Blast Off to Kindergarten

Heart of Indiana United Way

OUR VISION

Heart of Indiana United Way envisions a community where all individuals and families achieve their full potential through education, income stability and healthy lives.

OUR MISSION

To improve the quality of life in our community by engaging people and organizations to advance education, income and health outcomes for all.

WHAT DOES HEART OF INDIANA UNITED WAY DO?

At Heart of Indiana United Way, we've adopted the term THRIVE as a call to action around our community work. When children enter school ready to learn and graduate ready to continue training or enter the workforce; when emergency assistance is available; when people have access to health and also adopt a healthy lifestyle; when employers have a qualified pool of job applicants; when economic demand and a ready workforce lead to business investment; when economic growth leads to additional investments in infrastructure; when individuals and families see opportunity available, lives will change.

WHAT AREAS DOES HEART OF INDIANA UNITED WAY SERVE?

We serve five counties in Indiana including Delaware, Fayette, Henry, Madison, and Randolph.

Blast Off to Kindergarten

The purpose of Blast Off to Kindergarten:
The event gives you and your soon to be kindergartner a chance to visit a school, meet kindergarten teachers, and learn academic skills you can practice over the summer to be best prepared for your newest adventure as a kindergartner!

Why do we provide this event:
The data collected in the Heart of Indiana's five counties tells us that 1 in 5 children are reading below grade level by the end of their 3rd grade year. When children struggle to understand the foundational reading skills taught through the 3rd grade, they are less likely to succeed in reading to learn as they continue their school journey. When a child falls behind in reading, they risk falling further behind in every subject. By helping children to reach this goal, we are helping to put them on the path to lifelong success. This event is designed to help you, as a family, be prepared for this exciting next step in your child's life.

Description:
In the spring before your child enters kindergarten you will be invited to a "Blast off to Kindergarten" event at your local elementary school. With the help of the local schools, The heart of Indiana United Way has designed an interactive and engaging evening of learning with your child's needs in mind! Throughout the event your child will have the opportunity to sample the kindergarten day with the help of their future principal, teachers, and devoted community volunteers. Your family will have the opportunity to experience a bus ride, having a snack in the cafeteria, and actual kindergarten lessons. At the end of the evening you will leave with helpful information, resources, activities, and supplies in a backpack helping to ensure that your kindergartner is blasting off to a successful kindergarten year!

Materials:
Each backpack has crayons, scissors, glue stick, and a book for your child. A dry erase board, marker and eraser to take home will be given to your child in the writing classroom. This folder is provided for you to have the tools you need to help your child prepare over the summer.

What You Need to Know about Kindergarten Readiness

Getting ready is a team effort
Kindergarten readiness means more than making sure your child has the skills needed to be successful in school. It also means that you, your child's caregiver, and the new school are working together to meet your child's social, emotional, physical, and intellectual needs.

Every child learns at a different pace.
Children grow and develop at different rates. Some children walk or talk earlier than others, some children read sooner than others. What's important is that children have many opportunities to experience learning activities with loving adults. Playing with adults and other children, reading books, writing, and talking are all important ways that children learn and become ready for school.

The basics of what your child should know.
Most children that are successful in kindergarten can master the skills as noted on the Kindergarten Checklist provided to the parents and endorsed by school corporations in Heart of Indiana United Way's region.

What You can Do

- Be a positive role model and help your child develop a love for learning
- Show excitement about their new adventure
- Talk about new friends and experiences they will have
- Read daily to your child
- Start a routine with daily habits
- Encourage a routine bedtime
- Take your child to the library
- Practice the take home activities learned at Blast Off

Stay Involved

The transition to kindergarten is an exciting time for children. Developing a relationship with your child's school helps your child knows that the adults in their life are all working together to support them! Open communication and involvement in your child's school directly contributes to a more successful education! By investing your time in your child's education, you will contribute to their success later in life—a gift that will last a lifetime.

Skills I Can Do...

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Reading and Writing Skills

I can...

- ☐ recognize my written name
- ☐ copy or write my own name
- ☐ copy letters or symbols
- ☐ use my drawings to tell a story with a problem and solution
- ☐ know the difference beween top/bottom, first/last, before/after, up/down
- ☐ hold a book and open it correctly
- ☐ identify rhyming words
- ☐ identify 13 written letters of the alphabet
- ☐ retell a simple story
- ☐ sing or repeat songs, poems, or nursery rhymes

Math Skills

I can...

- ☐ identify 5 differnt colors
- ☐ count 5 objects
- ☐ count to ten without skipping any numbers
- ☐ sort things by their similarities (color, shape, size, etc)
- ☐ identify and draw 3 shapes
- ☐ repeat and create a simple pattern

Language and Communication Skills

I can...

- ☐ ask for help
- ☐ tell you what I need and want
- ☐ understand and follow 2-step directions
- ☐ speak clearly in full sentances
- ☐ learn things by listening
- ☐ follow routines and rules

Social and Physical Skills

I can...

- ☐ tell you my first and last name, gender, and age
- ☐ complete all bathroom needs by myself (zip, button, clean, and wash hands
- ☐ take care of my basic hygiene needs (brush teeth/hair, get dressed, wash)
- ☐ be away from my caregivers
- ☐ eat my lunch without help
- ☐ tell you how I feel
- ☐ take turns and share
- ☐ listen to directions or story without interrupting
- ☐ use my school supplies correctly (scissors, glue stick, pencils, crayons, etc)
- ☐ hop, jump, skip and bounce a ball

SUPPORTING A FAMILY OF READERS

CHILDREN LEARN TO READ BY INTERACTING WITH THE WORLD AROUND THEM

- Have your child draw a picture and explain their creation.
- Ask your child to tell you what they see, hear, smell, taste, or feel while playing outside.
- Encourage imagination based play and story-telling!

WHAT ARE THE 5 PILLARS OF READING AND WHAT DO THEY MEAN?

- **Phonemic Awareness-** The ability to hear and identify individual sounds in spoken words.
- **Phonics-** Understanding that each sound represents a letter or group of letters in a word.
- **Fluency-** Reading words in print as smoothly, quickly, and descriptively as you would in conversation.
- **Vocabulary-** The understanding of words and their meaning in conversation and in text.
- **Comprehension**- The ability to understand and make connections with what is read.

CONVERSATION LAYS THE FOUNDATION FOR READING SUCCESS

- The earliest stages of reading development focus on the child's ability to respond to oral language.
- Children learn to hear the sounds in words before they can identify specific letters.
- Comprehension skills such as main idea, supporting details, problem/solution, and plot are first introduced through storytelling and describing experiences.

DRAWING AND COLORING

- Children learn to first record their stories through their drawings.
- Drawing and coloring helps children understand that each line, symbol, or picture in a book has a meaning.

PRINT CONCEPTS

Before a student can read a book they must first understand how it works! Ways to help include:

- Pointing to words as you read.
- Explaining that each book has an author and illustrator.
- Help your child hold a book with two hands and practice turning the page.

RHYMING AND NONSENCE WORDS

- Rhyming is your child's first introduction to spelling!
- Phonemic awareness (understanding how sounds combine to make words) is strengthened as children learn to manipulate one sound to make a new word!

So you're going to have a kindergartener...

First of all, congratulations! Welcome to the Muncie Community Schools Family! We hope that you and your child find Muncie Community Schools a great place to learn and grow together! If this isn't your first kindergartener you may be an old pro at this, but for our first time parents or anyone who wants to give their child a head start next year, here are a few things to work on over the summer to give our new friends a smoother transition to school!

1. Make sure your child knows and can communicate their first and last name. This is important because sometimes we need to gather information to help our students get to the right class, share safety information, or contact a parent.

2. Help them to become comfortable talking to safe adults. While we don't necessarily want our children talking to any random stranger on the street, it is important to teach your child that talking to teachers and staff in school is not only ok but encouraged. Having your child share their needs helps our staff better understand your child and makes them feel safe and valued.

3.Help them feel safe being away from their parent/guardian. This is a tough one, not only for our children, but sometimes for the parents/guardians as well! Our youngest friends have spent their entire lives with their adult and being the primary focus of their day. Easing into separate space and time away from their adult this summer may help the transition into a long school day. (This may be tough for you too! It never hurts to practice!)

4. Start a daily routine and bedtime. Perhaps the biggest change for our children is a consistently structured day. When children are young and at home they follow your schedule which isn't always structured. Here at school there is a set time to do specific things. Starting a simple daily routine this summer and sticking to it as well as having a consistent bed time will help your student feel comfortable with routine when they start school.

5. Make sure they are able to communicate bathroom needs. Some of our students may not be fully comfortable using the bathroom by themselves, or telling an adult when they need to use the bathroom. Teaching your child to communicate these needs can help them feel a sense of control and may prevent accidents that can be embarrassing to your child.

As always the Muncie Community Schools teachers and staff are here to help your child transition to daily schooling and look forward to helping in any way we can! Please let us know if your child needs some additional help so we can start the school year off right! If you need further assistance or would like to schedule an appointment to speak with a counselor, please feel free to call the school.

*Thank you to Mr. Mike at West View Elementary School for this welcome letter.

School Bus Safety

Waiting For the Bus

- Be there on time.
- Stand back and wait for the door to open.

Riding the Bus

- Stay in your seat.
- Keep yourself and your things inside the bus.
- Listen to and follow the bus driver's instructions.

Exiting the Bus

- Exit the bus carefully
- Stand where your bus driver can see you
- Watch for the bus drivers signal before crossing the road.
- Wait for the bus driver to tell you it's ok, before you pick up anything you may have dropped.

A Family's Role: What you can Do

The family is the child's first teacher. The family develops the child's confidence, self-esteem, and social skills that will help the child succeed in school and life. If your child knows they are safe and are loved, the stage is already set for success. Use "teachable moments" every day to reinforce what is important.

Read to your Child

- Read aloud to your child. Make it a safe, cuddling time.
- Turn off the television, remove distractions, and focus on the child and the book.
- Let your child guide you in choosing books.

Use the PEER sequence.

Learn how to use this simple reading technique.

How we read to children is as important as how frequently we read to them. Children learn most from books when they are actively involved. The PEER sequence allows the child to become the teller of the story.

Prompt Evaluate Expand Repeat

Reading Activities

Parent Handout

The PEER Sequence

PEER is a special way you ask questions and respond to a child as you are reading a familiar book together. PEER stands for *prompt, evaluate, expand,* and *repeat*.

	P Prompt the child	E Evaluate what the child says	E Expand on what the child says	R Repeat – Child repeats the expanded words
How do you do it?	• Ask the child a question or invite child to talk about something on the page • Ask the child to name an object in the book or talk about something in the story	• Think about what the child says. Is it correct? What information can you add to the child's words?	• Add only a few words to the child's response • Sometimes give the right words to the child	• Ask the child to repeat your expanded response • If the child doesn't repeat the words, then you say it again
How does it help?	• Focuses the child's attention on a specific part of the book • Builds the child's interest in the story • Helps the child understand what's happening in the story • Adds new words to the child's vocabulary	• Focuses the adult's attention on what the child said • Provides the adult time to choose the words to add to what the child said	• Encourages the child to say a little more than he or she would naturally say • Builds the child's vocabulary in a way that makes sense • Connects new words directly to familiar pictures, objects, and what happens in books	• Encourages the child to use language that he or she has just heard
Example	Book: *The Three Pigs* **Example #1** **Adult:** What is this? (pointing to house) **Child:** A house.	**Adult:** Yes, it's a house.	**Adult:** It's a straw house. Can you say that? (Evaluate and Expand are often done as one statement.)	**Child:** Straw house.
	Example #2 **Adult:** What is he doing? **Child:** He's blowing.	**Adult:** He is blowing.	**Adult:** That wolf is going to blow the pig's house down. What's he going to do?	**Child:** Blow house. **Adult:** Yes, he's blowing the house down.

Adapted from information in "Read Together, Talk Together™", published by Pearson Early Learning.

Language Activities

Dinner Table Talk

Cut these questions out and place in a jar,
pull one or more out at each meal to engage your child.
Have fun making up your own questions

If you could have picked your own name what would it be?	What animal would you be?
Who is your favorite cartoon character?	Which character in a book best describes who you are?
If you could cook for me what would you make?	If you were granted three wishes from a genie what would you wish for?
Do you dance crazy when no one is looking?	Why is the alphabet in order? Is it because of the song?
Tell me the five best things about you?	What does the word “success” mean to you?
Who would you rather be: an NBA ball player, the mayor, a famous explorer, or a movie star? Why?	What would be the ideal allowance and how would you use it?
If you could keep your room the way you wanted, how would it look?	What is your favorite toy and why?
What do think is beyond the stars?	What do you like to do best with our family.
Name something that you would like to do as a family soon.	If you were going to have a weird , unusual pet, what would it be, and why would you want that pet?
Who is your best friend and why did you choose him or her?	What would you do if you were invisible for a day?
Do you think any of our neighbors are scary ?	Dalmatians born with spots. (T) or (F)

Writing Activities

You may use "the writing board" for any of these activities

- Draw dots for your child to connect and make a picture or shape.
- Draw the outline of a person and ask your child to add the eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Draw a person together. Provide prompts such as "What about arms?" "What about hair? "
- Draw simple pictures together such as houses, flowers, trees, and spiders. Point out the shapes as you draw.
- Show your child how to draw simple lines and shapes. Start with horizontal and vertical lines, and then try circles, and triangles.
- Trace around hands and feet.
- Try rainbow drawing- You draw a line, shape, or simple design.
- Draw simple pathways for your child to draw along. For example, make a straight road so a dog can get to a bone or a car can get to a house. Start with straight, wide paths and progress to narrow, curvy paths.
- Draw simple mazes for your child. Always start on the left side of the paper to teach left to right movement.
- Trace lines, patterns, and shapes with a finger and then different color markers.
- Trace around stencils or even old lids. Then try drawing the shape without the stencil.
- Have your child practice writing the letters of the alphabet.
- Practice writing first name with only one capitol letter and the rest lower case letters.

Name: _____

Uppercase & Lowercase

Trace the letters.

Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee

Ff Gg Hh Ii Jj

Kk Ll Mm Nn Oo

Pp Qq Rr Ss Tt

Uu Vv Ww Xx

Yy Zz

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Kindergarten Writing: Unit I Name: _____

Draw a Story with...

a dragon

&

a castle.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Summer Patterns

Can you complete each Summer Pattern? Cut and glue

Name: _____

Color by Number

1

2

3

4

5

6

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Name _____

Coloring 2D Shapes

Directions: Find the 2D shapes and color.

circle	square	triangle	rectangle	oval
green	purple	red	blue	yellow

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Name: _____

Count & Color

Directions: Count and color the ducks in each pond. Cut and paste the correct number to match.

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1	2	3	4	5	6

Cut and Paste Shapes

Cut out and paste the shapes that match in the boxes below.

Name: _____ Date: _____

FEELINGS

Trace the words and draw a face for each emotion.

Happy

Sad

Afraid

Excited

Angry

Silly

Name.....

teach numbers

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