NEWSLETTER

Northern Tier Community Action Corp.
Head Start Program

November/December 2024

From the Director . . .IN-KIND DONATIONS

Head Start funds come directly from the federal government. However, they do not provide all the funds needed to operate the programs. They expect that 20% of the funds come from in-kind Donations. In-kind Donations are considered a "non-federal" match generated through donations of time, space or materials that the program would otherwise purchase. Volunteer time is "valued" at the rate the program would have to pay for the serves. For example, a dollar amount for a parent helping in the classroom would be assigned at a rate equal to that of the teacher. The dollar amounts for time, space and materials are totaled to reach our required match. For every dollar the program is not able to raise, the government would request a return of $4.00 from our program's funds.

Volunteering and other donations are critical to the successful operation of our Head Start programs. Below are examples of ways you can help the children and our program be successful by volunteering inside or outside of the classroom setting.

Classroom Activities

- Read or tell stories to children, participate in Circle Time Help in all activity areas in the classroom including art, cooking experiences, building and more!
- Share family recipes, stories and cultural traditions
- Help teachers with walking or community field trips
  Greet children, help with arrival routines
- Assist children with teeth-brushing, playing a musical instrument or singing

Non-Classroom Activities

- Help with playground maintenance or toy repair
- Assist with parent and classroom bulletin boards
- Translate newsletter or written materials into other languages
- Attend Parent Group meetings or Council of Involved Families
- Gather or make materials for classroom projects
- Make phone calls for special activity reminders
- Copy, fold, sort, staple materials
- Record a story for use in the classroom

Donate-in-Kind

Learning at Home The daily activities you do with your children are very important! Home Learning activities help to connect the skills and development that teachers are working on in the classroom to your home. Reading, cooking activities, making shopping lists, and playing learning games are all activities that can count as home learning. Ask your child's teacher for a Home Learning sheet so you can keep track of the time that you spend working on new skills and concepts with your child.

Debra Sidelinger, Head Start Director

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Inside this issue:

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.

LIHEAP helps families living on low incomes pay their heating bills in the form of a cash grant. Households in immediate danger of being without heat can also qualify for crisis grants. The cash grant is a one-time payment sent directly to your utility company or fuel provider to be credited on your bill. These grants range from $300 to $1,000 based on household size, income, and fuel type.

Approved applicants will receive a one-time grant that does not need to be repaid.

Call the hotline Monday through Friday at 1-866-857-7095.

Debra Sidelinger, Head Start Director

Self Care Is Not Selfish!

Many parents are overworked and exhausted. In fact, a recent study showed that single parents work an average of 98 hours per week! Parents also survive with minimal free time. The average single parent only gets 17 minutes of free time each day. It is essential that parents care for themselves and their own wellbeing because any effort put into self-care also has huge payoffs for the child. When parents "fill their own cups," they have more patience, energy and passion to spread to their families.

Here are a few self-care strategies to help parents strengthen relationships, be compassionate toward themselves, and renew their energy:

Listen to uplifting music

Schedule an uninterrupted hour with a close friend- go for coffee, dinner, or a walk

Color a picture from a coloring book by yourself or with your child

On a piece of paper, write down 3 things that are weighing on you.

Then write down ideas of how to relieve your stress.

Each day, write down one thing for which you are thankful!

Make a list of three things you are looking forward to in the near future.

Write down a goal for the week and break it into small steps in order to achieve

Look at your schedule for each day and see if there is an activity that can be put off to a later date or someone can help you complete

If you are in need of more mental health resources or would like to talk to our mental health consultant, please contact your center's FSW.

They are there to help!

Debra Sidelinger, Head Start Director

Breakfast Ideas!

Safe, Simple Ways to Help Your Child Feel Better When They're Sick

Colds and flu are common in childhood, partly because your child's immune system is still developing. In most cases, time is the best treatment. In the meantime, here are some simple ways to keep your child comfortable while they get well.

Consider a fever reducer. Not every fever needs to be treated, but if your child can't sleep, acetaminophen or ibuprofen can help. Keep the right formula for your child's age on hand—chewable, liquid, or infant drops. Follow the package directions carefully to ensure you are giving the right dose. If your child cannot keep food and liquids down, a suppository may help. (Never give your child aspirin for fever or pain, since it can seriously harm their health.)

Keep your child hydrated. Kids fighting colds or flu need plenty of fluids, especially if diarrhea and vomiting are present. Electrolyte drinks can help restore the minerals your child's body needs. Once they can keep food and liquids down, you can switch to plain water. Warm liquids like hot water with lemon, broth and caffeine-free tea are a double remedy, since they replenish fluids and ease sore throats.

Relieve sniffles without drugs. Little noses will feel much better after you gently clear away congestion with a bulb syringe or nasal aspirator. Saline drops, sprays and mists or rinses are often part of this therapy, and can be used on their own to help clear nasal passages. These remedies are safe to use multiple times a day. (Tissues, hankies or plain-water wipes are great for catching the drips that might irritate your child's skin.)

Reach for honey instead of cough syrup. There are many over-the-counter medicines to treat a child's cough, but health experts point to the benefits of honey **for children over 1 year old.** This simple treatment works by soothing your child's throat and coating cough receptors. Dissolve a half to full teaspoon of pasteurized honey in a warm liquid for your little one to sip. Older children can take honey directly from a teaspoon every 2 hours. Make sure your child's teeth are brushed afterward to avoid tooth decay, especially before bedtime.

Add a cool-mist humidifier. Keeping the air in your child's space humidified can relieve a stuffy nose while easing dry coughs. Cool, moist air can also thin congestion and makes it easier to cough up. Be sure to clean the humidifier or vaporizer often to prevent growth of mold and bacteria or buildup of minerals.

Try mentholated vapor rub to ease nighttime symptoms. This is a safe, time-tested way to relieve aches and pains and relieve coughs, especially at night. Menthol—the scented, cooling ingredient in the rub—helps open nasal passages so your child can breathe easier. Apply the rub to your child's chest, leaving clothing loose so the vapors reach their nose and throat while they sleep. As with any medication, read and follow the directions carefully.

Bonnie Halquist, Health & Nutrition Manager

Kid's Craft Corner