

# Newsletter

December 2022



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

Hello, families! I hope you were able to enjoy your family and friends during the Thanksgiving holiday. We provided 40 Thanksgiving baskets to help families celebrate together. A special thanks to Stephanie and Kandie for putting the baskets together, organizing pick up, and delivering to families!

Our Program Manager team spent October and November completing CLASS observations in our EHS and HS classrooms. These observations examine teacher-child interactions in the classroom. The observer looks at positive relationships among teachers and children, enjoyment, engagement, problem solving, and language skills. We do the observations two times per year to improve the quality of programming. In the near future, we will celebrate areas of strength agency-wide and use professional development to improve quality in other areas. Our efforts allow us to support the work of teachers and ensure positive outcomes for your child!

Our EHS Home Base Program staff have been busy! In the past week they attended a week-long training to earn certification in the Growing Great Kids Next Generation Curriculum. Our home visiting team will begin using the new curriculum in January. We appreciate their hard work and commitment to working with families. We hope our EHS home base families enjoy the new activities, handouts, and information coming to their visits in the new year!

We have a few more agency updates for you. We will offer care for WRAP families during the holiday break on December 27, 28, 29, and 30. Eligible families will receive a letter from their site's Program Manager or Family Service Worker. We look forward to working with children during these days! Renovations on our new building are moving right along and it is our hope to

have administrative offices open by the end of the month. Stay tuned for more information. And finally, we are currently hiring for several positions. We have a high need for EHS and HS teachers and assistants. We want to offer more services for children at our Maywood site and look forward to enrolling children at our new location next fall. If you know of anyone interested in being part of the amazing work we do, please refer them to our website. Thank you!

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### Important Dates

#### December 8

- *Winter Extravaganza, 5:30 - 7:00 pm*

#### December 19

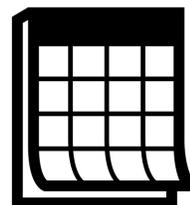
- *Policy Council, 5:30 pm - 6:30 pm*

#### December 22, 23, and 26

- *Closed for Winter Break*

#### December 27, 28, 29, and 30

- *WRAP Care available for eligible families*



#### January 2

- *Closed due to Holiday*

#### January 3

- *School resumes*
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## Lily

by **Dusty Olson**, Program Manager

Winter is closing in. With colder weather, we need to be ready. Make sure to dress in layers and bring coats, hats, and mittens/gloves. If you are in need of

coats, hats, or mittens/gloves, please speak with your Family Service Worker or teachers so we can assist you. If we have a late start or close due to inclement weather, you will receive an alert from the agency. You can also watch KWWL or look on our Facebook page.

*Here is a photo of the morning crew at Lily preparing for their day!*



TRI-COUNTY HEAD START  
Presents  
*Winter*  
**EXTRAVAGANZA**

December 8th, 2022  
5:30PM-7 PM

FOOD, ACTIVITES & FUN FOR THE  
ENTIRE FAMILY

CEDAR VALLEY SPORTS PLEX  
300 Jefferson St, Waterloo, IA 50701



*COME JOIN THE FUN!*

# Waterloo Schools

by **Ashley Caldwell**, Program Manager

As we enter the last month of 2022, our classrooms are focusing on weather changes, letter/sound identification, and handwriting. As the winter months begin, classrooms will discuss outside safety and also self-help skills with zipping coats, putting on snow boots, and hat and glove care. Helping children to become more independent with these skills will help them become self-sufficient, and also have a feeling of being proud of themselves for a job well done.

*Friends in Ms. Abi's room at Poyner Elementary exploring math manipulatives.*



## **Reminder:**

Waterloo schools will be closed December 22 - January 2, 2023. Classes will resume on Tuesday, January 3, 2023. I hope you have a wonderful winter break and Happy New Year.

## **At Home Opportunities**

Rhyming words are a stepping stone for children to begin sight word recognition and reading. An activity you can do at home is practice rhyming words by reciting nursery rhymes, or reading stories with rhyming words such as, *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?* By Bill Martin, and *Llama*

Llama Red Pajama by Anna Dewdney. Visit your local library to check these and many other great books out for a reading night at home.

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Tri-County is looking for families to participate in Prime Time, a program offered through the Waterloo Public Library. It is a free six-week program that meets one night per week from 5:30 - 7:00 pm. Please consider taking advantage of this wonderful opportunity. You may contact your Family Service Worker or Home Visitor for more information about registration. The program begins on January 12th so reach out today!

## JOIN US FOR PRIME TIME PRESCHOOL READING



- A FREE EVENING OF FUN ONE NIGHT A WEEK FOR SIX WEEKS
- YOUR CHILD KEEPS 6 AWARD-WINNING BOOKS
- DESIGNED FOR FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN 3-5 YEARS OLD, BUT SIBLINGS OF ANY AGE ARE WELCOME TO JOIN
- ENTER TO WIN DOOR PRIZES

Develop a lifelong love of reading in your family through Prime Time Preschool Reading. Designed for families with children aged 3-5 years old, you'll enjoy engaging, family-based reading, discussion, and activities on topics such as fairness, courage, and dreams. Our discussion strategies are proven to increase creativity, critical thinking, and academic success.

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# Maywood

by **Haley Bradford** , Program Manager

Last month we celebrated fall and the changing seasons! Who would have thought we would see the weather change to snow before our very eyes! Here are some photos of the fun and learning we did in November.



We will continue with reading sessions with our librarian in our Head Start rooms. Conferences with families began on November 27 and continue until December 21. Please look for sign up sheets in your child's classroom. Thank you!



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# Home Base Program

by **Vanessa Mamabolo**, Program Manager

The Home Base Program would like to thank the BSN students at Allen College for a job well done. The students partnered with our program to create a health project for us. The end result was excellent and will be beneficial to all the families that will use it. The Home Base staff are excited to share the educational project with the families that we serve.



We would also like to thank Iowa Total Care for choosing Tri-County Child and Family Development Council, Inc. to be a part of the 100 Head Starts in Iowa initiative which supports literacy development. As a result of being selected, the Grundy Home Base Program was awarded a \$500 gift card and a literacy toolkit

Since literacy is an important part of school readiness, we are grateful for new materials to promote this area of development.

### **Important Dates**

- Come join us for a fun-filled morning at our Story Time Socialization. The event will take place at the Waterloo Public Library at 10:15 am. The library is located at 415 Commercial Street.
- Please take advantage of the Car Seat Inspection event on December 5<sup>th</sup> from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm. This free event will take place at the Cedar Falls Safety Building located at 4600 S. Main Street.

The Home Base Team would like to wish you all a happy and safe holiday season. We care about all the families we serve and are very grateful to connect with everyone. We hope to see you at the socialization event and the car seat inspection event. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me at [dmamabolo@teamtricity.org](mailto:dmamabolo@teamtricity.org). Happy Holidays!

## Health

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

### Safe Sleep

Few things make you value sleep more than when you have a new baby. (*We're parents, too. We understand.*) We can't promise you more sleep, but we can offer you this—less worry and deeper sleep because you know your baby is sleeping safely.

When babies sleep with pillows, blankets, or on soft surfaces, they are at a greater risk for sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS). When they sleep in bed with us, there's the added risk of suffocation from soft bedding or getting trapped under or rolled over by an adult. The good news? Parents have been using tried-and-true strategies to keep their babies' sleep spaces safe every day.

#### *Message from the American Academy of Pediatrics*

The safest way to put your baby to sleep - every nap, every night. When babies sleep on soft surfaces, in bed with us, or surrounded by soft bedding and toys, they're at greater risk for SIDS. Here are four ways to keep your baby's sleep space safe.

1. Put the baby to bed on their back. When they're too young to turn themselves over, this is the safest way to sleep.
2. Put them to sleep in their own space.
3. Use a firm and flat mattress.
4. Keep the sleep surface clutter-free (skip the pillows, bumpers, blankets and toys).

These techniques can:



**Keep baby safe:** This reduces the risk of SIDS and the chances of you or your partner mistakenly rolling over your baby.



**Help you sleep more soundly:** We all sleep more deeply when we know our babies are as safe as can be.



**Set good habits:** As parents, we want to cherish all their snuggles while they're small, but most of us also want to avoid them sleeping in bed with us forever. Getting babies used to sleeping in their own space now sets the habit for later.

Click [here](#) to view a video on Safe Sleep.

You can also visit [healthychildren.org](https://www.healthychildren.org) for more resources on safe sleep.

### ***Head Start Health Happenings***

As part of our comprehensive health services our health team has completed hearing, vision, growth, and oral screens. Our school nurses will follow up with you regarding referrals that have been made. Families of children in our Head Start 3-5 program will receive a growth chart and nutrition information this month.

There is an increase in RSV in children in the United States. Early symptoms of RSV may include:

- Runny nose
- Decrease in appetite
- Cough, which may progress to wheezing or difficulty breathing

Remember the 3 Cs:

- Routinely **CLEAN** high touch surfaces and everyone should wash their hands
- **COVER** coughs and sneezes with a tissue or a sleeve
- **CONTAIN** germs by using social distancing, masking, or staying home

If your child is sick please keep them home. Ask yourself the following questions when symptoms such as a fever are not present:

- Can my child participate in normal activities?
- Does my child need more individual care than normal?
- Does my child have a significant change in behavior?

If you can answer YES to these questions please keep your child home so they can get better.

We encourage vaccinations for your family. Flu shots and COVID-19 vaccines for ages 6 months and up and boosters are available in your community.

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## Nutrition

by **Tracey Sauke**, Dietitian

In November, we learned about winter squash and celebrated Native American and Indigenous Heritage Month. Children had fun exploring pumpkins and making their own [pumpkin pudding](#). Maywood and Lily enjoyed [Great Garden Soup](#) for lunch, a traditional Native American stew consisting of squash, corn and beans.



Menu + Focus Food



In December, we will learn all about potatoes. Potatoes are a healthy and filling food to offer to your family and include in your child's diet. For more information, check out the [December Nutrition Newsletter](#). Our nutrition team will be busy transitioning out of our temporary kitchen into our new kitchen. We will resume cultural celebration meals in January.

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