

Newsletter

January 2023



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

Hello, families! As I shared last month, our Program Manager team spent time completing CLASS observations in our EHS and HS classrooms. These observations examine teacher-child interactions in the classroom. We do the observations two times per year to monitor the quality of programming. I want to share data from the first round of observations.

For infant classrooms, the overall score in responsive caregiving was 4.82 out of 7. The highest area was relational climate (teachers showing affection, using respectful communication, smiling, and using a gentle approach to caregiving). Facilitated exploration (following infants' lead, allowing choice, and supporting exploration) is an area identified as a training focus for this month's Professional Development Day.

For toddler classrooms, the overall score for emotional and behavioral support was 6.12 out of 7 and 4.66 out of 7 for engaged support for learning. The highest area was positive climate (teachers and children smiling and laughing, teachers using physical and verbal affection, and use of calm and respectful voices with children). Facilitation of learning and development (teachers provide opportunities for exploration and learning, relate information to children's lives, and children being actively engaged in their learning) is an area identified as a training focus for this month's Professional Development Day.

And finally, the overall scores for preschool classrooms agency-wide were as follows: 6.13 out of 7 for emotional support, 5.67 out of 7 for classroom organization, and 3.88 out of 7 for instructional support. Similar to toddler classrooms, the highest area for preschool was positive climate. Instructional

support (including concept development, quality of feedback, and language modeling) is the domain identified as a training focus for this month's Professional Development Day.

We celebrate the teachers and thank them for the work they do as evidenced by high scores in several areas. We know there are great things happening each day in our classrooms! The data collected also offers opportunities to revisit specific areas and discuss how teachers can improve their practice. We will compare scores with the second round of observations in February and March. A big thank you to all of the observers for their time and to the teachers for welcoming us into their classrooms. The efforts of all involved allow us to ensure positive outcomes for all children!

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Important Dates

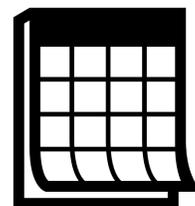
January 2: Closed for Holiday

January 3: School resumes

January 13: No School due to Professional Development Day

January 16: Closed for MLK Jr. Day Holiday

January 23: Policy Council Meeting, 5:30 - 6:30 pm



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Black Hawk County Legislative Tour

At the October Professional Development Day our agency had the pleasure of hearing Mary Janssen, Regional Director for Child Care Resource and Referral of Northeast Iowa, present on the topic of Child Care Advocacy. In response to our interest in advocacy, Mary provided the opportunity for Tri-County Head Start to be a stop on this year's Legislative Tour. On December 14th, a group of stakeholders including Senator Eric Giddens, Kristina McBurney (Representative for Ashley Hinson), Representative Bob Kressig, and Representative Timi Brown-Powers, toured



Maywood and learned about the challenges facing our agency including the staffing crisis. One of our home visitors, Michelle Davis, shared her story about the challenges of child care from the perspective of her home base



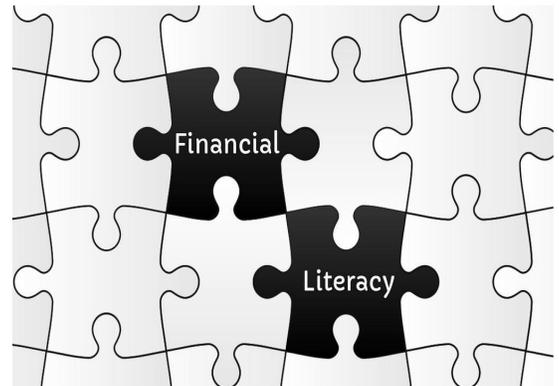
families and as a mother of a young child. This was a wonderful way for our agency to advocate for the early childhood profession and our families. Thank you to the Maywood staff and Program Managers for their representation of our agency and a special thank you to Michelle Davis for her

willingness to share her story!



Financial Literacy

Our topic for the month is financial literacy. “Financial literacy is a set of skills that allows people to make smart decisions about their money.” Being financially literate means an individual has an understanding of making, saving, and spending money (Bright Horizons).



Being financially literate is important for your family now and in the future. Here are some simple tips and guidance you may find helpful.

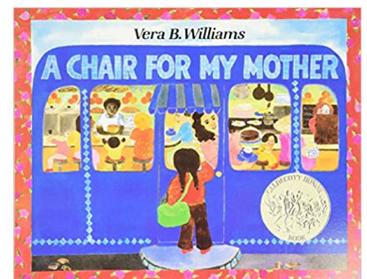
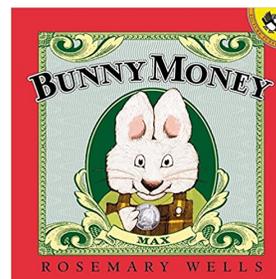
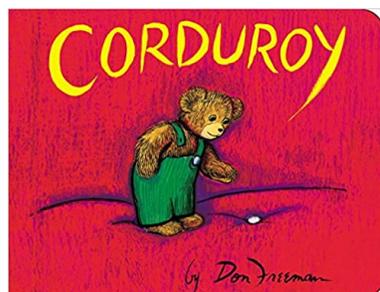
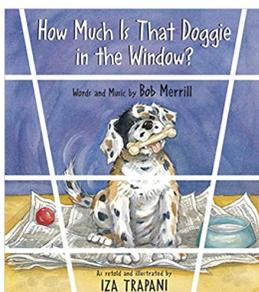
1. Know yourself! Be aware of how you spend money. The best way to do this is to keep track of how much you spend and what you spend it on.
2. Know your credit score. This score is associated with your past finances and ability to pay off debt. A good credit score is needed for purchasing a car, applying for a loan, renting, or buying a home.
3. Develop a budget. When doing so, you consider your income and how you will spend it. Writing down income and expenses helps you to see

the 'bigger picture' of your monthly financial situation. You can make decisions about spending and saving based on your income. You can also plan for the future.

4. No matter the amount, save. Try to save money each month by planning for it within your budget.
5. Seek help and know you are not alone! Many individuals have questions and need assistance with finances. Your Family Service Worker is a great place to start. This individual can answer your questions and recommend resources within the community.

In addition to understanding financial literacy yourself, you can help your child understand concepts and skills about money. Here are some age appropriate ways to teach financial literacy in the early childhood years.

- Teach the numerical value of coins
 - A penny equals one, a nickel equals five, a dime equals ten
- Encourage dramatic play
 - Set up a 'store' with items from your home; encourage your child to 'shop' and 'pay' for items
- Talk to your child about needs versus wants
 - Needs include food and shelter; wants include toys and treats
- Give your child a piggy bank and encourage him or her to save money
 - Encourage adults to give money as a gift, rather than toys
- Give your child age appropriate jobs (helping with a pet, cleaning their room, helping a neighbor) and pay a small amount of money for the work
- Read books - here are a few examples!



Sources:

<https://myscholly.com/financial-literacy/>

<https://www.brighthorizons.com/family-resources/financial-literacy-teaching-kids-money>

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Lily

by **Dusty Olson**, Program Manager

Welcome back everyone and Happy New Year! I am very excited to begin 2023 back at Lily! This month we are happy to welcome a new assistant teacher, Nicole Nesby, to our Lily staff. Reflecting back on the first half of the year, I am amazed at all of the growth and learning we have experienced with you and your children. Thank you for sharing your child and your journey with us. Let's have a great 2023!



It's Baby Yoga Time in Lily A!



Here are Gabbie, Trinitee and KamDyn (Lily C) enjoying the warm weather we had at the beginning of last December.

Waterloo Schools

by **Ashley Caldwell**, Program Manager

Happy New Year! I hope everyone had a relaxing and wonderful break. This month classrooms are continuing to discuss winter, arctic animals and hibernation, as well as continuing to document children's progress using our curriculum, Creative Curriculum, to assess student achievement and progression. Please remember as winter weather is here, children will need winter coats, boots, hats, and gloves. If you need additional support or assistance with these items, please contact your Family Service Worker.



Our friends in Mrs. Becker's classroom at Lowell enjoy math materials for learning.

Important Dates & Reminders

- On January 16th there is no school in observance of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day.
- Please watch for alerts and messages about inclement weather during winter weather.

At Home Opportunities

Writing is such a great way for children to express their thoughts, get good practice on handwriting skills, and to have fun telling their own stories. Working with your child on writing not just their name, but also labeling items around the house such as lamp, table, chair, dish, door, step, and so

much more, gives your child more vocabulary and writing skills to build upon for future literacy success.

Maywood

by **Haley Bradford** , Program Manager

Here are photos of children enjoying their time at Maywood!



MONTHLY HIGHLIGHTS

- **We are very excited to announce we will be opening our S3 classroom as a Duration room with the help of Ms. Janel and Ms. Heather!** Ms Janel just finished her degree and is excited to return to Tri-County Head Start to share her knowledge with us! We are ready to welcome our new students to our Maywood Site!

CENTER HAPPENINGS

- Visits from Librarian Dawn Best visits happen once a month in N6, S1, S2, N3 classrooms and soon our S3 classroom as well!

Home Base Program

by **Vanessa Mamabolo**, Program Manager

Happy New Year to all the families we work with and all your loved ones. We wish you all the best this year!



Home Base Happenings:

We are excited to announce we will add a few new faces to our team. We have a new Early Head Start Home Visitor joining us this month. Additionally, we welcome three interns for their Spring semester months.

We will implement a new curriculum in our Home Base program. Further communication will be sent out to families about this.

Important Dates:

On Friday, January 13, 2023, the agency will be closed due to staff having a Professional Development Day. This means that there will not be any home visits. Your Home Visitor will communicate with you to find another day that week that would work for you to meet.

We will have our second socialization event on Thursday, January 26, 2023. It will be a story time event with a craft or activity and a snack that children can enjoy. Please come and join us at the Waterloo Public Library (415 Commercial Street, Waterloo) from 10:00 am – 11:30 am. Socializations are events that give families an opportunity to meet one another and for children to make friends and start building positive relationships with both the children we serve in the program and those that live in the community. They are also educational events that are filled with fun activities to do.

Reminders:

Attendance: In the event you are unable to meet with your Home Visitor, please let them know before your visit that you will not attend and reschedule your visit for another time or day. If possible, please reschedule your missed visit for another day in the same week.

At-Home Activity Idea: Homemade Snow

Ingredients Needed: Baking Soda and Water

Method: Pour one cup of baking soda into a bowl. Add a tablespoon of water at a time. Keep stirring the mixture together while adding water tablespoon by tablespoon. Do this until the mixture is light and fluffy. Enjoy the home made snow without freezing your fingers!



We cannot wait to see you all! If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me at (319) 429-8918 or send me an email at dmamabolo@teamtricity.org.



Iowa Total Care has partnered with Hy-Vee to create healthy and easy-to-follow cooking videos with budget-friendly ingredients! In each video, a registered Hy-Vee Dietitian walks through how to prepare and cook a healthy meal. Links to these videos and other nutrition-related resources can be found using the link below:

<https://www.iowatotalcare.com/members/medicaid/bewelleatwell.html>

Here is an example of a child-friendly recipe!

Learn how to make
Apple Spiders

INGREDIENTS

- 2 large apples, any variety
- 4 tablespoons Hy-Vee natural creamy peanut butter, divided
- 32 Hy-Vee mini pretzel sticks
- 8 Hy-Vee raisins

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Slice apples into ½-inch circles. Spread 1 tablespoon peanut butter between two apple slices and add 4 mini pretzel stick legs to each side of apple.
2. If desired, finish with raisins for eyes and mouths.
3. Repeat with remaining ingredients.

Serves 4.

The videos are also available in Spanish:

<https://www-es.iowatotalcare.com/members/medicaid/bewelleatwell.html>

Here are photos of children in HS 1 at Hawkeye enjoying literacy materials donated by Iowa Total Care through the 100 Head Start Literacy Kits!



MLK Day of Service

MLK Day Projects

- Write a letter or card for veterans who participate in the Honor Flights. Bring finished letters to the VCCV for us to distribute.
- Fill a new pair of socks with granola bars and a bottle of water. Drop off at the VCCV and we'll share with homeless shelters in the community.
- Have your child pick out one food item each time you go to grocery store and when you have a bagful donate it to the Northeast Iowa Food Bank.
- Plant flower seeds in small cup to give to a special person.
- Design a thank you card for your postal carrier and put it in your mailbox.
- Color a picture and give it to your teacher.
- Choose a member of your family each day for a week and write a nice note to them.
- Answer this question: How would you change the world? Write a short story about your vision and draw a picture.
- Martin Luther King, Jr. had a dream. What is your dream? Write a short story sharing your dream.
- Make bookmarks and take to public library for others to use.
- Collect gently used books that you no longer read and donate to a free little library in the community.
- Collect and donate needed items to the Cedar Bend Humane Society. Needed items are listed on their web site: www.cedarbendhumane.org. Items include cat and dog treats, medical gloves, and blankets.
- Contact a local nursing home and arrange to become a pen pal of a resident.



The Volunteer Center of Cedar Valley offers ideas for MLK Day of Service on Monday, January 16th. These are simple ways for families to make a difference in the community! You can find more information including books and music to share with your child in honor of this day.

https://www.canva.com/design/DAE0aSWJAK0/1vaZ80kt3RxQPp25rb40sg/view?utm_content=DAE0aSWJAK0&utm_campaign=designshare&utm_medium=link&utm_source=publishsharelink

