



HEAD START HAPPENINGS NEWSLETTER

WEST CENTRAL COMMUNITY ACTION

FEBRUARY 2023

A word for the Director

Happy February! It has been another busy month! In January the Leadership Team and Education Team came together for another Data Review. This month the data that was analyzed was the Fall Teaching Strategies GOLD/ School Readiness Goals, Family Goals, Parent Meeting Attendance, Socialization Attendance, and Heights and Weights. I wanted to share a few key points and action steps from this review:

- Program-wide, the highest areas for our School Readiness is in physical and health. Cognitive and Social Emotional are the largest area of children either below the expectation or exceeding the expectation.
- The management staff would like to continue to provide training on GOLD data entry and the importance of reliable scoring. Also, they would like to compare the GOLD data to the ASQ & ASQSE data from the fall.
- A lot of family goals are not set yet, or are not documented consistently. The team is gathering a plan to update the procedures to ensure this will be captured similarly across the board next year. Also, the team noted that home based visitors will need to attend family advocate meetings to ensure they are all getting the same information.
- Parent meeting attending is varied throughout the service area. It was noted that September was the highest number of attendance and it has slowly declined since. It was also noted that it is typically the same parents attending each month. The team wants to look into this topic further and possible have it as a topic for the programs annual self-assessment to help get families involved and engaged in the Head Start program.
- Early Head Start Home Base Socialization data was not able to assess as it is not entered or collected consistently. The team will be working on a procedure for ensuring this happens.
- Heights and Weights data showed that 11% of children are underweight and 29% of children are overweight. The team wants to promote more I am Moving, I am Learning training to help give teachers the tools to get kiddos moving more.

February will be another busy month as we kick off our planning for the 2023-2024 school year. I can't believe I am saying that already! During this month our annual Self-Assessment will be happening as well. This is when the Leadership team selects data/topics that could utilize another set of eyes. We present data to the Self-Assessment team and brainstorm with them to make recommendations to the program to help us continually improve. We may be asking you to join a focus group and give feedback soon. We will also be getting Policy Council, Board Members, and community members involved to really help us get an outside perspective.

Lastly, I just wanted to take just a second to acknowledge you. This time of year is hard, it is cold and snowy and you just want to be outside again and get some natural vitamin C! Please make sure you are taking care of yourself at this time more than ever! Always remember the tools and resources you have here: supervisor, Full Circle, EAP. Never hesitate to reach out! Stay warm and have a wonderful February!

Danni Segebart, Head Start Director

ERSEA Update

Why is Attendance Important?

DID YOU KNOW?

- Starting in preschool and kindergarten, too many absences can cause children to fall behind in school.
- Missing 10%, or about 2 days each month over the course of a school year, can make it harder to learn to read. Students can still fall behind if they miss just 1 or 2 days every few weeks.
- Being late to school may lead to poor attendance.
- Absences and tardiness can affect the whole classroom if the teacher has to slow down learning to help children catch up.
- Attending school regularly helps children feel better about school—and themselves.
- Start building this habit in preschool so they learn right away that going to school on time, every day is important.
- Eventually good attendance will be a skill that will help them succeed in high school and college.

When Do Absences Become a Problem?



CHRONIC ABSENCE 18 or more days

WARNING SIGNS 10 to 17 days

SATISFACTORY 9 or fewer absences

Attending school each day for children is everyone's job. Our ultimate goal is to assist families to identify any barriers they may be facing that affects their child's attendance and set goals to overcome and improve before the child's next placement. The program will begin to monitor each child's attendance each month and notify classrooms and family advocates to begin attendance plans with families of children considered to be chronically absent. Progress will be monitored and uploaded into Child Plus under the attendance tab. If any program staff have any questions or concerns please notify Suzette for assistance or answers to your questions.

Suzette Bates Leal, Data Coordinator

ANNOUNCEMENT!

Recruitment Season for the 2023-2024 School Year is Here!!!



It's hard to believe that this school year is over half way through and we are beginning to gear up for next year already. Recruitment is everyone's responsibility so classrooms begin each school year full children. So the question becomes what can I do as a staff member to help in these efforts? Well there are several ways all of us can actively take part and I listed several suggestions below.

- 1.) Talk to anyone in your community that Head Start/Early Head Start is accepting application for fall enrollment. What makes our program stand out from all the others in our communities? Give them the QR code to share with others they may know to complete an online application or have paper applications available for the Family Advocate to complete the follow-up with the family.
- 2.) Display a yard sign that we are enrolling now. If every staff member does this that will be approximately 100 ways of free advertisement. Just let your supervisor know if you need a yard sign to promote our program.
- 3.) Encourage every family currently enrolled to give you one name of a family with a young child to contact so we can complete an application. Our data has shown this to be the best advertisement when current or past families share their experience with the program with others.
- 4.) Discuss other ideas and suggestions with your Family Advocate during your teachers meetings on how we can work together as a team to get our classrooms full and have an active waiting list.

So together as a program let's work together to get all classrooms ready to start an exciting new year.

From the Nurse's Desk...

February is Dental Health Month! Thank you for working so closely with families in seeing that children have a dental exam, but there is more work to be done. All children we serve that have teeth need a yearly dental exam and need to complete any treatment recommended following the exam. Dental related activities this month include:

- Reviewing the 2 minute video below for brushing tips: <https://youtu.be/-j3qFJcY2XA?t=24>
- Head Start Centers use the "Going to the Dentist Teaching Kits" to prepare children for a dental exam. If you cannot locate your kit contact a member of Health Staff and we can check one out to you.
- Any staff completing a home visit can discuss the need for a dental exam or treatment. Home based staff and Family Advocates have access to reports that show the children that still need a dental exam or treatment or call Dianne or Jan and we will be glad to provide you with this information for your center.
- At parent meetings provide parents with any of the information from the H drive/Health Services Folder or post on parent boards to promote dental care. Handouts include: EHS Health Habits for Happy Smiles Taking Care of Your Baby's Oral Health, EHS Prenatal

Health Habits for Happy Smiles Taking Care of Your Oral Health When You Are Pregnant and Visiting the Dental Clinic with Your Child. Dental hygienists in many locations are willing to attend a parent meeting to discuss oral health.

-Assist children in sending a thank you letter or send a drawing to their local dentist and talk about how dentists keep teeth healthy.

-Report back to a member of health staff any additional activities that you find successful so they can be shared or send a picture for next month's newsletter!

Dianne Blum & Janice Rosman, Health & Wellness Coordinators

Wellness Committee is committed to you!

Reappraisal/ Taking a Personal Time Out

When your brain is in a survival state, it tends to not be processing in a rational or logical manner. You're angry or irritated about anything and everything. When a person is at this point, negativity breeds more negativity. Unless you do something different. For some, there are some simple things you can do to reset yourself:

- Get a drink
- Take deep breaths

But that only starts the process, you may need to do more. If you have ever heard the saying, "Devil get behind me", it might be time to try it out. Banish the negativity.

When you come to this point you are shifting your brain to its emotional state. The emotional state is a fleeting state that quickly can go one way or another. You can quickly go back to the survival state if you don't intentionally do something different from the negativity. If you do the work on changing the negativity you work your way to the Executive state of your brain. The executive state is your logical rational self. Next steps to get there:

- Look for the good things in what appeared at first to be a bad situation.
- Recognize when you have successfully handled a similar situation.
- Recognize that you have grown from a challenging situation.

A little story: I once had a good day that could have been very bad within the first hour of my day. First thing that happened, my alarm did not go off. Negativity could have stated there, but I didn't let it. I told myself, at least I woke up before I was already late for work and can still make it on time. As I drive off to work I come down a hill with a red stop light at the bottom and two cars already stopped. It was late winter/early spring when the previous days melt froze overnight, and I was trying to come to a stop on black ice. As I'm doing my best to stop before wrecking my car, I end up doing a 180. Again the negativity could have set in, but I was thankful that I had stopped and that when my car decided to turn the wrong way on the street there were no other cars in the way. I make a pit stop at the office, and as I leave again I have a car that does not take it turns stopping in an intersection. No accident, another bad situation evaded. I see my first person of the day and I believe it was a no show. But in all the chaos of the day I already had, I somehow hit my trunk button. I pull over on a side road to shut my trunk. Now, if I had let the negativity set in this day I would have been fuming no matter what and everything would have just compounded and kept getting worse. But wait my story is not over. My phone had been sitting on my leg when I pulled over. I got out of my car absent minded about my phone. Not being aware that it had fallen, I get out of my car, shut the trunk, and go on about my route. When I got to my next location, I realized my phone was misplaced. But

again, I found the silver lining. Instead of my phone falling to the ground and running over it, the phone was safely in the pocket of the door.

I went on to have a productive day, free of harm.

I am a firm believer that the best things come out of situation that seemed to be the worst thing possible. We can't grow if we don't struggle.

Next, the Wellness Committee wants to start recognizing those for their time in services. We are taking the time each month to recognize those that hit the 6 months mark (or will be in February) from when they started and continue to put up with all of us ☺

Stephanie Beeber

Suzette Cote

Marisol Flores

Melissa Ingersoll

Madison Young

We would also like to recognize years of services. Those that are having an anniversary in January and February include:

Laura Bowen, 12 years!

Kris Evezic, 38 years!

Cassidy Kramer – Congrats on your one year anniversary!

Kristi Lingle, 12 years!

Linda Morris, 3 years!

Amber Roca, 2 years!

Bridgid Nichols – Congrats on your one year anniversary!

Millie Petrzilka, **53 years!!** WOW, congrats on such a huge accomplishment!

Jan Rosman- 14 years!

Jesse Smith – Congrats on your one year anniversary!

Chris Wessel- 30 years!



Soup Cook- Off

Thank you to everyone who participated in the soup cook-off either by bringing soup, desserts, or voting for your favorite soup! The committee raised over \$100 to utilize for more fun and wellness activities!



Congrats again to our first place winner, Veronica Mora! Congrats to our second place tie- Jill Mastin and Stephanie Beeber!

Some of you will be pleased to know, Veronica was gracious enough to share her recipe:

CALDO DE ALBONDIGA / MEATBALL SOUP

Ingredients:

4 carrots
4 potatoes
2 squashes
2 tomatoes
2 pieces of garlic
½ of onion chopped
2 leaves of Laurel
Cilantro

Ingredients for the Albondigas/Meatballs:

1lb of ground beef
Salt
Uncooked rice
Optional 1 egg
Basil
Seasoning

Making the Albonidigas / Meatballs

You put all the dry ingredients to the ground beef and the uncooked rice and the choice of putting in the egg. Mix everything together and roll into balls the size that you want and put them aside until you sauté the onion, garlic. Then you put the potatoes, carrots and tomatoes. You add water, fill it up to cover the vegetables, you add in the squash. When the vegetables are almost done you add the meat balls, and the cilantro and you let it simmer until meat balls are cooked. ENJOY☺



Last update from the Wellness Committee, the Atlantic Head Start received Winnie for the excellent team work in dealing with a crisis. Congrats and great job! If you have a nomination for who should have Winnie the Wellness Walrus for February, email your nomination to Shari Boucher.

Don't forget to share with the Wellness Committee all the amazing things you do for the 100th day of school.

The Wellness Committee

In Kind Meter

Be on the lookout for next month's newsletter to see where we ended up at the end of the fiscal year for in kind. Remember, February 1st starts the fiscal year over, which means in-kind restarts. Please get creative and share how you are collecting and boosting your in kind contributions this year!

Welcoming New Faces

Keisha Carlson, Harlan Early Head Start Teacher: "I have been an early childhood education teacher for ten years. I have a husband and three children: son, 15 years old, two daughters ages four and fourteen. I love anything Harry Potter or Lord of the Rings. I have an Early Childhood Development AAS and have worked at a reservation in Minnesota for three years. I am a true crime and music junkie!" Welcome to the team Keisha!



Joslyn Iliff, Family Advocate Council Bluffs (school partnerships): "Hi, my name Joslyn Iliff, I'm from Council Bluffs, Iowa! I am currently finishing up my psychology degree at Iowa Western Community College. I love to read and write in my free time. I will be getting married in May of 2023! Another hobby of mine is teaching my three-legged dog, Gio, new ticks!" Welcome Joslyn!



Kelsey Lamaak, Behavior Intervention Support Specialist: "Hello my name is Kelsey Lamaak and I am the new Behavioral Intervention Support Specialist. I am the youngest of four kids and I graduated high school from Avoca. After graduating high school I attended Iowa Western Community College for my Associates degree in Early Childhood Education. I have seven years of combined experience with infant toddler and preschool age children. I live in Ida Grove with my husband Noah and our one year old daughter Harper. We enjoy being able to play outside and go camping in the Spring/Summer time. My family is from the Harlan area and his family is from the Denison area so we try and get as much family/friend time as possible! I am eager to grow and learn in this position by getting to know the families and teachers."



Head Start Happenings.....



Lora Kanning from Cass county conservation came to read us "The Mitten" and act it out. We also learned about foxes and badgers



Ms. Amy reading to Denison 1.



The kids are pretending to use balloons as penguin eggs for large motor in the gym and carrying them between their legs like penguins do after learning about penguins this week. Mr Tyler from Monona county conservation came to talk to us about hibernation and brought some animal pelts for us to feel and look at. We saw a deer, opossum, badger, fox, skunk, beaver and squirrel. Ms Peg from the public library made her monthly visit to see us. She read us a book about Bears surprise and we sang a song about 5 bears and helped her count the 5 bears. Way to get your community involved Mapleton!

Upcoming Events/ Dates to Re

- January 3rd- Classes resume
- January 9th- 12:30 Dismissal
- January 16th- Holiday
- January 23rd- All Staff Professional
- January 30th- 12:30 Dismissal

Staff Birthdays...



Ms. Shannon and the Missouri Valley crew made a delicious fruit salad, yum!



Happy Birthday!

February 4th- Kyanna Hansen

February 15th- Shari Boucher

February 21st- Brittney Perkins

February 23rd- Dawn Maxwell

February 24th- Suzette Cote

February 27th- Bridgid Nichols



**If you notice that I have missed you, or someone else's birthday, please let me know. That means it is not in our Child Plus system correctly. Thanks for your help!

Remember YOU make the newsletter! If you have any pictures, hero stories, thoughts, or things to share in the newsletter, please submit to Danni Segebart by February 24th, 2023.

Open Positions:

Council Bluffs Early Head Start Teacher(s)

Family Advocate Denison

****IF YOU KNOW OF ANYONE INTERESTED, ENCOURAGE THEM TO APPLY AT
[HTTPS://WWW.WESTCENTRALCA.ORG/CAREERS](https://www.westcentralca.org/careers)**