



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

Hello, families! First, I want to welcome you (or welcome you back) to Tri-County Head Start. We are glad you are here and look forward to partnering with you during the most important years of your child's life, the early childhood years. This is an exciting time of discovery, learning, and growth!

Thank you to all of our families for working with the Teachers, Home Visitors, and Family Services workers to complete health packets and orientation paperwork. These are important steps in the process and we thank you for your participation.

At the beginning of each month you can look at the newsletter to keep you informed about what is happening agency-wide and in your child's program or site. There is additional information regarding important dates, community events, agency events, photos of children and families in our programs, safety tips, nutrition information, and at-home opportunities. I hope you find the monthly newsletter informative and helpful as you work with our agency throughout the year.

As the school year begins, routines change. Young children respond well to their environment and transitions during the day if they know what to expect. You can help your child by preparing them for morning, after school, and bedtime routines. Below is a link for a resource you can use at home. It

 **Visual Supports for Routines, Schedules, and Transitions**

Introduction

Visual supports can help children learn new skills and prevent challenging behavior. Visuals help young children learn and follow routines by helping them understand what is happening "now" and what is going to happen "next." Visuals serve as reminders for verbal directions and help children know exactly what is expected of them.

Use the following visual cue cards and templates to develop visual supports that work for your child and family!



Visual Schedule

Schedule

Finished

National Center for Pyramid Model Innovations | ChallengingBehavior.org

provides materials (pictures) for you to create a visual schedule of activities for your child. For example, you can show pictures and tell your child, first we are going to brush your teeth and then we can read a book before bedtime. Check out the link below. If you would like a printed copy of the materials, please ask your child's Teacher or your Family Service Worker. If you do try the visual schedule, be sure to share your experience with your child's Teacher or Family Service Worker. We would love to hear from you!

https://challengingbehavior.org/docs/Routine_cards_home.pdf



Tri-County Calendar

- **September 4, 2023**
 - *Agency Closed for Labor Day Holiday*
- **September 14, 2023**
 - *Fall Kick-Off Event*
- **September 22, 2023**
 - *No School - Professional Development Day*
- **October 5 and October 6, 2023**
 - *Learning and Community Center School Pictures*
- **October 9, 2023**
 - *Lily School Pictures*
- **October 13, 2023**
 - *No School - Professional Development Day*



Welcome

My name is Sarah Ross and I am excited to be working at Tri-County Head Start as the Home-Based Program Manager. I am new to the Waterloo area and most looking forward to meeting the children and families at the start of the school year! I have worked with children and families for almost 11 years at the Department of Defense in childcare facilities and most recently as a Family Service Manager in Head Start. I love the work I do and seeing children and families happy, healthy, and successful!



Welcome to Tri-County's Closet

To help support Head Start families with clothing needs, Tri-County has a new and unique space for families to shop for clothing items. Men, women, and children's clothing is available. The closet is now open Monday- Friday 9 am- 5 pm. Please see your Family Service Worker or Home Visitor if you are in need of clothing items.



Fall Kick-Off Event

Thursday, September 14th

*Tri-County Head Start Learning and
Community Center*

840 W. 4th Street, Waterloo

All families welcome

More information available soon



Waterloo Schools

by [Ashley Caldwell](#), Program Manager

Highlights

Welcome to the first full month of school! Learning is underway and the children are excited for a wonderful year of fun and growth. Classroom teachers begin their fall assessments in math and literacy, with a focus on letter/sound identification, rhyming words, and ending sounds. As children begin to adjust to their new school settings, they learn about classroom routines, expectations, and transitions. Making new friends, exploring learning stations and

interest areas are going to keep their little minds busy and full of new knowledge.

Reminders & Important Dates

- *Please remember to give updated phone numbers for yourself and emergency contacts for your child/children.*
- *Make sure to send an extra pair of clothes for children. Preschool gets fun and sometimes a little messy!*
- *September 14th is the Tri-County Head Start Fall Family Kick-Off! This is a great way for us to welcome our families back for a great year!*

At Home Opportunities



Teaching children safety while crossing the street is important, especially as the weather continues to be beautiful enough for them to play outside. Holding their hands and showing them how to look both ways before crossing the street alerts them to their surroundings and reminds them to be aware of their own safety.

Learning and Community Center

by Haley Bradford, Program Manager

Monthly Highlights

- This month we opened our brand new building to support and empower children



and families in our community.

- Every Monday we have our very own Mrs. Nancy read to a few classrooms per week.
- Traveling Tales also visits monthly with a new themed reading session for our classes.

Center Happenings

- 45 day screens and home visits are underway. Your child's teacher will be reaching out to schedule dates for a visit to discuss curriculum and learn more about your child.

At-Home Opportunities

- Starting at a new school with new friends and teachers can sometimes be scary. To help your child with this transition, we encourage you to bring a photo of your family for the child to use as a comfort item while at school. We're more than willing to print it for you too!

Reminders

- We ask that you please bring a change of clothes for your child in case of accidents at school. If you are in need of some new sizes because they grew over the summer, please get in touch with your Family Service Worker. This individual can help with items in need.



Lily

by **Dusty Olson**, Program Manager

We are excited to start the 2023-24 school year. We have added new equipment and furniture over the summer months and reorganized our classrooms and shared spaces. Feel free to ask any questions to our staff about these changes or why we do what we do. We are excited for children to experience the new and improved environments!

At-Home Opportunities

Teachers will be sending home materials to get to know you and your child(ren) better. Make sure to complete these forms and return them as they help us greatly in building relationships.

Reminders

- Please follow your schedule for drop-off and pick up. This is important for establishing routines for your children and to ensure we have staff coverage to provide quality services. If you have any questions about scheduled hours, please see Lily's Family Service Worker (Trista Hill) or Program Manager (Dusty Olson).
- When appropriate, we use our outdoor playgrounds for learning, so make sure your children are dressed for the weather.
- It is very important for children to have a change of clothes available at the center in case of accidents and messy play. Thank you!



Home-Based Program

by [Sarah Ross](#), Program Manager

Welcome to a new school year! With summer coming to an end, we look forward to spending the new school year watching your children learn and grow.



We want to take a moment to acknowledge and thank the 110 home-based children and families that attended our Transition Graduation event on August 15th at the Cedar Valley Arboretum. This event recognized the graduates of our Early

Head Start Home-Based Program. We wish the graduates all the best and thank their families for allowing us to be a part of these important years of growth and development!



Please be sure you received and read our Home-Based Handbook. This provides you with valuable information about our program as well as pertinent contact information. If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to your Home Visitor.

Health

by [Pauline Jones](#), Head Start/Early Head Start Health Coordinator; [Shana Smith](#) and [Darcie Stone](#), UnityPoint Contracted Nurses

The Tri-County Head Start health team would like to welcome you and your family to our agency. The team consists of Pauline Jones, Health Coordinator; Darcie Stone, Contracted Nurse; and Shana Smith, Contracted Nurse. We work with your home visitor, family worker and classroom staff to deliver comprehensive health services to your child as well as adults enrolled in prenatal services.

Thank you for taking time to complete the health packet. This information is reviewed by the nurses and helps determine your child's health status and how we can be of assistance in helping make sure health services are provided to your child on an age appropriate schedule.

Kicking off Health Activities in September

- Hearing and vision screens will be completed. Screens help identify potential follow up and treatment. Please make sure your child attends classes regularly so they do not miss their screen.



Physical and Dental Reminders

In order to meet the Head Start and State of Iowa requirements, current physicals and dentals are needed. Make your appointments today.



- *Dental exams completed June 1, 2023 - May 31, 2024 will be considered current.*
- *Current physical exams must be less than 12 months old and remain current throughout the school year to continue to receive services.*

Families will receive reminders throughout the year via text, email, or letter when exams are needed. Please keep your contact information up-to-date with your home visitor or classroom staff to receive these reminders.

School Success starts with health!

Nutrition

by Tracey Sauke, Dietitian

September is Family Meals Month. Studies show many benefits of eating family meals. Challenge yourself to make family meals a priority. For more information, check out these resources:

- [Sesame Street: Eat Together](#)
- Recipes: <https://www.myplate.gov/myplate-kitchen>
- [Say Yes to Family Meals](#)
- [Nutrition for the Toddler and Preschooler](#)

**With family meals
parents are able to:**

INFLUENCE
AND IMPROVE
FOOD CHOICES



MODEL
GOOD
NUTRITION



BUILD FAMILY
RELATIONSHIPS



all of which leads to:

BETTER
WEIGHT
MANAGEMENT



IMPROVED
PHYSICAL
HEALTH



IMPROVED
MENTAL
HEALTH



Utter J, Larson N, Berge JM, Eisenberg ME, Fulkerson JA, Neumark-Sztainer D. Family meals among parents: Associations with nutritional, social and emotional wellbeing. Preventive Medicine. 2018;113:7-12. doi:10.1016/j.ypmed.2018.05.006

Join the Movement • #FamilyMealsMovement



For more nutrition information make sure to check out our [September Nutrition News](#) featuring Apples, Family Style Meals, Menu and Family Meal Tracker.



Car Seat Safety Tips for Families

(National Highway Traffic Safety Administration)

FIND THE RIGHT CAR SEAT

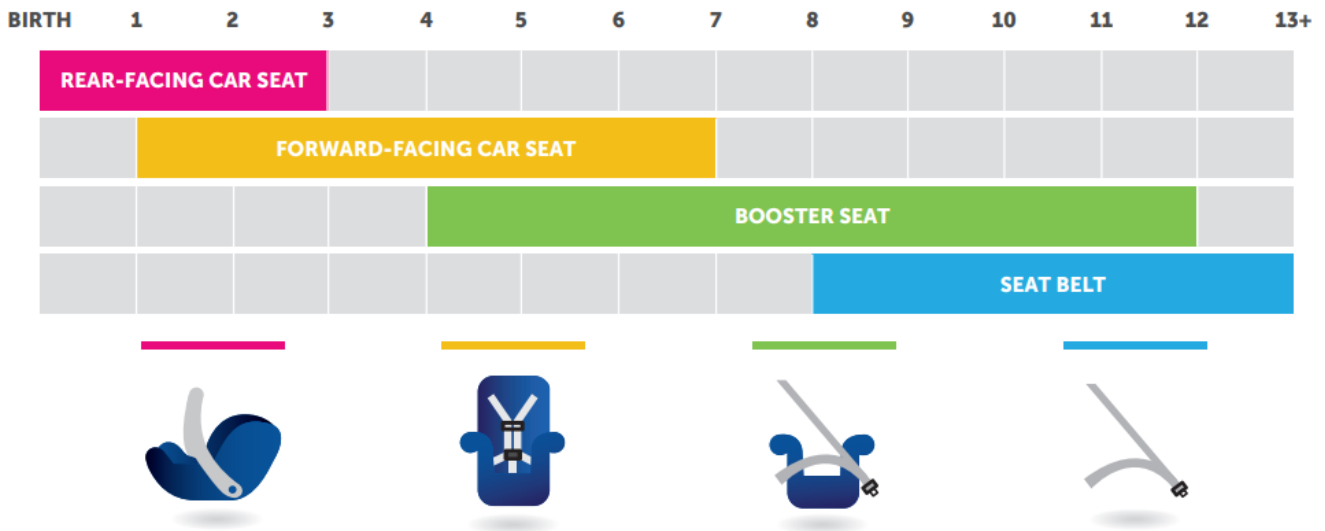
There are many car seat choices on the market. Use the information below to help you choose and install a car seat that best meets your child's needs. More information is available at www.nhtsa.gov/carseat.

TYPES OF CAR SEATS

Children require rear- and forward-facing car seats and booster seats before they are ready to use an adult seat belt. The following chart will help you decide which car seat is best for your child. For more information, visit www.nhtsa.gov/carseat.



AGE (YEARS)



Source: https://www.nhtsa.gov/sites/nhtsa.gov/files/documents/13237-parents_guide_playing_it_safe_tagged.pdf

TIPS FOR INSTALLING A CAR SEAT

If a car seat is not installed correctly, your child's safety could be compromised. Every car seat has different installation instructions, but here are a few things to keep in mind when installing a car seat. For more information and how-to videos, visit www.nhtsa.gov/carseat.

INSTALLING A CAR SEAT:

- 1 Read the car seat instruction manual and the section of your vehicle's owner's manual on car seat installation. Every car seat needs to be installed using either the lower anchors on the car seat or the seat belt to secure it in place. If you choose to use a seat belt to install your car seat, make sure you follow the instructions in your vehicle owner's manual so that you lock the seat belt. Because every car seat and vehicle is different, it's important to follow all instructions carefully.
- 2 Place the car seat in the back seat of your vehicle and follow the manufacturer's installation directions.
- 3 The car seat must be secured tightly. It should not move side-to-side or front-to-back more than one inch if you pull on the belt path. If it is a forward-facing seat and has a tether strap, connect it to the tether anchor and tighten. This step is very important as it limits forward head movement in a crash.
- 4 If it is a rear-facing seat, make sure the car seat is installed at the correct angle. Most car seats have built-in angle indicators or adjusters that help with this step.

If you have questions, trained professionals can help you. Many local fire and police stations offer free seat checks. Find the closest trained inspector at www.nhtsa.gov/carseatinspection or call the Department of Transportation Vehicle Safety Hotline at 888-327-4236. For how-to videos visit www.nhtsa.gov/carseat.

FITTING YOUR CHILD CORRECTLY IN A CAR SEAT:

- 1 Properly position the car seat harness straps on your child.
 - **Rear-facing**—The car seat harness straps should lie flat, not twisted, and be placed through the slots that are at or **below** your child's shoulders.
 - **Forward-facing**—The car seat harness straps should lie flat, not twisted, and be placed through the slots that are at or **above** your child's shoulders.
- 2 Buckle the harness and the chest clip and tighten. You'll know the harness is snug enough when extra material cannot be pinched at the shoulder.
- 3 Make sure the chest clip is at armpit level.

REGISTERING YOUR CAR SEAT:

You may not realize it, but child safety seats can be recalled, just like a car. Be sure to register your car seat at www.nhtsa.gov/carseat or by visiting the manufacturer's website. Registering makes it easy for manufacturers to contact you if they discover a safety defect and need to issue a recall. Although recalls are rare, if your car seat manufacturer issues one, they'll fix the problem for free. If you suspect your car seat has a safety defect, report it at www.nhtsa.gov/recalls.

3 most common car seat use mistakes:

- **Loose installation.**
- **Tether not used.**
- **Harness straps too loose.**

