



by [Dr. Latisha Smith](#), Educational Services Director

Hello families! I want to share what has been happening at Tri-County recently. As always, our management team and staff are continually working to provide quality environments, programs, and experiences for all of our children and families.

- Our Child Care Licensing Consultant from IDHHS recently visited the LCC and we are happy to report our new facility has a full license. This is a testament to all of the hard work of everyone at the LCC building!
- Our Home-Based team continues to offer regular socializations for families. They are working to increase attendance so more children and families can enjoy the activities and time together. If you are in the Home-Based Program, please talk to your home visitor about these opportunities. They would love for you to participate!
- The Program Managers are finishing up Infant/Toddler and Pre-K CLASS observations. These observations examine the interactions between children and teaching staff. We use the information from observations to plan professional development and help teachers reflect on their strengths and ways to improve the work they do each day.
- We completed Checkpoint 1 for GOLD documentation. A shout out to all of our home visitors and teachers for collecting and entering data the last few months! Your child's home visitor or teacher will share information to help you understand where your child is at in their learning and development. They will talk about how you can work together to support your child at home and school.

- We are excited to offer monthly Spanish activities and resources for teachers to use in the classroom. Thank you to Irene Sanchez for her time, ideas, and commitment to supporting teachers as they offer a diverse and engaging learning environment for all children. Here is a song children learned at school. Try it at home too!

DLL SPANISH RESOURCES & ACTIVITIES

November 2023

SPANISH SONG "HOLA HOLA"

This educational and entertaining Spanish song will have you class learning basic Spanish greetings with fun characters and movements to help them remember how to say hello to their friends.

Have fun! : <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tKQvpBLiDiM>

LYRICS & TRANSLATION:

Hola hola cómo estás - Hello hello how are you
Estoy muy bien gracias - I am very well thank you
Hola hola cómo estás - Hello hello how are you
Estoy muy bien gracias - I am very well thank you
Buenos días, buenos días - Good morning, good morning
Buenas noches, buenas noches - Good night, good night
Cada día va muy bien - Each day goes very well
Del sol hasta la luna - From the sun until the moon



MOVEMENTS/DANCE:

"Hola Hola" - Wave with right hand, wave with left hand

"Cómo estás" - Bend arms up and face palms up

"Estoy muy bien" - Touch your shoulders with both hands

"Gracias" - Clasp hands together in front of your chest

And finally, we are hiring! We have several positions available within our agency. If you are interested in working with children and families, please visit our website. <https://teamtricounty.org/>

We wish you and your family a safe and enjoyable holiday season. We thank you for your continued involvement with Tri-County. Families and children are at the heart of all we do!



Tri-County Calendar

- December 18, 2023
 - *Policy Council Meeting, 5:30 pm - 6:30 pm*
- December 22, 2023 - January 2, 2024
 - *Closed for Holiday and Winter Break*
- December 27 - 29, 2023
 - *WRAP care available for eligible families*
- January 3, 2024
 - *School resumes*
- January 12, 2024
 - *No School due to Professional Development Day*



Save the Date

Tri-County Head Start

Winter Extravaganza

Friday, January 26th from 5:00 pm - 7:00 pm

More information is coming soon!



Waterloo Schools

by [Ashley Caldwell](#), Program Manager

Highlights & Happenings

I cannot believe that we are so close to a new year. This school year has been flying by, yet each child continues to grow so much. This month classrooms will be focusing on winter months, holidays around the world, story retelling and variation, and numeral recognition and quantifying. Classroom visits from Traveling Tales, Service Learning, and Mindfulness Yoga will round out this month.



Friends in Ms. Becker's classroom at Lowell engaging in building with manipulatives and blocks.

Reminders & Important Dates

- *As the cold weather approaches, please send your child with a coat, hat, and mittens. If you need assistance with obtaining these items, please contact your Head Start Family Service Worker.*
- *No School due to Winter Break: December 22nd - January 2nd. Classes resume January 3, 2024.*

At Home Opportunities

December is a month of reflection and hope as we prepare for the new year. As a family, take time to talk about goals and intentions you have for the New Year. Write them down and post them for everyone to see in your home. Have a wonderful new year!

Learning and Community Center

by [Haley Bradford](#), Program Manager

Monthly Highlights

- In the month of December we will have consolidated care at the Learning and Community Center building on 840 W. 4th Street. Please have your attendance sheets turned in no later than December 6th to your Family Service Worker or Program Manager.
- Conferences are underway and it is important for these to be done in the comfort of your home. Thank you for working with your child's teacher and Family Service Worker to get these scheduled.



Center Happenings

- We currently have Traveling Tales from Waterloo Public Library and Nancy Macomber coming to read to our children monthly!
- Our very own Irene Sanchez has started doing Spanish activities with our classrooms!
- If you have an interest in visiting the classroom please let your child's teacher know!

At-Home Opportunities

- The weather is getting colder and it's time to talk about dressing appropriately. You can use baby dolls, action figures, or whatever you have to practice dressing for different types of weather. You can do this to help your child understand why they need to wear coats, gloves, and hats!

Reminders

- Upon arrival, please remember to drop off your child's items at their cubby in order to prevent items being lost or misplaced. Putting names on their items is helpful to staff when there are multiple children in similar clothing.
- Please bring a photo of your family to your child's classroom to help us make the classroom personalized to them!
- If you have not received your parent access card for the building, please contact Haley Bradford at 319-450-0860.



Lily

by [Dusty Olson](#), Program Manager

Winter is upon us and with it comes challenging weather. Be sure to give yourself enough time for travel with snow and ice and watch KWWL news for delays and closings under Tri-County Head Start Lily Furgerson.

Winter is a time for staying indoors more often. This can lead to increased illness and contagion. Keep your family healthy by washing hands regularly and wiping down doors, handles, light switches, and other surfaces in your home.



At-Home Opportunities



Family-style meals are practiced at our center and are encouraged in the home. This involves passing food around the table, allowing your child to choose how much food is put on their plate, involving them in healthy eating habits and self-help skills, and focusing on meals as family time without the use of devices or television.

Reminders

- Please follow your schedule for drop-off and pick up. This is important for establishing routines for your children and ensures we are covered with staff to provide excellent services. If you have any questions about scheduled hours, please see your child's teachers or Program Manager.
- It is very important for children to have a change of clothes available at the center in case of accidents.
- Please make sure to use your access card whenever you can and sign your child(ren) in and out on our tablets in the classrooms or the Great Room.



Home-Based Program

by [Sarah Ross](#), Program Manager

Greetings from the Home-Based team! We hope everyone enjoyed the Thanksgiving break. As we gear up for December, the Home-Based program has some events we would like to share with our families. On Friday, December 8th we will host a socialization event for Black



Hawk County at the Learning and Community Center (LCC) from 10:00 am - 11:30 am. The theme for this event will be Winter Wonderland. We encourage all of our Home-Based families to come together at these events to share ideas, meet new people, and most importantly, have fun! Our next socialization will be on December 19th. Please keep an eye out for more information as the date gets closer.

This month your Home Visitors will be discussing your child's developmental progress with you. Our program uses Teaching

Strategies GOLD to track children's development in many different areas such as literacy, social-emotional, and language development, to name a few! We are excited to share your child's progress with you as we work together to plan for the next steps in your child's growth and learning.

If you have any concerns regarding how you feel your child is growing and learning, your Home Visitor is always available to listen and provide you with resources that may help! As always, we thank each and every one of you for allowing us to be a part of your journey in nurturing and parenting your children





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.



Nutrition

Happy December! This month our focus food is root crops. Root crops grow underground. Common root crops grown in Iowa include carrots, beets, potatoes and sweet potatoes. All are healthy choices.

Young children are at increased risk for choking. Food, toys and household items can all be choking hazards. Check out these resources to help prevent choking:

- [Choking Prevention Tips](#)
- [Reducing the Risk of Choking at Mealtime](#)
- [December Safe Toys and Gift Month](#)

WIC provides healthy food, nutrition education and breastfeeding support to eligible women and children. Your first WIC appointment

will be in-person. After that the WIC educator will talk to you about future appointment requirements. Some of these appointments can be completed online if you find that to be more convenient. To make an appointment call 1-319-291-2065. For more information: www.operationthreshold.org.

Make sure to read the:

[December Nutrition Newsletter](#)

Includes: Focus Food Information - In-Kind Activities - Menu

Common Choking Hazards



Food

- Chewing gum
- Dried fruit
- Gummy fruit snacks
- Hard candy
- Hard pretzels and chips
- Marshmallows
- Nuts and seeds
- Popcorn
- Round or tube-shaped foods



Toys

- small toys
- toys with strings
- toys with small parts



Household Items

- keys
- coins
- jewelery



Tri-County Clothes Closet

The weather is changing and winter weather will soon be on its way! Be sure to visit the Clothes Closet for your family's clothing needs on Monday- Friday from 9 am - 5 pm. Please see your Family Service Worker or Home Visitor if you would like to stop in!

