Northern Tier Community Action Corp.
Head Start Program
September/October 2026
NEWSLETTER

Dave Greene
Executive Director

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Welcome to a new program year! As we begin another year of learning, growing, and making memories together, I want to personally **welcome** each of you to our Preschool Services family. The beginning of a school year is always an exciting time. For some children, it may be their first experience away from home. For others, it is the beginning of another year of friendships, learning, and discovering new things. We understand that every child and every family have their own experiences, questions and hopes for the year ahead.

Our commitment is to provide every child with a safe, nurturing, welcoming, and engaging environment where they can learn at their own pace and feel confident in who they are. Our teachers and staff work each day to create meaningful experiences that support the whole child—socially, emotionally, physically, and academically.

Families are an important part of that journey. We believe children succeed when families and teachers work together. Please know that your questions, ideas, concerns, and suggestions are always important to us. Communication between home and school helps us better understand your child and provide the support they need to be successful.

This year will bring new opportunities, new friendships, and, of course, some challenges along the way. Preschool is about much more than learning letters and numbers. It is about learning to share, making friends, solving problems, expressing feelings, becoming independent, and most importantly…….to develop a **love** of learning.

I am especially proud of the dedicated staff who come to work each day with the goal of making a difference in the lives of children and families. Their patience, creativity, compassion, and commitment are what make our program special. As we start this new year, I encourage you to **ask questions, stay connected, celebrate your child's accomplishments, and enjoy the little moments.** They grow so quickly!

Thank you for trusting us with such an important part of your child's early years. We look forward to partnering with you and making this a wonderful year for your child and your family.

With warmest wishes for a successful year,

Debra Sidelinger, Head Start Director

Policy Council:

Next Meetings:

September 17th & October 8th at 10:30 AM via ZOOM

Inside this issue:

10 Reason Children Benefit from Head Start

Keystone STARS—Center Locations

Social Media

Measle Cases in PA

Be Ready for Measles

Fall Fun

TEN REASONS children benefit from Head Start!

Preschool is an opportunity for growth ~

Preparing children for kindergarten ~

Promoting social and emotional development ~

The preschool environment is structured, although it may not appear that way ~

Children get to make choices ~

Children learn to take care of themselves and others ~

Promoting language and cognitive skills ~

Preschool teachers nurture a child's curiosity ~

Preschool activities boost pre-math and literacy skills ~

Helping to develop fine & gross motor skills ~

Head Start
Where Bright Futures Begin

Debra Sidelinger, Head Start Director

All Our Locations are 4 Stars!!

The **Keystone STARS** system rates programs from STAR 1 to STAR 4, with **STAR 4** being the highest quality standard. A Keystone STARS designation assures parents that their children are in a safe, respectful environment and that the early learning center provides students with opportunities to learn new things every day to support their current and future success in school and life. The program evaluates early learning centers across four key areas:

- Staff education
- Learning environment
- Leadership and management

Family and community partnerships

This achievement demonstrates that our early learning centers have met the most rigorous standards in early childhood education, ensuring that every child who comes through our doors receives high-quality early education in a welcoming, caring environment..

Debra Sidelinger, Head Start Director

Social Media

Follow us on Facebook to stay connected with program news and happenings! Like "Northern Tier Community Action Corporation Head Start"

Measles Cases Continue to Rise in Pennsylvania

Pennsylvania is currently experiencing a significant increase in measles cases. The Pennsylvania Department of Health reported 594 confirmed cases across 37 counties, with 104 hospitalizations and two measles-associated deaths.

Measles is a highly contagious virus that spreads easily through coughing, sneezing, and contact with contaminated air or surfaces. The virus can remain in the air for up to two hours after an infected person leaves an area.

Early symptoms may include fever, cough, runny nose, and red, watery eyes. A rash typically develops a few days later, beginning on the face and spreading downward over the body. Symptoms can appear 7 to 21 days after exposure.

The best protection against measles is vaccination. The MMR (measles, mumps, and rubella) vaccine is given in a two-dose series and is approximately 97% effective at preventing measles after two doses.

Parents and families are encouraged to review their family's vaccination status and speak with their health care provider if they have questions or concerns. If you believe you or your child has been exposed to measles or is experiencing symptoms, contact your health care provider before visiting a medical office or facility to help prevent potential exposure to others.

For the most current information about measles activity in Pennsylvania, visit the Pennsylvania Department of Health measles information page.

MEASLES (Rubeola)

Measles is a highly contagious respiratory virus that causes febrile rash illness.
Measles has been eliminated (no sustained circulation) in the United States for decades. However, there can still be measles cases, as it is easily imported by unvaccinated travelers and can spread in under-immunized communities.

DISEASE COURSE

The incubation period is typically 11–12 days from exposure to measles virus until the first symptoms appear (prodromal symptoms). A rash follows the prodromal symptoms 2–4 days later and usually lasts 5–6 days. Measles is infectious 4 days before and 4 days after rash onset.

SYMPTOMS

Prodromal: Fever, cough, coryza, or conjunctivitis. Koplik spots (tiny white spots inside the mouth) may also appear 2–3 days after symptoms first appear.

Rash: A maculopapular rash (rash of both flat and raised skin lesions) begins on the head and face and then spreads downward to the neck, trunk, arms, legs, and feet. The spots may become joined together as they spread from the head to the body. Fever may spike to more than 104° F when rash appears.

Measles on the face

Measles on the trunk of the body

* Presumptive evidence of measles immunity for healthcare workers (one of the following): documentation of two doses of measles-containing vaccine, laboratory evidence of immunity (positive IgG), laboratory evidence of disease, or birth before 1957. Consider vaccinating healthcare workers born before 1957 who do not have other evidence of immunity to measles. Self-reported doses and a history of vaccination provided by a parent or other caregiver, or a clinical diagnosis of measles, should not be accepted.

COMPLICATIONS

Most common complications: Diarrhea and otitis media.

Most severe complications: Pneumonia, encephalitis, and death. Patients may require hospitalization. Children younger than 5, adults older than 20, pregnant women, and immunocompromised persons are at most risk of serious complications.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU HAVE A SUSPECTED CASE

1. **Immediately mask and isolate the patient** in a room with a closed door (negative pressure room if available). Follow standard and airborne precautions.
2. Only allow health care workers with **presumptive evidence of measles immunity*** to attend the patient; they must use N-95 masks.
3. **Evaluate the patient and order measles confirmatory testing** (collect a throat or nasopharyngeal swab for RT-PCR and serum for IgM measles testing).
4. **Contact infection control** if available at your facility.
5. **Immediately report this suspected case** to your local and/or state health department.

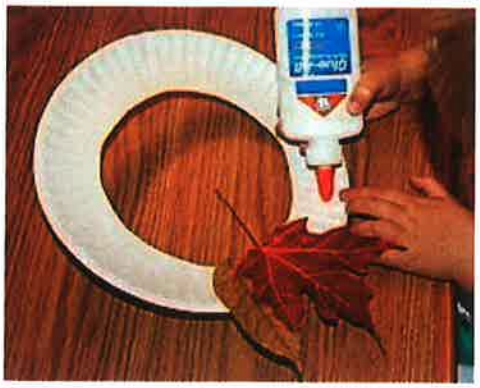
For questions regarding specimen collection, storage, and shipment, please visit www.cdc.gov/measles/php/laboratories/

RESOURCES

- **Measles information for healthcare providers:** www.cdc.gov/measles/hcp/clinical-overview/
- **Measles vaccine recommendations:** www.cdc.gov/measles/hcp/vaccine-considerations/
- **Infection control guidelines for measles:** www.cdc.gov/infection-control/hcp/measles/
- **Surveillance manual chapter on measles:** www.cdc.gov/surv-manual/php/table-of-contents/chapter-7-measles.html

BE READY FOR MEASLES
cdc.gov/measles

Fall Fun!



Fall Wreath

Have your children collect leaves and glue down on a paper plate ring. Add a pretty bow ribbon and hang on your door to welcome visitors!

Your little one will love painting leaves on a tree using a cotton ball & clothes pin paintbrush !

Spread out the ripped pieces & put into a pile. Give your child a glue stick & explain to them to glue the pieces into the middle of the drawing.