



*Supporting. Educating. Advocating. Empowering.
One child, one family, one community partnership at a time.*

Monthly Newsletter

Dear Families:

We are off to a great start in our centers and home-based programs this year! We are looking forward to some exciting events this fall for families. We have our Gifford Farm event on September 13th. This will be followed up by two agency-wide events in October!

We know how important it is for families to be involved in their children's education. We have already had some parents spending time in our classrooms! We will be working on voting in new Policy Council Members. Each site will have voting opportunities and Parent Committee Meetings in September. Policy Council meetings are typically once a month with child care and an evening meal. If you are interested in being active in our Policy Council, please talk to your Family Advocate or Home Visitor for more information.

Family Advocates and Home Visitors will be setting up appointments with each family for a home visit. These home visits provide a time for families to express their strengths, any need for community resources, as well as develop family goals. Family Advocates and Home Visitors have many resources they can share with you.

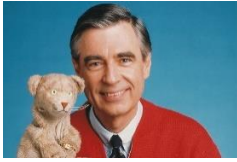
Head Start teachers recently spent a Saturday completing a training called Handwriting Without Tears. They will be incorporating these concepts into their curriculum and lesson plans to assist children in a variety of areas including reading, writing, math, and language. Early Head Start teachers have started training on Infant and Toddler CLASS. This assessment tool helps encourage and develop strong teachers' interactions with children. Preschool CLASS has been utilized by our program for several years in Head Start. We are excited to have the opportunity to implement it in Early Head Start. Home Visitors have been eagerly planning Socialization for the year. Their format will look a little different this fall as we transition into utilizing a curriculum specific for Socializations. This will be an extension to the Growing Great Kids and Growing Great Families curriculum utilized in the home on a weekly basis.

We look forward to continuing to build our relationships with families and getting to see families during our fall events. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to reach out to our staff or Leadership Team!

Sincerely,

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- **Education**



All of us have special ones who loved us into being. Fred Rogers

By: Robin Kolumban, Assistant Director

The above quote is one of my favorites by a gentle man who loved and advocated for children his entire life, Mr. Fred Rogers. If you reflect on his show on PBS, you will remember how it was developed around the idea that children were unique and special people with feelings and ideas that should be shared and discussed.

As we begin a school year, we are striving to build classrooms that honor those principles and are built on strong relationships with students and families. We want to create learning spaces that are positive and happy places to be. We hope to be one of those important people, in partnership with you, that will smile your child into smiling, talk your child into talking and help love them into who they will grow and develop to be. Some of the ways we do this in the classroom are:

- Calling children by their name.
- Learning and playing in small groups or individually to build relationships.
- Using specific, positive praise that describes what children are doing as they play and learn.
- Dancing and singing together throughout the day.
- Reflecting children's families and themselves back to them through photo displays, class books etc.

We want you to be part of our positive classrooms too! Share important events with us through a photo or in conversation. Come in our classrooms and join in our play, songs or activities! If you have a hobby or skill to share, let your classroom teacher know. We love our families! Together we will make our classrooms positive and happy places where learning and growth thrives!

- **Promoting Your Child's Language Development**

As a parent and your child's "first teacher", there are many ways you can promote and increase your child's language development. Here are a few tips you can easily incorporate into your child's day:

- Utilize every opportunity to talk --in the car, while shopping, or eating dinner.
- Read to your child EVERY DAY! (Books, card or notes received in the mail or from school--even the street, a menu and store signs as you're driving)
- Provide your child opportunities to play alone as well as with other children
- While reading to your child, ask questions about what you're reading or have them point out pictures in the story. Ask what happens next in frequently read stories.
- Teach your child songs that are easy to remember.
- Have your child help you think of items for a list: (grocery store; rules at home; chores) Encourage them to "write" their own lists!
- At the grocery store show your child the connection between words and things.
- Show you child how to print their name or simple words.

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- **Health and Nutrition**

8 Ways to Reduce Your Kids Sugar Intake

If you are tired of your kids acting moody and feeling sluggish as a result of too much holiday sugar, then let's re-commit together to take the health of our families up a notch! I'm ready! Sugar doesn't only make kids (and yourself) moody and tired. Too much sugar (more than 25 grams of added sugar a day) also:

- Reduces brain function!
- Leads to over-eating (that one should be obvious)
- Contributes to obesity
- Ruins our sensitivity to insulin and contributes to Type 2 Diabetes
- Promotes inflammation
- Can lead to headaches (this happens to me!!)

While it can be argued that all sugars break down into the same molecular structure, some sugars are worse than others. By worse, I mean, they offer nothing in return for you nutritionally. Fruit sugar is accompanied by nutrients and fiber, while table sugar and high fructose corn syrup have nothing of value except calories. By fruit sugar I just mean fruit! Puree it or blend it to incorporate into some of your favorite baked goods and smoothies. It's best when trying to limit your kids intake of sugar to reduce table sugar, high fructose corn syrup, powdered sugar and brown sugar. Honey is delicious in limited amounts, and contains some nutrients. But fruit sugar is ideal.

We have 12 ways you can reduce your family's consumption of sugar, that should not lead to complaining or hassle!

1. **Read labels!** Similar products can result in hugely different amounts of sugar. Instant Oatmeal (the flavored kind), granola bars, cereals, muffins, and yogurts are great examples. Often, you can continue to purchase these kid favorites by just changing the brand you buy.
2. **Bake more often.** If your kids love cookies like mine do, there is no reason to eliminate them entirely. Baking at home will allow you to use less sugar, no matter what- or even replace all the sugar with pureed fruit.
3. **Eliminate sugar added beverages-** Altogether, period. And don't look back! There is no reason to have sugar sweetened soda pop or sugar added juices in your home. Sugar sweetened beverages is being held responsible for the majority of added sugar in American's diet today! That is one statistic you do not want to be a part of!
4. **Plan your meals and snacks.** It's true! When you plan your meals and snacks, that urgent feeling of finding anything to eat, no matter the healthfulness of it is eliminated. If you plan for mangoes and almonds for lunch, you'll have mangoes and almonds for lunch! If you don't plan for it, vending machines and fast food await you, full of their sugars and chemicals.
5. **Count sugar!** There are constant studies being released that show by simply tracking food intake, people will eat better. It's that simple. You don't even have to decide you will eat better, just decide to track it.
6. **Intentional Trade-offs.** If your kids can identify they have a craving for something sweet, offer fruit. Our Japanese exchange students would tell us they would have fruit for dessert after dinner. Never would they have pie and ice cream! It was just how they grew up, and they didn't need the heavy desserts we are used to.
7. **Know the hidden sugar offenders.** Just knowing these will make you a smarter shopper. The hidden sugar offenders are those items that you wouldn't think need sugar, and the homemade version either contains very little or no added sugar. They include: Spaghetti sauce, breads, hamburger and hot dog buns, medications, lunch meats, and sometimes canned beans and vegetables! Make your own, or opt for the brands that do not include added sugar in their ingredient lists.
8. **Change their super sweet sugar tolerance.** As your family reduces their sugar intake and increases the whole foods in their diet, their tolerance for sugar returns to its normal and natural state. That means foods that are high in sugar will start to taste- TOO SWEET! This change is gradual but it definitely happens. If you can

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commit to keeping added sugar under 25 grams a day- and less if possible, than kids will begin to desire less sweet foods.

Reference:

Super Healthy Kids. 8 Way to Reduce Your Kids Sugar Intake. <http://www.superhealthykids.com/blog-posts/12-ways-to-reduce-your-kids-sugar-intake.php>.

Crispy Baked Chimichangas

Instructions:

- 6 tortillas
 - 1 egg white
 - 1 can refried beans (fat free)
 - 1 can El Paso Salsa de Chile Fresco
 - 2 tsp Oil
 - Shredded Cheese
 - Desired toppings: Lettuce, tomato, cilantro, salsa, sour cream, plain yogurt
1. Add egg whites to a bowl and mix with whisk.
 2. Add beans to the middle of your tortilla and sprinkle with cheese
 3. Begin folding your tortillas. Start with one side and fold up an inch and then fold sides and then add more egg white where you made the last fold.
 4. Flash-fry chimichangas by placing in a pan of 2 tsp oil on medium-high heat. Heat on both sides for 1 minute until golden brown. Place chimichangas onto a pan covered in foil, seam-side down.
 5. Bake 350 for 12-15 minutes.

- **Upcoming Events**

- [Lift Up Sarpy](https://liftupsarpycounty.org/events/) - <https://liftupsarpycounty.org/events/>
- [Free or Low Cost Activity](https://www.gosarpy.com/) - <https://www.gosarpy.com/> or <https://familyfuninomaha.com/omaha-attractions/free-family-activities-in-omaha/>
- [Agency Event – Like Gifford Farms or Fall Festival](#)
- [Libraries](http://www.bellevuelibrary.org/calendar.htm) - <http://www.bellevuelibrary.org/calendar.htm>, <https://www.papillion.org/411/Calendar-Events>, <http://cityoflavista.org/calendar.aspx?CID=17>, <https://www.gretnapubliclibrary.org/kids/special-eventscontests/>, <http://libraries.ne.gov/springfield/library-calendar/>

- **Parent Education Opportunities**

- [Children’s Hospital and Medical Center Parenting U](https://www.childrensomaha.org/services/parenting-u/) - <https://www.childrensomaha.org/services/parenting-u/>

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- Boystown - <https://www.boystown.org/locations/nebraska/Pages/csp-classes.aspx>
- CSI Training- <https://childsaving.org/services/parenting-classes/parent-education.html>

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