



A note from the office:

December 2025

"OMG! Santa! I know him"

Reminders from the office this month.

- By HHS regulations, every child is required to have 2 nap blankets or 1 crib sheet and a blanket for rest time. Please remember to take them home on Friday to be washed and returned on Monday. Extra clothes need to be in every child's cubby for accidents or spills. Please check them to make sure they are weather appropriate.
- Please check your child's cubby in their classroom for take home art and your family folder by the office for notes from the office.

Christmas fun is ahead! Please watch your child's classroom door for sign-up sheets to let us know if your child will be here around the holidays. We will be putting up our wish tree by the fish tank. Please find a tag with your child's class, take the tag, purchase the gift, wrap it and place it back under the tree. All classrooms will open up the gifts at their classroom party on **December 23rd**. Let your child's teacher know if you would like to bring a special snack for their party!

We are having our first ever center-wide Christmas caroling afternoon. This will be on **Friday, December 19th** from 3:00 - 4:00pm. The event will take place in the lunchroom with snacks and refreshments to follow. All kids 1 year old and up to school-agers will participate. We are looking forward to a wonderful afternoon.

We hope you all enjoy Christmas and safe travels to anyone traveling.

Miss Erica & Miss Whitney



Backpack Connection Series

About this Series

The Backpack Connection Series was created by TACSEI to provide a way for teachers and parents/caregivers to work together to help young children develop social emotional skills and reduce challenging behavior. Teachers may choose to send a handout home in each child's backpack when a new strategy or skill is introduced to the class. Each Backpack Connection handout provides information that helps parents stay informed about what their child is learning at school and specific ideas on how to use the strategy or skill at home.

The Pyramid Model



The Pyramid Model is a framework that provides programs with guidance on how to promote social emotional competence in all children and design effective interventions that support young children who might have persistent challenging behavior. It also provides practices to ensure that children with social emotional delays receive intentional teaching. Programs that implement the Pyramid Model are eager to work together with families to meet every child's individualized learning and support needs. To learn more about the Pyramid Model, please visit ChallengingBehavior.org.

More Information

More information and resources on this and other topics are available on our website, ChallengingBehavior.org.



ChallengingBehavior.org

How to Help Your Child Recognize & Understand Anger

Brooke Brogle, Alyson Jiron & Jill Giacomini

As a parent, you might find that calming your angry child can be one of the biggest challenges of parenting. There are many things that make children angry, and children feel anger in different ways — just as adults do. Perhaps you were taught as a child that being angry was not “allowed” or that anger was “bad.” It is important to teach your child that it is normal to get angry. Often, the first step parents must take is to set aside what they themselves were taught as children, and choose to teach their own child something new. As with all emotions, when you help your child recognize and name his anger you have helped him take the first step toward being able to control his own behavior. When your child is able to recognize the feeling and say, “I’m angry!” it reduces the chances that he will act out.



Try This at Home

- Notice and label when you, your child or others are angry. You might say:
- About yourself: “I am feeling angry in my body. My heart is beating fast and I feel like a volcano inside. I am going to take some deep breaths to calm down.”
- About your child: “I can see that you are angry! Your hands are making a fist and your eyes are big.”
- About others: “I see that little girl is angry. I wonder what happened. What do you think might help her to calm her body?”
- Encourage your child to move. Just as adults release stress at the gym or by going for a run, physical movement helps children to change their body experience. Teach your child to yell into a pillow or push on the wall. However, don’t encourage your child to hit others or hit objects (we want children to let go of their anger without hitting or hurting others).
- Read books about being angry. Talk with your child about what the character is feeling and experiencing and come up with ideas that might help. You can find many books and activities to help your child learn about emotions at: <http://challengingbehavior.fmhi.usf.edu/docs/booknook/ChildrensBookList.pdf>
- Calming down is a skill that children must learn. Young children do not understand the words “calm down.” Tucker Turtle is a story that helps children understand how to calm down. It can be a great tool for teaching this skill. Download and print Tucker Turtle for free at: <http://challengingbehavior.fmhi.usf.edu/Pyramid/intervention/TTYC/tools.html>.

- Puppets and toys are great to use for role playing situations that your child understands. “Wow, this lion is very angry. Her sister took her toys! She is stomping her feet and roaring very loudly! Let’s help her to calm down.”



Practice at School

Children can become angry at school for a variety of reasons. Teachers help children understand that everyone feels angry and shows the class positive ways to calm down, such as taking a deep breath or finding a quiet place by reading stories, or role playing with puppets. Children are given the opportunity to practice different techniques and find a solution that works for them. By encouraging children to find a solution that helps them not feel angry, teachers help children feel in control of their emotions and confident in their ability to handle difficult emotions.



The Bottom Line

Anger is a feeling all parents and children experience from time to time. The goal is not to try to get rid of anger in your child or yourself, but rather to teach your child useful and acceptable ways to manage her feelings. You can teach your child that anger is a natural, healthy emotion and like other emotions (i.e. joy, sadness, frustration), anger needs to be expressed appropriately. A child who has been taught to recognize and understand anger in herself and others will be less likely to express her anger in aggressive and destructive ways. The ability to manage feelings and solve problems is a life-long skill necessary for children to be happy and healthy.



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Weekly Themes:

12/1 - 12/5	Winter Wonderland
12/8 - 12/12	Candyland Christmas
12/15 - 12/19	Whoville
12/22 - 12/26	Christmas Fun!
12/22 - 12/26	Welcome 2026!

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Teacher Fun Fact

What is your favorite Christmas movie?

Miss Erica: Elf
 Miss Whitney: National Lampoon Christmas Vacation
 Miss Jessica: Home Alone
 Miss Becky: Christmas Vacation
 Miss Shantel: Home Alone
 Miss Yesenia: Home Alone
 Miss Soraya: How the Grinch Stole Christmas
 Miss Lexi: Home Alone
 Miss Katrina: Home Alone

Miss Chloe: A Christmas Story
 Miss Izabelle: The Grinch
 Miss Shelby: The Polar Express
 Miss Mya: Elf
 Miss Anna: The Grinch

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Michael	Violet	Riley
Mya	Enver	Jakaris
Brantley	Reid	Alijah
Nigel	Kathy	Nubian
Parker	Vivian	Mara
Eric	Eric	Lily
Monica	Masen	Miss Kali
William	Greyson	Miss Breonna
Selena	Lilyana	Miss Makayla
	Jakari	

Photos of the Month



Health & Fitness Tips:

TIPS TO KEEP YOUR CHILDREN HEALTHY IN WINTERS

LOAD UP ON VITAMIN C

Foods rich in vitamin C can shorten the length of a cold



Vitamin C **reduces the duration** of children's colds by 14%

That means an average of **4 fewer sick days** a year

TAKE VITAMIN D

This vitamin regulates the immune system and prevent colds

Kids who take **1,200 mg** a day all winter get the seasonal flu **58% less**



WASH HANDS

Careful washing with soap and water kills most germs



Only **28%** of kids know how to wash their hands properly

Hands should be scrubbed for **at least 20 seconds** - as long as it takes to sing "Twinkle Twinkle Little Star"

SLEEP WELL

Plenty of sleep helps kids fight illness

Toddlers need at least **13 hours** of sleep per day

School-age kids require **10-11 hours**



USE A HUMIDIFIER

Maintain an ambient temperature which is neither too cold nor too hot.



WINTER WEAR

Wear enough layers of clothing including socks and gloves.



Santa
says...



Jump for joy
Hop on one foot
Do a dance
Pretend to ride a sleigh
Sit down
Stand up
Make a snow angel on the floor
Jump up
Spin around
Do a jumping jack
Pose like a Christmas tree
Reach for the stars
March like a toy soldier
Say ho-ho-ho
Pretend to throw a snowball
Hop like a bunny
Clap your hands
Play air guitar
Smell your feet
Walk backwards



CELERY REINDEER SNACKS



These Celery Reindeer Snacks are a fun and delicious twist on a familiar favorite. Easily turn a popular, kid-friendly snack into a festive treat with a few simple ingredients.

INGREDIENTS:

- Celery Sticks
- Peanut Butter
- Nutella
- Pretzel Twists
- Fresh Cranberries or red M&Ms
- Candy Eyes

DIRECTIONS:

- Cut celery into sticks that are 3-4 inches long. Spread peanut butter and Nutella along the center of the stalk.
- Break the pretzel twists in half. Arrange them at the top of the celery stick to form the antlers.
- Add two candy eyes below the antlers, then place a cranberry beneath each pair of eyes for the reindeer's nose.

Care-A-Lot

It's the most wonderful time of the year!

We will be getting into the holiday spirit this month. We will be listening to Christmas music and making cute Christmas gifts. We will be offering a lot of tummy time, working on rolling over and learning to sit up. We enjoy feeling different textures with our sensory squares.

Aracyn is starting to sit up with little help and is already wanting to hold her own bottle. **Liberty** has been rolling over in the classroom.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Miss Jessica

Bees & Ducks

Happy holidays to all!

This month we will be learning and talking all about Christmas! We have a lot of crafts to make, Christmas stories to read, and Christmas songs to sing.

Save the date for our Christmas caroling coming up on **December 19th** from 3-4PM. Please watch for more information on when the Bees & Ducks will carol! Join us to sing, and have cookies and drinks!

We are practicing keeping our hands & feet to ourselves and showing kindness to our friends and teachers. **KC** has been doing such a great job sharing with his friends. **Aiyana** is taking small steps.

We hope this month brings joy to all!

Miss Yesenia & Miss Soraya

Dragonflies

Merry Christmas!

This month we will be doing a lot of Christmas crafts so be prepared for all the fun. We will be doing math by counting M&M's, as well as color match them. We love to go over the days of the week and months of the year at circle time. We will focus on learning the alphabet and what letter our name starts with.

We plan to have a PJ and Movie Day on **December 23rd**, so wear your Christmas jammies.

I am so proud of **Eric**. He saw a friend was feeling sad and went to them and gave them a hug to help them feel better. What kindness! **Grayson** is always great at helping his friends out in the classroom and sharing his toys. Way to go!

Happy Holidays! See you in 2026.

Miss Katrina

Disney

Hello, happy holidays!

We will be doing fun Christmas artwork. Please watch for it hanging in the classroom! We are loving watching the babies grow and learn new things. We are exploring different textures - on the toys we play with and table foods we eat. We will be working on things like balance, standing up, moving around objects, taking steps on our own and even walking.

Some things to smile about are **Josiphene** is crawling all around and has started standing up. **Arya** is taking steps all by herself. Way to go!

Merry Christmas!

Miss Becky & Miss Shantel

Butterflies

We are so excited for Santa to come to town this month!

We are excited for Christmas caroling this month and hope you can join us for our fun-filled event. Please save the date of **December 19th**, which will be our center-wide caroling.

We plan to play with snow in our sensory bin. We have fun arts and crafts planned for Christmas. We have noticed some of our friends are really starting to use their words when it comes to letting a friend know to "please stop" if they are feeling bothered.

We hope you have a Merry Christmas and get to spend a lot of time with family and friends.

Miss Lexi & Miss Jana

Caterpillars

Happy Holidays! I can't wait to teach & learn with the kiddos.

We are so excited for all our fun-filled crafts and activities this month to celebrate CHRISTMAS! We will have fun celebrating with our themes: Winter Wonderland, Whoville, Candyland Christmas and Christmas Fun! We will be practicing for our Christmas caroling on **December 19th** from 3-4pm. Save the date and join us for a fun-filled afternoon.

We are working as a class to nicely take turns with our friends by setting a timer. We are also practicing using our walking feet in the classroom, hallways, to and from the lunchroom, and outside time.

Merry Christmas!

Miss Chloe

Turtles

Hello winter!

We are mainly focusing as a class on taking turns. We will use our timers to learn patience and taking turns. This really helps with the transitions between peers in the classroom. We are also practicing using our manners, some examples are "please" and "thank you". We will be doing tracing of our names and our numbers. This helps us build up our fine motor skills.

Jordan is a kind friend. He is always making sure someone has a buddy to play with. **Jacob** is always eager to do art and also to watch his friends create masterpieces. He is their biggest hype man.

Snow has officially made its presence, sometime this month we will be bundling up and heading out to have fun in the snow. Remember to send all your child's snow gear.

See you in 2026!

Miss Izabelle

Frogs

Sending you all warm winter wishes!

This month the kids will be learning fun holiday songs, and making super cute winter theme art. We will continue to work on our letter recognition and grow in our abilities to count. Miss Shelby is excited to show her friends her fizzy snow science experiment and have fun with an indoor snowball fight.

We have a couple of number wizards in our class. **Malcolm** and **Masen** are doing so good with counting and have been practicing counting up to 20, sometimes going past that. Way to go!

We are always working on using our words to tell each other how we feel or what we want. Examples are asking a friend nicely to play or share, along with if they don't want to share right away saying, "That's ok, then we will set a timer, and I will wait and take my turn".

Let it snow, let it snow, let it snow.

Miss Shelby

Lizards

Welcome to the most wonderful time of the year!

We are going to be focusing on learning our colors and shapes. Along with that, we will be working on sitting nicely for circle time and keeping our hands to ourselves while using only nice touches. We plan to make slime this month, and the kids love that.

Save the date - Our Christmas Caroling event will be **December 19th!** We are practicing and hope you will be able to join us for a fun-filled afternoon. More information will be sent home.

Ridge and **Olivia** are both so good at sharing toys and playing nicely making sure everyone is happy in the classroom. Way to go.

Wishing you a very Merry Christmas and a bright new year.

Miss Mya

School-Agers

"Sleigh bells ring, are you listening?"

Please let the office know if your child's schedule will change while they are out of school for Christmas break.

We are so excited to be able to share our Christmas songs with all of you at the center-wide Christmas Caroling, which will be on **December 19th**. Watch for more information to be sent home. We hope you will all join us for the fun-filled afternoon.

We have noticed this past month a couple of great helpers. One is **Riley**. **Riley** has been helping the younger school-agers by guiding them to where they need to be. Also, **Eloise** has been a great help in the classroom and always listens to instructions. We appreciate that!

We hope everyone has a great holiday and spends a lot of time family and friends.

Pre-K

Season's Greetings!

This month we are continuing our clothing study. We will talk about how clothes are made, where we buy them from, their importance in special jobs, and how they differ in different countries.

With snow & cold weather here, please bring a coat, snow pants, snow boots, hat & gloves for your child to wear outside. We plan to go out as much as possible.

This past month we have seen fun times between friends. **Cadmin** and **Mara** worked together to make patterns with gems on the light table and had so much fun! **Xander** and **Greyson** played in the water table with water and made a game collecting and finding all the gems at the bottom!

As a class we continue to work on taking a break when we need to calm down. During this time, we talk and practice taking deep breaths. We will utilize a volume chart to help us use our inside voices.

Happy Holidays!

Miss Anna

December

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
30	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14 	15	16	17	18	19  Christmas Caroling / 3-4pm	20
21	22 NO SCHOOL Sioux City Schools (12/22 - 1/2)	23 DRAGONFLIES PJ & Movie Day	24 Building Blocks is CLOSED today	25  Building Blocks is CLOSED today	26	27
28	29	30	31	1  Building Blocks is CLOSED today	2	3