



NEWSLETTER

Northern Tier Community Action Corporation Head Start Program



November/December 2016
David Greene, Executive Director

From the Director . . .

There are many ways you can support your child in his/her Head Start journey toward Kindergarten. Being a part of that journey is the most important. It means so much to a child when his/her Mom, Dad, or other family member takes part in school activities.

The Federal government requires Head Start programs to demonstrate the community's support by



documenting donations of time and/or goods for which the program would otherwise have to pay. This is known as our Non-Federal Share or more commonly referred to as In-Kind. It is mandatory that we reach a goal equivalent to roughly one quarter of our annual funding.

When a Head Start parent helps out by doing something for which we would normally pay a staff person, we can convert the donated time into dollars by applying an amount equal to what we pay entry level employees, plus fringe benefits, per hour. Time donated by volunteers on Policy Council and Advisory Committees is counted at a higher rate because they are actively involved in the administration of the program. A person who volunteers in a professional capacity, such as a carpenter, painter, or a secretary can be counted at his/her professional rate if those skills are being used to benefit Head Start.

Of course, there are stringent requirements for documenting all donations. We have developed what we hope are "user friendly" forms to meet the regulations. Any staff member can help you find and use those forms. We even have a form to record time you spend at home helping Head Start. If you are unable to come on site or if your child is in our Home-Based option, ask his/her Teacher or Home Visitor about things you can do at home and how to document that time.

You can also donate goods to the program and tell us their current market value. Talk to your child's Teacher or Family Service Worker if you have items you would like to donate for use within the program.

We need and appreciate your help. What's really great though is what you will get in return. Your child will be so proud of you and pleased that you are taking part in his/her school experience!

Many, many thanks for all you do to support our Head Start program!

Debra Sidelinger,

Head Start Director



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Parenting Strategies for a Persistent Child

The ability to “stick to a task” is one of the most important traits that we can teach the child to assist them in successfully navigating childhood and adulthood.

Is your child persisting to the point where they become stuck and “spin their wheels?” Find parenting tips to help your child approach challenges in a more constructive way.

Persistence means not giving up when faced with a challenge. It is the ability to stick with a difficult task and cope with frustration.

Children who are persistent usually keep trying when faced with a challenge, are slower to “lose it” when they don’t get their way, and can tolerate waiting for their needs to be met.

- Join your child in his play. It’s easy to let your child play alone for long periods because he is less demanding of your presence. But your child needs and benefits from your interaction together, and you can help him build new skills.
- As your child grows, let her know that everyone needs help sometimes and that you are available. Sometimes, children get so much positive feedback for being independent that it’s hard for them to ask for help when they do need it. Other times, children who tend not to seek help may go unnoticed when they are truly “stuck” figuring out a problem or task.
- Check to see whether your child is “spinning his wheels” by trying the same strategy over and over. Sometimes, persistent kids can get stuck this way. If it happens, suggest new ways to approach the challenge.
- Help your child to let go sometimes. A persistent child may have a hard time accepting no for an answer. For example, even though you’ve said no more TV, your child keeps asking and asking. Be firm in your response and redirect her to something that she is allowed to do.

Taken From: Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning

Contributed by: Mike Kuleck, Disabilities Specialist



Tips for Setting SMART Goals

Goal setting helps you identify what you want to accomplish in life. Goals are things you want, need, or family dreams. It is important to break these goals down into small attainable steps. The next few months we will be together to set family goals using your family strengths and community resources.



Here are a few ways to set SMART goals:

SPECIFIC

- *well defined
- *clear
- *written

MEASURABLE

- *know if the goal is obtainable
- *be sure it is something you really want
- *be sure it is something that will help you in life

ATTAINABLE

- *your goal should challenge you, within your boundaries
- *your goal should be something that you have to work hard for
- * think about what skills you will need to accomplish your goal

RELEVANT

- * look at all you have accomplished so far- your strengths
- *must have the right efforts and attitudes
- *think about what it will take to achieve your goal

TIME-BASED

- *create a time line and keep track of your progress
 - *write down dates and steps to achieve goals
- *be sure to give yourself enough for each step/but not too much that you put off working on it

"A dream is just a dream. A goal is a dream with a plan and a deadline."

~Harvey Mackay

Happy Goal Planning!!

Marcy Boswell, Family & Community Specialist



The Importance of Play in Early Childhood

When children play we often just think they're having fun, but research has shown that the benefits of play extend far beyond that in early childhood. A child's brain doubles in size in the first year of life and by the age of 3 it has reached 80% of its adult size. This means that what your child is exposed to in the first 3 years will have a massive impact on their future. Very often just letting the child play as they wish is the best approach, as you don't want to interfere with their progress, but there are certain things you can do to help them along. For example, allowing a child to engage in messy play has a place in that and it can help them to discover the world. You should also try to introduce them to scribbling and finger painting as young children are natural artists!

Play helps a child:

- * Build Confidence
- * Feel loved, happy, and safe
- * Develop social skills, language, and communication
- * Learn about caring for others and the environment
- * Develop physical skills
- * Connect and refine pathways in their brain

WHAT IS REAL PLAY???

- Real play does not need to be expensive or elaborate toys; in fact, these often hinder creativity and create limits to play.
- Children need toys and materials to play with that are "open ended" in nature. Dirt, shovels, and toy cars are a great way to let children explore the outdoors!
- This is why many children are more interested in a box a toy came in than the toy itself. Help them build a house, rocket ship, car, or whatever they want! The important thing is to let them lead the activity so that can develop many important skills!

Supporting Your Child's Play

One of the keys to supporting your child's play effectively is to not take over. The best approach is to ask the questions and let them answer for themselves. Use the following questions to guide you as you play with your child!

~Planning

"What will you need?"

"Let's think about what you are going to do."

"Tell me how you will start. " "What will happen then?"

~Wondering

"I wonder what this is?"

"What do you think that is for?"

"Why do you think that happened?"

(cont'd page 5)

The Importance of Play in Early Childhood (cont'd)

~Remember

"Tell me how it all started."

"Can you remember what happened when...?"

"How did that feel?"

~Predicting

"Can you guess what will happen next?"

"What do you think will happen if we...?"

"What do you think will happen if we don't...?"

Taken from: <http://www.nourishbaby.com.au/the-importance-of-play/>

Contributed by: **Amanda Dempsey, Education/Transition Specialist**

Holiday Shopping For Your Child's Mind

With the holidays fast approaching remember that gifts can be fun and educational all at the same time. Instead of rushing to the toy isle try looking for a great book for your children. There are so many interactive and brilliant books for kids now a days depending on their age and interests. Books not only teach your child but they allow you to spend quality time with them as you read together all the great stories that are out there or make up your own helping your child write and illustrate his favorite topic. Think about the following ideas for your child's holiday surprise;

Picture books are the best type of book for preschool children; they have a great balance of pictures and simple words. The pictures tell most of the story and words are in large print.

Choose books that represent real-life facts in story style like stories about dinosaurs, penguins, snow etc..

Choose books that tell a predictable story, use repetition and word pattern throughout the story.

Let your child fill in the repetitive phrases as you turn the pages or let them predict.

Your child will find laughter in stories that give animals human characteristics and involve them in human situations.

Look at wordless books together and let your preschooler tell the story.



The **ABC's** of Hand Washing

Hand washing is important for your whole family!

Even if your hands look clean, they probably carry germs (or bacteria). Germs are everywhere. If you wash your hands really well with warm soapy water, you can get rid of the germs.

Some germs can make you sick. Colds and flu can spread from one person to another in your family through unwashed hands. It is easy to contaminate food, too, with germs from dirty hands.

Always wash hands

Before:

- Handling food
- Eating a meal or snack



Help your child learn good hand washing habits:

- Follow good hand washing habits yourself. Your child will watch and follow what you do.
- Encourage your child to count slowly to 20, or to sing the *Alphabet Song* (which takes 20 seconds), to help make hand washing fun and long enough.
- Get a safe stepping stool so your child can reach the sink.
- Hang a hand washing reminder by the

After:

- Combing hair
- Blowing your nose
- Changing a diaper
- Handling garbage
- Playing
- Handling food
- Using the bathroom
- Touching a pet
- Coughing or sneezing into your hands

Bonnie Halquist
Health/Nutrition Specialist

Try This!

This may even surprise you! Show your child why good hand washing takes three things: 1) warm water, 2) soap, and 3) rubbing your hands for 20 seconds.

- **First mix.** Mix vegetable oil with cinnamon in a small bowl.

- **Now rub it in.** Let your child rub “cinnamon oil” on his or her hands.

- **Wash hands together** in four ways to remove the cinnamon:

- 1) Cold water only
- 2) Cold water and soap for 10 seconds
- 3) Warm water and soap for 10 seconds
- 4) Warm water and soap for 20 seconds.

Rub your hands well! And remember to sing the Alphabet Song!

- **Talk about it.** What does it take to get all the cinnamon off? Cinnamon is not harmful. But you can see it if you do not wash your hands right. Germs are invisible. You cannot see them, so you must wash your hands right!



Bonnie Halquist Health/Nutrition Specialist

How We Influence Our Children Everyday

Every day we influence how our children act and feel without even realizing it such as:

Reading ~ Children do better in school when parents read to them often. Show them that reading is important to you by not only reading to them but having them see you enjoy reading yourself. Have a variety of reading materials available throughout the house.

Being Involved ~ Children do better when they see their parents showing an interest in their school. Attend activities when possible and always ask them about their day.

Getting Along ~ Children develop social skills from watching those around them. Spend time quality time with your children. Set guidelines for behavior and supervise your child during play dates.

Self-Esteem ~ Children develop higher self-esteem when parents show they want to spend time with them.

Behavior ~ A supportive, loving family will provide a home that promotes positive behaviors.

Stress ~ Children who are exposed to extreme stressful environments can actually have physical symptoms related to both social and emotional issues. Children hear more and pick up on more than we think they do. Be careful what and when you have adult conversations. It is understandable for us to be stressed but we should never put that burden on our children.

Jodi Guisto, Education Specialist

