

Northern Tier Community Action Corp.  
Head Start Program

Dave Greene  
Executive Director

November/December 2017

From the Director . . .

In today's world of balancing work and home schedules, parents find it hard to have quality time with their children. It is essential for parents to make the best use of time they have with their children. Your child needs time with you to relax and play. Playing with children builds lasting bonds. Playing allows parents to appreciate the uniqueness of each child. Playing with children can also be a stress reducer for over-worked parents. Laughing and relaxing are also important to your own well-being.

You will never have this day with your children again. Tomorrow they'll be a little older than they were today. **This day is a gift.** Just breathe, notice, study their faces and little feet. Pay attention. Relish the charms of the present. **Enjoy today,** it will be over before you know it.

Try to spend individual time with each of your children. When a parent plays a board game with a child, shares a bike ride, plays baseball, or reads a story, the child learns self-importance. Your child's self-esteem gets a boost. You are sending positive messages to your child when you spend quality playtime with him. From these early interactions, children develop a vision of the world and gain a sense of his or her place in it.

Family activities are important for the whole family. They help develop strong family bonds, which can last a lifetime. Families who play together are more cooperative, supportive and have better communication. Have movie nights and game nights, or go for walks together. A game night allows parents to teach children to take turns, how to win, how to lose and methods of sequencing events. Listening to music together by singing along, or playing rhythm instruments will help children to listen for and recognize patterns in music, which will assist with math skills in school. If you are a single parent or have only one child, invite family and friends over to play.

Debra Sidelinger, Head Start Director



Policy Council:

Chairperson:  
Jacqueline Howard

Vice-Chairperson:  
Gabrielle Floyd

Secretary/  
Treasurer:  
Alexis Reed

Next meeting: Dec.  
7 at 11:00 AM,  
Hoss's Restaurant,  
St. Marys.

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## "Thanksgiving - The Season for an Attitude of Gratitude"

Since we are now in November and close to the end of another calendar year, we thought it fitting that we give "thanks" for all of the good things we have in our lives. While some often try and succeed in totally skipping over this season in a mad rush to Christmas and on to the New Year, we want to take a moment to consider all of the things that have happened this year that enrich our lives as well as the lives of our children.

Let's give thanks for our Head Start friends!



We are thankful for great Head Start teachers!



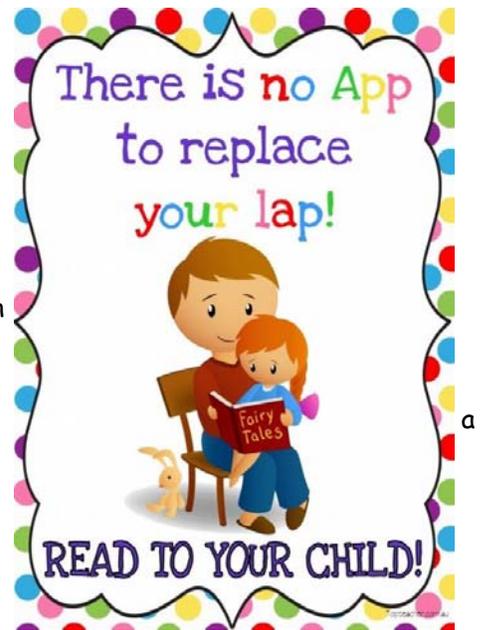
We are thankful for our terrific 'team' of Family Service Workers, Home Visitors, Management Team, and Bus Staff!!

**But most of all....thank you for our Head Start children and families!**

~ Deb Sidelinger, Head Start Director

# Benefits of Reading to Your Child

- **Language and speech development:** Reading to a child makes it easier for him/her to develop speech. As a matter of fact, it is recommended that parents read to children with speech delays as part of the treatment.
- **Vocabulary and pronunciation:** By looking at a picture in a book or a word and then hearing how it is pronounced out loud, children can learn new words along with their pronunciation.
- **Preparing for school:** Children are ready to go to school when they can attend or listen to what someone else is saying, learn and participate in structured situations such as story reading and focus in and listen to one central person in the classroom. Reading to a child is great way to prepare pre-schooler for the school environment. On a higher level, children will get used to hearing stories and following sentences. This will be very helpful when they start to learn about grammar and sentence structure.
- **Bonding time:** Reading to a child is also an ideal opportunity for a parent to spend some time with their child. Reading time can be perceived as "their time!" Parents should get down and spend time with their children at their level. Reading an interesting children's story to them accomplishes this.
- **Part of a routine:** Reading to children before bed time becomes a nice pre-bed time ritual or routine. Children tend to have an easier time going to sleep if there is a set routine. For example: brushing the teeth, have a story read to them and then fall sleep.
- **Life-long benefits:** As a child gets older, they will read on their own, building on the interest and experience of being read to for years. This sets off a life-long interest/aptitude in reading which comes in handy in any aspect of our lives especially during the formative school years right through college and beyond.



Adapted from: <http://www.drpaul.com/library/READING.html>

## Winter Fun!!



- Fill a spray bottle with colored water and write or draw in snow.
- Go sledding, ice skating, or bowling.
- Make hot chocolate and snuggle up together on the sofa and watch a favorite movie.
- Have an indoor picnic! Pick a location in the house, lay down a blanket and eat sandwiches and fresh fruit.
- Prepare a "snow meal" - all food should be white, such as chicken alfredo, mashed potatoes, apple slices, milk shakes.
- Make a house/fort out of a big cardboard box!
- Have a scavenger hunt.
- Create an obstacle course—have them jump, crawl, hop, and walk over and under things.

# Teaching Young Children Self-Control

Around 18 months of age children start to realize that they can be separate from their parents and are eager to begin acting on their own. But at this age they have very limited self-control and have not yet learned how to wait, share or take turns. Not understanding these concepts is what leads most children to become frustrated and act out aggressively. They are still depending heavily on their actions to communicate their wants and needs so simply grabbing a toy they want seems appropriate.

## Let's think....

As we know no two children are alike nor are two families. So think of your own child as you ask yourself the following questions.

- \* What is going on when my child begins to act aggressively? Why does this seem to be happening?
- \* How do you usually respond to your child acting aggressively? Does your reaction seem to help the situation or make your child angrier?

## What You Can Do...

For young children be sure to set limits in a clear, firm voice (without anger). Redirect children's attention to areas or activities that are more appropriate.

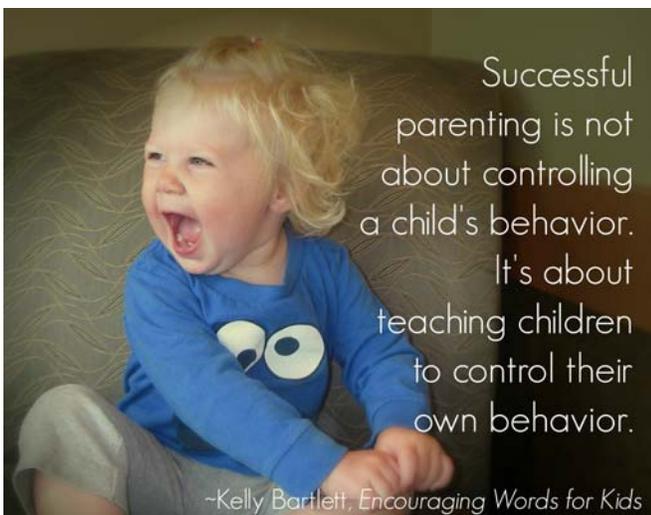
As children get older their aggression usually means that they are out of control and need help calming down before they can learn any self-control. Remember the following strategies when trying to help your child manage their feelings....

- \* Stay Calm- the calmer you are the quicker the child will calm down.
- \* Recognize your child's feeling- let your child know that you understand what he/she wants: *It's okay to be mad, but it is not okay to hit. Hitting hurts.*
- \* Use gestures along with your words- Use a calm voice at the same time that you hold your hand out to say "stop"!
- \* Offer "good" choices- If a child is throwing a hard ball in the house offer them a soft one or take them outside.
- \* Use a distraction- Ignore the child's tantrum and point out something more interesting like a bird outside, something on TV etc.. Children tend to give up when you ignore the inappropriate behavior but your attention is what they are really looking for.
- \* Suggest appropriate outlets for aggression- If your child is having trouble calming down suggest kicking a ball, ripping paper or cuddling with favorite stuffed toy.
- \* Help your child take a break- some children simply need time to themselves to calm down.

Giving them a place to calm down does not have to be a punishment but a time and place to calm down and think.

Children need our help and support to master self-control and become better able to manage their feelings as they get older and these tips can help throughout the years.

Submitted by: Jodi Guisto, Education Specialist  
Adapted from Zero To Three 2009





## Tips for Getting Kids to Eat Healthy

Getting children excited about healthy eating can be one of the hardest challenges for parents! Some children (no matter how hard you try) just don't like healthy food and turn their noses up at even the freshest fruit and vegetables.

There are some tricks to getting your children on board with healthy eating though – and one of the most effective ways is embracing recipes that children find fun and appealing. The trick is, to cook these fun meals, and include the healthy food. Hopefully – the excitement of the meal will distract them from the fruit and vegetable hidden inside!

### Healthy Pizza!

Pizza is one of those great meals that can so easily be disguised as something much cooler than what it actually is! For kids, pizza is the ultimate treat food – so by making it healthy, you're really latching onto something great. Hand-make the pizza dough and use whole-wheat flour instead of the processed white flour to start with. Then, use low-fat cheese and top with very finely cut vegetables. You could even blend the vegetables into the tomato sauce – that way the children won't even be able to see them – but they'll still be getting their 5-a-day!

### Offer a Variety of Foods

As a parent or caregiver you play an important role in helping your child learn about food. It is your responsibility to provide a variety of healthy foods for your child.

Offering a variety of foods helps preschoolers get the nutrients they need from every food group. They will also be more likely to try new foods and to like more foods. When preschoolers develop a taste for many types of foods, it's easier to plan family meals.

### Snack Ideas from Each Food Group

**Grains:** dry cereal, whole grain crackers, mini rice cakes, sliced bread, mini bagels, graham crackers, whole wheat tortillas

**Vegetables:** veggie "matchsticks" (thin sticks) made from fresh carrots\* or zucchini,\* bell pepper rings, cherry tomatoes\*, steamed broccoli, green beans, sugar peas, avocados

**Fruits:** apple slices, tangerine sections, strawberry halves, bananas, pineapple, kiwi, peach, mango, nectarine, melon, grapes, berries, dried apricots

**Dairy:** low-fat cheese slices or string cheese, mini yogurt cups, fat-free or low-fat milk, low-fat cottage cheese

**Protein Foods:** egg slices or wedges, peanut butter, bean dip, hummus, slices of lean turkey or chicken, shelled pumpkin seeds

Bonnie Halquist, Health/Nutrition Specialist



## Recipe ~ Chex® PB and Chocolate Blast



### Ingredients:

- 6 cups Rice Chex® cereal
- 1 cup white vanilla baking chips (6 oz)
- 1 cup peanut butter chips
- 1 cup candy-coated peanut butter candies
- 1 cup dry-roasted peanuts

### Preparation Steps:

1. Line 2 cookie sheets with foil or waxed paper. Place 3 cups cereal in large bowl. In small microwavable bowl, microwave white vanilla baking chips uncovered on High about 1 minute or until chips can be stirred smooth. Pour melted chips over cereal in bowl; stir to evenly coat. Spread mixture in single layer on one of the cookie sheets. Refrigerate 5 minutes or until set.

2. Repeat the above using the remaining cereal and the peanut butter chips; refrigerate 5 minutes or until set.

3. Gently break up coated cereal into large bowl. Add candy and peanuts; stir gently to combine. Store in airtight container.

**Tips:** Just for the fun of it, try this recipe using different flavored chips or candy-coated pieces. Serve on ice cream why not!

### Serving Idea:

Why not? Try this crunchy mixture served on top of ice cream!

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## Box Of Love

To make this gift you'll need:

Small plain boxes- Jewelry boxes work very well.

Glitter, sequins or any ornamentation.

Ribbon

Printed poem, on good stock paper if possible.

This is a very special gift  
That you can never see.  
The reason it's so special is,  
It's just for you from me.  
Whenever you are happy,  
or even feeling blue.  
You only have to hold  
this gift and know  
I think of you.

You never can unwrap it  
Please leave the ribbon tied.  
Just hold the box close  
To your heart,  
Its filled with love inside.

Have your child decorate the box, add ribbon and the poem.



## Messages From Marcy . . .

Recent studies have shown that children are most successful in school when parents are involved. Volunteering in the classroom, be actively involved in the NTCAC Head Start Program (Policy Council or Parent Center Committee), or with home activities is a great way to become involved in your child's education. All donations of time, space, and materials are known to Head Start as *IN-KIND*. In-kind is your way of giving back to Head Start.

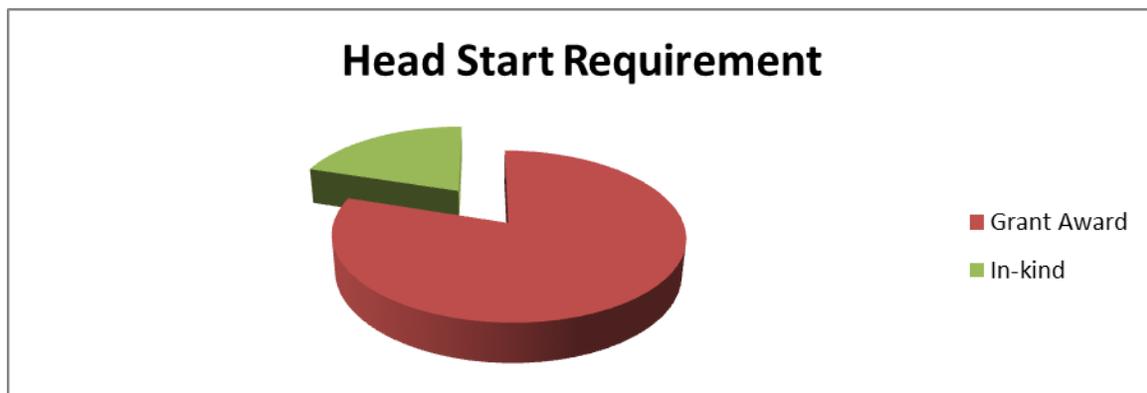
Small children need to have lots of individual attention. Since the program employs only minimum staff in the classroom, we need parents, aunts, uncles, grandparents, or individuals from the community to interact with children in the classroom, and during socialization for the Home Based program.

In addition, Head Start volunteers are always in need of help in preparing, serving, and cleaning after meal time. We need volunteers to help, every day. There is always something happening at Head Start.

Home Activities are sent home so that parents can work with children on their child's Head Start goal. Teachers spend a great deal of time developing activities and completing in-kind Home Activity form. Please devote a little time to complete Home Activity In-kind Sheets.

Failure to meet the In-kind requirement means a loss of Federal dollars that are critical to the program. Items of value that are accepted for In-Kind donations are items for which the program might reasonable spend Federal dollars. We **must** have documentation of all donations, such as a receipt.

We really appreciate and value all that you do to help our program.  
Thank you so much giving to Head Start!



Currently we only have a few sites reaching the in-kind goal:

**September 2017:** Coudersport, Ridgway

**October 2017:** Coudersport, Emporium, Kane 1, Ridgway,

Marcy Boswell, Family & Community Specialist

## PHOTO SHARING



All of the Bradford centers had a blast during our book club event on 11/13! We read the book: *There was an Old Lady Who Swallowed Some Leaves*. We made our very own scarecrows, which will be used as centerpieces at our Harvest Luncheon.

## December is Family Month

**Make Time.** Set aside time for your children and spouse. Plan ahead. In our busy world, families must make an effort to spending time together.

**Eat Together Regularly.** Meals are a great way for communication and unity. Turn off the television and allow the answering machine to pick up phone calls during mealtime. Eating together will help parents practice listening to their child; it is a time of praising and will create trust in children. Although it is not always possible to eat together due to work schedules, try to plan one meal a week together.

**Help with Schoolwork.** Helping children with schoolwork, increases the child's interest in learning. Parent / Teacher conferences are scheduled this month. Each parent can take a few minutes to go over what is happening at Head Start. Do fun learning things with your child- if you need some suggestions; contact your child's teacher. You can, also, come into the center and get some great ideas.

**Read Together.** Research indicates that reading to children helps them have an interest in reading. It also increases their attention span.

**Assign Chores.** Giving children chores helps them learn responsibility and self-worth. If chores can also help develop teamwork.

**Play Games.** Turn off the television at least once a week. Play games that the whole family can play, or just go outside and have fun.

**Go on Family Outings.** Go on hikes, have a picnic in your living room, visit the public library, participate in community events or visit family and friends. There are so many free activities, especially this time of year. Let the children plan some of the outings. *Enjoy your time together!*

"Love is giving your kids your undivided attention and time" ~Kevin Heath, author

**Marcy Boeswell, Family & Community Specialist**