



Northern Tier Community Action Corp.
Head Start Program
September/October 2019
NEWSLETTER

Dave Greene
 Executive Director



From the Director . . .

Choosing your son or daughter's first education experience is one of the most important decisions you will make for your child. A good preschool setting can have a positive impact on the development of your child.

Since you are the 1st and most important teacher of your child, you also can be helping him/her learn every day at home. Please always make sure and check backpacks and pockets for information sent home, and remember that regular attendance is so important to your child's success!

Head Start is a family development program. The overall goal of the program is to increase the social competence of children, and to achieve that, Head Start provides the child and his/her family with comprehensive services.

Northern Tier Community Action's Head Start program provides:

- ~ Education services to help improve the child's skills;
- ~ Medical services and health education;
- ~ Dental services and dental education;
- ~ Mental health services to ensure healthy emotional development;
- ~ Nutrition services and nutrition education;
- ~ Services to families through linkages to appropriate community agencies;
- ~ Parent involvement in the classroom and home visits to help make decisions about the program and in carrying through activities which parents develop for themselves and their families.

Policy Council:

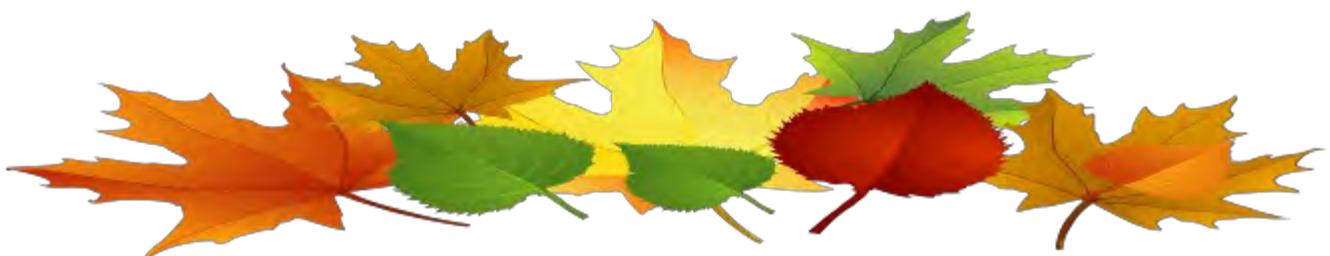
Next meeting:
October 10, 2019

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Thank you for choosing our Head Start program!

Debra Sidelinger, Head Start Director



Welcome !



I want to welcome you to Northern Tier Community Action Head Start. My name is Marcy Boswell and I am the Family and Community Manager. I am so excited to start a new year. We are so fortunate to have enthusiastic parents and dedicated staff. I was so pleased to see so many parents attend Policy Council. It was great to see some returning parents and was wonderful to see some new faces at the meeting. I hope you find it informative and fun. I am looking forward to a very productive year.

Policy Council: Policy Council is made up of current parents and community representatives who provided direct participation in the planning and administering policies in accordance with the Head Start Performance Standards. Members serve as a link between Head Start and your site. Members of Policy Council will have input in programming, grant approval, budget, policies, procedures, ERSEA (Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment, and Attendance). We do not expect you to know every thing about Head Start/Policy Council. We'll teach you! We are looking for your great ideas! Being an active parent volunteer means everyone wins; child, parent, family and the Head Start program.

We are still looking for Policy Council representative at some sites. If you are interested in becoming a Policy Council member contact your Family Service Worker or Home Visitor.

Applications: Head Start is always accepting applications. If the center/home based site is full those applications are put on a waiting list in the event that a spot becomes open in your location.

Attendance: In order to get the full benefits of Head Start, your child must attend. Head Start must maintain an 85% attendance rate. We need your cooperation to accomplish this goal. We do ask that all parents contact the center if your child will be absent. If you know that your child will be absent for a few days, please let the staff know. A parent or doctor note is required when your child returns. Please know that it is your responsibility to contact the center when your child will not be attending.

I am looking forward to meeting and working with all the families and children at NTCAC Head Start. We would ask that all parents take time to read over the Parent Handbook and get familiar with the information contained within it.

Marcy Boswell
Community & Family Manager

Together We Shine!



Social Media



Follow us on Facebook to stay connected with program news and happenings!

Like "Northern Tier Community Action Corporation Head Start"



Also, follow us on Pinterest to get new ideas!

Follow "NTCAC Head Start"

Volunteering, In Kind, and Local Match

There are several reasons volunteers are needed to work with the Head Start staff person in the classroom:



- ~ Head Start must have 20 percent of volunteer time, materials or goods for every dollar awarded us by the Federal Government to operate the Head Start program.
- ~ Head Start must provide opportunities for parent involvement at anytime during hours of operation.
- ~ Parents who volunteer also benefit from their volunteer time.
- ~ Children look forward to having their parents or other important people in their lives as the teacher.
- ~ Children enjoy teaching the parent about classroom rules and routines.
- ~ The parent then has a chance to see firsthand how the child operates in a classroom setting.
- ~ To prove that there is community support for Head Start, each Head Start program is required to keep records of the amount of time and/or goods donated to the program. Each donation is given a dollar value. These "imaginary dollars" add up throughout the year until our local match requirement has been met.
- ~ Head Start must match every dollar awarded the program by the Federal government with 20% match through volunteer time, space, materials or goods.

Deb Sidelinger, Head Start Director

Hello !

Hello! My name is Meghan Allen, and I am the new Disabilities and Mental Health Coordinator for Head Start. My role here at Head Start is to help support children with Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) and challenging classroom behaviors. I make sure your child's IEP is being followed in the classroom, they are getting the supports in the classroom they need to be successful, and helping the teachers (and you!) come up with ways to help manage the students' behaviors. Previously I was the Family Service Worker for the St. Marys and Emporium centers for six years.

As it's the beginning of the year, you're probably hearing a lot about screenings. Screenings are performed by teachers from the Seneca-Highlands IU9. They help determine if your child is "on track" in five different areas: communication/speech, fine motor (like holding a pencil, using buttons, picking up small items), gross motor (running, climbing, throwing), problem-solving (filling in the blanks, counting, etc.), and personal-social (taking care of their own needs). You likely also completed a social-emotional screening with your child's teacher during your first home visit; this measures your child's behaviors at home and out in the community. All of these screenings are used to determine what *your* child needs to be successful at Head Start and prepare them for kindergarten.

If you have any questions or concerns about your child's development, feel free to speak to your child's teachers about them. It is your right as a parent to request an evaluation by the IU9 at any time, whether your child passed their initial screening or not, and there are different standards for different age groups. You can always reach out to me for help with anything you or your child might need. If you have any questions about the IEP process, would like someone to accompany you to the meeting, or are facing challenging behaviors with your child at home, please free to contact me at any time.



Meghan Allen, Disabilities and Mental Health Coordinator

Building Social Emotional Skills at Home

As children experience new routines, such as those found in our Head Start classrooms, you may notice new behaviors. Providing your child with an opportunity to talk about how they act and ways to manage the different situations that take place in school is important to developing their social and emotional skills. Their social emotional skills refer to how to express feelings and how to work with their new friends.

Below are some suggestions to develop these skills:

Puppets: Talking with your child about problems and helping them think about solutions while using puppets is a great way to use feeling words like happy, sad, and angry. Children will sometimes share even more about their feelings to their favorite stuffed animal. Their stuffed animal can be more than just a snuggle toy. They can possibly help you with challenging times that occur in a lot of homes, like getting to bed on time.



Think out loud: When your child hears your thinking process, it helps her understand how to cope and solve problems. "Whoops, my pocket has a hole in it. I better not put my keys in that pocket." This kind of self-talk helps our child learn ways to deal with everyday situations.

Read bedtime stories: It can be magical to talk about problems for the characters in stories. Invite your child to share her thoughts and feelings by asking questions: "What do you think he should do? How do you think she feels? What would you do if you were the character?"

Do a job together: Your child watches everything you do all day long. They want to learn about all things. Giving your child a chance to fold laundry, set the table, rake leaves, or water flowers is a good time to talk about helping others.



Play games: Board games and outside games such as tag or hop-scotch offer time to practice to take turns, work together, work through frustration, and more. While playing games together, focus on fun instead of winning or losing.

Prevent problems: Sharing is such an important piece of our Head Start community, but when your child is at home, it is okay to put away his favorite toy before a friend comes to play. Another way to prevent problems at home is to talk to your child using a step by step description of what you will do. It is important to prepare your preschooler of what will happen next.



Tricia Juran, Professional Development Coordinator

Healthy Fall Snacks



Get Ready to Write



There are a lot of fun and natural activities and materials you can use at home to help develop your child's fine motor skills and get them ready to write. The following activities can not only help to strengthen fine motor skills, but they will keep your child interested and having fun while they learn.

1. Work with play dough and clay. Let them roll, pinch and shape the dough to strengthen finger and wrist muscles.
2. Give children big pieces of paper and crayons, not markers. Markers are easier to use and don't work the small muscles as well as crayons.
3. Let them construct with LEGOS to work on hand muscles and pincer grasp.
4. Have children cut different patterns. Start with a straight, short line and then work on shapes and curved lines.
5. Provide stencils to trace.
6. Let children pour from small pitchers.
7. Have them use hole punchers on thin cardboard pieces.
8. Let them clip clothes pins onto a clothesline or side of a box.
9. Have them fold paper by first matching the corners of a square sheet of paper. You can then try more folds and create paper airplanes and other designs.
10. Have children practice throwing and catching small balls, bean bags or sponges.
11. Let children follow a beam of light with their eyes and fingers. (use flashlight)
12. Practice zipping, buckling and snapping.
13. Set out puzzles, pegboards and small table toys for children to play with.. Provide beads, buttons and noodles that children can string together.

Remember to keep learning fun, and make it a part of your every day activities. How children feel about learning will be determined long before they their first day of school; learning will always begin at home with you!

Taken from;www.earlylearning.com

Contributed by: Jodi Guisto, Education Manager

Fall Craft

Supplies: Washable Paint, Clothes Pin, Cotton Balls

Paint the branch and let it dry before moving on.

Now the fun part! Make your cotton ball paintbrushes and start painting. We started with red first, then orange and painted the yellow last. I didn't worry too much about the colors drying in between and they didn't seem to mix or smudge together.

Let your child be creative!



Social and Emotional Development in Early Childhood

How Kids Learn to Share and Care

A tremendous amount of social and emotional development takes place during early childhood. As kids experience temper tantrums, mood swings, and an expanding social world, they must learn more about their emotions as well as those of other people.

Emotions and Social Experiences of Early Childhood

Throughout the toddler years, temper tantrums are quite common. There's a good reason why people often refer to this stage as the "terrible two's"! Toddlers tend to have rapid mood swings. While their emotions can be very intense, these feelings also tend to be quite short-lived. You might be stunned at how your child can go from screaming hysterically about a toy he wants at one moment to sitting in front of the television quietly watching his favorite show just moments later.

Children at this age can be very possessive and have difficulty sharing. Learning to get along with other children is an essential skill, however. In just a few short years, your child will go from spending most of his time with family and close friends to spending a large chunk of his day interacting, learning, and playing with other kids at school.

In fact, researchers have found emotional development and social skills are essential for school readiness. Examples of such abilities include paying attention to adult figures, transitioning easily from one activity to the next, and cooperating with other kids.

Helping Kids Develop Social and Emotional Skills

So how can you help your child learn how to play well with others? Social competence not only involves the ability to cooperate with peers; it also includes such things as the ability to show empathy, express feelings, and share generously. Fortunately, there are plenty of things that you can do to help your kids develop these all-important social and emotional skills.

Modeling appropriate behaviors is essential. Observation plays a vital role in how young children learn new things. If your child sees you sharing, expressing gratitude, being helpful, and sharing feelings, your child will have a good solid understanding of how to interact with other people outside the home. You can model these responses in your own household with both your child and other members of the family. Every time you say "please" or "thank you," you are demonstrating how you would like your children to behave.

Most importantly, be sure to offer praise when your children demonstrate good social behaviors. **Reinforcement** not only makes young children feel good about themselves, but it also helps them understand why certain behaviors are desirable and worthy of praise. Helping your children feel good about themselves also plays an important role in developing a sense of empathy and emotional competence. By creating a positive climate where children are allowed to share their feelings, children will naturally begin to become more generous and thoughtful.

Teaching Empathy and Cooperation

Parents can also boost **empathy** and build **emotional intelligence** by encouraging their children to think about how other people feel. Start by inquiring about your child's own feelings, asking questions about events in your child's life. "How did you feel when you lost your toy?" "How did that story make you feel?"

Once children become skilled at expressing their own emotional reactions, begin asking questions about how other people may feel. "How do you think Nadia felt when you took away the toy she was playing with?" By posing such questions, children can begin to think about how their own actions might impact the emotions of those around them. Cooperation is one skill that benefits tremendously from direct experience. Giving your child the opportunity to interact and play with other kids is one of the best ways to teach your child how to relate to others. While your toddler may find playing with other kids his age frustrating at times, since kids often lack patience and the ability to share, things will gradually begin to improve with age and experience.

As children play and interact, they also begin to develop social **problem-solving skills**. Early attempts might involve plenty of arguments and conflict with siblings and peers, but eventually, kids learn how to negotiate and compromise with other children.

SOCIAL EMOTIONAL



Taken From: Very Well Mind

Contributed by Loren Wendel, Education Manager

LICE Prevention & Control

What are HEAD LICE?

The head louse, or *Pediculus humanus capitis*, is a parasitic insect that can be found on the head, eyebrows, and eyelashes of people. Head lice feed on human blood several times a day and live close to the human scalp. Head lice are not known to spread disease.

Head lice are found worldwide. In the United States, infestation with head lice is most common among pre-school children attending child care, elementary schoolchildren, and the household members of infested children. Head lice move by crawling; they cannot hop or fly. Head lice are spread by direct contact with the hair of an infested person. Anyone who comes in head-to-head contact with someone who already has head lice is at greatest risk. Spread by contact with clothing (such as hats, scarves, coats) or other personal items (such as combs, brushes, or towels) used by an infested person is uncommon. Personal hygiene or cleanliness in the home or school has nothing to do with getting head lice.

Head lice have three forms: the egg (also called a nit), the nymph, and the adult.

Egg/Nit: Nits are lice eggs laid by the adult female head louse at the base of the hair shaft nearest the scalp. Nits are firmly attached to the hair shaft and are oval-shaped and very small (about the size of a knot in thread) and hard to see. Nits often appear yellow or white although live nits sometimes appear to be the same color as the hair of the infested person. Nits are often confused with dandruff, scabs, or hair spray droplets. Head lice nits usually take about 8–9 days to hatch. Eggs that are likely to hatch are usually located no more than $\frac{1}{4}$ inch from the base of the hair shaft. Nits located further than $\frac{1}{4}$ inch from the base of hair shaft may very well be already hatched, non-viable nits, or empty nits or casings. This is difficult to distinguish with the naked eye.

Nymph: A nymph is an immature louse that hatches from the nit. A nymph looks like an adult head louse, but is smaller. To live, a nymph must feed on blood. Nymphs mature into adults about 9–12 days after hatching from the nit.

Adult: The fully grown and developed adult louse is about the size of a sesame seed, has six legs, and is tan to grayish-white in color. Adult head lice may look darker in persons with dark hair than in persons with light hair. To survive, adult head lice must feed on blood. An adult head louse can live about 30 days on a person's head but will die within one or two days if it falls off a person. Adult female head lice are usually larger than males and can lay about six eggs each day.

Head lice and head lice nits are found almost exclusively on the scalp, particularly around and behind the ears and near the neckline at the back of the head. Head lice or head lice nits sometimes are found on the eyelashes or eyebrows but this is uncommon. Head lice hold tightly to hair with hook-like claws at the end of each of their six legs. Head lice nits are cemented firmly to the hair shaft and can be difficult to remove even after the nymphs hatch and empty casings remain.

Signs and symptoms of head lice infestation:

- Tickling feeling of something moving in the hair.
 - Itching, caused by an allergic reaction to the bites of the head louse.
 - Irritability and difficulty sleeping; head lice are most active in the dark.
- Sores on the head caused by scratching. These sores can sometimes become infected with bacteria found on the person's skin.

Taken from Centers for Disease Control

Bonnie Halquist
Health & Nutrition Manager



Center Photo Sharing



Port Allegany I center had a blast using bingo dobbers to trace their name.



Emporium center exploring the sensory floor.



Bradford I center had pajama day!



Johnsonburg center learned about bus safety.