



Northern Tier Community Action Corp. Head Start Program

March/April 2025



Dave Greene
Executive Director

From the Director . . .

Dear Parents,

As we approach the warmth of spring, we welcome the sunshine back to our small Pennsylvania towns. It has been a long, cold, and snowy winter!

We appreciate your dedication in getting your child to Head Start daily. It certainly can be a struggle on some days.

Each day that your child attends provide an opportunity for your child to grow socially, emotionally and physically. Advancement in school readiness skills takes time.....each day builds those skills.



Policy Council Officers:

Chairperson:
Phaedra Steele (J)

Vice Chairperson:
Kayla Bond (K1)

Secretary:
JayLea Mosher (K2)

Upcoming Meetings:

March 13, 2025

April 10, 2025



Head Start just works. Since 1965, Head Start has impacted the life circumstances of more than 40 million children and families: better health, better preparation for kindergarten, greater likelihood of graduating high school and going on to post-secondary education.

We are proudly celebrating Head Start's 60th birthday by spreading the word about the monumental impact Head Start has had on children, their families, their communities, and the country.



Sign a birthday card for Head Start!

<https://birthday.nhsa.org/>

Debra Sidelinger, Head Start Director

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Read to Your Child!

Reading to and with your child is the single most important thing you can do to improve school success.

R - Remember to mention the title, author and illustrator

E - Explain confusing words and concepts

A - Ask your child questions about the story

D - Discuss the story during and after reading

Sharing a book with your child is a terrific way to bond, plus it helps build important early literacy skills, such as listening, growing vocabulary and understanding.

S - Snuggle with your child

H - Help your child turn pages and point to pictures

A - Ask your child questions about the story

R - Respond to your child's comments

E - Enjoy this special bonding, brain-building time together!

You can help by looking together at the pictures and pointing out objects. Encourage your child with questions and respond to what he or she says. Help your child expand his thoughts by asking "who", "what", "when", "where" and "why" questions.

You'll be surprised at all the talking you'll do and the fun you'll have together!



Contributed by:
Debra Sidelinger
Head Start Director

The Importance of Lowering Stress



"According to the National Child Traumatic Stress Network, chronic exposure to traumatic events, especially during a child's early years, can:

- * Adversely affect attention, memory, and cognition.
- * Reduce a child's ability to focus, organize, and process information.
- * Interfere with effective problem solving and planning..."
- * The executive functions that trauma can compromise:
 - "Inhibitory control — the capacity to inhibit or regulate strong emotional or impulsive behavioral responses voluntarily;
 - * Cognitive flexibility — the ability to think about multiple concepts simultaneously or to switch quickly between concepts;
 - * Working memory — the ability to hold new information in the mind, process it, and store it as a learned memory."

Contributed by:
Debra Sidelinger, Head Start Director

Transition to Kindergarten

welcome to kindergarten

HOW TO START TO PREPARE FOR YOUR CHILD'S NEXT TRANSITION



Call the doctor

Children entering kindergarten must have a physical exam, dental exam, and certain immunizations.

In Pennsylvania, to enter kindergarten, your child must have the following immunizations:

- 4 doses of DTaP (one dose on or after their 4th birthday)
- 4 doses of polio (4th dose on or after 4th birthday)
- 2 doses of MMR
- 2 doses of varicella (chicken pox)
- 3 doses of Hepatitis B

Get familiar with their new school



- Register your child early so you don't miss any mailings the district sends to incoming students
- Participate in any offered orientations
- Attend "new student" events
- Plan on attending kindergarten screenings
- Enroll in any summer readiness programs offered by the district



Practice kindergarten skills

- Practice writing with pencils and crayons, and using child-safe scissors
- Practice with your child saying their full name (first and last) and how they are supposed to get to and from school (walking, car rider, bus rider, etc.)
- Practice self-help skills (putting on/taking off coat, hanging up backpack, toileting, washing hands without help, blowing their nose)
- Discuss simple rules (taking turns, raising your hand, walking in the halls)
- Play "cafeteria" (i.e., practice eating lunch in under 30 minutes without additional servings or drink refills)

What if my child needs special help?



- If your child had an IEP in preschool, attend and participate in their transition meeting with the IUP and the school district
- Request copies of any evaluations completed by the district
- It is a parent's legal right to request an evaluation at any time OR request a second opinion. Know your (and your child's) rights
- Even if your child is not eligible for an IEP, they may be eligible for a 504 plan, which protects their civil rights under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
- Keep open lines of communication with your child's teacher(s), therapists, and even the Director of Special Education.

STILL HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT TRANSITION?

Contact Meghan at meghan.allen@ntcac.org

Become a Volunteer!

Benefits of

VOLUNTEERING

IT SHOWS YOU CARE

By volunteering your child learns that education is important to you. It helps to see you take their education serious too!



IT'S GOOD FOR YOU

Studies show that volunteering is good for your mental and physical health

YOU GET TO KNOW EVERYONE

Volunteering allows you to get to know the teaching staff, students and other parents better. It allows you to find out who is important to your child as well.



IT ALLOWS US TO MAKE OUR SCHOOL BETTER

- 1-using your skills to improve aspects of our program
- 2-giving our program the opportunity to earn In-Kind funds that are important to maintaining our grant
- 3-giving opportunities for students to learn social skills through more exposure to positive role models

ROCHELLE STEWART-ED
MANAGER

Is Your Child A Picky Eater??



Tips for Picky Eaters

- Let them touch, smell and taste the new food without forcing them to eat it
- Offer new foods once at a time, some children may need to try food 10 or more times before they accept it
- Make food simple, plain, and recognizable. Some kids don't like food that is mixed or on the same plate
- Offer small amounts of the new food with familiar foods

Foods to Avoid

It's important to avoid foods that may cause choking:

- Slippery foods such as whole grapes, large pieces of meats, hotdogs, candy, and cough drops.
- Small, hard foods such as nuts, seeds, popcorn, chips, pretzels, raw carrots, and raisins.
- Sticky foods such as peanut butter and marshmallows.

Additional Tips:

- Set a good example of healthy eating for your child
- Plan regular meals/snacks and give your child enough time to eat
- Plan a quiet time before meals. Children eat better when they are relaxed
- Don't use food as a reward
- Involve your children in making the food
- Introduce new foods as early as possible
- Be a good role model - avoid junk food and your child will likely follow your lead
- Have family meals

Contributed by: **Bonnie Halquist, Health & Nutrition Manager**

Be Creative This Spring!



Snack Ideas for
the Kids!