

Newsletter

September 2022



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

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

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

Hello families! Here are some photos of our Tri-County staff during Preservice Week. Staff participated in professional development opportunities to assist them in preparing for the new year. They learned about setting up appropriate environments, active supervision, nutrition, and how to keep children safe in the event of an active shooter. They spent time discussing lesson plans, curriculum, and assessment. Teaching staff at Lily and Maywood also set up their rooms in preparation for Open Houses and the first day of school. Waterloo assistant teachers participated in training to prepare for their work in the district. Home visitors and family service



workers completed visits, orientations, and paperwork with many of you. The week ended with an all staff rally to promote our core values and culture to ensure Tri-County is an amazing place to be! I want to thank our enrollment team and health team as

they do so much to prepare for the start of the year. It is truly a team effort throughout our agency and everyone's contributions are appreciated!



Our *Amazing* Team!

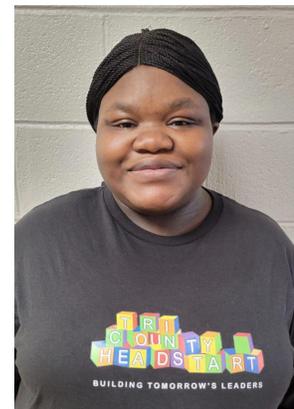




It is wonderful to see new faces and returning children and families. At Tri-County, we strive to provide educational experiences that promote kindergarten readiness. We are excited to announce Total Care Iowa selected 10 of our sites/classrooms to receive a literacy kit and \$500 gift card for the purchase of literacy items. The teachers look forward to selecting materials and sharing them with the Head Start children! Look for photos in an upcoming newsletter!



My name is Nejamiel Thomas. I will be an Assistant Teacher at Maywood. My first son, Sakari, is due to arrive in September. I have always loved working with children. I graduated from East High in 2018. My first daycare job was at the Hawkeye Child Development Center and I loved every second of it. I hope to further my education by going back to college and one day becoming a teacher. I am very excited to meet the children and families and begin my journey at Tri-County!





Important Dates

September 5

- *Closed for Labor Day Holiday*

September 8

- *Family Kickoff Event (see below)*

September 23

- *No School due to Professional Development Day*

September 24

- *Car Seat Inspections at Waterloo Fire Station #1 (see flyer below)*

Family Kickoff Event

Thursday, September 8th

4:30-7:00 pm at Maywood



Games, food, community resources, and more!

All families are invited to attend!

NATIONAL SEAT CHECK SATURDAY



Saturday, Sept 24th 2022
9:00am - 12:00pm
Waterloo Fire Station #1
(425 E 3rd St)



**Car Seat Inspections
Free to the Public**
Child must be present
(unless not yet born)



Cedar Valley Safe Riders collaborating agencies: Family and Children's Council of Back Hawk County, Lutheran Services in Iowa, Iowa Child Care Resource & Referral, Tri-County Head Start, Operation Threshold, Grundy County Public Health

In celebration of Child Passenger Safety Week, please take advantage of a free car seat fitting!

Lily

by **Dusty Olson**, Program Manager



Welcome (back) everyone to Lily and the start of the 2022-2023 school year! We are so excited to get back into the Lily classrooms and see some new faces. For parents new to Lily, please make sure you park in an area that does not block another parent. Please have patience in the drop off area as we get ourselves back into the swing of things.

It was great to see and meet many of you at our Open House last month. As we get underway, please make sure to speak with your child's teacher about what is happening in the classroom and what you can work on at home. If you have questions or concerns, feel free to call or stop into my office at any time.

Reminders

- Accidents happen! Please bring a change of clothes (or 2) for when they do.
 - Make sure to dress for the weather! It can still get very warm in September and weather can change quickly and without much warning.
 - The Lily teachers work hard to keep the environment safe and keep illness away for you, your children, and their families as well. Please make sure if you or your child is sick you stay home and wash your hands regularly to keep everyone healthy and safe.
 - If your child will not be in attendance for the day, please call Lily and let your teacher or Family Service Worker know. Lily's main number is 319-287-4104.
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Waterloo Schools

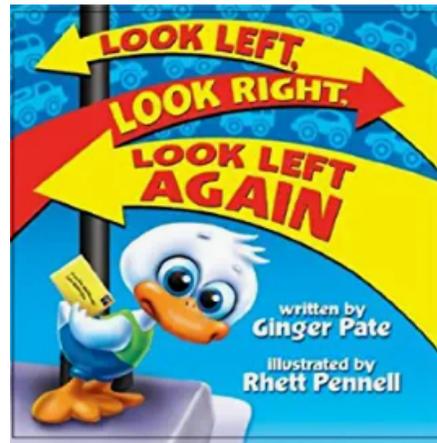
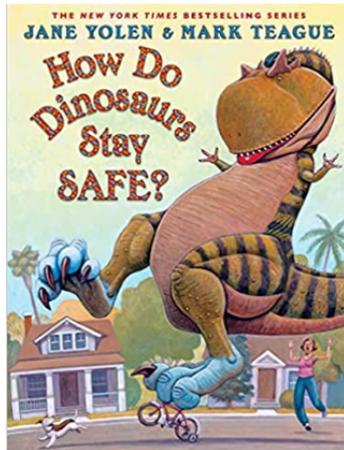
by **Ashley Caldwell**, Program Manager

September is here! Classes are underway, and I hope your child is transitioning well in their new environment. Teachers, assistant teachers, and supporting staff are here to support your child as he or she begins one of the most formative years in their education. From learning classroom routines, meeting new friends, and learning new and exciting things, the very best is yet to come! Please make sure you complete your fall orientation paperwork with your family support worker. This information is required. If you have any questions, please contact your family support worker.

At Home Opportunities

With children going to school, it is ideal to discuss pedestrian safety, such as crossing the street with an adult, how to recognize traffic lights to walk/not walk, and being safe while walking with others.

Books that can support this:



Click the links for a read aloud of each book!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HPKDjKWchQ8>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N_oW_7jPUHA

Maywood

by **Angie Barth and Haley Bradford**, Program Managers



Our Maywood team would like to welcome Ms. Ariel and Ms. Crystal to Maywood. They were

previously at our EMA/Lily sites and are now joining Maywood this year! We also welcome two new-hires, Ms. Haley and Ms. Nejamiel to our Tri-County Team! Ms. Haley is a Program Manager and will be the main manager while our current manager Angie is on maternity leave. If you have any questions

or concerns this school year, her office is located at the end of the upstairs north hallway next to N3's classroom. Ms. Nejamiel will be assisting in our Head Start program as an assistant teacher once she returns from maternity leave. Welcome aboard! Please check out all our staff pictures on our bulletin board at the main upper level entrance!

Center Happenings

Hello families and staff! Our summer session has flown by even faster than expected and we are welcoming the new school year with open arms! During the summer, Maywood had many updates including a brand new laundry/storage room, new classroom doors with windows, a new parking lot with lines, rubber mulch on the small playground, and some brand new play equipment in our courtyard! We are so excited to share these new things with you this school year and hope you love them as much as we do!

This month our focus at school is Pedestrian Safety. One of the things we do at Maywood to help encourage awareness is to have children look both ways before crossing the parking lot to the playground. We also encourage parking within the lines to help keep marked walkways clear for families to use.



At-Home Opportunities

You can incorporate pedestrian safety at home. When with your child and family, focus on safety when crossing the street and emphasize awareness of the street. Even when playing in the yard, if a ball rolls out onto the street a child is likely to run after it. Helping them develop a sense of awareness around the road can help them to identify that the road can be dangerous and needs to be treated with caution. You, as their role model, are the biggest and most available source of information they can learn from.

Reminders

- Safety is our number one priority, so please remember to bring your child to his/her classroom every day and sign him/her in on the

classroom iPad. If your child is outside during the time you pick-up or drop-off, it is important to still come inside and sign your child in or out.

- No outside food or drink is allowed in the building. We have this in place to protect children and staff with allergies.
- Please call the center within the first hour of your child's scheduled arrival time to communicate if they will be gone for the day and the reason.
- Your child needs to have a change of clothes available in case he/she has an accident or gets wet/dirty while learning. We cannot guarantee there will be extra clothing in your child's size when needed.



**We look forward to having you and your family with us this school year and can't wait to encourage your child to grow and succeed in our program!
Welcome to the 2022-2023 school year!**

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Home Base Program

by **Vanessa Mamabolo**, Program Manager and **Michelle Davis**, Early Head Start Home Visitor

I would like to formally introduce myself. My name is Vanessa Mamabolo. I am the new Program Manager for our Home Base program. I am delighted to be a part of this program. One of my favorite quotes by Nelson Mandela says "Education is the most powerful weapon that one can use to change the world". As our mission states, we are here to inspire every child and support every family and to change the world one mind at a time. I would like to wish all the families and children that we serve a year filled with compassion, a growth in mindset, healthy teamwork relationships, and excellence. I look

forward to meeting you all at our socializations. My office number is: (319) 429-8918.

The home visitors have done an excellent job all summer preparing for the upcoming school year. We are so excited to see all returning families and children and those that will be joining us for the new school year. Families and individuals have started to prepare for the new school year and perhaps also return to work. This is the perfect opportunity to do a recap on Car Seat Safety in an effort to keep families and children safe. Parents and caregivers can make a lifesaving difference by checking whether their children are properly buckled on every trip. Whether the trip is a quick one or a long distance drive, parents and caregivers can make a lifesaving choice.

Here are several Car Seat Safety tips and facts from The National Child Passenger Safety Board

How Car Seats and Seat Belts Prevent Injuries:

- Keep children in the vehicle
- Direct crash forces to the strongest part of the body
- Protect head, neck, brain and spinal cord
- Spread crash forces across the body and minimize injury risk
- Help children ride down crash forces

Using the correct car seat or booster seat can be a lifesaver. Make sure your child is always buckled in an age- and size-appropriate car seat or booster seat.



Keep children age 12 and younger properly buckled in the back seat.

*Recommended age ranges for each seat type vary to account for differences in child growth and weight/height limits of car seats and booster seats. Use the car seat or booster seat manual to check for important information about installation, the seat weight and height limits, and proper seat use.

How to Wear Your **Seat Belt** While **Pregnant**



1. ALWAYS wear your seat belt... even in the back seat
2. Lift belly up - make sure lap belt is low & flat on tops of thighs
3. Pull upwards on shoulder belt to get lap belt snug
4. Shoulder belt lays between breasts
5. Tilt steering wheel upwards, if possible
6. Keep vehicle seat as upright as possible: reclining increases the chance of the lap belt pressing on the uterus in a crash.
7. Slide front seat as far back as possible - to sit as far away from airbag

Things to Remember about Car Seat Safety:

- 1) All car seats have expiration dates; check the manufacturer label on the seat for this information.
- 2) Do not add anything to the car seat that did not come with it, unless approved by the car seat manufacturer.
- 3) In the event of a crash, depending on the manufacturer, the car seat may not be used again.
- 4) It is advised to refrain from purchasing car seats from “For Sale” groups and Garage Sales due to not knowing the history of the car seat.

Here are some Car Seat Safety Resources in the Cedar Valley:

- Cedar Valley Safe Riders
 - Tri-County’s Child Passenger Technician, Michelle Davis
 - Family and Children’s Council
 - Child Care Resource and Referral
 - CDC Website
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Education Specialist

by **Angela Shylman**

The return to the regular school year can bring anxiety and worry for children and parents. New teachers, new classrooms, and new friends. Rather than telling your child “You’ll be fine,” or “Don’t worry about it,” try one of these phrases the next time your child is feeling worried:



What to Say to Help an Anxious Child Calm Down

- o **“I am here; you are safe.”** Anxiety has a way of making things look worse and feel scarier than when we are not feeling worried. These words can offer comfort and safety when your child is feeling out of control, especially if they are at the height of their worry. If you’re not sure what to say, this is an excellent go-to phrase!
- o **“Tell me about it.”** Give your child room to talk about their fears without interrupting. Some children need to have time to process their thoughts. Do not offer solutions or try to fix it. Children sometimes do better with a set amount of time: “Let’s talk about your worries for 10 minutes.”
- o **“How big is your worry?”** Help your child verbalize the size of their worry and give you an accurate picture of how it feels to them. They can represent their worry by using arm length (hands close together or arms stretched wide apart) or by drawing three circles on a piece of paper (small, medium and large) and choosing the one that applies.
- o **“Can you draw it?”** Many kids cannot express their emotions with words. Encourage them to draw, paint or create their worries on paper. When they are finished, make observations, and give them a chance to explain the significance: “That’s a lot of blue!”

- o **“I’m going to take a deep breath.”** Sometimes our children are so worried that they resist our encouragement to pick a calming strategy. In this case, use yourself as a calming skill! Verbalize what you are doing and how it makes you feel. Some people hold their children close so they can feel the rise and fall of their chest as they breathe.
- o **“It’s scary AND...”** Acknowledge your child’s fear without making it even more frightening by using the word “AND.” After the word “and” you can add phrases like, “You are safe.” or “You’ve conquered this fear before.” or “You have a plan.” This models an internal dialogue your child can use next time they are feeling worried.

Anxiety and worry look different for every child. Not every one of these strategies will work. You are the expert on your child. If you try something and it makes their worries worse, don’t panic. Just pick something else from the list to try next time. Eventually, you will find a few phrases that are effective for sending a calm, encouraging and empowering message to your child.

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Disabilities Services Coordinator

by **Melissa Edwards**

Whenever traveling on the road, make sure children age 12 and younger are always properly buckled in the back seat in a car seat, booster seat, or seat belt—whichever is appropriate for their age, height, and weight. For more information regarding requirements, please visit the CDC website.

<https://www.cdc.gov/injury/features/child-passenger-safety/index.html>

According to the CDC:

- Car seat use reduces the risk for injury in crashes by 71–82% for children, when compared with seat belt use alone.



- Booster seat use reduces the risk for serious injury by 45% for children age 4–8, when compared with seat belt use alone.
- Seat belt use reduces the risk for death and serious injury by about half for older children and adults.

Whether you are traveling for a long distance or making a quick run to the grocery store, traveling with young children can be challenging at times. Here are some screen-free road trip activities for your young child.

- **Eat.** Make it fun while keeping it healthy and pack their snacks in fun little containers. Keep the sugar level low and the protein high. Crackers, cut up fruits and veggies, cheese sticks, and sandwiches are a few ideas.
- **Music.** Silly sing-alongs and impromptu dancing is fun for the whole family!
- **Books.** Books tend to keep children entertained for a good amount of time and it's great to encourage reading as much as possible!
- **Puzzles and Shape Sorters.** Puzzles without a lot of pieces are great for the car and help children work on fine motor skills and hand-eye coordination!
- **Road Trip Surprise Packages.** Go to the Dollar Store and pick up several small toys to make several surprise packages. Rotate the surprise packages as often as needed.
- **The Color Car Game.** Tell your child to look for a certain color of car to count, for instance, red cars. Anytime they see a red car they point it out and you try to reach a certain number before switching colors.
- **Pipe cleaners.** Children can make fun chains, animals or just sit and bend into shapes. This simple little travel hack is inexpensive but fosters creativity!
- **Alphabet Magnets.** Grab a small magnet board and some fridge magnets for a fun activity. In a pinch, you can also use a cookie sheet from the Dollar Store.



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Health

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

Health Happenings

Vision and Hearing Screens

Central Rivers and school nurses will be completing hearing and vision screens during September and October.



Well-Child and Dental Exams



The health team is available to help you keep your child up-to-date on age appropriate preventative medical and dental care. To receive center based services, current physicals are due **September 28, 2022**.

EHS Home Base Program Screening Day

Our nurses will complete hearing and vision screens September 15 and 16 for children. To sign up please contact your home visitor.



Pedestrian & Transportation Safety Information for Parents

Children are vulnerable to pedestrian death because they are exposed to traffic threats that exceed their cognitive, developmental, behavioral, physical and sensory abilities. As adults we often overestimate children's pedestrian skills.



Definitions

- ❖ Cognitive - ability to learn
- ❖ Developmental - how much they have learned
 - ❖ Behavioral - actions
 - ❖ Physical - body ability
- ❖ Sensory - sight, sound, and touch abilities

Children are **impulsive** and have **difficulty judging speed, spatial relations, and distance**. Auditory and visual acuity, depth perception and proper scanning ability develop gradually and do not fully mature until at least age 10. This is why the rules below are vital to keeping your child safe.

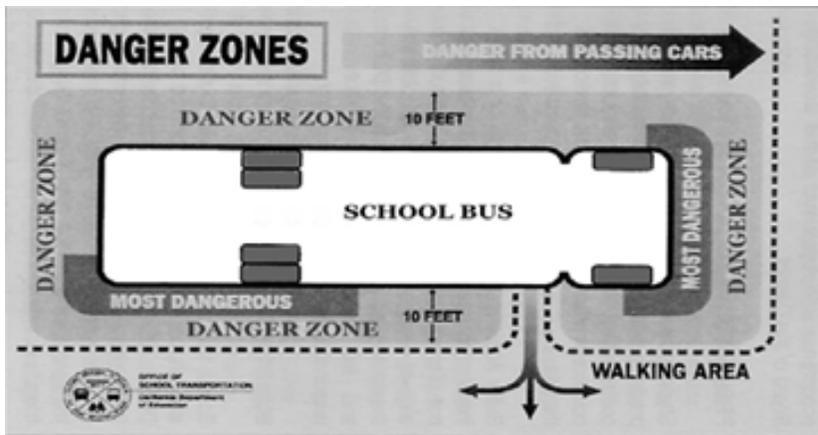
Safe Rules for Children

1. Cross the street at the corner or at a crosswalk if there is one, and obey all traffic signals.
2. Walk on a sidewalk; if there is no sidewalk; walk on the left side of the street, facing oncoming traffic.
3. Walk with an adult until you are at least 10 years old
4. Only cross in front of a school bus when the driver says it is safe. Do not cross behind the bus or where the driver can't see you.
5. Hold an adult's hand when you cross the street. Look left, right and left again before you cross and keep looking both ways until you reach the other side.
6. If you walk when it is dark, wear light-colored clothing or clothing with reflective material so drivers can see you. A flashlight is also a good idea.
7. If a toy or pet goes out into the street, ask an adult for help getting it back.
8. When you are outside playing, play in a backyard or playground away from the street or parking lots.



Visit www.nhtsa.gov for more information on pedestrian safety.

Safety tips you can reinforce with your children:



Know the Danger
Zone

Loading and
Unloading

- The bus driver cannot see you if you are closer than ten (10) feet to the bus.
- Stay out of the Danger Zone.
- If you have to cross the street to get to the bus, wait until the bus has stopped and the safety lights are flashing. Cross the street after the bus driver directs you. Look both ways before crossing the street.
- If something is dropped at or near the bus, tell the driver before you retrieve it.

Source: National Association for Pupil Transportation

Nutrition

by **Tracey Sauke**, Dietitian

- September is **National Family Meals Month**. **Make meals and memories together**. It's a lesson your child will use for a lifetime!
 - Family meals lead to better nutrition
 - Family meals improve family relationships and emotional health

- Family meals improve learning
- On **September 22nd, classrooms will make fresh Pico de Gallo** to learn all about tomatoes and celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month! Find the recipe at:
<https://spendsmart.extension.iastate.edu/recipe/salsa-fresca/>
- **September 28th is Iowa Local Food Day.** We will be eating locally grown apples and zucchini and locally made yogurt!



Be Well. Eat Well. An Iowa Total Care initiative that promotes healthy living through healthy eating. Find out how to get fresh produce, how to cook with seasonal vegetables, locate community resources and more.



For more nutrition information don't miss our [September Nutrition Newsletter](#). We are talking all about tomatoes. Tomatoes are in the vegetable group. Aim to serve your child around $\frac{2}{3}$ - 2 cups of vegetables per day. To learn more about the vegetable group visit myplate.gov.

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>