

# MOUNTAIN STATES EARLY HEAD START NEWS

Mountain States Early Head Start, a program of Jannus, Inc.

January/February 2023

## Coping with the Winter Blues

Written by Larissa Bennett-Family Consultant

For some of us, this can be a challenging season. Here are a few tips to keep the wintertime blues at bay.

### Exercise

Physical activity like walking, yoga, weight lifting, and dancing can boost health, brain activity, and relieve stress.

### Healthy Eating

Whole grains can increase energy, while fruits and vegetables can help with a mood lift.

### Stimulate Your Senses

Lighting a candle, painting a picture, or even playing with play dough can be calming.

Find more quick tips from Mountain States Early Head Start by following our Facebook Page:

[facebook.com/MtnStatesEarlyHeadStart/](https://facebook.com/MtnStatesEarlyHeadStart/)

## I SPY!

It has been a snowy winter! See if you and your child can find five snowflakes hidden throughout this newsletter.



Painting a picture can be a calming activity to help you cope with the Winter Blues

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Cases of common colds, COVID, and RSV are on the rise.

## Sniffle Season is Here

Written by Ariel Snyder-Health and Safety Specialist

It's that time of year again when winter colds and red noses are out in full force.

As you have likely heard, cases of common colds, COVID, and Respiratory Syncytial Virus Infection (RSV), are on the rise. The latest, RSV, is a common respiratory virus that usually causes mild, cold-like symptoms. According to the CDC, "most people recover in a week or two, but RSV can be serious, especially for infants and older adults."

To ensure that we keep you and your loved ones safe and healthy, here is a quick reminder of our best practices for home visits and playgroups during sniffle season:

**Feeling unwell?** To ensure the health and safety of all our families, MSEHS staff may ask you to reschedule your home visit or skip playgroup, if you or your little one displays symptoms or has been diagnosed with an infection illness. For example:

- Temperature greater than 100 degrees.
- Any signs of infectious disease such as: rash, strep throat, impetigo, pink eye, chicken pox, scabies, or persistent cough.
- COVID-19 symptoms, including a cough, fever, muscle aches, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, chills, sore throat, loss of taste or smell, fatigue, headache, congestion or runny nose, nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea.
- RSV symptoms, including runny nose, decrease in appetite, coughing, sneezing, fever, or wheezing.

See Sniffle Season is Here on Pg. 4



## Policy Council News

Policy Council was held from 10:00-12:00 on December 1, 2022. Meeting minutes are available at each site and on our website at [msehs.org/news/policy-council](https://msehs.org/news/policy-council). Highlights from the meeting include:

- We have successfully hired two new Family Consultants. Jaki will serve Kootenai County and started on November 21st. Chelsea is in Sandpoint and started on December 5th. We also hired our first Records Clerk who will begin in January and will be stationed at the Coeur d'Alene Center.
- We will have two more Coffee Connection meetings. Bonner County will be on February 22nd and June 21st. Kootenai County will be on February 23rd and June 22nd. We are open for suggestions on talking points.
- The IHSA Conference will be from February 21-23, 2023 and will be in-person. Aleta will plan meetings and preparation with the representatives prior to the conference and will consult by-laws regarding parent participations or extensions. .

Interested in attending Policy Council?

The next Policy Council meetings will be on January 5, 2023 from 10:00 AM-12:00 PM

## Connection Corner

Sharing your power allows for your child to develop a sense of creativity and identify and strengthens their confidence and self-worth. It will also develop trust between you and your child.

**We share power through offering choices.** Here are some examples:

- Instead of “you can have strawberries,” it becomes “would you like strawberries or bananas?”
- “It’s time to go inside” becomes “It’s time to go inside. Would you like to race to the door or hop to the door?”



Practice coming up with choices to the following scenarios:

- Your child wants a snack
- Your child does not want to take a bath

Try offering your child choices this month. Tell your Family Consultant how it goes and you’ll receive a free book!

## Sniffle Season is Here Continued from Pg. 2

**Unsure if a runny nose is a sign of something more serious?** Here's a good rule of thumb: if you or child's mucus is clear, then you are in the clear to join a home visit or playgroup. If not, schedule a quick check-up with your doctor as soon as you can.

**What if my child has a chronic illness?** Not to worry-MSEHS accommodates all little ones with chronic health conditions. If you have questions, ask your Family Consultant for details.

**What about when MSEHS staff become sick?** All of our staff are encouraged to stay home if they are ill or have symptoms that could potentially be contagious.

Stay safe and healthy out there!

## How Our Program is Making a Difference



Jeanette and Ellie look at their books together at a Lakeland Playgroup.

Literacy and reading are important, but it is often difficult to build libraries for your children. We hear this from our families a lot, so this past spring, we started planning a new way to support our families and put our money where our mouth is. We made a commitment to spending this program year building our families' libraries.

Beginning in July, our enrolled children have gotten a new book every month to add to their library and help them support their child's reading skills. The best part? This will continue throughout the entire program year, so every child will have up to 12 new books by the end of June 2023. Families who attend Playgroup also get a copy of the Circle Time book each session! We love seeing the excitement in our families while they support their children's love of books.





Aries gazes at himself in the mirror at Playgroup in CDA.



Daxton and Iris add tape to our Lakeland Playgroup Collage.



Persy slides the slide at Playgroup in CDA.

### **Birthdays:**

Jeanette A. turns 3 on January 9th  
Kai A. turns 2 on February 2nd

### **Congratulations!**

Jamesun W. was born on October 21, 2022 to mom, Destiny. See photo below. Congratulations!

Lucas B. was born on October 27, 2022 to parents Kendra and Matthew. He joins big sister, Eliza. See photo below. Congratulations!

Ellianna Rose F. was born on November 21, 2022 to mom, Anna. She joins siblings Westley, Emberlyn, Jacob, and Aariah. See photo below. Congratulations!

### **Events:**

You're invited to our Cabin Fever Community Playgroup on January 25, 2023 from 10:30 AM-12:00 at our Lakeland Center. We will be offering story time, cookie decorating, sensory exploration, and a visit from the Rathdrum Library. Hope to see you there!

You're invited to our Sandpoint Winter Celebration -Open House. It will be on January 30th from 2 PM-4 PM at our Sandpoint Center. We will have some fun activities for children, giveaways, and snacks available. Bring a friend!



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## Contact Us

Visit us at  
[msehs.org](http://msehs.org)

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For program updates, photos, videos, and parenting resources, be sure to like us on Facebook! [www.facebook.com/MtnStatesEarlyHeadStart/](https://www.facebook.com/MtnStatesEarlyHeadStart/)