

Volume 1, Issue 4

May/June 2004



OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHENANGO, INC.

# Head Start Newsletter



## REAP THE REWARDS OF GARDENING WITH YOUR CHILD

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Spring is here and so is the opportunity to begin gardening with your family! Find a location where children can sow and reap the rewards of planting. Even if a small plot cannot be found, a container garden makes a fine alternative. A garden need not be extensive or have dozens of plants. A barrel, a window box, or gallon jugs cut in half will do nicely.

Gardening allows children to plan and work together to create something that they believe is important, and it offers opportunity to introduce reading, writing, math, and science. Even young children can do “research” to find out what kinds of plants might grow best in their yards or containers. A trip to the library or local greenhouse can help children increase their knowledge about how to take care of plants.

Math skills are developed during the gardening process. Children can count seeds as they plant, measure the distance between plants, mark the calendar for the anticipated date of seedling appearance, and chart and measure the height of the plants as they grow. Science lessons emerge as the plants grow and as beneficial and harmful insects make their appearances.

Reading and writing skills are enhanced when books about gardening are read to children and when children draw pictures or write stories about their own plants. Books such as The Little Red Hen by P. Galdone, The Carrot Seed by Ruth Krauss, Planting a Rainbow by Lois Ehlert, Growing Vegetable Soup by Lois Ehlert, and From Seed to Plant by Gail Gibbons are some of the many books that can help stimulate children’s interest in planting.

Another benefit to gardening is that children develop a sense of responsibility caring for their gardens. They feel a true sense of pride and accomplishment as their plants grow bigger and bigger and as they share their harvest. And of course, they can then take an active role in helping to prepare their vegetables for a simple nutritious snack or prepare them as part of a full meal. It’s a wonderful opportunity to spend quality time with your child while you both learn and have fun in the process!

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### Dates to Remember

- ♦ May 18 - 12:00 – 2:00 E.H.S. Open House
- ♦ May 19 – Parents as Cooking Partners Class
- ♦ May 20 – 9:30 – 11:30 Policy Council, OFC, INC.

### Dates to Remember

- ♦ May 20 - 9:30 – 11:30 Policy Council, OFC, INC.
- ♦ June 17 – last day for Preschool Head Start children

# Early Head Start Is On The Move

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Opportunities for Chenango, Inc. Early Head Start came to Chenango County in 1998 and began to serve families in January 1999. Parents and staff are equally proud of the Early Head Start program as we have begun our seventh year of partnerships with Chenango County families!

Early Head Start is a home based program offering child, family, and parent support and services through home visits, socialization opportunities, and the combination option. During the past few years Early Head Start has grown and continued to develop strategies to meet the needs for families within the community.

Early Head Start has purchased a building on East River Road, previously owned by the Mason and O'Keefe veterinary practice. We are very excited to announce that the Early Head Start Family Center will be celebrating our Grand Opening on May 18<sup>th</sup>.

This newly renovated building will be the new home of our Socialization/Combination Option Classroom as well as offices for our Norwich, North Norwich, Sherburne, and Combination Option Home Visitors. The facility includes a large and comfortable training room, a fully equipped kitchen and plenty of storage space.

Please plan to come and celebrate with us the opening of the Early Head Start Family Center on May 18, 2004 from 12:00 – 2:00 in the afternoon. There will be a light luncheon provided.



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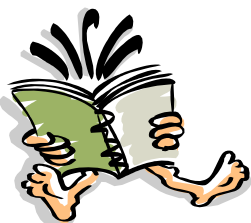
class participant Michael Wackford



## Parents as Cooking Partners

Parents as Cooking Partners is a program for Head Start and Early Head Start moms and dads who are interested in learning about new recipes, how to prepare low cost nutritious meals, gardening, freezing, canning and much more! You do not have to be a cook to join us – we are all learning from one another. And the best thing is the taste testing! Each family leaves with the tools they need to cook the specialty of the day at home. Parents as Cooking Partners began last November and has been a great success! Each month we have more interested parents join us. If you would like to learn more about Parents as Cooking Partners talk to your Home Visitor or family Advocate or call 334-7114 and ask for Cindy.





## **Book Corner**



Check out your local library for “To Market to Market” by Anne Miranda. It is a great book for all ages, especially toddlers and preschoolers. Children will not get tired of hearing this fun story and parents will not get tired of reading the same story over many times which children, as adults know...love to do!

The bright pictures of animals and the colorfully dressed lady shopping for her lunch makes the book interesting for young children. The story puts a new spin on the old rhyme To Market, to Market to Buy a Fat Pig. Parents can even make up their own story from the colorful pictures without reading a word of the story. Each time the story is read, parents can focus on a different learning concept like numbers, colors, animals, favorite foods or concepts of under and over.

Parents can create activities for children to do after reading the story. Ask children to think of what words rhyme with “goat”. Ask the young listeners to point to all the red things in the story. Ask the child to be a spy and find all the animals that are hiding. Help a toddler to make the sounds the animals make or even name different animals or objects in the pictures. This activity helps build vocabulary and increase literacy skills. Parents can even keep their preschooler busy while grocery shopping by writing a list of foods from the story on a small pad. Draw some pictures next to the words that help a child recognize or know the word – you don’t have to be an artist, the children can help! When you get to the store, put the child in the grocery cart – keep them safe – and ask them to find all of the items on their shopping list. They can check the items off on the list with a crayon. This activity keeps them busy while parents find the bargains.

If parents and children have a favorite book they want to share with others in the next newsletter, give the information to your home visitor or family advocate and ask them to give it to Kaye or Brenda at O.F.C., INC.

## **21st Century Exploring Parenting Class**

This parenting class especially tailored for parents of children ages birth to five is offered to Head Start parents at least twice every year. If you are interested, please speak with your Family Advocate or Home Visitor.

Parents from the first Exploring Parenting group were asked how the class has helped them. It could be what they have gained from attending, participation in the class or a way their family has been influenced. Here are some statements that were shared.

- ⇒ I’m getting my kids to put their feelings into words instead of hitting and biting each other.
- ⇒ I learned why making time for my family is important.
- ⇒ I learned the difference between punishment and discipline.
- ⇒ I learned in Exploring Parenting that I really have to stop and listen to what my children are saying to me. I want my boys to know that they can always come to me with anything and that I will always love them no matter what they are going through.





**OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHENANGO,  
INC.**

44 West Main Street  
P.O. Box 470  
Norwich, NY 13815

Phone:  
(607) 334-7114



**We're on the web!**  
**[www.ofcinc.org](http://www.ofcinc.org)**

## 36 YEARS IN CHENANGO COUNTY

Head Start has been serving children and their families in Chenango County for the past thirty-six years. If you want to give your child and family a HEAD START apply now.

**WHO:** Eligible Pregnant mothers and children from birth to 5 years old.

**WHAT:** A program where:

**CHILDREN** can:

- Learn to play with other children
- Be supported in their growth and learning process
- Be helped to get any medical, dental or other special services they might need before they are ready to go to school

**PARENTS** can:

- Learn more about how their children grow and learn
- Share experiences and learn from other parents and staff
- Be a part of their children's education and help make decisions about the program

This is only a hint as to what Head Start is about. Do you want to learn more?

**HOW:** If you would like to learn more or to apply call 334-7114 and ask for Sue (Early Head Start: pregnant Women/ children 0-3) or Georgi (Preschool Head Start children 3 & 4 years old)

## Head Start Contact Information

Preschool Head Start Sites and Options			Early Head Start		
Site	Phone Number	Family Advocate	Site	Phone Number	Home Visitor
Bainbridge	(607) 967-8582	Brenda Oralls	Bainbridge & Guilford	(607) 967 – 3725	Jody Kenyon
Guilford	(607) 895-6248				
Greene	(607) 656-9367	Rhoda Kinne	Greene	(607) 656 – 4829	
New Berlin	(607) 847-8587	Pat Kellogg	New Berlin	(607) 847 – 8587	
North Norwich	(607) 334-4324	Barbara Pierce	North Norwich	(607) 334 – 7114	Julie Palmere
Norwich	(607) 336-6219	Abigail Cortez	Norwich	(607) 334 – 7114	Peggy Asma
Oxford	(607) 843-9990	Becky Vanderhiede	Otselic Valley	(315) 653 – 7514	James Fletcher
Otselic Valley	(315) 653-7514	Paulette Paliana	Oxford	(607) 843 – 7028	Michelle Deady
Sherburne	(607) 674-5197	Jennifer Palmer	Sherburne	(607) 334 – 7114	Joe Palmere
Afton Pre-K Program	(607) 639 – 8234	Michelle Hunt	Combination Option	(607) 336 – 8957	Karyn Paul
Family Child Care Option	(607) 336 – 4515	Sabrina Daniels			