**A better tomorrow**

In early November, CAPCA was contacted by a landlord who had a tenant three months behind on her rent. Although he was doing everything he could to work with her, she had already received several eviction notices. She was a single mother of three girls; her oldest daughter was preparing to drop out of her senior year of high school to gain employment and help the family keep their house. CAPCA enrolled the family in the Emergency Solutions Grant Homeless Prevention Program and assisted with $2,045 to bring their rent up to date. Supportive services were also provided including a food box from the pantry and assistance applying for SNAP benefits. With the help of CAPCA and our partners, the eldest daughter gained employment to help her mother while continuing her education and graduating in May under the work study program.

A staff member received a text message from the mother that read, “You gave me hope for a better tomorrow, like an angel guiding me out of sorrow. I need you to know that you did so much more than just help me pay my rent. You helped us keep our home. You helped my daughter find a job. Even more incredible, you helped her stay in school and graduate. I truly believe with everything in me that you are my guardian angel. I could never say thank you enough.”

**ABOUT THE EMERGENCY SOLUTIONS GRANT**

The Homelessness Prevention Program may provide assistance to prevent individuals and families from becoming homeless. The funds under this program are intended to target individuals and families who would be homeless if not for this assistance.

The Rapid Re-Housing Program may provide financial assistance and services, and help those who are experiencing homelessness to be quickly re-housed and stabilized. The funds will provide a variety of assistance including short-term or medium-term rental assistance, housing relocation and stabilization services such as medication, credit counseling, security or utility deposits, utility payments and case management.

These programs operate in Faulkner, White and Cleburne counties.
Sam the K9
The Amite Head Start Center in Louisiana had a furry community volunteer visit the students. Sam the K9, with the Tangipahoa Parish Sheriff's Office K9 Division, stopped by with his officer owner to educate the children on safety, the important roles that canines have within the police department and how, as a team, they “catch the bad guys”. Sam also showed his fun side! The students’ favorite part was definitely seeing how playful Sam was with his toy and the officer. The Amite Center appreciated these community volunteers for sharing their talents.

Making learning fun
Bald Knob Head Start Center enjoyed a recent science experiment from HIPPY representative Ms. Trudy Boatman. The experiment consisted of water, salt and an egg. Ms. Trudy asked the children what they thought would happen to an egg placed in regular water compared to one placed in salt water. After much discussion, the consensus from the students was that both eggs would sink. To the claps and delight of the children, the egg in the regular water did indeed sink. Then, with much pomp and circumstance, the salt was added to the water. The enchantment on the children’s faces when the egg began to float was priceless. Thank you, Ms. Trudy, for making learning fun!

A giving spirit
Quitman Head Start has felt the giving spirit this 2016-2017 program year. As the season transitioned from fall to winter, the Foothills Faith Tabernacle kindly donated hats and mittens for all of the students at the center! The children were so excited to receive their gift and thankful to be warm when the cold weather arrived. Additionally, the Quitman Parent Committee donated their time and great effort to raise money for their parent fund. In turn, they used part of their funds to purchase a new laptop and television for the center! The year has not been all hard work and no play. The Parent Committee also sponsored a fall carnival in October. For the carnival, the children dressed up in costumes and played carnival games at the center. Likewise, for the winter season, the parents organized a celebration; the children had great fun attending school in their pajamas, decorating stockings with family members, making reindeer food to put out for Santa’s reindeer on Christmas Eve, beading candy cane decorations, and enjoying a visit from Santa who passed out gifts donated by Foothills Faith Tabernacle and the Parent Committee. The Quitman Center staff would like to wish everyone a safe, blessed and happy holiday!
All the leaves are falling down

“All the leaves are falling down, falling down, falling down!”

The Mills Head Start Center has now settled into classes; the new curriculum allows the teachers to cover one subject for a few weeks and helps the students obtain a better understanding of various topics. The children have studied balls, buildings, trees, bread and, of course, pumpkins in October!

The students visited the pumpkin patch and enjoyed a hay ride, corn maze and various small farm animals. Parent volunteers helped the children select the perfect pumpkin. Each class dissected a pumpkin by cutting off the top and studying the inside. Pumpkin pie was tasted and several classes enjoyed pumpkin seeds.

In November, the children went for hikes looking for “wild animals” and colored leaves. Large tree collages were created and collections of nature items explored. Parents were invited to share Thanksgiving lunch where the students practiced manners and sharing.

December is here and the classrooms are decorated with snowmen. The students are reading winter themed books and learning about all about winter activities such as making snowballs and snow angels, sledding and wearing hats and mittens to keep warm. Parent volunteers helped the children make winter decorations for their homes. The Mills Center is ready to stay warm and cozy over Winter Break and is excited for new lessons in January!

A day to remember

Ward Head Start Center held its annual Fall Festival on Friday, October 28th, 2016. The event was a huge success with the help of parents, community members, volunteers and staff. The day began with a field trip on foot to the center’s emergency relocation site, First Baptist Church of Ward, escorted by the Ward Fire Chief to control traffic as the children crossed the streets. Upon returning to the center, the students enjoyed a presentation by the Ward Fire Department. The firefighters demonstrated how to extinguish fires and the children took turns holding the fire hose and touring the fire truck. Afterward, the children, parents and staff enjoyed wonderful activities set up by parent volunteers on the playground. Special guests Spiderman and Snow White made a surprise appearance! The children had so much fun playing and posing for pictures with their favorite characters. Fall Festival was such a fun, eventful day filled with amazing activities that the kids will remember for the rest of the school year! Special thanks to everyone who helped to make this day such a successful and exciting experience for the Ward Head Start children.

Head Start works

Family and Community Engagement is the fuel that drives the Head Start program. Head Start is more than a childcare center; it is a program that helps build strong families and communities by providing comprehensive services. CAPCA Head Start would like to encourage you to research “Head Start works, because we do” and become informed of the many lives that Head Start has touched, from everyday citizens to government officials. With support from parents and the community, Head Start can be the building block to creating a better tomorrow for the most vulnerable children in the community. Head Start is always looking for volunteers to aide in this movement. A few ways to make a difference are:

* Help with center maintenance.
* Engage in a lesson plan activity with children enrolled in Head Start.
* Establish a partnership with Head Start centers.
* Provide an on-site service if possible.
* Educate parents during parent meetings.
* Donate your time or services.
HO! HO! HO! at Stuttgart

On the last day of class before winter break, the children of Stuttgart Head Start Center received a special visitor. With jingling bells and a jolly “HO! HO! HO!” Santa arrived to wish the children a very Merry Christmas! Adding to the holiday spirit, parent Ms. Brittany Kemp and grandparent Ms. Andrea McKennon decorated a tree donated by community volunteer Mr. Ricky Haynes and provided a winter backdrop for beautiful family pictures with Santa. Parents and children alike sat on Santa’s lap and the children told Santa what they wanted for Christmas. The visit was enjoyed by all! Center Manager Sharon Poll’s husband dressed up as Santa and took pictures with Stuttgart families. Thank you to all of the volunteers who helped celebrate the winter holiday.

Thankful at England

The England Head Start Center has had a superb first year being a part of the CAPCA family! In October, staff, students, and parents supported Breast Cancer Awareness in a unique way. The students marched through the centers’ parking lot with instruments, a banner and music while wearing pink. Afterwards, the children made pink lemonade and released pink balloons to commemorate those affected by breast cancer.

November brought a celebration of thanks. England Head Start staff prepared a Thanksgiving dinner and a Parent and Child Together (PACT) activity promoting family literacy. In the week prior to the PACT activity, the students practiced writing daily in their journals and the teachers prepared a “take home” journal for each child to collect after PACT. The parents enjoyed helping their children write about being thankful and were so excited to be presented with journals to continue practicing at home.

4 Tips for National Bath Safety Month

Keep the fun in the tub throughout the month of January with these helpful tips:

* **Stay with the child.** The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that children age four and under always have a parent or caregiver present when they are near water, including the tub. Accidents can happen in an instant.

* **Prevent slips.** Young children do not have the coordination or strength to hold steady if they lose their balance. Affix a slip-resistant plastic mat that suctionst to the bottom of the tub and make sure the throw rug outside the tub does not slide when stepped on.

* **Test the temperature.** Always wait until the tub is finished filling before placing your child in the water, as the temperature can change. Set your home’s water heater to deliver water no hotter than 120 degrees to lower the risk of scalding.

* **Beware of sharp edges.** Use a rubber cover for the faucet head and drape a towel over metal rails for shower doors when your child is in the bath. Avoid bath toys with hard edges or points that could be hazardous if your child falls onto them.

www.scholastic.com
Meeting the Challenge

In education, one of the most prevalent challenges is misbehavior in the classroom. According to statistics reported by Scholastics, 62% of teachers working at the same school for five years or more stated that behavior issues interfering with teaching and learning have progressively worsened. This concern is seen across all grade levels including over 50% of elementary, middle and high school teachers. Logically, preschool teachers are seeing the same increase in challenging behaviors with every new school year.

This year, many Head Start teachers collaborated with the CAPCA Education Coordinators to learn how to improve behavior in the classroom. Ms. Cindy Williams, representing a division of ASU Childhood Services, conducted training with CAPCA teaching staff following the topic “Meeting the Challenge with Challenging Behaviors.” This training was extremely engaging and laden with unique strategies teachers can implement into classroom routines. Also included were self-assessments for teachers to reflect upon and the opportunity to consult with fellow Head Start teachers on tips and methods. Afterwards, a teacher who attended the training stated, “I feel rejuvenated and I have so many new ideas that I want to try out in my classroom.”

It’s the most wonderful time of the year!

It’s the most wonderful time of the year at Rose Bud Head Start! Since the children returned from Thanksgiving Break with their tummies full of yummy turkey and pumpkin pie, there has been a flurry of activity in the classroom. The children and their teachers have been busy decorating for the holiday season. They started by making paper garlands of red and green to hang around the room. Then, one of the parent volunteers helped each child make a calendar with chocolate kisses to help them count down the days until the holiday arrives.

Our Parent Committee voted to provide the children with a Winter Celebration including games, crafts and delicious, healthy treats like fruit and vegetable trays, little smokie sausages and fruit juice. Rumor has it that someone special will be arriving from the North Pole for a visit. He will be bringing each child a special gift and, of course, lots of holiday cheer.

From all of us here at Rose Bud Head Start to each of you, may your home be filled joy, peace and lots of family fun now and in the new year to come.
**Enriched curriculum at Heber Springs**

Additional teaching resources allowing the teachers to present more in depth lessons to the students has enriched the curriculum at Heber Springs Head Start Center. For example, the children are currently learning all about bread, diligently grinding their own grains and corn into fine powders at the discovery center. Homemade bread in a bag was an especially fun activity incorporated into the lesson. The students helped with each step of the process, measuring and mixing ingredients until the bread was ready to go in the oven. Freshly baked bread was savored by the children and staff alike!

In the fall, the students enjoyed a field trip to the Arkansas Frontier Pumpkin Patch in Quitman, Arkansas. Riding the bus was super fun as this was a new experience for most of the children. Once they arrived at the pumpkin patch, the children enjoyed activities such as mining for jewels, digging for dinosaur eggs, walking through an enchanted forest and picking a large pumpkin to take back to the center. The students and Center Manager Rebecca McMaster scooped out all of the seeds and the “ooey, gooey stuff” as the children called it. The pumpkin seeds were then toasted for the students to taste. While some students enjoyed the seeds more than others, this was a great learning experience for all!

**Fostering independence in your child**

An important part of growing up is becoming independent, learning self-reliance and gaining the ability to solve one’s own problems. Ways to foster self-esteem and independence include:

- Encourage your child to make choices. Give real choices and make sure you can accept what your child decides. For instance, do not ask a four year old, “Do you want to go to bed now?” Say instead, “It’s bedtime. Do you want to brush your teeth before or after the story?”
- Set realistic goals and help your child succeed in completing tasks. For example, while two year olds can pick up their toys, they need help and encouragement.
- There will be times when children need extra support or comfort and may need you to do things that they can do themselves. A tired child may find putting all the blocks away overwhelming. By lending a hand, instead of demanding that he/she do it all himself/herself, you get the task completed cheerfully.
- Pose little problems to give your child practice in finding solutions. For instance, “What would you do if it started to snow and you didn’t have your boots?” or “What would you do if you fell on the playground and hurt your knees?”
- Share your pleasure in your child’s good decisions. As your child matures, point out the things he/she can do for himself/herself. “You noticed it was getting colder and decided to put on your sweater. That’s really taking care of yourself.”

www.childcaresourcesinc.org, The Danville Group

---

**CONGRATULATIONS!**

**CONGRATULATIONS In-Kind Winners!**

Greenbrier Head Start Center - October 2016
Gould Head Start Center - November 2016
Gould Head Start Center - December 2016
Carmen is a wonderful person and employee. She is always willing to help out in any way she can. Carmen always has a smile on her face and is always willing to learn new things that will make her job easier. She wants to see her center succeed in the community. She is a team player and loves helping the families. She goes over and beyond for her center and the community. She doesn’t mind helping staff when shorthanded and also greets parents with a smile every morning. She is a dependable person and a hard worker. I’m proud to have her as a co-worker.” – Nominator

(Pictured from left: Ms. Melissa Knight, MSHS/RHSII Supervisor, Ms. Carmen Kinley, Ms. Briana Wiley, Teacher Aide, and Stuttgart Center children)

Ms. Melissa Lawson
Family Advocate
Searcy Head Start
November 2016

“Melissa has a positive attitude and is very outgoing. She is always willing to help in any way possible. Melissa has been working hard at her center by doing not only her tasks, but whatever else is asked of her. She is always smiling and that makes for a happy and peaceful atmosphere. Melissa is dedicated to her families and strives to help them meet their needs. I believe her positive attitude and smiling personality is a huge asset to CAPCA because it helps make our children and families feel warm and welcome.” – Nominator

(Pictured from left: Ms. Jessica Borling, RHS Supervisor and Ms. Melissa Lawson)

Ms. Cindy Lopez
Teacher
Ward Head Start
December 2016

“I am nominating Cindy for Employee of the Month; she is a teacher at Ward Head Start. Cindy is very dedicated to her job and her students. She really loves teaching; she is very passionate about it. Cindy is very creative and enthusiastic. Her classroom is always a reflection of her lesson plan theme, when you walk into her room you automatically get an idea of the lesson she is teaching. She spends quality time teaching her students to make sure they understand the lesson and activities. She makes sure learning is fun and exciting. Cindy is very warm, caring and nurturing. Her parents speak highly of her and she makes sure to make them feel welcome in her room. Cindy is always at work on time; she adheres to the break schedule and is respectful of everyone’s time. She is a joy to work with. Cindy goes above and beyond her job requirements to make sure her work is completed and is a good representation of herself and all of the knowledge she has acquired. She really implements her knowledge from training and education into the classroom. Cindy has a positive attitude and works well with fellow employees and is always willing to help others. Cindy brought a tent from home and set it up on the playground and also bought battery operated tea candles for the kids to have at naptime. She passed these out to the students at naptime to use as their night light for camping. She also read the children a story; as they laid down, they pretended to be in their tent on their sleeping bags and the candles were to give them light during the night. It was so cute. This was all a part of her camping lesson plan. This is just one example of the great job she does and the amount of thought she puts into her lesson plans, her classroom and her students. I believe she is a great candidate for Employee of the Month.” – Nominator

(Pictured from left: Ms. Denise Middlebrook, Ward Center Manager, Ms. Cindy Lopez and Ward Head Start children)
Winter driving tips
Severe weather can be both frightening and dangerous for automobile travel. Motorists should know the safety rules for dealing with winter road emergencies.

* Avoid driving while you're fatigued. Getting the proper amount of rest before taking on winter weather tasks reduces driving risks.
* Never run a vehicle in an enclosed area such as a garage.
* Make certain your tires are properly inflated.
* Keep your gas tank at least half full.
* If possible, avoid using your parking brake in cold, rainy and snowy weather.
* Do not use cruise control when driving on any slippery surface such as wet roads, ice or sand.
* Always look and steer where you want to go.
* Use your seat belt every time you get into your vehicle.

Fun Rainy Day Activities
Don't let rainy days spoil all the fun. If you can't go outside, use these creative ideas to bring the fun indoors instead.

* **Pretend to go camping.** Build a tent in your living room out of blankets and chairs. Don't forget to bring flashlights, snacks and books, or make it an igloo and pretend to hunt for polar bears and go ice fishing.
* **Mix education and fun.** Pull out old magazines and catalogs and let your kids find pictures of animals, food, babies or cars. Give them safety scissors and glue sticks to make collages.
* **Get messy!** Can't play in the dirt? Play in the tub with shaving cream, bathtub paints and bath crayons. Don't want a bath? Paint with finger-paints or, for easier cleanup, let your kids paint with chocolate and vanilla pudding. Yummy!
* **Indoor obstacle course.** Push aside some furniture and practice gross motor skills! Set out a laundry basket and use balled up socks to practice throwing and accuracy. Tape down some yarn or string for a makeshift balance beam. Do moves in place like running, jumping and hopping. Use a timer and cheer them on. There are an infinite number of possibilities!
* **Freeze dance.** A classic! All you need is music and the only guideline is to freeze when the music is paused. Encourage kids to “freeze” in fun poses or with funny faces. Use a variety of musical styles and tempos. Tip: An older child can do the music while you dance with younger ones.
* **Scavenger hunt.** Take any theme, such as patterns, letters or colors and hunt around the house. Make it official with a clipboard and check off items as you go. Crawl around, reach up high and get down low!
* **Story go-round.** Make up a cooperative story by letting each person add one sentence. Start with characters and a simple plot, like “a dog and cat went to the beach,” and let the children take it from there.

The sillier, the better!
Communicating with your child
After a long day’s work, it’s sometimes hard to find ways to reconnect with your child. Here are some helpful tips:

* Let your child know that you care about what he/she did during their day, whom he/she spent time with and what he/she had strong feelings about (whether those feelings are positive or negative).
* Listen for the feelings behind the words.
* Look directly at your child when you talk together.
* Use active listening to reflect what the child is saying.
* When setting limits for your child, phrase them positively. Save “no” for times when you really need it.
* Tell your child exactly and clearly what you want him/her to do.

The key to communicating with your child is to listen carefully before you react.

www.childcareresourcesinc.org, The Danville Group

Encouraging your child to love reading
Parents often wonder what they can do to encourage their children to become eager readers. Here are some steps you can take to create enthusiasm:

* Have books and reading material of all kinds around the house. Provide a wide range of reading for your child.
* Spend time each day reading to your child. Begin reading to your infant and don’t stop when your child learns to read by himself/herself. Even school-aged children love hearing exciting stories.
* Let your children read to you. Encourage your preschoolers to tell stories based on pictures.
* Pick books you really enjoy; you will be reading them over and over and over.
* Plan frequent trips to the library and allow your children to select their own books. Children’s librarians are a wonderful resource and are there to help you and your child.
* Encourage children to talk about books they are reading. Provide follow-up activities which extend ideas from the books into real life. For example, take your child to the park after reading a book about the outdoors.
* Show how reading can provide valuable and practical information. Children learn by example. Let your child see you reading - magazines, recipes and newspapers - as well as books.

The key to encouraging your child to love reading is to take time to share the pleasure and value reading can bring to everyday life.
www.childcareresourcesinc.org, The Danville Group
Utility Assistance Program opens Jan 9

The Winter Utility Assistance Program will open on Monday, January 09, 2017, for assistance with gas, propane or electric. Applications will be accepted Monday, Tuesday and Wednesdays between the hours of 8:15 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. and 1:15 p.m. - 3:30 p.m. The office will be closed from 12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m. for lunch. Applicants are seen on a first come, first serve basis; however, arriving between these hours does not guarantee that an interview will be conducted; staff will serve as many applicants as possible during the scheduled interview times. It is recommended that you arrive early.

All interested applicants must provide:

* Proof of all household income for the month of December for all household members 18 years old or older. If a household has not had income during the previous month, you will need CAPCA’s Contribution and/or Collateral Statement.
* A copy of both light and gas bills.
* A valid state or government issued ID.

No determination can be made until all information has been received.

For more information, please contact the following:

In Faulkner County, please contact our Administrative Office at (501) 329-3891 or at 707 Robins St., Suite 700, Conway, AR 72034.

In Cleburne County, please contact Ms. Debbie Gilmer, Community Services Coordinator at (501) 206-0382 or at 305 W. Searcy St., Heber Springs, AR 72543.

In White County, please contact Ms. Lisa Smith, Community Services Coordinator at (501) 279-2015 or at 1132 Benton St., Searcy, AR 72143.

*If you are in another service area, please contact your local community action agency for more information. To find your local agency, please visit www.acaaa.org.
Holiday Food Box Distributions

Cleburne County

The Cleburne County Support Office (CCSO) held its annual Holiday Food Box Distribution on November 18, 2016, in conjunction with the fourth quarter Commodity Distribution. In addition to the USDA foods received from commodities, holiday food items and a turkey were added to the boxes to make a complete holiday meal. These additions were made possible by generous contributions from local businesses, churches, organizations and individuals through monetary and non-perishable food donations.

Preparations began in September with advertising seeking donations and food commitments. Then, food box applications were accepted in October. The CCSO strives to provide a food box for every qualified household applicant. In November, the non-perishable items were collected, counted and recounted to ensure the correct quantity for each box. The day before the distribution, food was delivered and 17 community volunteers assisted in building and filling boxes. Turkeys were delivered the next morning and the distribution process began with the help of 13 community volunteers, the Concord School Fellowship of Christian Athletes coach and 25 students. With the help of gracious donors, the boxes weighed over 70 pounds each and CAPCA was able to provide 226 Cleburne County families with a Thanksgiving meal and enough additional food to stock their pantries.

A special thank you to the following contributors for their support in this project:


Faulkner County

The Faulkner County Holiday Food Box Distribution was held Friday, December 16, 2016, at True Holiness Saints Center in Conway, Arkansas. Because of the generosity of our community, 350 families received a food box this year! Through the Bookworm Project held in partnership with Friends of the Faulkner County Library and the Arkansas Community Foundation of Faulkner County, recipients also received books for all ages, adult and children coloring books, markers, colored pencils and paracords of their choosing. A big thank you to the individuals, groups and businesses who supported the project:


CAPCA would like to say a special thank you to all of the individuals who gave of their time and strength to help make the Holiday Food Box distributions a success. The Cleburne and Faulkner County staff are very thankful for your help. The smile on the recipients’ faces as they receive their box lets us know all of the hard work is well worth it. Without the help of CAPCA’s caring community partners, the Holiday Food Box would not be possible.
Migrant and Seasonal Head Start

The children and families served by Migrant and Seasonal Head Start (MSHS) programs have certain unique characteristics which distinguish them from other Head Start families. The children of migrant farm workers change their residence and geographic location as their parents follow the agricultural work opportunities which vary greatly across the nation. MSHS programs also provide farm worker families’ children ages birth to five years old with child care, health care and other social services that address their unique needs. To be eligible for MSHS services, a family’s income must come primarily from agricultural work and the family must be otherwise eligible for Head Start services.

CAPCA MSHS centers are located in Amite, Louisiana, and Dumas and Kensett, Arkansas. The months of operation are as follows:

* Amite Head Start Center, Amite Louisiana: February – January
* Dumas Head Start Center, Dumas, Arkansas: March-November
* Mills Head Start Center, Kensett, Arkansas: February-November

For enrollment information in Migrant & Seasonal Head Start, please contact:

Lily Farfan
MSHS ERSEA Coordinator
501 329-3891, ext.2073
lily.farfan@capcainc.org