

Monthly Family Newsletter

October 2021

Happy October Cummings Great Expectations Families!

This month for October we are observing National Eat Better, Eat Together Month during October! Our hope is to encourage families to gather for mealtimes. When families have their main meals together, they tend to eat more nutritious foods. With today's hectic schedules, it may feel impossible to eat together for every meal. But you can always start simply, by making it a goal to eat at least one meal a week as a family. Another way to make this possible is to prepare several meals ahead of time. Having ahead-meal menus ready, can help simplify and organize meal planning and shopping lists. Don't stop there! Try and get everyone involved in the cooking or setting the table. No matter the age of the family member, no one should be left out. What better way to spend time together and learn about each other's daily activities?



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CUMMINGS GREAT EXPECTATIONS

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Meet The Cummings Family!

KAMORA HARDEN

Kamora Harden is one of our Early Head Start teacher here at Cummings, and has been with us for almost a full three years! When Kamora isn't at Cummings, she enjoys reading a good book, like her favorite book *I Am Perfectly Designed* by Karamo Brown. Kamora also enjoys family game nights, where she makes sure no one is breaking the rules. If Kamora could have any superpower, she would choose the unique power of problem-solving. Kamora's favorite color is gold and enjoys a classic Mid-Western dish with rice on the side for her perfect meal. She's excited for the start of Fall, it's her favorite season because it seems to always be perfect weather.

"My favorite thing about working at Cummings Great Expectations is working with the families and creating a forever village. So when they go on to high school, those families won't forget about us."

From Our Executive Director

JA'NEL JAMERSON

We all have heard the chatter of how valuable eating meals as a family can be. Eating meals as a family can provide numerous benefits for the children in a home. Including: less likely to be overweight, more likely to eat healthy food, perform better academically, less likely to engage in risky behaviors, and generally, have better relationships with their parents. Eating together can be difficult. Most in one household don't all share the same schedules. But when an effort is made, children can reap the benefits.

We are encouraging all families to share meals together this month! Our cookbook, *What's Cookin'*, features dozens of recipes submitted by families at Educare Flint and Cummings Great Expectations for drinks, soups, healthy meals, desserts & more! The Great Expectations Market is available to assist with those additional food items needed to make your family mealtime complete. If you are interested, contact your Family Engagement Advocate for more information.

[Click Here](#) To Download The **What's Cookin' Family Recipe Book!**





Mark Your Calendars:



Important Dates

- **October 7: Parent Café Zoom**
- **October 12 Market Order Pick-up**
- **Head Start Parent Policy Meeting**

From Our Family Engagement Coordinator

MIKE KILDEE

Eating Together as a Family

Our busy lives can make it a real challenge to try to have a meal together as a family. Although it can be challenging, it is well worth the effort to sit down as a family and share a meal that everyone has contributed to.

Schedule a time to eat together - Eating together can happen at Breakfast, Lunch, or Dinner. Pick the meal when it is best for your family to connect.

If you don't usually eat together, pick a day of the week that works best and try to increase that to a few days a week. Sunday dinner has been traditional time for families to eat together. This may be a good place to start and increase from there.

A time to connect - Sitting around the table gives everyone an opportunity to talk about their day by sharing what happened that was good and what may be bothering them. This will bring families closer and for young children, it can really build their self-esteem by allowing them to be heard.

It is important that there are no distractions from the conversations. It is best that cell phones or other technology not be at the table.

Everyone contributes - if everyone feels as though they are contributing to the meal, they are more likely to participate.

Children can help with preparing the meal, setting the table or clearing the table afterwards.

Children are more likely to eat foods that they have helped prepare. This can be helpful when encouraging children to eat healthier foods.

Spending time listening and supporting each other as a family has benefits that will last a lifetime. Take the time to share a meal together and enjoy being a family!

From Our School Director

MICHELLE TOWNSEND

The first month of school is a success! Thank you for following our health and safety protocols and keeping your children home when they are sick. Together we will keep our student and staff safe.

Don't forget about The Great Expectations Market. Here is the link to order FREE items for your home: <http://cummingschool.org/market/>

Babies are born learning. Very young children are learning through play, the active exploration of their environment, and most importantly, through interactions with the significant adults in their lives. Learning to read and write doesn't start in kindergarten or first grade.

Developing language and literacy skills begins at birth through everyday loving interactions, such as sharing books, telling stories, singing songs, and talking to one another. Learn how adults - parents, grandparents, and teachers - play a very important role in preparing young children for future school success and helping them become self-confident and motivated learners. Here are some other ideas for nurturing early literacy skills in your baby or toddler:

- **Talk or sing about the pictures**
- **Let children turn the pages**
- **Show children the cover page**
- **Show children the words**
- **Make the story come alive**
- **Make it personal**
- **Ask questions about the story, and let children ask questions too!**
- **Let children tell the story**
- **Create books together**
- **Make books a part of your daily routine**



Scan this QR code to complete the health check survey each morning.



THANK YOU FOR ALLOWING US TO BE A PART OF YOUR FAMILY!