

# Newsletter

April 2023



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



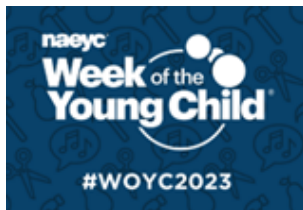
Hello, families! On Friday, March 24th our agency engaged in professional development. Our staff enjoyed a family style breakfast to reinforce use of family style meal service and promote understanding of the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). We are committed to helping your

children develop a variety of skills through family style meal service including fine motor skills, social skills, table manners, appropriate use of utensils, and exploration of different types of foods. Another focus of our day was diversity. Gina Weekley was our guest speaker with her workshop, Disrupt Unconscious Bias/Enhance Inclusive Leadership. We appreciated

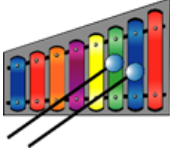






the information she shared as it will help us to reflect on our own biases in an effort to be sensitive to the needs of children, families, and all who work at our agency. We ended the day with special guests, a Children's Bosnian Dance Troupe Performance. We appreciate Amra, one of our Waterloo assistant teachers, for arranging this wonderful performance!





This month we look forward to celebrating NAEYC's Week of the Young Child. The celebration begins on April 1st and continues through April 7th. Through daily activities during the week our agency will show our support and appreciation for the children we serve and the dedicated teachers, home visitors, family service workers, program managers, and all staff who make a difference each day. See below to learn more about the theme for each day of the week. This year Tracey Sauke, our dietician, will provide materials for Tasty Tuesday. Children will make and eat yummy fruit parfaits. We encourage you to join in the fun and celebrate at home too!

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Music Monday</b>              | <i>Music Monday is more than singing and dancing, it's a way to encourage children to be active while developing their early literacy skills and having fun with friends and family!</i>   |
|  <b>Tasty Tuesday</b>           | <i>Tasty Tuesday isn't just about eating your favorite snacks together. It's also about cooking together and connecting math with literacy skills and science while introducing ways to incorporate healthy habits into children's lifestyles.</i> |
| <b>Work Together Wednesday</b>  | <i>When children build together they experience teamwork and develop their social and early literacy skills.</i>   |
|  <b>Artsy Thursday</b>          | <i>Children develop creativity, social skills, and fine muscles with open-ended art projects that let them make choices, use their imaginations, and create with their hands.</i>  |
| <b>Family Friday</b>            | <i>Parents and families are children's first teachers. Family Friday focuses on engaging families to support our youngest learners.</i><br><b>(Source: NAEYC WOYC, 2023)</b>   |

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## **Important Dates**

### **Week of the Young Child**

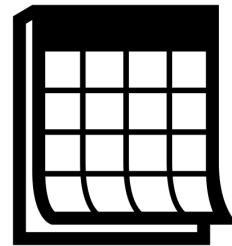
- ***April 3rd, Music Monday***
- ***April 4th, Tasty Tuesday***
- ***April 5th, Work Together Wednesday***
- ***April 6th, Artsy Thursday***
- ***April 7th, Family Friday (No School)***

### **No School - Holiday**

- ***April 7th***

### **Policy Council Meeting**

- ***April 17th, 5:30 pm - 6:30 pm***



### **Kindergarten Kick Off**

- ***April 20th, 5:00 pm - 7:00 pm***

### **No School - Professional Development Day**

- ***April 28th***
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## **Lily**

by **Dusty Olson**, Program Manager

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

In April we celebrate Spring and all it has to offer. It is a great time to get outside to explore the world around us. Walking around the neighborhood is a great way for children to learn more about the places we live and nature in

general. If you would like more information to help your child learn about Spring and the outdoors, speak with your child's teacher for suggestions.



***In the Lively Lions (Lily-D), Khari and Brighton try on the hat from Dr. Seuss' Cat in a Hat.***



***The Kangaroo Krew (Lily-C) work on painting using cookie cutters.***

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## Waterloo Schools

by **Ashley Caldwell**, Program Manager

This month is a busy one as teachers and children are working hard to complete learning assessments that focus on numeral recognition, quantifying numeral sets between 10-20, rhyming, and letter/sound



matching. Classroom visitors from the Waterloo Public Library and service learning are engaging in meaningful activities with children to share with families and in the community.



***Friends in Mrs. Copp's class at Lowell having fun while reading and engaging in dramatic play!***

### **Important Dates & Reminders**

- April 10: No School or Snow Make-Up Day
  - Information will come from Waterloo Schools
- Kindergarten Round-Up
  - For children entering kindergarten in the fall, Round-Up will be in early May
  - Information will be available in mid to late April

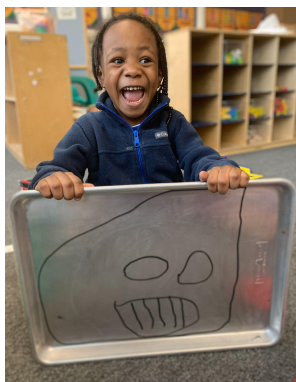
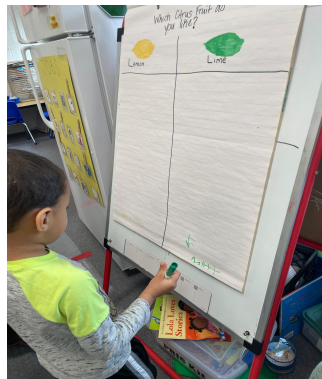
### **At Home Opportunities**

As we enter into spring weather, thunderstorms and tornadoes are often common in our area. Taking time to practice tornado drills and safety locations in your home is important. Children should know how and where to take shelter in your home or at a family member's home. Taking time to practice can help your children take on the responsibility of knowing what to do to keep themselves safe in case of an emergency.

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## Maywood

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



### MONTHLY HIGHLIGHTS

- March's focus food was microgreens. We look forward to sharing pictures on our Facebook page with all our families. If you haven't yet, check out the progress of S3's beans and S2's tomato plants. They have really grown!
- Classroom S1 planned and created some fun traps in efforts to catch a leprechaun in March.
- A few of our classrooms also celebrated Dr. Seuss's birthday by reading some of his books, making "green eggs and ham" and participating in Reading Across America!

### CENTER HAPPENINGS

- Teachers will be scheduling visits in the home with our families. As a reminder, home visits are part of our Head Start Performance Standards we need to meet.

Please work with your teacher to find the best time that works for your family!

- The first week in April (April 1st-7th) we will be celebrating the Week of the Young Child. Don't forget to check out our Facebook page to see the different ways the classrooms celebrate. The week will be as follows: Music Monday, Tasty Tuesday, Work Together Wednesday, Artsy Thursday and Family Friday. We would love for you to bring a family photo we can display in our hallway!

### AT-HOME OPPORTUNITIES

- You can celebrate the Week of the Young Child at home too! Here are a few activities you can do each day of the week to promote your young child's development:
  - **Music Monday:** Put on your family's favorite songs and dance together!
  - **Tasty Tuesday:** Invite your child to help make your family's favorite meal and sit down at the table to eat. Practice passing the food and encourage your child to scoop food on to their own plate!
  - **Work Together Wednesday:** Get some toothpicks and marshmallows and see what you and your child can build together by connecting the toothpicks with marshmallows! Take pictures and share them with your teacher!
  - **Artsy Thursday:** Take your child outside and draw on the sidewalk with chalk or sit down and color with crayons. If you are wanting something a bit more adventurous, find some flat rocks outside, put them on a pan and place in the oven until they are toasty warm. Then, take some crayons and help your child safely decorate the rocks. The crayons will melt and create some cool patterns.
  - **Family Friday:** Find a community event to attend as a family or sit down and play a board game together!
- You and your family are invited to a free Music Together ® Class! Mixed age family classes are designed for children from birth to kindergarten and their grownups. Sing, dance, twirl and jam with special community music makers. April 8th 8:30-10:15 @ NewAldaya Lifescapes in Cedar Falls.
- The Waterloo Public Library will be hosting STEM Activities. It is free to anyone who shows up and takes place every third Sunday from 3-4 in the afternoon.





*Thank you to our families and  
staff volunteers for attending the  
Cedar Valley STEM Festival!*



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## Health

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

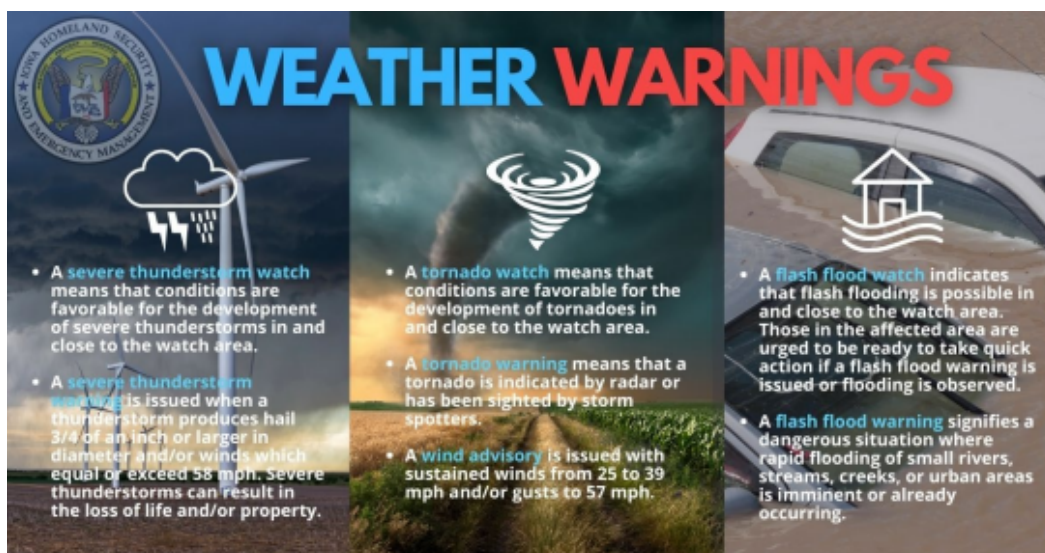
- An approaching cloud of debris can mark the location of a tornado even if a funnel is not visible.
- Tornadoes generally occur near the trailing edge of a thunderstorm. It is not uncommon to see clear, sunlit skies behind a tornado.
- Rain-wrapped tornadoes are especially dangerous. They are common 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, going to [redcross.org/apps](http://redcross.org/apps), or texting “GETEMERGENCY” to 90999.

| 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

The last week of March classes received microgreen seeds. The children will be planting their own microgreen cups. The microgreens should be ready to harvest about two weeks after planting. To harvest you can simply snip the microgreens with scissors. After harvesting make sure to rinse clean. Add the microgreens to your meal. They work great on sandwiches!





In April, center based classrooms will participate in Week of the Young Child and celebrate nutrition with Tasty Tuesday on April 4. We will be making fruit parfait cones. You can make your own at home.

## Fruit Parfait Cones

*All you need:*

- Waffle cone
- Assorted Fruit (washed & cut)
- Yogurt

*Directions:*

1. Fill cones with yogurt.
2. Top with desired fruit.
3. Enjoy



*Tips:*

- For fruit like grapes make sure to cut in half lengthwise to help prevent choking (see below).
- Any fruit works - fresh, canned (just drain well), frozen (just allow to thaw).

## How to Cut Grapes for Babies

@solidstarts

9 months +  
(quartered)



18 months +  
if consistently showing  
ability to bite and tear  
(halved; grapes should  
be large and oblong,  
not small and round)

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Varies

(see description by age)



Our April food of the month is bell peppers.  
Don't miss our [April Nutrition Newsletter](#) for  
kid friendly bell pepper recipes, activity sheets,  
and more!



# Home Base Program

by **Vanessa Mamabolo**, Program Manager

It is officially Spring! I am sure that we have all been looking forward to warmer temperatures. We are excited to have opportunities to have some visits and socializations outside.

The interns would like to extend their gratitude to all the families that have allowed them to come into their homes for home visits. They have learned a lot and have enjoyed getting to know you and your family. We truly appreciate it.

We have received positive feedback about how the first few visits with the new Growing Great Kids curriculum have gone. Thank you for being accepting of the change and showing patience as we all learn and familiarize ourselves with it. Please may you keep the binder that your Home Visitor provided to you in a safe place so it is ready to be used for every visit. If you have any questions or concerns about the curriculum, please let us know.

Here is an activity you can do at home to welcome Spring!

## Egg Carton Flowers

Supplies needed: paint, a paint brush, a paper straw, cardboard egg carton, pom poms, scissors, and glue. If you do not have some of these supplies, please let your Home Visitor know.

Instructions:

1. Cut out four slots from the egg carton. After you rip the edges, the slots will look like round petals.
2. Paint each egg carton slot that you cut out.
3. Glue a paper straw onto the back. This will be the stem of the flower.



4. Glue a pom pom onto the center of the carton.
5. Enjoy some play time.

Our next Early Head Start socialization will be on April 13, 2023 from 10:00 am - 11:30 am at the Waterloo Public Library. It is a fun yet very educational experience. Come and join us!

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**Families eligible for this event will receive an invitation from their Family Service Worker. Come and enjoy the fun with your kindergartener-to-be!**

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