

Badlands Head Start: PRENATAL TO FIVE



January/February 2019 Newsletter

Upcoming Dates

January 21st	HOLIDAY-No Centers
January 16th	Policy Council Meeting
January 17th	TREC Board Meeting
February 18th	HOLIDAY-No Centers
February 20th	Policy Council Meeting
February 21st	TREC Board Meeting

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Activity Idea - Snow Fort

For ages: 42-48 months

Activity: When the snow begins to melt it's time to build a snow fort. Bundle up to ensure you and your child stay dry and warm.



Find some plastic buckets to use as snow molds to make snow blocks. The buckets need to be a size you and your child can fill and pack with snow.

Encourage your child to use his or her imagination and problem-solving skills to decide how big the snow fort should be. Begin packing the snow in the buckets and carry them to the location of your fort. Turn the snow-filled buckets upside down and tap the top and sides of the buckets to help the snow blocks slip out of the bucket.

Continue to fill and dump until the foundation or first row of blocks is completed. Make a second level of snow blocks and put them on top of your first row. When you and your child reach the desired height of snow with your blocks, the fort is complete. Now it's time to play in the fort with your child.

What your child is doing:

Snow play is an excellent time for you and your child to bond. Many opportunities exist for you and your children to have fun and learn about nature and the outdoors.



Your child is learning about science as he or she changes the shape of the snow when packing it in the bucket. Your child will see how the shape of the snow can change and remain in the form you create.

Gross motor development occurs as your child carries the bucket of snow. Gross motor development refers to your child's large muscle development. It may be difficult for your child to carry a bucket of snow through snow. Your child will learn how to maneuver through the snow and maintain balance while carrying the bucket and walking with big steps.

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Earned Income Tax Credit

Submitted by: Wanda Dunn, Family and Community Partnership Specialist



GUIDE TO EVERYTHING EARNED INCOME TAX CREDIT FOR INDIVIDUALS ONLINE

What is Earned Income Tax Credit?

Earned Income Tax Credit or EITC, also called EIC, is an important benefit providing a financial boost to working individuals and families. To claim EITC, you need to meet certain qualifications and file a return even if you have no other filing requirement or owe no tax. [Find more EITC Information on www.irs.gov/eitc.](http://www.irs.gov/eitc)

Are You Eligible for EITC?

Find out if you are eligible by answering questions and providing basic income information using the EITC Assistant on irs.gov. It helps determine your filing status, the number of qualifying children you have, if any, and estimates the amount of your EITC. You can also print out a summary of your results.

[English Version of the EITC Assistant](#)

[la Versión en Español del Asistente](#)

To receive the credit, you must have income from:

- work for your employer or someone else,
- work for yourself,
- a business or farm you own or operate, or
- some disability plans.

[Find what earned income is or is not here.](#)

To claim EITC, you, and your spouse if you file a joint return, must meet certain eligibility rules. [Find the Earned Income Tax Credit Rules for Everyone here.](#)

And either

meet the additional rules for those with a qualifying child. [Find out if your child or children meet all the Qualifying Child Rules here.](#)

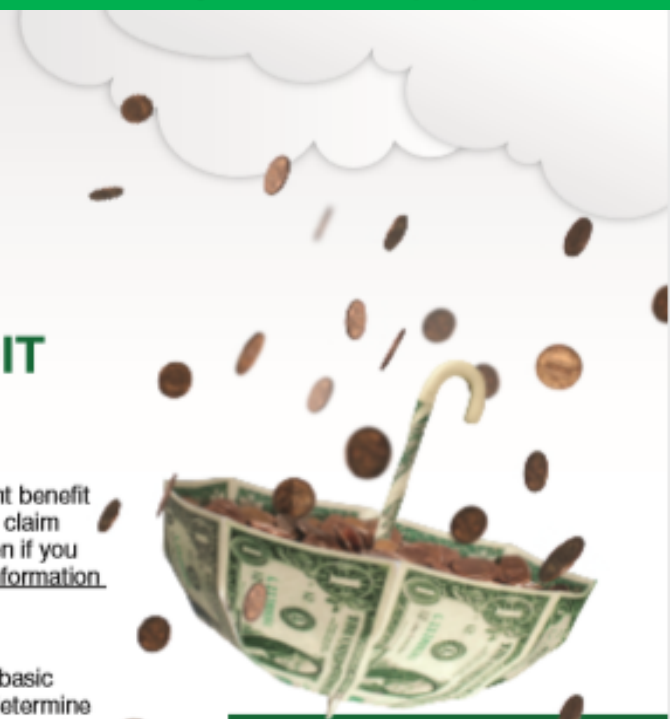
or

the rules for those without a qualifying child. [Find the rules for those without a qualifying child here.](#)

Special EITC Rules. There are special EITC rules for members of the military, members of the clergy, those receiving disability benefits, and those impacted by disasters. [Find the special EITC rules here.](#)

Is EITC only for those with low income?

Not really. Check to see if you and your family meet the EITC income limits. [Find the income limits for this year and other years.](#)



Watch out for common errors!

Errors can delay your refund or result in IRS denying your EITC claim. Avoid the following common errors:

- Claiming a child who does not meet the qualifying tests for age, relationship and residency.
- Social Security number or last name mismatches.
- Filing as single or head of household when married.
- Over or under reporting of income or expenses.

Errors can delay the EITC part of your refund until it's fixed. If the IRS audits your return and finds the EITC claim incorrect, you must pay back the amount of EITC you received in error plus interest and penalties. You may also have to file [Form 8862, Information to Claim Earned Income Credit after Disallowance](#), for future claims. And, if the IRS finds your incorrect claim was intentional or because of fraud, we may ban you from claiming EITC for 2 or 10 years.



Earned Income Tax Credit (Continued)

PREPARING YOUR RETURN

Be prepared to get the EITC you earned.

Gather your important documents and make sure you have all the information you need to claim EITC. Find out what you need to prepare your return claiming EITC [here](#).

Choose a method:

1. Prepare your own return:
 - Use [third party software](#) to complete and file your return.
 - If you know how to complete a tax return, use IRS [Fillable Forms](#).
 - Have a certified volunteer assist you in preparing your return at any participating Volunteer Income Tax Assistance site.
2. Have a certified volunteer prepare your return. [Check here for more information on free tax return preparation.](#)
3. Pick a paid preparer carefully. If you pay someone to do your taxes, choose wisely. [If you are paying someone to do your taxes, find out what you should know here.](#)

Taxpayer Assistance Centers.

IRS Taxpayer Assistance Centers (TAC) are your source for personal tax help when you believe your tax issue cannot be handled online or by phone, and you want face-to-face tax assistance. [Find a list of local offices and hours of services.](#)

The most current version of this publication is available through www.irs.gov/eitc. If links are not working properly, please check to make sure you have the most recent version. If the problem continues, please let us know. Email: eitc.program@irs.gov

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AND RESOURCES:

Does EITC affect my other public benefits? Generally, EITC has no effect on most public benefits and is not used to determine eligibility. [Find more information here by scrolling down to the EITC and other Public Benefits information.](#)

Don't overlook the state credit. If you qualify to claim EITC on your federal income tax return, you also may be eligible for a similar credit on your state or local income tax return. [Find more information on states and local governments with EITC.](#)

Do you have questions about EITC? We have the answers. [Find the most common questions and answers related to EITC here.](#)

[Read more about EITC in Publication 596 in English \(PDF\) or, Publicación 596 \(SP\), Crédito por Ingreso del Trabajo \(PDF\).](#)

What You Need to Know About Your Taxes – Responsibilities & Benefits!

This toolkit is available to you 24 hours a day, seven days a week and makes it easier for you to understand basic tax information. The IRS and the Taxpayer Advocate Service (TAS) worked together to develop this [Tax Toolkit](#). TAS is an independent organization within the IRS whose employees assist taxpayers who are experiencing economic harm, who are seeking help in resolving tax problems that have not been resolved through normal channels, or who believe that an IRS system or procedure is not working as it should.

Taxpayer Rights.

Whether you file a Form 1040EZ or a complicated corporate return, you will benefit from knowing your rights as a taxpayer and being familiar with the IRS's obligations to protect them. The goal of the Taxpayer Rights Corner is to be your one-stop shop for taxpayer rights information during every step of your interaction with the IRS. [Visit the Taxpayer Rights Corner.](#)

Did you receive a Notice?

Reply to any IRS correspondence to get the EITC you earned. [Find information on Understanding Your IRS Notice here.](#) [Find IRS Notices listed by the notice number here.](#)

Life's a little easier with



Harding and Perkins Happenings

Happy New Year 2019!

As I write this before the Holiday break, I have to wonder where the Fall went! Our northern counties have had a busy Fall full of fun and learning at both the Bison and Lemmon Centers and during our home based visits. I want to take this opportunity to thank all the staff I work with, for their dedication to the program and the families they serve. We truly have a great bunch of teachers, home visitors, and nutrition staff, and I can't thank them enough for everything they do. Along with the great staff, we have amazing parents/guardians that make the program possible. So thank you for sharing your kiddos with us, for being so prompt in helping us meet those ever important 45 and 90 day requirements, attending socials, and completing required paperwork.

You all rock!

Social dates for January are the following:

Harding Co. January 8th from 9-11, and
January 29th from 1-3 pm.

Perkins EHS-Lemmon: January 10th and
24th from 5:30-7:30

Lemmon Center January 16th from 5:30-
7:30

Ruth Adams

Area Services Manager



Update from Belle Center

We are excited at our Head Start Center in Belle to begin 2019. We begin class on Jan. 3rd and are looking forward to seeing all our kids back after the vacation.

We are also excited to introduce a new teacher in Center 1. Her name is Naomi Lermon. Naomi is originally from Colorado but received her college education at the University of Wyoming. Our new teacher loves being an educator and is excited about starting her 4th year as a teacher for Head Start.

Naomi and her husband live in Belle and are busy raising two children, Colton and Cordelia. As a family they enjoy traveling, spending time in the Black Hills, reading, and raising livestock.

Welcome Naomi! We are delighted to welcome you to our team. We believe it is going to be a super good year. Happy New Year to all!

Judee Wilson— Belle Fourche Center Area Services Manager



Update from Butte County

In the last newsletter I shared with you information on Socials and some fun pictures of our families at the fire house. Now I would like to share some taken at November's social. Please come join the fun. Ask your Home visitor or Teacher when their next scheduled social will be held. Until that time let me share with you some more activities that you can do with your little ones on a cold and snowy day.

First of all go outside and enjoy the snow. Buddle yourself and your child up and go exploring. You can measure with a ruler different places in your yard. Make it a guessing game, what part of the yard might have more snow and how much. You can also ask the child what might be the reason for the different amounts. If it is snowing, go out and take with you some dark colored paper or a towel and try to catch the snowflakes. Then look at them very carefully and if you are lucky enough to get a few you can compare them. If you find yourself interested in learning more about snowflakes, you can google Wilson Bentley (he spent his whole life studying snowflakes and taking photos of them). There is also a wonderful children's book called Snowflake Bentley that you might like to read. You should be able to find it at your local library.

Michele Kreuzer-Ranken — Butte Co. Area Service Manager



Message from Melissa

LET'S TALK, READ AND SING ABOUT STEM! TIPS FOR FAMILIES WITH YOUNG CHILDREN

Children begin discovering the world around them from the moment they are born. When you talk, read and sing with your child, you're helping her learn. It can be as simple as counting your baby's toes during bath time, asking your toddler a question about the sky, or encouraging preschool-age children to build with blocks! In fact, very young children can learn some of the basic concepts underlying **science, technology, engineering and math** (STEM). You can discover STEM with your child in many ways. Talk, read, sing, play, sign or use other ways to communicate – whatever works best for your family.



For children with disabilities or developmental delays, communicate with your service providers and keep each other informed of your child's individual learning style and methods you are using to make your child's language environment as rich as possible.

While we provide some tips, we know every child is unique. As always, you should do what is best and developmentally appropriate for your child.

WHAT IS STEM?

"STEM" stands for **science, technology, engineering and math**. STEM can refer to the subjects individually or one or more working together, but can also mean a way of doing things that includes solving problems, asking questions and exploring the world around us.

For example, children learn about the concept of technology when they're exploring tools or simple machines. These can be items they use every day like a pair of scissors, or things they might see like the wheels of a car as they walk outside.

For young children, we focus on STEM through exploration, play and building curiosity about the world and the way things work. STEM learning is important for everyone and can happen anytime, anywhere. The real-life skills that people develop when learning STEM help make everyone better problem-solvers and learners.

For parents of children who are learning English or speak another language themselves, talk about STEM in your **home language**, in English, or both. Research shows that bilingual children have an easier time understanding math concepts and developing strong thinking skills. When families use their native language, it helps children foster a rich sense of self. Bilingual students have certain cognitive and social benefits that facilitate success in school and life.

Source: Zelasko, N., & Antunez, B. (2000).

If your child learns in two languages.

National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education.



Message from Melissa (Continued)

The following tips include **STEM words** (in bold) that you can use with your child.

TIPS FOR INFANTS

- *Let's Observe the World!* Observing is important in **science**. Everywhere you go, talk about what you see and describe what your baby is looking at or pointing to: "Wow, I see that **big, blue** truck too! Look at the black spinning wheels! **How many** wheels does it have all together? **1, 2, 3, 4** wheels. **Four** wheels **all together**."
- *Use All Your Senses.* At the grocery store, discover the smell, feel and taste of different items with your child. Hold an orange and say, "What does an orange look like? Feel like? It's **round** and **smooth**." At home, hold a dish towel and say, "A dish towel is a **rectangle** and **feels soft**." Encourage your baby to explore these objects with their senses.
- *Count, Rhyme and Sing.* Use **numbers** as you go about your day together. Sing simple number songs like "**One, two**, buckle your shoe." Repetitive songs like "The Wheels on the Bus" or "Los Cinco Hermanitos" help babies learn **patterns** too!
- *Would You Like More?* During meal time, you can teach about the idea of "**more**" – the first step toward understanding **addition**. As you feed your baby, pause and ask if she wants **more**. Wait to see how she responds to your questions and follow her cues.
- *Link Words with Actions.* When you move your baby from one position or place to another, put words to your actions. Say "**up, up, up**" when you lift your baby from the changing table, crib, or floor. When you place him down, say "**now down** you go to play!" These simple words build the foundation for later math and engineering skills.

TIPS FOR TODDLERS

- *Let's Count Cars.* When walking down the sidewalk or in a parking lot, count the cars together as you pass them: "**1, 2, 3, 4, 5**. We passed **five** cars to get to the store." You can also count buses or other vehicles together while you are outside.
- *Explore Sizes.* Ask your child to **compare** the sizes of measuring spoons when cooking. Use words like **smallest**, **small**, **medium**, **big**, **bigger**, and **biggest** to describe each spoon.
- *Whole and Half.* At meal time, show your child a **whole** piece of toast and cut it in **half**. Then say, "These two pieces are the same size. They're called **halves**."
- *Let's be Scientists!* At the grocery store, have your child hold two different pieces of fruit in their hands. Ask, "Which one is **heavier**? Which one is **lighter**?" Ask other questions that encourage observation and description, like "Which fruit is red? Can you find the yellow fruit?" Exploring together builds skills for future **scientists**!
- *Compare Amounts.* At dinner, compare the size of your food portions. Say, "You have **more** carrots than I do. I have **fewer** carrots than you."
- *Cause and Effect.* Stand in the bathroom and turn the lights off and on. "When I flip the switch **up**, the light goes on! What will happen if I flip it **down**?" They are learning about technology!
- *What Rolls?* Spheres are **round**, **three-dimensional** shapes. Look around your environment for something that is a sphere and **predict** what would happen if you dropped it on the ground. Would it roll? Bounce? Spin? If it's safe to do so, drop the sphere and check your **prediction**!
- *Enjoy a Shape Snack.* Offer a **square** (or **rectangle**) cracker. Cut a piece of cheese into a **triangle**. Talk about and trace each shape with your finger before you eat it.
- *Count Hugs & Kisses.* Before putting your toddler to bed, ask if they want two kisses or three kisses. **Count aloud** as you give each kiss. You can count hugs too!
- *Sing about STEM!* Songs with **repeated phrases** like "Old MacDonald Had a Farm," "Wheels on the Bus," or "Los Cinco Hermanitos" can teach children about patterns.



Message from Melissa (Continued)

TIPS FOR PRESCHOOLERS

- *Why? Questions.* When young children ask “**why?**” questions, they are being scientists! As a parent, you don’t have to have the right answers to help your child learn about STEM. You can respond by saying, “**That’s a good question. How can we find out together?**” Have fun and be co-discoverers.
- *Laundry Time is Talk Time.* When folding laundry with your child, make a **pattern** with socks. Line them up like this: **big, small, big, small, big, small**. Then, have fun **matching** the pairs of socks together. Every time you find the right pair, say, “It’s a **match!**”
- *Setting the Table.* While setting the table, ask your child tell you **how many** forks you need for everyone to have one, and then count them out loud together. You can talk about **texture** too. How does a napkin feel **compared to** a plate?
- Sing simple **number songs** and nursery rhymes like “Counting in Twos,” “One Banana, Two Bananas,” “Five Little Monkeys,” and “Tres Pececitos.”
- *Let’s Measure.* In the kitchen, point out and read the lines on the measuring cups and spoons as you prepare dinner. Talk about how **half** the onion gets used for the soup. Let your child fill and pour using different measurement methods: **one cup** of cornmeal for the cornbread; **two tablespoons** of oil to cook the chicken.
- *Go on a Shape Hunt.* You can discover shapes all around you. “The window is a **rectangle**. Look, it has **four sides** and **four corners**. Let’s see **how many** rectangles we can find.” Or, “The mirror is shaped like an **oval**.” It’s fun to make shapes too. Using a stick, draw a shape in sand or dirt while at the park. See if your preschooler would like to try. Practice making **BIG circles** and then **little ones**, **BIG squares** and **little ones**, etc.
- *Math Walk and Talk.* Take a math walk on the way to the bus. As you walk, play a game where you and your child need to take “**four big steps**,” find “**six pebbles**” or touch “**seven green leaves**.” Ask and work together to solve how many questions, such as “**How many** steps from the front door to the sidewalk?”
- *What Comes Next?* You can use snack time to make patterns: place a strawberry, a cracker, and a slice of cheese in a repeated line across the plate. On a walk, use a **BIG-step, little-step pattern**. Ask your child, “What comes next?”
- *Let’s Build!* Give your child safe, everyday **materials** like cardboard, tubes, string, fabric and tape. You can also provide simple **tools** and machines like scissors, rulers and wheels. Allow your child to get creative and work together to **build, engineer** and **problem solve!** After you finish building, talk together about why you built the **design** the way you did and what tools made it easier.



Message from Melissa (Continued)

You can find more tips like these—as well as videos, information, and more—at [Too Small to Fail](#) and [Let's Talk about Math](#). Other early childhood STEM resources can be found at the [Early Childhood Learning & Knowledge Center](#). Track your child's development by using the [Milestones Moments Booklet](#). If you have concerns about your child's development, including their language development, talk to your child's primary care provider.

For more information on developmental and behavioral screening, visit [Birth to Five: Watch Me Thrive!](#) and [Learn the Signs. Act Early](#). For more information on early learning, please visit the [National Center on Early Childhood Development, Teaching, and Learning \(NCECDTL\)](#), [Head Start's Center on Quality Teaching and Learning](#), [Early Head Start National Resource Center](#) and the U.S. Department of Education [early learning](#) webpage.

For more information on working with young children who are learning more than one language, please visit [Head Start's National Center for Cultural and Linguistic Responsiveness](#) and the [National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition \(NCELA\)](#). For more information on making the language environment richer for children with developmental disabilities or delays, please visit the [Center for Early Literacy Learning](#), and [Facts about Developmental Disabilities](#). For resources on building language, see the [Talk, Read, and Sing Together Every Day!](#) tip sheets.

These resource materials are provided for the user's convenience. The inclusion of these materials is not intended to reflect its importance, nor is it intended to endorse any views expressed, or products or services offered. These materials may contain the views and recommendations of various subject matter experts as well as hypertext links, contact addresses and websites to information created and maintained by other public and private organizations. The opinions expressed in any of these materials do not necessarily reflect the positions or policies of the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services. The U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services do not control or guarantee the accuracy, relevance, timeliness, or completeness of any outside information included in these materials.



Misty Wilbur

Health, Nutrition
and Safety Specialist



February is
Children's Dental
Health Month!



Cavities are Preventable

Childhood cavities can be prevented. Cavities are caused by germs in the mouth interacting with sugary foods and drinks.

Limit Sugar Exposure.



Poor oral health can lead to serious health problems such as abscessed teeth, respiratory infections, pneumonia, bronchitis, heart disease, kidney disease, or even **DEATH**.

Avoid emergency room visits for tooth pain and dental surgery.



Your Child's Mental Health

A New Year!

I thought a lot about what to write for the first newsletter of the New Year. When it comes to mental health, children, parents and families, there's so much we could always talk about! I thought it might be a good time to visit about New Year's resolutions. Sometimes we think of New Year's Resolutions in such big ways! It's understandable, as it's the time of year we reevaluate our lives and take inventory. We think about what we like about the past year and what we want to be different. Yet, thinking too big can often be a set up for a lot of us. Let's face it, change is difficult. It takes a lot of commitment and hard work. Starting small is sometimes the key to doing something differently and can often trigger and jump start the process of change. I think as parents we can be overly critical of ourselves and often think of what we'd like to change in our families in often too big of ways. Sometimes this can seem overwhelming and hopeless. As parents we are the leaders and role models of our families. It's easier to focus on our children's behaviors, anger and negativity without looking at ourselves. It's wise to look at ourselves when our family is struggling. Often it takes only one person in a family to change and do something differently to start a chain of reaction in our children and those we live with.

How about a New Year's resolution to do something small but significant as a parent or family? Something small that would help us to build a closer relationship with our children? What can we accept responsibility for and commit to changing over the course of the New Year? What if we make a decision to yell less, eat supper together at least once a week, one evening with no electronics and television? Perhaps it's making a conscious effort to be a better listener or simply playing with them for 10 minutes each night. Oh the ideas are endless...

The truth of the matter is, we cannot ask our children to work on changing certain behaviors if we ourselves are stuck in negative and unhelpful habits. Having an open and honest look at our own parenting and identifying what we've been doing well and what we can work on is great role modeling for our children! I urge all of us as parents to take an honest look. Come on, let's commit to making our family just a little bit stronger this year!

Ideas for New Year's Family Resolutions

Introducing one new healthy food to yourself and family 1x a week.

Praise them and yourself for the courage to try something different and new! Have everyone clap for each other as they take their first bite.

Exercising one night a week as a family. Go to the local gym and play ball, play hide and seek in your house, put some music on and dance and just get silly together!

Eating dinner one evening during the week together. Give your children jobs to set the table, let them make it fancy with a candle or tablecloth if they'd like. Let them serve you and pretend they're your waitress or waiter. Make it fun!

Less yelling. Are you yelling from room to room at each other? Is the television too loud? Too many electronics on at once? Look at the overall climate of your house.

Less negativity. Post a bulletin board in your house and write positive quotes or put up happy pictures on it that your child draws.



One night with no electronics. This includes parents too! Play a game of hide and seek, draw, or read a book with your child.

More playtime with your children. Ten minutes a night can make a big difference! Let them take the lead and pick whatever they like.

Increased socialization. Get together with friends and other families once a month. Have a potluck dinner where friends visit and children play.

