



EOAC Head Start/Early Head Start

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EOAC Head Start/Early Head Start
500 Franklin Ave
Waco, Texas 76701

OUR COMMUNITY

Inside this issue:

Holiday Reading	2
Holiday Eating	2
Math Activity	2
Group Activity	3
Writing Activity	3
Language Activity	3
Moms to Be....	6

The theme for the month of December is **OUR COMMUNITY**. Though the school days are few this month, each week is packed with educational and fun filled activities. This time of the year our families may celebrate the holiday seasons of Christmas, Hanukkah and Kwanzaa.

No one does the holiday season quite like Americans/McLennan and Falls counties. We break out the holiday music, commercials, displays and decorations even before the Halloween candy is devoured. Christmas is one of the biggest and brightest times of the year in America, es-

pecially for children.

It is important to show the children there is more than one way to celebrate the holiday.

England-Santa/Father Christmas looks much like his American counterpart. People write letters to Santa and burn on a holiday fire, to send up to him; leave out "mince pies" and sherry for Santa on Christmas Eve.

Germany-Two celebrations on December 6 and 25th. Children clean and put their shoes outside the door to receive Nikolaus' gifts: oranges, nuts and chocolate. On Christmas Eve, Christkind delivers gifts to children in the



Christmas around the world...

more traditional sense of Christmas as we know it.

Sweden-Santa is called Jultomten and arrives in person on Christmas Eve to deliver gifts.

Where ever you are and whatever you call the man in red, one thing remains the same-the holiday season is a time of friends, family, food and fun.

Happy Celebrations!!

Special Dates of Interest:

- * December 8-Ornaments with Dad
- * December 18th-Home Visits End and Early Release at 12pm
- * Dec 21-31 Winter Break with no school
- * January 4th-Staff Dev.
- * Jan. 5th-Children return

Holiday Safety Tips....

The holidays are a wondrous time for a baby. The twinkling lights, warm fires, incredible smells drifting from the kitchen, pretty gifts topped with elaborate bows—what baby could resist? Suggestions to prepare for a safe holi-

day season:

Christmas tree-secure tree in the stand, baby can pull on the braches and topple the tree; don't use tinsel, glass ornaments; never leave baby alone near tree.

Holiday Parties-Designate

caregivers to care for baby; careful about party foods, some might now be appropriate for your child; if visiting, have small-breakable objects moved up high; watch for plants, especially mistletoe, holly and poinsettias which are toxic.

Suggestions for Holiday Reading...

Books make great gifts for children any time of the year. This holiday season, why not give the gift of reading to a child in your life? The holiday-themed books are sure to get your children into the spirit of the season and carry their enthusiasm for reading into the new year.

Max's Christmas by: Rosemary Wells; The



All Time favorite holiday movies-
"It's a Wonderful Life," "The Christmas Story."

Polar Express by Chris Van Allsburg; Dream Snow by Eric Carle; Mooseltoe by Margie Palatini; Chanukah by Sarah Wilson; Holiday by Angela Santomero; My First Kwanzaa Book by Deborah M. Newton Chocolate; Gaspard and Lisa's Christmas Surprise by Anne Gutmand and Geortg Hallensleben; Barbie: The Nut-

cracker by Golden Books; The Poky Little Puppy's First Christmas by Golden Books Little and Justine Korman-Fontes.



Healthy Holiday Eating...

Food is an important part of the holiday season. Whether your taste runs to old standbys or to something new, it's easy for normal eating patterns to take a backseat at this time of year. Here are some tips to help family members enjoy special foods while keeping a balanced and healthy diet:

.What matters most is total amount of types of food you eat over several

days; choose fewer foods that are high in fat or sugar, while selecting more fruits and vegetables, which are packed with important vitamins and minerals; before a holiday event, eat a snack or light meal; it is important to not let children eat whatever they want during this festive time of the year.

More healthy tips: eat smaller por-

tions of food; eat slowly; after a meal go for a walk with family and friends to see holiday displays in your neighborhood; avoid fast foods.

Food and holiday gatherings go hand in hand. Eat in moderation, exercise and that will be a great recipe for holiday fun for the whole family.

Holiday Math Activity for Children....

With some creative thinking, math can be introduced into the many parts of the holiday hustle and bustle:

.Candy Cane Patterns-give children a handout of a candy cane with ten stripes or more. Label the first few stripes with a letter or number indicating a color to fill in. Organize the color codes in simple patterns. A pattern might be red, white, red and white. Another-red, white, white, red.

Ask the children to figure out what colors will come next in the candy cane stripe pattern. Once they have solved the pattern problem in the holiday math activity, they can follow through by coloring the rest of their candy cane picture.

.Come up with a list of common types of holiday cookies and have them vote for their favorite. Tally votes and do a bar chart showing most/least popular.



Holiday Group Activities....

Giant Jingle Bell Garland Race- this fun group project will be a great way to ring in the holidays! Groups of 4 children sit in a horizontal row at a long table and give each group a sturdy piece of holiday colored yarn. At one end, tie a knot. Give each team of preschoolers a basket full of large, colorful jingle bells to string onto the garland.

First child at end of string will place the first bell onto the garland.

Second child will slide it along his section of string, then the third pre-

schooler will slide the jingle bell along her section of string. Finally, the little one at the knotted end will move the jingle bell to the knot. Continue until the garland is complete and all jingle bells have been used.

Another great group game idea would be to turn the jingle bell garland activity into a race game by timing the teams and awarding the group who finishes first! Jingle bell garland will also make a great holiday decoration for the families.



Writing Activity during the Winter Break.....

Support your toddler's writing development during winter break by keeping materials for writing and drawing handy. Children take pride in their work and like to have their attempts acknowledged at home....what a fun time to have displayed "works" when family and friends stop by during the holidays.

Drawing is a complex task that in-

volves grasping a crayon or marker, holding the paper so it does not move, and applying just the right amount of pressure with the marker—all at the same time. As toddlers develop and practice these skills, they become better writers and drawers.

Older toddlers like to use "writing" in their play. So have plenty of chalk, crayons, and pencils on hand.

Older toddlers also become aware that written symbols, such as letter or pictures, represent real objects.

This awareness lays the foundation for them to become not only writers, but readers as well. In order to read and write, toddlers must first understand that letters stand for sounds and that groups of letters together stand for words.

Language/Listening Activity....

Toddlers who hear lots of lively, interesting talk over the winter break, and all year long, are more likely to develop a rich vocabulary. They learn language best when adults make eye contact with them and talk about topics of interest to them. Toddler's language development is also supported when he hears his own words repeated back to him and



Having fun listening and learning at home and school.

when adults expand on what he says.

Toddlers can understand the words she hears but may not be able to name or describe what she sees and does. For exam-

ple, your toddler may not be able to name everyone in her playgroup, but when her caregiver asks her, "Where's Nicole? Where's Hector?" she points accurately.

Don't assume toddlers aren't listening when they are playing. It's the work of toddlers to explore and play. They still may be listening even as they are pouring, stacking, or swinging.

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Head Start

500 Franklin Avenue
Waco, Texas 76701

Phone: 254-753-0331

Fax: 555-555-5555

E-mail: someone@example.com

Your are an Essential Part of The
Team!!

EOAC Head Start/
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The Family of EOAC Head Start/Early Head
Start extends our best wishes for this Holiday
Season and New Year

Our Centers will close for our Winter Break at
12 Noon on December 18, 2009. Centers will
reopen for the Spring Semester of January 4,
2010 for Staff Development (staff in attendance
only) Children will start back January 5, 2010
during regular hours.

See you in 2010!!

Moms to Be.....

A survey in Parents Magazine recently shared that Books are Moms' top choice to de-stress.

Survey results found that moms' number one way of dealing with stress was through reading. 19% of the moms chose reading as their favorite stress management activity. 11% preferred cooking a good meal instead of simply eating it as a way to relax. Retail therapy and girls' nights out tied at 13% a piece, and the sweetest choice—chocolate therapy—received a solid 15%.

Motherhood is often a stressful juggling act, and it's not a surprise that work, raising kids, and making time for family activities cause a lot of moms to suffer parental burnout. The American Psychological Association recognizes that learning to deal with stress effectively is a worthwhile ef-

fort. The APA recommends ten minutes of daily personal time at least two or three times a week.

Book suggestions for Moms to Be...

.The Girlfriends' Guide to Pregnancy: Or everything your doctor won't tell you, by: Vicki Iovine

.What to Expect When You're Expecting, Third Edition by-Heidi Eisenberg Murkoff

.What to Expect the First year, Second Edition, by Heidi Eisenberg Murkoff

.In the Womb by Garrett Brown

