



November 2013

Topic of the Month

Does your coalition have a special event/activity planned to coincide with the Christmas holidays?

Our coalition will participate in the *Sugar Plum Saturday* event with the city to celebrate the holidays. The Dec. 7th event will allow us to share information about Excel by 5 with families in our community, but to also provide some fun learning activities alongside the fun of welcoming St. Nick! **-Cynthia Minton Walker, Gulfport coalition**

We will assist our childcare preschoolers as well as our stay-at-home "library story hour" children in creating ornaments to decorate a Christmas tree at the library. **-Wendy Rogers, Stone County coalition**

We make a personal visit to our childcare centers and deliver a "thank you" gift of cookies and fresh fruit. We usually shoot for the 2nd or 3rd week in December. The centers really appreciate this simple act of kindness. **-Connie Jo Williams, Pascagoula coalition**

Biloxi will host our *Come Learn with Santa* event on Saturday, December 12th at Lopez school from 9 till noon. Santa is there and individual pictures are taken with Santa and child/children. Pictures are mailed to parents. Christmas activities are planned for children birth to 5. **-Susan Hunt, Biloxi coalition**

Our coalition works with our local hospital to set up a booth at their annual *Winter Wonderland*. As the families are waiting to see Santa, our volunteers read to children and speak with parents about the importance of early education. Also, our Mobile Resource center will be open in another area of the event. We give away 1 (donated) book per family and share information about local childcare centers. **-Susan O'Connell, Corinth-Alcorn coalition**

We participate in *Snowflakes and Sugarplums*, our community's Christmas festival. We provide: games, parent information, "books as gifts" recommendations, "make & take" learning gifts for children, ornament making, and "Santa" letter writing. We also partner with the library for the *Christmas Tree Gala*, working with our child care centers to decorate an EB5 tree. It's a big hit! We always win a ribbon! **-Cathy Wilson, Hancock County coalition**

We will be walking in the Hattiesburg Christmas parade and giving away books bearing our Excel By 5 logo on December 7. Additionally, on December 14, we will give away books at *Zoo Lights*, the Hattiesburg Zoo's Christmas event. **-Dan Kibodeaux, Hattiesburg coalition**

At the conclusion of each year, our Steering Committee crafts an "Annual Message" on holiday stationery to be sent to all coalition members, as well as other EB5 supporters including our school board and city board of alderman. We use the letter to highlight the year's work - typically using bullet points for an easier read. We also publish it in our local paper so the community is reminded of the work done as well. **-Julie Fondren, Petal coalition**

We are planning a night of goodies and special activities for our children on December 5 at our Family Education Center. Then we will join in Moss Point's tree-lighting ceremony on December 6 by helping children make ornaments. Finally, on December 7, we will hold our annual health fair in conjunction with the city's Christmas parade. **-Patrice McCullum, Moss Point coalition**

For more details on any information listed above, contact the certification manager listed or your sites coordinator.

