

SPRING 2023

EARLY LEARNING NEWSLETTER

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 **HENRY**
COUNTY SCHOOLS



**EARLY
LEARNING**



SPRING EDITION

As another school year begins to wind down, here at Henry County Schools, we are gearing up to welcome new students for the 2023-2024 school year! In this issue, you will find:

- Enrollment Support
- 4-year-old Developmental Milestones Information
- Fine Motor Skills Development
- Book Suggestions and Activities

Spotlight Strategy: Providing your child with hands-on counting opportunities will increase their early understanding of math!

READING IS FUNDAMENTAL

Did you know that reading to your child can increase their exposure to over 1.4 million words before they enter Kindergarten? Reading to your child is one of the best ways to set them up for academic success and to become life-long learners!

Below are some recommended books and activities you can do with your child to increase literacy and math skills!

Goodnight Moon by Margaret Wise Brown (Birth +)

While reading with your child, encourage them to wave and "say" goodnight to the objects around them.

Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See? by Bill Martin Jr. (Age: 1+)

Encourage your child to point to pictures and turn the pages of the book as you read aloud.

Five Little Monkeys Jumping on the Bed by Eileen Christelow (Age: 2+)

Encourage hand play as you read this story with your child. Model and show your child how to count down the monkeys with their fingers.

Press Here by Herve Tullet (Age: 3+)

This book is great to have your child practice using their fine motor skills. Encourage your child to interact with the book as you read along.

The M&M's Brand Counting Book by Barbara Barbieri McGrath (Age 4+)

This is a great book to introduce and practice shapes, colors, and counting with your child. Candy not included.

Stuck by Oliver Jeffers (Ages: 5+)

This is a fun story to read with your child. As you read be sure to ask questions such as "What do you think will happen next?" or "Who are the characters in our story?"



ENROLLMENT SUPPORT



The Henry County Schools' Learning and Support Center is home to the HCS Welcome Center. Our Welcome Center provides a wide array of support services to families and has welcomed over 9,000 families since its Grand Opening in July of 2021. Tailored services include OLR (Online Registration) Kiosks with one-on-one support from administrative assistants, bilingual staff members, identification of homeless youth, hospital homebound services, and other programs related to the enrollment process. We serve as a liaison between families and other District Office departments and we have partnered with outside community agencies to meet the needs of Henry County families.

At the Henry County Schools' Welcome Center, we are happy to provide families support with enrollment and to answer any questions you may have. If you are in need of an affidavit of residency, the Hospital Homebound Program, School Choice/School Transfer, and support for families in transition please come visit us! We are located at 166 Holly Smith Drive in McDonough and can be reached at 770-957-3945. We look forward to serving you!

For more information, please visit our website at:
<https://schoolwires.henry.k12.ga.us/Page/147767>

4-YEAR-OLD MILESTONES



Monitoring and understanding how children develop both mentally and physically is important to help them be successful. The Center for Disease Control has developed checklists to monitor developmental milestones for newborns through age 5. The milestones list what most children (75% or more) can do by a certain age. By the end of your child's third year, they should be able to:

- Speak sentences with 4 or more words
- Answer simple questions
- say the names of some colors
- Draw a person with 3 or more body parts
- Begin to unbutton clothing
- Hold a crayon or pencil with fingers and thumb
- Catch a large ball most of the time
- Answer "what comes next" in a familiar story
- Play pretend
- Recognize and avoid dangerous situations
- Comfort others who are hurt or sad

You are your child's first teacher and you know them better than anyone else. If your child is not meeting identified milestones, it is important to act early and to discuss any issues with their pediatrician.

For more information, visit the Center for Disease Control's Milestones website at

<https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/index.html>

You can also download a free Milestones Tracker app on your iOS and Android devices in English and Spanish.



Information is taken from the Center for Disease Control's Developmental Milestones website: <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/milestones/index.html>

Fine Motor Skills Development

Fine motor skills are an essential part of child development and give children more independence as they grow. Through developmentally appropriate play, preschool children are developing fine motor skills that will build a foundation for years to come. These activities can include building with blocks, lacing a board, cutting with scissors, coloring, playing with playdoh, and playing outside. When the activities are fun and engaging, children will continue to engage and progress toward more mature fine motor skills.

The chart below lists some fine motor activities that children should be able to do or progress toward by the end of each year. Please note that all children develop at their own rate and these are general guidelines for skill development.

Three Years Old	Four Years Old	Five Years Old
• Strings large beads and laces a card • Snip with scissors • Hold crayon with thumb and fingers • Pick up small objects with thumb and index finger • Imitate vertical, horizontal, and circular strokes • Eating without assistance	• String small beads • Cut paper in half • Uses one hand consistently • Color with no more than 1/4" deviation from lines • Copy a circle and imitate a cross • Dressing independently including large buttons, socks, and shoes	• Complete 8 - 12 piece interlocking puzzle • Cuts on lines and basic shapes • Holds a crayon with a tripod grasp • Color an entire picture • Begins to print name in uppercase letters • Dressing and undressing independently except shoe laces

Interventions to address areas of need include playing with playdoh (squeezing, pinching, snipping), using shaving cream to draw shapes, building with Legos, drawing or coloring on a vertical surface, and using a pipe cleaner to string beads on.

If you have concerns about your child's development, please discuss them with your pediatrician. If you suspect your child has a disability and they are between the ages of birth to 3 years old, please contact the local Birth to 3 Program. For children ages 3 to 21, please contact the Henry County School System at (770) 957-8086.

KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION

Did you know that you can register your soon-to-be Kindergartener completely online? Henry County Schools has made the process quick and easy with our registration portal. Please visit <https://schoolwires.henry.k12.ga.us/Page/147767>



Every parent wants their child to experience success in school. The start of your child's educational career can be filled with many emotions. For many children, this is the first time they will experience an educational setting. Below are some suggestions to help prepare your child for Kindergarten next fall.

Get READY for SCHOOL - Encourage your child to:

- Express emotions in appropriate ways--explain feelings in words your child can understand and encourage your child to do the same.
- Share supplies like crayons, toys, or books.
- Dress independently including buttoning and zipping clothing and tying their own shoes.
- Listen carefully and follow directions.
- Have a bedtime routine that includes reading.

Get INVOLVED at SCHOOL - We encourage you to:

- Attend and actively support school activities.
- Participate in the PTO, school advisory committee, or volunteer for school events.
- Talk with your child about school on a daily basis.
- Take interest in your child's learning and share learning experiences at home.
- Visit the Henry County Schools' website for information about school activities.

Get READY to LEARN - To prepare for learning:

- Engage in rich discussion about books as well as what is going on around them. Ask and answer questions to enrich your child's vocabulary and understanding of the world.
- While Reading, encourage your child to follow along by pointing to words and pictures on the page, identify interesting words or images to grab his/her attention.
- After reading or viewing your child's favorite television show, encourage him/her to retell the story identifying the characters, location, and events that take place.
- Practice identifying letters and sounds of letters of the alphabet when writing first and last name or other words, reading books, websites, watching television, or when visiting places in the community.
- Count basic items and identify numbers 0-20 as you read or when completing routines like grocery shopping, cleaning the house, or preparing dinner.
- Identify basic shapes and colors of items around the house, in nature, or any place you visit.
- Praise and encourage your child for his/her effort and make learning fun!

EVENTS

- Kindergarten Kickoff begins March 21st
- HCS Spring Break: April 3 – 7
- Week of the Young Child: April 10 – 14
- HCS Last Day of School: May 26



COMMUNITY RESOURCES



Henry County Schools – <https://schoolwires.henry.k12.ga.us/>

Henry County Library System



Your Destination for Learning, Creating & Connecting

Henry County Library System – <https://henrylibraries.org/>



Henry County Parks and Recreation –

<https://www.co.henry.ga.us/Departments/M-R/Parks-Recreation>



Ferst Readers – <https://ferstreaders.org/>



Bright from the Start – <http://www.dec.al.ga.gov/>



CDC Developmental Milestones –

<https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/milestones/index.html>



Department of Public Health –

<https://www.district4health.org/locations/henry-county/>