



NEWSLETTER

Northern Tier Community Action Corp.
Head Start Program
November/December 2020



Dave Greene
Executive Director

From the Director . . .

Dear Parents:

We wish to thank **you** for your continued support throughout the school year. Our commitment to you and your children is very important to us. We are dedicated to providing your child with quality products and services. We could not do this without your cooperation!

What are the components of a Head Start program?

Head Start takes a comprehensive approach to meeting the needs of young children. There are four major components to Head Start:

- * **Education:** Providing a variety of learning experiences to help children grow intellectually, socially, and emotionally.
- * **Health:** Providing health services such as immunizations, dental, medical, and mental health, and nutritional services, and early identification of health problems.
- * **Parent Involvement:** Involving parents in the planning and implementation of activities. Parents serve on policy council and committees that make administrative decisions, participate in classes and workshops on child development, and volunteer in the program.
- * **Social Services:** Provide outreach to families to determine what services they need.

Debra Sidelinger, Head Start Director



POLICY COUNCIL

Policy Council

Meeting:

December 10, 2020

10:00 AM

Inside this issue:

Energy Assistance	2
Program update	
Messages From Marcy	3
Head Lice: What Parents Need to Know	4,5
Strategies for Helping Children Understand and Regulate Emotions	6
Supporting Writing At Home	7
Building Positive Relationships	8
Piggy Bank Craft	8
Kid's Craft Corner	9

Energy Assistance

Northern Tier Community Action Corporation implements several different energy assistance programs through both utility donated and private funds throughout our four counties. These programs are available to those customers that are experiencing difficulties in paying for or restoring utility service. Clients are able to apply for funds one time during the funding year. The energy assistance programs use the Federal Poverty Guidelines for eligibility, along with client need. If you find yourself in this position, please contact our offices directly, or go to your County Assistance Office. If you are having difficulty, ask your FSW for assistance in obtaining the information you require to help you keep up with your utility costs.

In addition, if you are eligible, the County Assistance Office may also refer you for CRISIS and/or Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) services for your residence. You may also be eligible for weatherization services for your dwelling, with landlord approval if you rent, which are available through Northern Tier Community Action programs currently in operation.

Debra Sidelinger, Head Start Director

Energy Assistance

Program Update!

Our Head Start program will be monitored beginning on December 14th.

The areas of governance, health, enrollment, attendance, fiscal / budgeting, and various other areas will be evaluated to see how our program is doing and to help us plan how we can improve. It is critical that we know both our strengths and weaknesses so that we can provide the best service to our children and families.

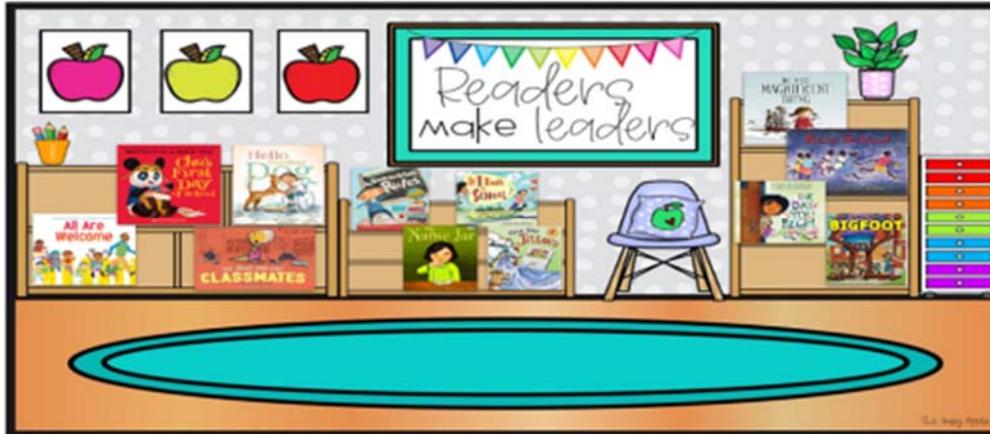
**Debra Sidelinger
Head Start Director**



Messages From Marcy

I would like to thank all families and staff for their patience and understanding during this crazy COVID time.

Parent Activities- We are trying to provide parents with opportunities to participate in the Head Start program. Our sites can only have 1 parent volunteer in the classroom at a time. Some classrooms such as the ones located in the school districts are unable to have any volunteers in the classrooms this year.



We do know how important it is for you to participate with your child's learning experience. If you would like to be a virtual reader for our classroom, please contact the center. You can also tape yourself doing a craft, or job that the children may enjoy. Please share your knowledge with the children.

Policy Council- Policy Council is made up of current Head Start parents and community representatives. Policy Council members participate in the planning and administrating of policies in accordance with Head Start Performance Standards. We do not expect you to know everything about Head Start and Policy Council. We will teach you! We are looking for your great ideas to improve our program. We appreciate your commitment to Head Start!

Family Goals- Currently, FSW's and Home Visitors are encouraging families to develop family goals. Goals are so important to give purpose to your dreams. Start with attainable goals. "How can Head Start support you in helping your attain your goal?" "What would you like to accomplish by the end of the school year?" Remember we must create SMART goals (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-based)

Parent Activity Fund- Parent Activity Fund is money set aside in program budget to provide parents the opportunity and experience in planning, developing, and implementing their own project. Each site is allotted \$3.00 per child enrolled. The Parent Committees will decide how they want to spent the funds and then report to Policy Council.



Marcy Boswell, Family & Community Manager

Head Lice: What Parents Need to Know

Head lice are a common problem that usually affects school-aged children and their families. They can attach to the hair of anyone's head. It doesn't matter if the hair is clean or dirty. Head lice are also found worldwide in all different places, such as in homes or schools or the country or city. And it doesn't matter how clean, dirty, rich, or poor the place or person is.

Though head lice may be a nuisance, they don't cause serious illness or carry any diseases. Head lice can be treated at home, but it's important to check with the doctor first.

What are head lice?

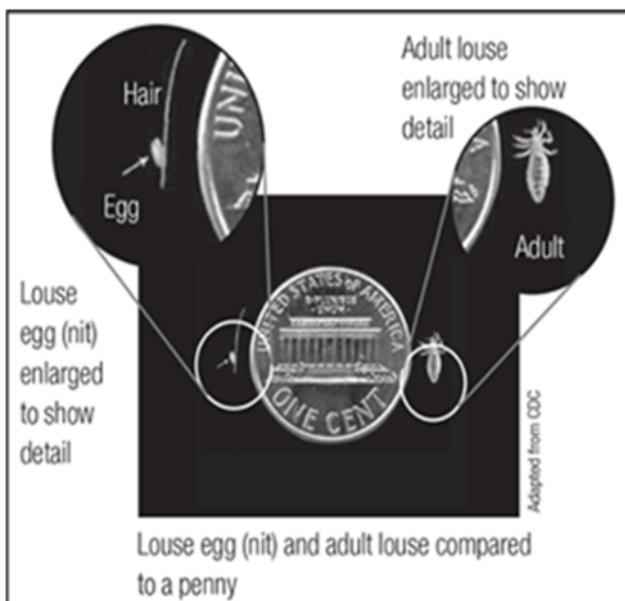
Head lice are tiny bugs about the size of a sesame seed (2-3 mm long [mm stands for millimeter]). Their bodies are usually pale and gray, but their color may vary. One of these tiny bugs is called a louse.

Head lice feed on small amounts of blood from the scalp. They can usually live 1 to 2 days without blood meal. Lice lay and attach their eggs to hair close to the scalp. The eggs and their shell casings are called nits. They are oval and about the size of a knot in threads (0.8 mm long and 0.3 mm wide) and usually yellow to white. Some nits may blend in with some people's hair color, making them hard to see, and are often confused for dandruff or hair spray droplets. Nits attach to the hair with a sticky substance that holds them firmly in place. After the eggs hatch, the empty nits stay on the hair shaft.

What is the life cycle of head lice?

Head lice live about 28 days. They develop in 3 phases: egg (also called a nit), nymph, and adult louse.

- **Egg or nit.** Eggs or nits hatch in 6 to 9 days. Eggs are usually found within 4 to 6 mm of the scalp and do not survive if they are farther away.



- **Nymph.** The nymph looks like an adult head louse but is much smaller (about the size of a pin-head [1.5 mm]). Nymphs become adults about 7 days after hatching.

- **Adult louse.** An adult louse can multiply fast and lay up to 10 eggs a day. It takes only about 12 to 14 days for newly hatched eggs to reach adulthood. This cycle can repeat itself every 3 weeks if head lice are left untreated.

(cont'd)

Head Lice: What Parents Need to Know (cont'd)

How do head lice spread?

Head lice are crawling insects. They cannot jump, hop, or fly. The main way head lice spread is from close, prolonged head-to-head contact. There is a very small chance that head lice will spread by sharing items such as combs, brushes, and hats.

How do you check for head lice?

Regular checks for head lice are a good way to spot head lice before they have time to multiply and infest (are present in large numbers) your child's head.

- Seat your child in a brightly lit room.
- Part the hair.
- Look for crawling lice and for nits on your child's scalp a section at a time.
- Live lice are hard to find. They avoid light and move quickly.
- Nits will look like small white or yellow-brown specks and be firmly attached to the hair near the scalp. The easiest place to find them is at the hairline at the back of the neck or behind the ears. Nits can be confused with many other things such as dandruff, dirt particles, or hair spray droplets. The way to tell the difference is that nits are firmly attached to hair, while dandruff, dirt, or other particles are not.

Use a fine-tooth comb to help you search the scalp section by section.

How do you treat head lice?

Check with your child's doctor before beginning any head lice treatment. The most effective way to treat head lice is with head lice medicine. After each treatment, using the comb-out method every 2 to 3 days for 2 to 3 weeks may help remove the nits and eggs.

Head lice medicine should be used only when it is certain that your child has living head lice. Remember, check with your child's doctor before starting any head lice medicine. Also, when head lice medicines are used, it is important to use them safely.

Taken from healthychildren.org

Bonnie Halquist
Health/Nutrition Manager



Strategies for Helping Children Understand and Regulate Emotions

Understanding and regulating emotions are two of the most important social-emotional skills for young children to develop. As authors Jennifer Grisham-Brown, Mary Louise Hemmeter, and Kristie Pretti-Frontczak point out, “children who manage their own emotions well and who respond appropriately to the emotions of others will be more successful in their interactions with their peers.”

Here are some simple tips you can use to help kids understand their own and others’ emotions, manage their own behavior, and communicate feelings appropriately.

Show them what emotions look like. Use photos of different facial expressions to directly teach children what emotions look like. Set up a mirror and ask children to imitate the facial expressions they see in the photos. Ask children questions: *What might have made the person in the photo feel that way? What makes you feel the same way that this person feels?*

Teach emotion vocabulary words. Children need to be taught beyond the basic words for emotions like *happy*, *sad*, and *mad* to accurately label how they are feeling and to explain to others. Try to teach them more specific words, such as *frustrated*, *disappointed*, and *proud*. Talk about and label your own feelings during your day with your child.

Create a collage. Work together to draw or create a collage about a specific emotion, such as “proud.” You can cut pictures out of magazines, take or find photos of children making appropriate facial expressions, and have children dictate or draw pictures related to the emotion.

Look for teachable moments. Throughout your daily activities and routines be aware of moments when your child is displaying different emotions, and talk with them about how they feel and help them use words to label their feeling. While watching TV with your child, discuss the feelings and emotions of different characters with them. Do not judge your child and acknowledge that their feelings are real.

Put up a feelings chart. A colorful chart with pictures of different emotions can be a great tool for helping children to identify what they’re feeling at a specific time. Encourage them to identify if and when their emotions change during the day.

Seek out books about feelings. Use children’s books to teach kids a wider range of emotion vocabulary and create or recall stories about times children might feel different emotions: excited, gloomy, angry, proud, surprised, jealous, and anxious. Encourage discussion about how the characters in the story might be feeling and why.

Act it out. Use role play to help the young children understand how other children or characters may feel. Role play may also help children act out different ways to respond to their emotions or others.

Choose games that require control. Playing simple games can help children practice impulse control during play. Play games with them that help them develop this skill. Simon Says and Red Light, Green Light are two good examples of games that require children to manage impulses in order to play.

Stay Calm. Show children how you keep calm during frustrating or disappointing experiences during the day. Make sure you describe why you were frustrated and how you were able to calm down. You might say something like: “I’m so disappointed it’s raining today and we can’t go outside! I’m going to take some deep breaths and think about the fun things we can do inside instead.”

Teach breathing techniques. Model and practice deep breathing to help children manage emotions like anger and anxiety. Encourage children to take deep belly breaths and pretend they are blowing out birthday candles when they exhale.

Children who develop empathy and emotional regulation at a young age will be better prepared for social interactions in school and as they develop throughout all the stages of their lives.

Taken from; Blended Practices for Teaching Young Children in Inclusive Settings, Second Edition
By Jennifer Grisham-Brown, Mary Louise Hemmeter, and Kristie Pretti-Frontczak

Jodi Guisto, Education Manager

Supporting Writing At Home



Young children like to scribble, make marks that look like letters, and play with writing. Chances are, your child will experiment with writing long before he or she learns to read. Here are some ways to help your child learn about and practice writing.

Display children's writing in a special place. Hang your child's work on the refrigerator, a bedroom door, or a cork board; tape it to a bathroom mirror or tile. Or, scan the writing and send it to the grandparents. You will be telling your child that her writing is important and worthy of being shared. She will want to write more and more.

Write in front of your child and talk about it. Whether writing a shopping list, thank you note, or e-mail; completing an application; or ordering from a catalog, explain what you are doing. Ask him what to add to the list or what to say in the thank you note or e-mail.

Invite your child to dictate stories. While playing together, encourage your child to tell you a story about where the cars and trucks are going or who lives in the Lego house. Write down exactly what she says. Read it aloud afterward. Suggest that she draw some pictures to illustrate her story.

Create greeting cards for special occasions. Provide paper and crayons or markers so children can make cards and then "sign" their names when finished. Show them old cards with phrases like "Happy Birthday," "I Love You," and "Season's Greetings" to copy on their cards.

Create an "office" for your child. Gather different kinds of paper, envelopes, pencils and pens, crayons, stickers, and labels. Place them on a shelf near a desk or table or in a basket your child can carry to a comfortable place for writing. Add interesting and exciting items like address and date books, calendars, or an old computer keyboard.

Involve your child in writing while running errands. Offer a pad and pencil and suggest your child make a "reverse shopping list"—a list of things you've already bought. At the bank, give her a blank deposit slip while you fill out yours. These tasks let children write and keep them busy as they learn new skills!

Put writing materials in several places around the house. Provide pencils, crayons, or markers in coffee cans or baskets, along with a basket of small unlined pads, notebooks, or clipboards with paper. Place these collections in the bathroom, kitchen, or living room. Be sure to remind your child to write on the paper and nowhere else.

Take it outside! Let your child write or draw with chalk or old paintbrushes and water on sidewalks and fences. Fill a backpack with writing tools and paper to take in the car or while doing errands.

Encourage all writing efforts. Make writing an everyday part of your children's lives at home! Remember, those first scribbles are important—they are the first step in learning to write.

Building Positive Relationships

A positive relationship with your child will provide you with more cooperation and motivation. Some key ingredients to build a positive relationship with your child are:

In order for adults to build meaningful positive relationships with children, it is essential to gain an understanding of children's preferences and interests. Through sharing your own interests and stories about your childhood, you are developing your child's language skills. Create an all about me book at home using paper folded in half. Draw pictures and tell stories together as you make this book you will have for years to come.



Think of the words you speak as a coin being put into a piggy bank. Children speak to us using their actions when they do not have the words to say what is bothering them. We must ask ourselves if we are giving too many demands or nagging them. They are no different than you and I as adults, when someone nags us we tend to become frustrated and short tempered. When buttons are pushed anger, raised voices, and escaping the situation become important. The efforts of our children are priceless. We want to be sure we acknowledge their ability to hold the scissors, make an entire picture, share or take turns with the toy, or even know they must find something else to do before they become angry.

Please know we are really proud of our Head Start families. Putting deposits into children can be very difficult when they are throwing a tantrum in Walmart or arguing over what shoes to wear to school.

Piggy Bank Craft

This is perfect to help us remember to make deposits to our children's emotional needs. You may customize it according to your preference. If you wish to be really creative, you can do away with the usual pink color. Paint your bottle piggy bank any color you want - go crazy! Your imagination is the limit. Gather your tools and materials and start creating!

Materials: EMPTY soda bottle (choose your preferred size) for the body 4 - 20 oz soda or water bottles for legs, paint (whatever your preference is), sharpie, glue, construction paper (if you prefer rather than paint). **Tools:** Sharp knife (parents only), paint brush, and scissors.



Tricia Juran, Professional Development Coordinator

Kid's Craft Corner

