

# HEADS UP

Lake Geauga United Head Start's Monthly News Bulletin

December 2021



## Happy Holidays



### Learning That's Hands-On Holiday Fun

By: Reading Rockets

#### Dates to Remember...

#### Head Start Closings

##### Winter Break-

December 20- January 3

##### Martin Luther King Jr.

Day- January 17

##### President's Day-

February 21

##### Spring Break-

March 21-25

##### Easter Break-

April 18

Last Day of School- May

26th

Focus on reading readiness and enjoy winter holidays at the same time with these simple activities you can incorporate into your preschooler's daily routine:

- \* Winter's chill offers a different medium for writing and drawing. Let your children "write" on frosted windows or in the snow.
- \* On short trips to the store or holiday vacations to visit family or friends, play this game to help your preschooler recognize different sounds. Say "We're going to the store. What sound do you hear in the beginning of the word store?" (or, "What are we bringing to grandma's house that starts with /g/?")
- \* In conversation about holiday celebrations, introduce interesting and new words to your preschooler. For example, "Dad got a plethora of ties last year. Since he has so many ties, let's get him a different gift." or "I like our family tradition of baking cookies together. It is something we do every year that I really enjoy."
- \* Let your preschooler have a hand in holiday list-making. Even if it is just sitting with you as you write a shopping list, your preschooler will benefit from exposure to the power and practicality of literacy.
- \* Set aside time just for reading. Curl up on the couch together and read aloud an old favorite or check out books about another culture's winter celebrations.

# Curriculum Corner

## 7 Family Time and Learning Tips for the Holidays,

by Laura Bay from [pbs.org](http://pbs.org)

The holiday season is here! Like most families, my household is already in a flurry of activity—decorating, purchasing gifts, preparing for guests and baking cookies and pies. This is also a special time for family fun and togetherness. But with the holiday rush, the to-do list seems to grow exponentially by the minute. In the busyness of the season, it's important to keep learning and quality time with family at the top of the list while your kids are home on break from school. Research shows that families who spend quality time together and connect activities at home to what children are learning in school have a stronger emotional bond and better communication—and the kids do better academically.

The holiday season also provides great opportunities to expose children to new ideas and information, reinforce skills and knowledge, and encourage creativity, which supports their success in school. As you are shopping, baking and celebrating special traditions, here are some ideas to mix quality time with learning: **Cook Together** — Include your children in meal prep and baking for holiday gatherings. It's a great way to have fun and teach kids about cooking and nutrition. While you're cooking, you can practice math and reading skills—and demonstrate cool science concepts through various cooking techniques. **Make Holiday Greeting Cards and Gifts** — Have your kids write holiday cards or letters to family and friends. It's a great opportunity for children to practice their handwriting, as well as their grammar, spelling and creative writing skills. Also, making gifts at home is a way to encourage creativity. **Explore Your City** — When you feel a bit of cabin fever, plan a family outing. Many local parks and zoos feature light displays and other festivities to celebrate the season. You can also visit a local museum and historic sites, or see a play at a local theater. **Play Games** — Playing board and trivia games during holiday get-togethers is a good way to enjoy quality time together. Look for ideas online. There are a variety of games—for all ages—that are fun and educational as well.

**Enjoy the Great Outdoors** — Play with your kids in the backyard or at a local park. If it snows, build a snowman or hit the slopes! You can find fun outdoor games that promote physical activity.

**And Read Every Day** — Take your kids to the local library and borrow books to read over the winter break. And spend time reading together—it helps children develop their literacy skills and excel academically.

Family schedules can be grueling during the holidays, but remember the most important part of the season is spending time with the people you love. And when you add learning to your quality time, it will enhance the special moments with your children and support their success.

# What is In-Kind?

Head Start is a federally funded program. As a condition of funding, the program must generate in-kind dollars. “In-Kind” is described as anything given to Head Start that would normally be paid for and is an allowable expense; such as donated time, materials, services, space, etc. For every dollar received from the funding sources, 25 cents must be generated from in-kind donations. The list below provides examples of activities or donations that could count toward in-kind match.

How can you help with In-Kind?

- ◆ Complete At-Home Family Engagement Activities that are sent home each month
- ◆ Complete At-Home Activities that are sent home each week
- ◆ Read with your children and complete the reading log each month
- ◆ Complete the monthly at home calendar based on the time you spend working with your child
- ◆ Share a hobby or talent virtually via Zoom
- ◆ Become a member of Policy Council or an Advisory Committee
- ◆ Attend parent meetings virtually via Zoom
- ◆ Sign up for Ready Rosie and watch videos that can provide fun and educational ideas for your child.

Contact your child’s center if you are interested in volunteering! Thank you, parents, for your continuing involvement and commitment to your child’s education!

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## Family Engagement At-Home Activities

In December, one family engagement activity will be sent home for you to complete with your child. These activities are designed to be fun and low stress for you and your child to complete together. Encourage your child to be creative, enjoy your time together and most importantly, have fun! We will be having a **Christmas Caroling on Zoom; Thursday December, 16th**. Information about the activity will be sent home.

The materials sent home are yours to keep and you are encouraged to continue doing the activities and reading the books for a long time to come. Please remember to complete the bottom of the activity form and send it back to your child’s teacher- this is how we will keep track of your participation. If you have any questions do not hesitate to contact your child’s center!

### Upcoming Family Engagement Activities:

***Christmas Caroling on Zoom***

December 16, 2021





Hi Families,

This is an exciting year! We will be partnering with the educational resource ReadyRosie to share powerful games and expert videos that support you and your child in his/her learning. Through our partnership with ReadyRosie you will have free access to their learning website and tools.

**You will receive a text or email that will say “your child’s teacher is inviting you to join ReadyRosie.”**

Tap on Sign up for ReadyRosie twice and follow these steps:

1. Choose preferred language
2. Enter your first and last name
3. Choose how you want to receive notifications text/ email/ both. Enter mobile number and create a password.
4. You’re in! You will now receive weekly messages with activity ideas!

**Ask your Family Advocate if you need assistance.**

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### It’s Cold Outside...

We like to take the kids outside for gym time if weather permits. Playing outdoors promotes physical development and well-being. This is because outdoor play encourages the use of the whole body by offering a safe space to run, jump, and exercise. Please remember to be sure your little one is wearing a winter coat, gloves, and a winter hat. Thank you for your support.





# 25 Christmas Books for little learners



@lgheadstart

Check out our website for information on upcoming events and helpful resources!

[www.lguhs.org](http://www.lguhs.org)

# **Build Healthy Mealtime Habits**

By: Wendy Kirby RDN, LD

Preschoolers love to copy what their caregivers do. They mimic caregiver's table manners, willingness to try new foods and preferences. Take a break from the TV or phone and build healthy mealtime habits together.

## **1. Make meal enjoyable**

Eat meals with your children whenever possible. Let them help you prepare the meal. Make conversation about somethings that made them laugh during the day. Keep mealtime upbeat and stress free.

## **2. Try to get two food groups in a snack**

Pair pretzels with hummus or nut butter on a mini bagel

## **3. Keep things positive**

Talk about the color, feel or flavor of the foods so they sound appealing to your preschooler. Discourage others from making negative comments about food during meals.

## **4. Develop taste buds**

Don't give up on a food if they disapprove of the food at first. It takes a dozen tries for a child to accept a new food

## **5. Visit the grocery stores together**

Shopping can teach your preschooler about food and healthy eating- talk about where foods come from and how they grow

## **6. Help them know when they are full**

Encourage your child to stop eating when he/she is full rather than when the plate is clean. When your child is not interested in the meal, excuse them from the table.

## **7. Reward with attention, not treats**

Rewarding children with sweet desserts or snacks may encourage them to think that treats are better than other foods. Comfort and reward with care and praise, not food

## **Fruit kebabs Snacks**

Cut up fresh fruit of your choice and stuff onto a wooden skewer. Serve with vanilla greek yogurt for a dip (this snack offers two food groups- dairy and fruit)