



December Upcoming Events!

- Tuesday, Dec. 5th @ 8:30 AM Birdhouse with Dad
- Friday, Dec. 15th Abbreviated Day Early Dismissal @ 9:00 AM
- Christmas Break Dec. 18th -Jan. 2nd **NO SCHOOL**

November Perfect Attendance

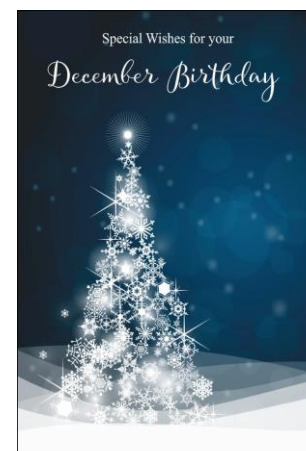
Emmitt
Haleigh
Korbyn
Lucas
Cali
Aerabella
Mira
Connor W
Aurora
Abigail
Olivia
Paisley
Marsali
Juliet
Kylan
Emi

December Birthday's

Finnan
Paisley
Easton

Van Buren County Head Start!

If you are currently not following us on Facebook please Like and Follow Us. Some of the benefits include: photo galleries, special news and updates, plus the ability to connect and chat online with other people who share your interest.





Transition Talk

Your child will experience many changes as they transition to kindergarten in the public-school system. One of the most significant changes will be their daily routine. At Van Buren County Head Start our daily schedule currently consists of 2 hours and 10 minutes of center choice time where teachers interact with children and work on language, fine motor, pre-writing, cognitive, self-help and personal social skills. The schedule also reflects one hour of gross motor time where children work on their gross motor skills through active play. We also have two 15-minute group times where children work on social skills as well as academics. There are transition times where children are moving from one activity to another and meal times which tallies up to our 6.5-hour day. The kindergarten schedule consists of 1 hour of English Language Acquisition Skills and Knowledge; 1 hour of Guided Reading and Literacy Stations/RTI, 1 hour of Math, 30 minutes of outdoor time, and 30 minutes of finishing Knowledge and Math. There is a 30-minute lunch and breakfast schedule. Also 45 minutes fluctuates between Guidance, STEM, PE, and Library on different days of the week. They do have a rest time of approximately 30 minutes as well. Other activities are completed within the day and a total of 7.25 hours per day. As you can see their schedule reflects increased times requiring your child to remain focused for longer increments of time. They also will have less active play time which helps burn some energy off and adds to their attention span. To assist your child in lengthening their attention span, you might want to try the following techniques:

1. Play focus games (example: blow bubbles and ask your child to wait until you tell them to pop them - at first allow them to pop as soon as you blow them, then increase to a few seconds, halfway to the ground, almost on the ground, etc.)
2. Divide bigger tasks into smaller tasks.
3. Understand your child's method of learning (visual (have to see it), auditory (hear what is expected), or kinesthetic (involves movement with learning)). Once your child's method of learning is determined, play games using their preferred method.

Working together we can assist your child with a smooth transition into kindergarten. Thanks for your support.
Rita Mayfield Assistant Mentor Coach/Education Supervisor



Importance of Reading with Kids

Early reading with your child is a true one-on-one opportunity for children to communicate with their parents and parents to communicate with their children. It allows children to grow their vocabulary skills with exposure to new words and listening skills they develop from hearing someone read to them that become vital to their academic success.

Studies have shown that “the more words that are in a child’s language world, the more words they will learn, and the stronger their language skills are when they reach kindergarten, the more prepared they are to be able to read, and the better they read, the more likely they will graduate from high school” ([PBS.org](https://www.pbs.org)).

Numerous studies have shown that students who are exposed to reading before preschool are more likely to do well when they reach their period of formal education. According to a study completed by the [University of Michigan](https://www.umich.edu), there are five early reading skills that are essential for development. They are:

1. **Phonemic awareness** – Being able to hear, identify, and play with individual sounds in spoken words.
2. **Phonics** – Being able to connect the letters of written language with the sounds of spoken language.
3. **Vocabulary** – The words kids need to know to communicate effectively.
4. **Reading comprehension** – Being able to understand and get meaning from what has been read.
5. **Fluency (oral reading)** – Being able to read text accurately and quickly.

<https://www.all4kids.org/news/blog/the-importance-of-reading-to-your-children/>



Nutrition



Healthy recipes to try at home with your child/children



how long will food last in the fridge?

Store leftovers, like cooked meat, poultry and casseroles, safely and use them within 3 to 4 days.

- Place food in the refrigerator as soon as possible after a meal is finished.
- Keep foods in a refrigerator at 40° F or less to prevent spoiling.



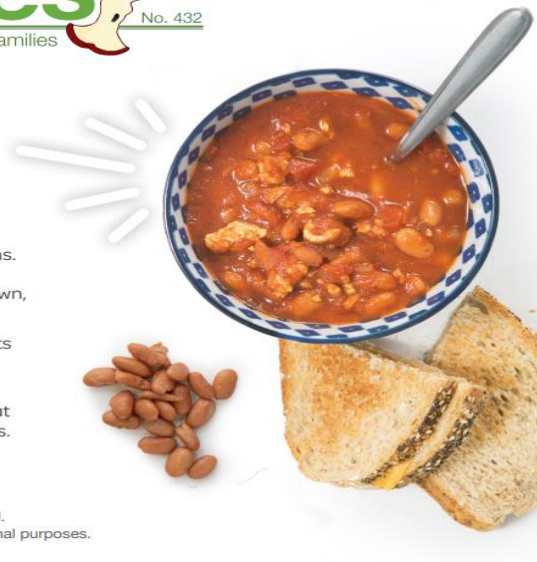
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turkey chili

Serve with a dish of fruit like canned peaches, mandarin oranges or applesauce.

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| <p>1 pound ground turkey
1 cup chopped onion
1 (15 ounce) can tomato sauce
1 (6 ounce) can tomato paste
2 (16 ounce) cans pinto beans
2 cups water
2 tablespoons chili powder
1 teaspoon garlic powder</p> | <p>1. Drain and rinse pinto beans. Cook ground turkey and onion until the meat is brown, about 4 minutes.</p> <p>2. Combine all the ingredients along with the meat in a large kettle.</p> <p>3. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer for 30 minutes.</p> |
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DECEMBER 2023

ACTIVITY CALENDAR



Book of the Month

Winter is for Snow
by Robert Neubecker

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			Fruit of the Month: Pepino Melon & Kumquats Vegetable of the Month: Turnips & Beets Flower of the Month: Holly	Native American & Alaskan Native Heritage Month	1 Rosa Parks Day- create a bus out of construction paper. Discuss who Rosa Parks was.	2 Find 10 items that start with "D" around the home
3 Create paper snowballs and have a snowball fight today	4 Santa's List Day- create Santa out of construction paper and write a list in his white beard	5 International Ninja Day- tape crepe paper in a hallway to create an obstacle course. Get through it like a ninja	6 Time to read for 15 minutes	7 National Cotton Candy Day- brainstorm and create a picture of a bizarre flavor of cotton candy	8 National Brownie Day- make brownies for a treat today	9 Christmas Card Day- make a Christmas greeting or two for friends and family
10 Nobel Prize Day- pick someone who won a Nobel prize to read about today	11 National Stretching Day- get up and stretch before starting the day	12 Gingerbread House Day- create a house out of graham crackers	13 National Cocoa Day- have a hot cocoa treat today	14 Monkey Day- read the story "Ten Little Monkeys Jumping on the Bed"	15 National Ugly Christmas Sweater Day- decorate your shirt with construction paper	16 National Wreaths Across America Day- a wreath-laying ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery to remember our fallen heroes
17 Wright Brothers Day- create or draw and design your own airplane	18 National Twin Day- dress like a friend or family member today	19 National Hard Candy Day- check out a video on how hard candy is made	20 Go Caroling Day- visit nearby and sing carols	21 National Flashlight Day- grab a flashlight and have an indoor scavenger hunt	22 Time to read for 15 minutes	23 National Roots Day- create a family tree drawing today
24 Christmas Eve	25 National Pumpkin Pie Day- create a pie out of paper. How many slices make up a pie?	26 National Candy Cane Day create a cane out of red and white pipe cleaners	27 Find 10 blue items around the house	28 National Card Playing Day- play a game of war or old maid as a family	29 Find 10 red items around the house	30 Time to read for 15 minutes
31 New Years Eve - create a goal list for the new year						



Where's the Cotton Candy?

December 7th is “National Cotton Candy Day” and cotton candy is not just delicious to eat but it’s also fun to use in science experiments. You can make cotton candy disappear right in front of your child’s eyes and all you need is cotton candy (sold at any grocery store in small containers) and some cool water. Let your child pour some cool water into a shallow dish or pan. Next, help them open the container of cotton candy and tear off a section of it. The, 1-2-3, drop the cotton candy into the water and watch it disappear! The water will turn the color of whatever cotton candy you are using. Pour the water out and start over. Your child can put in big or small pieces of even the whole container of cotton candy at one time for a dramatic disappearance. If you pour seltzer water or a light-colored carbonated drink and drop the cotton candy into it, the water will actually fizzle and produce bubbles. The cotton candy dissolves because it is made of sugar and sugar dissolves in water! This activity is easy, safe, and the best part is that your child can use the cotton candy for an experiment and for a snack!



Puzzle Piece Wreath

December 16th is “National Wreaths Across America Day” and what better way to honor this day than by making a wreath? You will need a paper plate, small puzzle pieces (you may have some puzzles that having missing pieces or you can buy a few from the Dollar Store), glue, and green paint. First, lay out the puzzle pieces on newspaper or wax paper and let your child paint them with green paint. While the pieces are drying, fold the paper plate in half and cut out a half-circle from the center of the plate. Once you open it, there will be a full circle cut out of the middle of the plate. Next, let your child squirt glue all over the paper plate rim and begin placing puzzle pieces all over the plate until there is no more white showing. Pieces can even be placed on top of each other to add dimension. Add a pre-made bow to the top of the wreath or clip on the holly that your child made in the Books by the Bushel activity “Handprint Holly”. Finally, loop a piece of string or yarn around the top of the plate, near the bow or holly, and hang the wreath on your child’s bedroom door to add a holiday decoration to your home!