



Newsletter

April 2022

by **Dr. Latisha Smith**, Educational Services Director

Hello, families! I am excited to share our plan of returning to family style meal service very soon. What is a family style meal? It is a meal where all the foods and beverages are put in the center of the table. Family members (including children) pass the food around the table one by one. Family members serve themselves by choosing the items they want on their plates. Why are we returning to family style meals in the classroom? This is because of the many benefits for children. I share five of these benefits with you as families can also practice this at home.

- Children can practice fine and gross motor skills as they pass bowls, scoop food, and use utensils. Practicing these important skills helps them to become more independent and build self-esteem. Self-help skills are part of school readiness!
- Children can make their own decisions about food, including what and how much they want to eat. They learn about their own appetite and body cues related to hunger and fullness.
- Children try new and different foods without being forced. When children see and smell the food as they pass it, they are more likely to give it a try.



- Children can practice their manners. Family style meals provide an opportunity to say please and thank you as well as practice patience.
- Families can stay connected and spend time together. Meal times focus less on forcing children to eat and more on enjoying the experience.

Source: <https://thenourishedchild.com/family-style-dinner/>

Fun myPlate activities to try at home!

Let your child create the menu for a meal.



<https://myplate-prod.azureedge.us/sites/default/files/2020-12/Create%20Your%20Own%20MyPlate%20Menu.pdf>

Let your child be a food critic and rate a new food or recipe.

https://myplate-prod.azureedge.us/sites/default/files/2020-12/Food_Critic_508.pdf

Tri-County Important Dates



❖ **April 1**

- School Pictures at Lily
- Waterloo Kindergarten Enrollment

❖ **April 15**

- Holiday - No School

❖ **April 18**

- Policy Council, 6:00 pm - 7:00 pm

❖ **April 20 and 21**

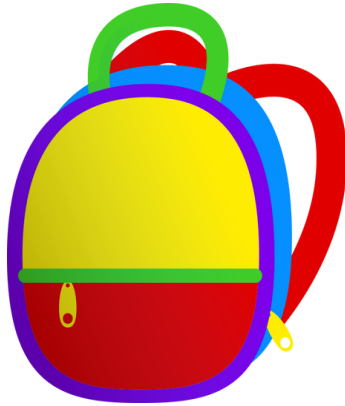
- Operation Threshold Virtual Parenting Fair, 9:00 am - 3:00 pm

❖ **April 26 and 27**

- School Pictures at Maywood

❖ **April 28**

- Kindergarten Kick-Off, 5:00 pm - 7:00 pm (Prince of Peace Church)



Kindergarten Kick-Off

Who: Head Start children going to kindergarten

When: Thursday, April 28th

Time: 5:00 pm - 7:00 pm

Where: Prince of Peace Church in Evansdale

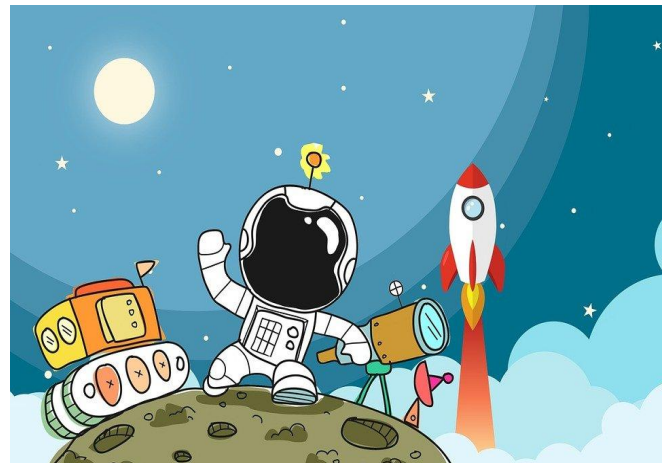
The kick-off includes information about kindergarten, fun activities, backpacks, and food! Children eligible for this event will receive an invitation to attend.

Virtual Parenting Fair 2022 DISCOVERING THE BEYOND

Resources for Parents in the Community

Variety of local agencies providing medical information, family and child services, educational opportunities, and other resources in the community

*Door Prizes!



Wednesday, April 20th and Thursday, April 21st from 9:00 am - 3:00 pm

Join the Facebook Group: Parenting Fair 2022

Contact Rachel Oberhauser with questions, 319-939-6219 or

roberhauser@operationthreshold.org

Lily

by **Dusty Olson**, Program Manager

Spring is upon us! We are in store for some warm, sunny days. However, with spring comes rain, cool mornings and other weather challenges. Make sure to layer clothing and jackets so our little ones are prepared for anything.

In April we celebrate Spring, growth and renewal. It is a great time to get outside to explore the world around us. Walks around the neighborhood are a great way for children to learn more about the places we live and nature in general. If you would like more ideas for spring activities and the outdoors, speak with your child's teacher.

In the Lively Lions Classroom (EHS-D), Ms. Candace works with Sam to crack some eggs.



Ms. Tina cooks some green eggs with Michael in celebration of Dr. Seuss's birthday.

Brailyn, Rosalee and Carter trying their green eggs.



At Home Opportunities

April can bring extreme weather. During this month we ask you to prepare for these challenges. It is important to plan and practice what to do in the event of a tornado and extreme weather events. This includes where to go in the case of a tornado warning and having supplies ready. For more information visit <https://www.ready.gov/tornadoes> or speak with your child's teacher or family service work for suggestions and tips.

.....

Maywood

by **Angie Barth**, Program Manager

As many of you know, we had to make some major changes in March due to saying goodbye to some of our staff and filling roles in other areas within the agency. It was a very difficult decision and we were very sad to say goodbye to staff, children, and families. Having said that, we are excited to move forward with the staff and children here in April and hopefully develop a new quality routine to finish the school year and head into summer. Families eligible for WRAP care in the summer will receive further information within the next month or so, once our planning begins. As a reminder, there are no core hours for Head Start children in the summer (which means you must be working or going to school in order for children 3-5 years old to attend).

Another exciting thing happening in April is SCHOOL PICTURES. With the pandemic the last few years we haven't been able to take school pictures, but we will this year! Maywood is scheduled for pictures with Lifetouch on April 26th and 27th. You will receive more information closer to the date. What Lifetouch has done in the past is take everyone's picture and send home a proof, and then the family can decide if/what to order online. Orders can be shipped to you or to the center.



At Maywood we brush daily to keep our teeth healthy and clean!

Reminders

- Please check with your child's teacher to make sure he or she has spare clothing that is weather appropriate.
- Please park in a parking spot when picking up your child(ren). ***For the safety of all children and families, please do not park in the middle of the lot.***



At Home Opportunities

As spring approaches, we will hopefully see some warmer weather. However, during spring, chances of tornadoes and severe weather also increases. Here are some helpful tips and things you can do at home to prepare for severe weather.

When severe weather occurs, it can be frightening, especially for young children. The more you prepare in advance and practice for severe weather, the less frightening it can be for children and adults!

Does your family have a safety plan? Developing one can help everyone prepare for an emergency.

Things to think about:

- A meeting place where your family will meet in a time of emergency.
- A list of emergency contact numbers (you never know when your cell phone battery might die or not get service).
- Creating an emergency kit (extra supply of water, flashlights, batteries, weather radio, food for each person in your family, blankets or extra clothing, medicine, and/or anything else that is crucial for your family).

- Activity kit (crayons, books, paper, cards or anything else that can be used to keep busy and occupy young children's attention).

Here are some other helpful resources that have great ideas in different ways to prepare your family and young children for severe weather:

- Alert Find:
<https://alertfind.com/storm-and-emergency-safety-guide-for-kids/>
- Direct Energy:
<https://blog.directenergy.com/prepare-child-severe-weather/>
- Bright Horizons (How to talk to children about severe weather):
<https://www.brighthouse.com/family-resources/Talking-to-Children-about-Severe-Weather>
- FEMA Family Emergency Play Template:
https://www.ready.gov/sites/default/files/FamEmePlan_2012.pdf

These children had fun exploring with lights and shadows!



.....

Waterloo Schools

by [Ashley Caldwell](#), Program Manager

We are close to the end of the year! It's hard to believe it was just August and now we are almost at the end! This month we are preparing our 4 year olds for that big transition to kindergarten. Teachers are working hard with end of year assessments to make sure their students are on track for this next adventure. Just a friendly reminder, if you missed Kindergarten Enrollment sign up for Waterloo Schools, please see your family support worker for more information.



Ms. Linda's class at Elk Run celebrating the 100th day of school!

Reminders

- Please make sure you have information for the 2022-2023 year completed. Whether your child is transitioning from 4-year-old Prek to kindergarten, or 3-year-old programming to 4-year-old programming, discuss next steps with your family worker to ensure everything is ready to go.
- ***Monday, April 18th is a Snow Make Up Day and your child needs to attend school***

At Home Opportunities - Tornado/Disaster Prevention

Making a tornado shelter safety plan with your family is a great way for children to know what to do in case of inclement weather. Practice tornado drills with your family at home to ensure everyone knows what to do.

Home Base Program

by **Lynette Bond and Nichellee Wright**, Early Head Start Home Visitors

Spring is here! Now that the weather is warmer and we can be outside, here are some activities you can do with your family.

- ❖ **Picnic.** You don't even have to leave home for this one. Simply take whatever food you were planning to eat and lay down a picnic mat or blanket outside in the yard.
- ❖ **Sidewalk Chalk.** Children as well as grown ups love to color with sidewalk chalk. You can talk about colors, and children can copy what you draw (one example is shapes).
- ❖ **Blow Bubbles.** Take turns blowing and let babies have fun watching the bubbles float by.
- ❖ **Plant Flowers.** Children love digging in the dirt! Buy some inexpensive flowers and put them in a cup and your child can watch them grow and water them.
- ❖ **Nature Scavenger Hunt.** Make a list of natural things to look for outside. For example: clouds, a bird's nest, and dandelions. Go for a walk and see what nature you can find.
- ❖ **Parks and Splash Pads.** These are great places to go and visit as a family. You can run through the sprinklers, jump, play on the swing set, bring balls and throw, catch, and kick them.
 - Here is a list of Parks and Splash Pads: Liberty Park, Lafayette Park, Place to Play Park, Seerley Park, Exchange Park, Orchard Hill Park, El Dorado Heights Park, Lookout Park, Prairie Grove Park, Orange Elementary School Park, Kittrell School Park, Byrnes Park, George Wyth Park



Remember to let your home visitor know when you do these activities and they can be counted as in kind hours. Thank you!

Source: www.momalwaysfindsout.com/outdoor-activities-for-kids/

Education Specialist

by **Angela Shylman**

I want to share a resource for children and families offered through Iowa Total Care. Your child can join the Doc's Kids Club! This exciting free club is open to Iowa residents age 10 and under. Doc's Kids Club promotes ways to get healthy and stay that way.



It's super easy to enroll. Simply visit the [Doc's Kids Club page](#). After signing up, each child receives a free book, official Doc's Kids Club ID card, sticker, and monthly e-newsletter. Our bilingual newsletter includes health tips, activities, and fun kid-friendly recipes. See the link below for last month's edition. All materials are in both English and Spanish.

<https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0/#search/newsletter/FMfcgzGmvfRdGDKDmLDkWDngKHHnNFMW?projector=1&messagePartId=0.1>

Disabilities Services Coordinator

by **Melissa Edwards**

Can you believe Spring has finally sprung? The month of April is a great opportunity to get outdoors for some well needed fresh air! It is also a great chance to explore the great outdoors with your children. Did you know that according to the American Academy of Pediatrics, children should have some sort of physical activity every day? Yes, it's true!

- Infants need 30 minutes throughout the day of physical activity. This can be tummy time while awake.
- Toddlers should be active three or more hours daily, or about 15 minutes every hour they are awake. Neighborhood walks or free play outside are examples.
- Elementary and middle school students need 60 minutes of physical activity most days, including vigorous muscle and bone building activities three days a week. Free play and organized sports are good options. For middle school students, focus on ways to encourage socialization.

The health impacts of physical activity are immense, with strong evidence that moderate to vigorous activity improves cardiovascular and muscular fitness, bone health, and weight. Less widely appreciated, according to AAP, are the benefits of physical activity on how children behave, focus on tasks and perform academically.

Here are some simple, yet fun, spring physical activities to try with your child!

- ☐ **Blow Bubbles:** Buy some bubbles at the Dollar Store and chase your child around the yard!
- ☐ **Fly A Kite:** Find an open area and run with your child to get the kite in the air!
- ☐ **Play Hide and Seek:** Head outside for a game of hide and seek!
- ☐ **Play Hopscotch:** This is a great time and super fun to play at all ages!
- ☐ **Ride A Bike or Other Outdoor Toys:** Enjoy the local bike trails or the sidewalk!



Health

by **Pauline Jones**, Head Start/Early Head Start Health Coordinator; Shana and Darcie, UnityPoint Contracted Nurses

Tornados

When a tornado is coming, you have only a short amount of time to make life-or-death decisions. Advance planning and quick response are the keys to surviving a tornado.



Tornado Danger Signs

- An approaching cloud of debris can mark the location of a tornado even if a funnel is not visible.
- Tornadoes generally occur near the trailing edge of a thunderstorm. It is not uncommon to see clear, sunlit skies behind a tornado.
- Rain-wrapped tornadoes are especially dangerous> They are common with heavy precipitation supercell thunderstorms, which frequently occur in Iowa. Supercell storms have been observed to generate the vast majority of long-lived and violent (EF2-EF5) tornadoes, as well as downburst damage and large hail.

Source: <https://ready.iowa.gov/tornadoes/>

How does Tri-County Head Start prepare?

We practice monthly tornado drills at our centers with staff and children. The drills occur at different times of the day each month. Signs are posted in every classroom to let everyone know where they should seek shelter.

The **Red Cross** urges everyone in the path of these storms to get prepared now and offers the following safety steps they should follow:

- Know the difference. A **tornado watch** means a tornado is possible. A

tornado warning means a tornado is already occurring or will occur soon. Go to your safe place immediately. Watch for tornado danger signs: dark, often greenish clouds, wall clouds, and clouds of debris.



Download the free Red Cross Emergency App to receive emergency alerts and information about what to do in case of flooding, as well as locations of shelters. Users can find it in smartphone app stores by searching for the American Red Cross or going to redcross.org/apps Or text: "GETNADO" to 90999. Parents can also download the Red Cross [Monster Guard: Prepare for Emergencies App](#) for a fun game to teach children what to do in case of a flood, hurricane and other disasters.

| Safety Tips | |
|--|--|
| Know your community's warning system. Many communities use sirens intended for outdoor warning purposes. | Identify a safe place in your home to gather – a basement, storm cellar or interior room on the lowest floor with no windows. A small, windowless interior room or hallway on the lowest level of a sturdy building is the safest alternative. |

| | |
|--|--|
| If you have time, move or secure items outside that can be picked up by the wind. | If you live in a mobile home, find a safe place in a nearby sturdy building. No mobile home is safe in a tornado. |
| If you have access to a sturdy shelter or a vehicle, go there immediately, using your seat belt if driving. | If you are outside, seek shelter in a basement, shelter or sturdy building. |
| If you cannot quickly walk to a shelter, immediately get into a vehicle and try to drive to the closest sturdy shelter. Remember to buckle your seat belt. | Stay away from bridge/highway overpasses. If strong winds and flying debris occur while driving, pull over and park, keeping your seat belt on and engine running. Put your head down below the windows, covering your head with your hands and a blanket. |
| Bring your companion animals indoors and maintain direct control of them. | |

Basic Disaster Supplies Kit

To assemble your kit, store items in airtight plastic bags and put your entire disaster supplies kit in one or two easy-to-carry containers such as plastic bins or a duffel bag.

A basic emergency supply kit could include the following items:

- Water - one gallon of water per person per day for at least three days, for drinking and sanitation
- Food - at least a three-day supply of non perishable food
- Battery-powered/hand crank radio and a NOAA Weather Radio (tone alert)
- Flashlight
- First aid kit
- Extra batteries
- Whistle to signal for help



Additional Emergency Supplies to Consider

- Dust mask to help filter contaminated air and plastic sheeting and duct tape to [shelter-in-place](#)
- Moist towelettes, garbage bags and plastic ties for personal sanitation
- Wrench or pliers to [turn off utilities](#)
- Manual can opener for food
- Local maps
- Cell phone with chargers and a backup battery
- Prescription medications
- Non-prescription medications such as pain relievers, anti-diarrhea medication, or antacids
- Glasses and contact lens solution
- Infant formula, bottles, diapers, wipes
- Pet food and extra water for your pet
- Important documents such as copies of insurance policies, identification and bank account records (electronic or in a waterproof container)
- Sleeping bag or warm blanket
- Change of clothing, sturdy shoes
- Household chlorine bleach and medicine dropper to disinfect water
- Fire extinguisher
- Matches in a waterproof container
- Feminine supplies and personal hygiene products
- Paper cups, plates, paper towels, plastic utensils
- Books, games, puzzles, or other activities for children

Source: Department of Homeland Security @ <https://www.ready.gov>

.....

Nutrition

by **Tracey Sauke**, Dietitian

During March we planted peppers and tomatoes from seeds. We are excited to watch them grow. March was Irish American Heritage Month. We celebrated with a traditional Irish meal consisting of bangers (we used turkey sausages) and mash (mashed potatoes and peas). Some of us mashed our potatoes and peas together while other classes used their blenders to combine the two.

In April we will learn about leafy greens. April is a great time to start planting cool weather plants like lettuce and other leafy greens. April is Arab American Heritage Month. We plan to celebrate by trying some Tabbouleh.



Check out our Facebook pages for more information about Tri-County!

Tri-County Head Start:

<https://www.facebook.com/tcheadstart/>

Lily Furgerson Head Start:

<https://www.facebook.com/LilyFurgersonHeadStart>

Maywood Head Start:

<https://www.facebook.com/MW.HeadStart>

Our mission is to inspire every child and support every family.

Our vision is changing the world one mind at a time.

