide an opportunity for discussion about life changes.

Head Start



1



2



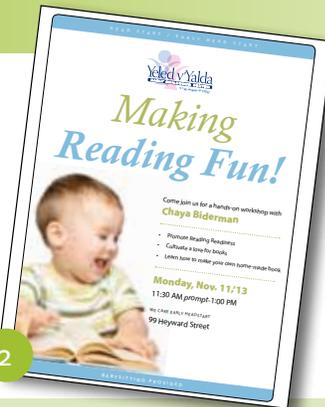
3

1. YVY's Parent Policy Council meets for the first time in the 2013-2014 school year. The PC is a crucial component of YVY agency governance. 2. YVY Family workers received training in using Child Plus software, which will streamline record keeping for all Head Start children. 3. Parents of all YVY Head Start children took part in orientation activities at the beginning of the year. Here, orientation at the YVY Learning Center, 1257 38 Street.

Early Head Start



1



2



3

1. YVY's Home-Based Early Head Start Home Instructors attended a meeting on Literacy in Young Children. They discussed how to make reading books meaningful and fun when on a home visit. 2. A series of workshops for parents at YVY We Care Early Head Start focuses on reading. 3. Mageinu workshop, on recognizing signs of child abuse, for both Head Start and Early Head Start parents at YVY Farragut Road. The workshop was also open to the community.

YVY Department of Special Services Entrance Conference for School Year 2013-2014



1



2



3

1. YVY CEO Solomon Igel's opening remarks to YVY therapists and service providers stressed the importance of their mission. 2. Therapists and service providers learned about updated record-keeping procedures before attending professional development workshops. 3. Attendees received a variety of therapy materials to use with their clients

YELED V'YALDA

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MELODY LENZA, MSED
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YVY Appoints New Health & Safety Coordinator

In response to the new emphasis on health and safety in the Office of Head Start, YVY has added a new position in its Facilities Department, Coordinator of YVY Head Start Health and Safety. Yisroel Jacobs, who works under the Director of YVY Property Management, now visits all YVY Head Start sites monthly. His task is to assure that all classrooms and public areas conform to the Head Start standards for health and safety and to determine responsibility for follow

up, both in YVY's own sites and in the sites which occupy leased space.

While health and safety have always been a top priority at YVY Head Starts -- YVY has always prided itself on its exemplary record in all areas relating to the care of its Head Start children -- this new position will assist in monitoring, will assure greater accountability, and will also assure that all problems are dealt with expeditiously.

November 2013

ONGOING ACTIVITIES

Self-Led Aerobics

99 Heyward Street, Sun., Nov. 3, 10, 17, 24
Thurs. November 21

Self-Led Yoga Mommy and Me

99 Heyward Street, Tues., Nov. 12, 19

Parenting Workshops

6201 Farragut Road, Thurs. Nov. 17
99 Heyward Street, Wed., Nov. 20

Fitness for Men

99 Heyward Street, Wed., Nov. 6, 13, 20

Expectant Mom's Program

Aerobics and Childbirth Education
Parenting Skills for Postpartum Moms
1257 38 Street, Sun., Nov. 10, 17
99 Heyward Street, Mon., Nov. 4, 25

SPECIAL ACTIVITIES

Promoting Reading

1257 38 Street, Wed., Nov. 20

LIVE Parenting Teleconference Series

Thurs, Oct. 10 – Nov. 14

Building Literacy Teleconference

Nov., 1 - 30

Creative Challah Baking Workshop

Wed., Nov. 20

Health Advisory Committee Meeting November 6

Policy Council Elections November 26

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Expanding Expression: A Multi-Sensory Approach

Sun., Nov. 3

Reading with TLC

Sun., Dec. 8

SEIT Teleconference

Wed., Nov. 13

Staten Island

ONGOING ACTIVITIES

Home-Based Socializations

Fri., Nov. 8, 15, 22

Parent Committee

Wed., Nov. 13

Fathers in Action Breakfast

Thurs., Nov. 27

SPECIAL ACTIVITIES

Early Literacy

Wed., Nov. 13

Classroom's Family Literacy Day

Wed., Nov. 27



YVY Director for Policy and Research for Education Dr. Isabelle Barriere presented some of her research findings on language development in Yiddish-speaking children at the annual YIVO Naomi Praver Kadar Memorial Lecture, *Creating Identity: Yiddish Across a Spectrum of Jewish Communities Today*.

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 2 // NOV - DEC 2013

EARLY LITERACY: Your Baby & Toddler & Learning to Read

November is National Literacy Month. YVY is stressing this vital component of School Readiness this month through workshops for teachers and workshops and a teleconference on Literacy for YVY Head Start parents.

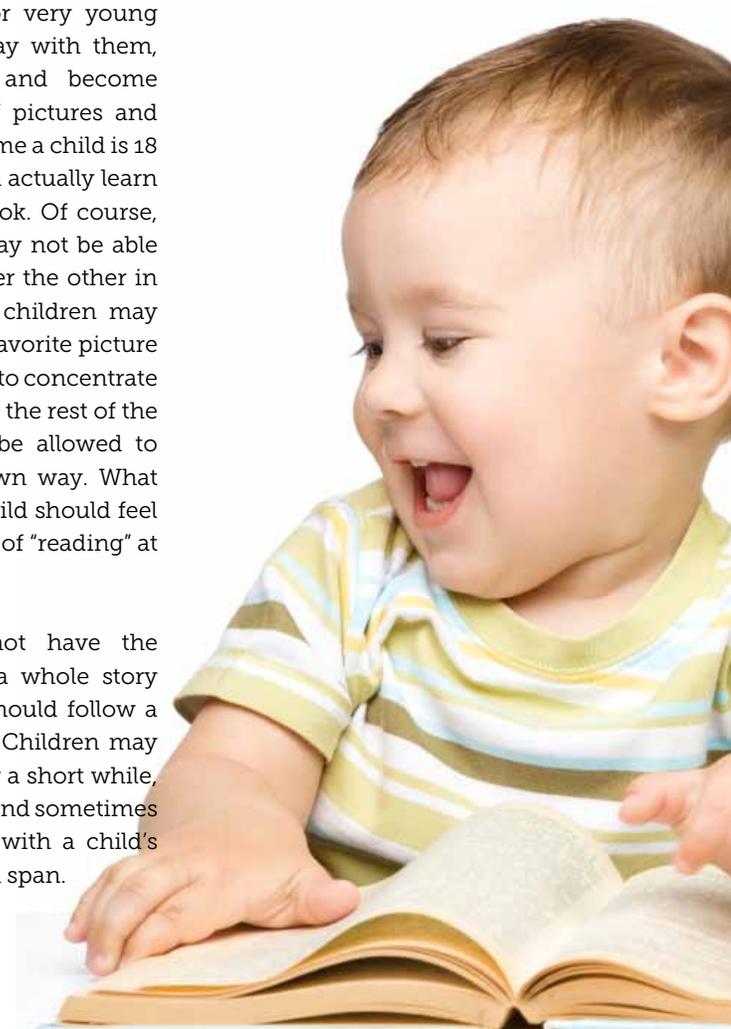
Your children's education is too important to be left solely to their schools. Research has proven that parents' involvement in their children's education is more important to children's academic success than the qualities of the schools they attend. But what kind of involvement is necessary? The primary way parents can help children succeed in school and beyond is to show that they themselves value, and even love, learning. And, of course, the primary avenue for learning is reading.

When should parents begin to expose their children to reading? Surprisingly, early literacy actually begins with babies. Even babies can be read to. Babies, like all young children, love rhythm and repetition. A simple board book with words that have a pleasing rhythm, rhyme or a recurring refrain can be read to a baby to soothe him, to engage him, to play with him.

Very young babies may want to mouth books. That is fine. In fact, there are soft

books that are meant for very young children, so they can play with them, manipulate the pages, and become familiar with the idea of pictures and words on a page. By the time a child is 18 months old, he or she can actually learn to turn the pages in a book. Of course, at that point, the child may not be able to turn the pages one after the other in sequence. In fact, some children may have a favorite page or a favorite picture in a book. They may want to concentrate on that to the exclusion of the rest of the book. Children should be allowed to explore books in their own way. What is important is that the child should feel comfortable with the idea of "reading" at a young age.

Young children may not have the patience to sit through a whole story in one sitting. Parents should follow a child's lead in this area. Children may want to leave the book for a short while, move to another activity, and sometimes come back. This varies with a child's interest, age and attention span.



Children, especially infants and toddlers, love predictability, so parents can, and should, read the same book over and over. Children quickly learn to have favorites, and parents will find that their child wants to hear the same story again and again, way past the parents' threshold of boredom. Knowing that the child finds something in the story that is reassuring may help the parents persist, despite their own desire for something new.

Reading to children should be joyous, uninhibited and animated, not flat, dull or boring. Some parents enjoy creating voices for the characters in the story to make the story come alive. It is important to read a book with the same intonation or tune each time, so the child hears the

sounds and can enjoy anticipating what is to come. As children grow older, they will often chime in at a rhyming word or at the repeated words in a refrain. Even very young children will often giggle and coo in anticipation, realizing that a particular repeated word is coming.

Reading with young children is a participatory activity. Both babies and toddlers love to handle their books. Older children can turn pages on their own or can be prompted to turn the pages when sitting on a parent's lap. Parents can use the story to initiate a back-and-forth conversation with their child, pointing out familiar activities or objects in the illustrations, or asking questions about them. Parents should also let children tell the story on their

own or ask their own questions.

Children love to repeat a story by themselves. Younger children may need some prompting, but three-year-olds often memorize a well-loved story, and love to recite it, turning the pages as they do so. Some children will use the story as a base and then construct their own story, allowing their imaginations to roam free. Parents need to be willing participants in such an activity.

Parents can also "read" the pictures apart from the actual story in the book, and can also encourage a child who is old enough to "read" the pictures to them.

Familiar routines always help children calm down. Reading a carefully-chosen book to a child before a nap or before bedtime can be soothing and can help the child fall asleep. (Of course, the book cannot be too stimulating or exciting or one that will initiate conversation.) In fact, books can be part of many daily routines. Singing or reading a story to a baby during nursing can be pleasurable for both mother and child. Reading a book to children can calm a noisy breakfast or dinner table. Reading a book to a child in the doctor's waiting room can make waiting time less tedious. Plastic books can even be utilized at bath time, to help a fussy baby enjoy the tub.

Before a book is read to a toddler, he should be shown the cover page. Parents should explain what the story is about; an older toddler can be asked to guess what the story might be about or guess the story's outcome. When reading with older children, parents should run their finger along with the words as they read, allowing the child to follow.

Parents can also enhance children's emerging literacy skills in many

*READ WITH
YOUR CHILDREN
BECAUSE YOU
LOVE TO BE
WITH THEM,
NOT JUST
BECAUSE IT'S
THE RIGHT
THING TO DO.*



ways that are not directly connected to reading. The most important way is through conversation. Conversing with a child helps the child develop new vocabulary (children love picking up new words) and also gives the child knowledge of the world he lives in. Telling stories, talking about the child's family, traditions and community are also ways to engage children in conversation and teach them new words. Singing and rhyming with a child and playing rhyming games encourage phonological awareness – awareness of the patterns of sounds used in the language—which is necessary for reading.

Opportunities to increase a child's awareness of letters and words abound in everyday life. Children can learn about letters and words by noticing them in the world they live in. They can learn to "read" the names of cereals on cereal boxes or the names of favorite snacks on packaging. A walk down the street can be a rich learning experience. Children easily learn to identify stop signs, street names, and house numbers. A trip to the grocery or supermarket can help children distinguish specific brands of products.

Cooking with children is another opportunity for learning which enhances reading skills. They can be shown a recipe, read label ingredients, and learn the concepts of measuring and comparing amounts.

Writing with children is also important. Providing lots of different writing materials such as chalk, markers, crayons and pencils encourages children to draw and write on their own. Parents can also make books with their children, using pictures cut from magazines or catalogs. Older children can dictate stories to parents and then illustrate them.

A child who lives in a print-rich home

environment will more naturally gravitate to reading books. Children who see parents read will likely want to read on their own. Children whose parents provide books for them to read, whether their own books or books from the library, will find reading to be a natural activity.

Reading with a child also has many benefits that extend beyond the child learning how to read. Children who are read to develop basic speech skills that are critical to language. When parents spend time reading with children, children also develop communication skills, learning how to communicate properly from the stories they read and from their interaction with their parents. They also learn logical thinking skills, as they learn abstract concepts and read about applying logic in different scenarios.

Children who are read to have a higher aptitude for learning in general. While children may initially become distracted during story time, they eventually learn to listen for the duration of a book. A longer attention span and better memory retention are some the benefits they gain, in addition to learning self discipline. All these skills are necessary for learning.

Parents who joyfully engage in literacy and pre-literacy activities with their children also reap additional rewards. Meaningful interaction with a child helps build the parent-child relationship, which brings satisfaction to both parent and child. And children who have secure relationships with parents, and who come to school armed to succeed, have fewer obstacles to overcome to achieve success in both school and in life.

Most importantly, parents should read with their children because they love to be with them, not just because it's the right thing to do.

How to Choose Books for Babies & Toddlers*

FOR BABIES:

For the youngest babies, choose books with lots of contrast, such as books in black and white.

Choose short books, with only a few words on the page.

Board books with stiff and sturdy pages are good for babies.

Babies love to look at pictures of other babies!

Babies learn by touching, so choose books that have things to feel or flaps to lift.

Some books are perfect for bedtime stories – to calm and reassure babies.

Sing and read with your baby -- choose books that illustrate common children's songs.

Books with rhythm, rhyme and repetition help build early literacy skills.

Read books in your child's primary language.

FOR TODDLERS:

Toddlers can begin enjoying books with paper pages, along with board books.

Books with rhythm, rhyme and repetition help build early literacy skills.

Books with counting, opposites, colors, and other concepts are suitable for toddlers.

Interactive stories -- with refrains, sound effects, or actions to imitate – are fun.

Toddlers love books about cars, trains and things that move.

Books with stories about familiar things and situations that toddlers can recognize stimulate conversation.

Books with stories that can help toddlers deal with their fears and feelings develop children's emotional intelligence.

Read and sing with your toddler – books that illustrate children's songs.

Read books in your child's primary language.

Get books like these from the YVY Children's Library, the circulating library at your child's YVY site, or the public library.

**From: Books for Babies, Toddlers and Preschoolers, Brooklyn Public Library.*



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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.

Project REACH (Continued from page 1)

Home instructors use a research-based curriculum, the Learning Games, when working with the children. The instructor comes equipped with a bag of exciting toys, games, books, and other educational materials so that each child has an enjoyable educational experience. Every session ends with a fun craft activity. Children gain important skills in cognitive, social-emotional, physical and other domains of development, all within the context of play.

In addition to gaining developmental skills through their interaction with their YVY Head Start instructors, the children of Project REACH also get the other valuable services that YVY offers all its Head Start children. Project REACH children get hearing and vision screenings, and are assessed three times a year using the Objectives for Development and Learning in the Teaching Strategies Gold tool. All these assessments are shared with parents. A social worker and RN are also on the Project REACH staff,

to help both parents and Home Instructors in their interactions with the children.

Project REACH's six full-time and two part-time teachers service children at home and in 13 hospitals in the New York tri-state area. Children serviced by Project REACH have a variety of health conditions, such as hematological illness, cardiac conditions, spina bifida, feeding issues, cancer, or other chronic disorders or genetic conditions. A new, innovative aspect of the work done by Project REACH is working with siblings of children who have serious medical conditions. These children are often in need of additional care, since their parents' attention is often necessarily focused on dealing with their sibling's more acute needs.

Helping children and families who are dealing with serious illness is a mission YVY Project REACH takes seriously. The children of Project REACH eagerly await their weekly sessions of learning through play with their YVY Home Instructors.



A Project REACH child engaged in an activity brought by his Home Instructor.