

## Joaquimia Williams, Mental Health and Disabilities Coordinator

## Mental Health

### National Mental Health Awareness Month

As the Mental Health and Disability Coordinator I would like to share that May is National Mental Health Awareness Month. In recent times, attitudes towards mental health issues appear to be changing. Negative attitudes and stigma associated with mental health and related issues have lessened, and there has been a growing acceptance towards mental health issues and support for people with them.

Mental illnesses are real disorders with real treatments, but too few people receive optimal care. Early childhood mental health is synonymous with general health and well-being, as well as healthy social, emotional, and behavioral development. Early identification and support for behavioral, emotional, and mental health needs have a positive impact on very young children.

Strengthening the well-being and knowledge of parents and families leads to improved outcomes for their children. To learn more about early childhood mental health awareness, please visit <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/mental-health>.

If you have any concerns or questions regarding your child having healthy social-emotional development I am available with resources and referral information at your child's Early Learning Program.

## ★ Catalina Torres, Parent Involvement Coordinator

## Around Town

**McKinney-Vento Spring Resource Fair RISE Chicago Heights**, 405 Ashland Ave., Chicago Heights, IL, on May 4, 2019 from 10 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Representatives from local support agencies will be on hand to connect you with valuable resources: healthcare, housing, benefits, and shelter. Lunch provided. Complimentary Supplies.

**BabyPalooza** presented by UChicagoMedicine at Ingalls Memorial Cancer Care Lobby, located on One Ingalls Drive, Harvey, IL on May 18, 2019 from 10 am to 1 pm will offer information on Healthy Pregnancies and Healthy Babies: Snacks, raffles, face painting, giveaways, hourly education sessions, free samples, unit tours, car seat safety checks, vendors, and more. For additional information, call 708. 915.3825.

**Chicago Heights Park District Job Fair** May 8, 2019 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at 1400 Chicago Rd., Chicago Heights, IL. Call 708.755.1451 or visit [www.chparkdistrict.net](http://www.chparkdistrict.net).

**Chicago Heights Park District** will offer **Free Movies Under the Stars**. Pack some snacks, a blanket or a lawn chair and bring the whole family. All movies rated PG. For more information, visit [www.chparkdistrict.net](http://www.chparkdistrict.net).

- 5.13.19 Toy Story at Commissioners Park, 311 N. Chicago Road, Chicago Heights
- 6.1.19 Black Panther at Smith Park, Ashland & 14th St., Chicago Heights
- 6.28.19 The Lion King at Swanson Park, 207th & Travers St., Chicago Heights
- 6.29.19 Transformers at Sesto Park, Beacon Blvd & Western Ave., Chicago Heights

**Prairie State College** will offer the **Kids @ College-iSTEAM** program, designed to help enhance the problem solving of children ages 5-10 through fun, hands-on, team-building activities. The program starts June 17 through July 25 from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Matteson Area Center. During these six weeks, children will learn about: Inventions, Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics. The program is \$150 a week. For more information and registration, call (708) 709-3750 or visit [www.prairiestate.edu/kids](http://www.prairiestate.edu/kids).