



September 2025

NPHS News



Volume 30, Issue 1

Northern Panhandle Head Start, Inc.
Serving Hancock, Brooke, Ohio, Marshall and Wetzel Counties In West Virginia



NPHS Inc.

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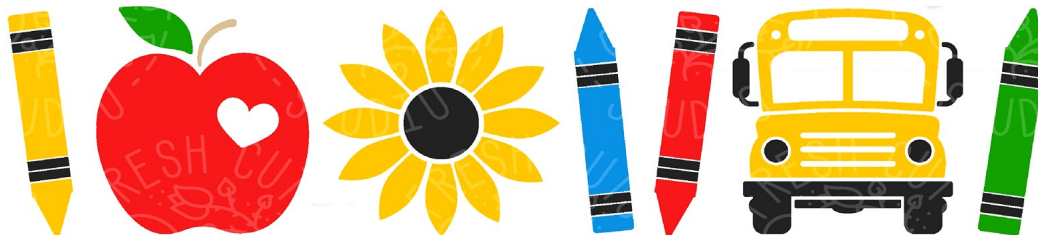
www.npheadstart.org

Jackie Bell, Executive Director
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Northern Panhandle Head
Start, Inc.

Serving Hancock, Brooke,
Ohio, Marshall and Wetzel
Counties In West Virginia

**Check us out on
Facebook at
Northern Panhandle
Head Start Inc.**



2024-2025 Top Parent Volunteers Recognized

Our Top Volunteers:

Top 5 Male Volunteers:

Christopher White—591 hours

Vincent Schmidt—562.75 hours

Brian Rush—271.50 hours

Bruce Maxwell—266 hours

Shawn Fowler—237.00 hours

Top 5 Overall Volunteers:

Amanda White—734.25 hours

Morgan Gump—719.25 hours

Crystal Burns—601.50 hours

Christopher White—591 hours

Crystal Lucas—583.25 hours

Top 5 Hancock County Volunteers:

Diamond Cervenak—101.25 hours

Heather Chambers—85.75 hours

Jamie Bernardi—67.50 hours

Haley Gajewski—46.17 hours

Jocelyn Kelley—37.50 hours

Top 5 Brooke County Volunteers:

Cearra Curran—444.75 hours

Katy Romitti—270.50 hours

Christina Wild—258 hours

Teewanee Sperringer—252 hours

Shawn Fowler—237 hours



Top 5 Ohio County Volunteers:

Crystal Burns—601.50 hours

Cassie Hayes—435 hours

Shelby Nash—407 hours

Mariah Aldridge—399.50 hours

Jennifer McBride—366.25 hours

Top 5 Marshall County Volunteers:

Morgan Gump—719.25 hours

Crystal Lucas—583.25 hours

Vincent Schmidt—562.75 hours

Janice Blake—468.50 hours

Bethany Ewing—348 hours

Top 5 Wetzel County Volunteers:

Amanda White—734.25 hours

Christopher White—591 hours

Renee McDougal—504.75 hours

Amanda Buenaventura—383 hours

Brittany DeBolt—380.50 hours

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Policy Council

2025-2026

Chairperson
Vice Chairperson
Secretary
Treasurer
Parliamentarian

Our first Policy Council Meeting is scheduled for October 15th, 2025.

Speak with your Family Resource Advocate or Parent Educator for more information on how you can get involved.

Head Start and Early Head Start Federal Funding Information for the 2025-2026 Program Year

Head Start/
Early Head Start
\$7,710,607.00
Head Start T&TA
\$47,683.00
Early Head Start T&TA
\$41,241.00

CCP
\$1,534,964.00
CCP T&TA \$29,664.00

We are required to match each grant listed with a non-federal share match. We are grateful for the generous support of our community collaborations and parental involvement.

Special Thank You

- ♦ **NPHS Board of Directors**
- ♦ **NPHS Parent Volunteers**

Welcome Back, Head Start Families!

We're so excited to begin another wonderful year with you and your child at Northern Panhandle Head Start! The start of school is a big step for both children and parents—it's exciting, sometimes a little scary, and full of learning opportunities for everyone.

In our classrooms, the beginning of the year is all about building relationships, learning routines, and creating a safe, predictable space where children can grow socially and emotionally. Children are learning how to share, take turns, follow rules, and express their needs in a healthy way. These are the building blocks for success both in school and in life!

Here are just a few things you can expect at the start of the school year:

- Transitions take time. It's normal for children to cry at drop-off. Saying a clear, calm goodbye and leaving confidently helps your child adjust faster. Long or uncertain goodbyes can make it harder.
- Safety first! Always sign your child in and out and bring your ID—even if we know you well. We take your child's safety seriously!

Let them get messy. Children are encouraged to explore, try new things, and do tasks independently, like serving food or cleaning up spills. Send them in clothes that are okay to get dirty—we promise it's part of the learning! To support your child's growth and development, we use quality curriculums to guide play-based learning across subjects like math, science, and literacy. But just as important as academics is learning how to be part of a classroom family.

To support this, we use Conscious Discipline, a program that teaches emotional and social skills. It helps children—and adults—learn how to handle big feelings, solve problems peacefully, and build a caring school community. This year, we're also connecting it with PBIS (Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports), which focuses on teaching and reinforcing positive behaviors in a consistent, supportive way across all of our classrooms. Together, Conscious Discipline and PBIS help us create a space where every child feels safe, valued, and ready to learn. We model kindness, practice calming strategies like deep breathing, and use moments of challenge as chances to learn and grow.

Remember: mistakes are just an "OOPS"—our opportunity to practice! Let's make this a great year of growing, learning, and building strong foundations—together.

Amber Boring,
Education & Training Manager

Finding Calm in a Busy Fall Season

Fall often brings excitement with cooler weather, back-to-school routines, and the return of sports and activities. But for many families, it can also bring extra stress as parents juggle busy schedules, older siblings' school commitments, and the needs of their toddlers at home or in care.

Here are a few gentle reminders to help keep stress low and enjoy this special season together:

1. Keep routines consistent.

Toddlers thrive on predictability. With siblings' sports practices, homework, and new routines, try to keep your toddler's bedtime, mealtimes, and drop-off times as steady as possible. Familiar routines help little ones feel safe and secure even when the family calendar is full.

2. Build in transition time.

If older siblings are rushing from school to practice, give your toddler a little extra time for cuddles, snacks, or quiet play before heading out the door. This helps prevent meltdowns and keeps everyone's stress level lower.

3. Simplify where you can.

It's okay to say no to some activities or choose easy dinners on busy nights. Small changes—like prepping snacks in advance or laying out clothes the night before—can make mornings and evenings feel smoother.

4. Make space for connection.

Even a few minutes of one-on-one attention goes a long way for toddlers. Reading a short story, singing a song, or having a silly dance party can help your child feel connected and calm during hectic days.

5. Remember self-care.

Parents need downtime, too. Whether it's a short walk, a cup of tea, or simply taking a few deep breaths, giving yourself a moment of calm helps the whole family.

As the fall season unfolds, know that it's normal to feel stretched at times. Focusing on routines, connection, and flexibility will not only ease stress but also help your toddler (and the rest of the family) enjoy the fun and excitement this time of year brings.

Beth Ott, MSSL
Early Head Start Manager

Using Positive Language to Improve Behavior

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Instead of saying “**Stop it!**” or “**Don’t do that!**”, try telling your child what they *can* do. This small change can reduce tantrums, whining, and challenging behavior.

Young children often don’t understand what “don’t” means, but they do understand clear directions like “**Please keep your feet on the floor**” instead of “**Don’t climb on the counter.**” Positive language helps kids feel confident and make good choices.

Tips for Home:

- **Say what to do, not what not to do**
Instead of “Don’t cut that!” try:
“Scissors are for cutting paper or playdough. Which one do you want to cut?”
- **Offer choices**
Give two positive options so your child feels in control. This strategy also works for you as a parent because you approve of either choice. Teachers use this same strategy!
“If you want to play with sand, you can fill this bucket. Do you want the blue or red one?”
- **Say “when,” not “no”**
When your child asks to do something, rather than saying no, acknowledge her wish and tell her when she might be able to do it.
“The park sounds like a great idea! I need to finish this letter for work right now. Would you like to go after your nap today or tomorrow morning after breakfast?”
- **Use “First-Then”**
“First pick up your toys, then you can watch TV.”
- **Give time to respond**
Children need extra time to process what you say—stay calm and repeat if needed. Remember that your child is learning language and how to use it. She needs time to think about what you said and how she is going to respond. It can take her several seconds, or even minutes, longer than you to process the information.
- **Help them remember**
Instead of blaming:
“Remember you need shoes on before going outside.”

Bottom Line:

How you talk to your child matters. Positive language builds confidence, cooperation, and independence—and creates a happier home for everyone!

View more of the Backpack Connection Series at

<https://challengingbehavior.org/implementation/family-engagement/#backpack>

Amanda Ames, M.A.Ed.

Child Development and Disabilities Coordinator

Short Cut Lasagna Makes 6 Servings Ingredients

- 1 (24 ounce) jar spaghetti sauce
- 8 ounces dry lasagna noodles
- 1 (15 ounce) container part skim ricotta cheese (or cottage cheese)
- 2 cups part-skim mozzarella cheese shredded
- 1/4 cup parmesan cheese, grated

Directions

1. Wash hands with soap and water.
2. Spread 1/2 the sauce on the bottom of a 2 quart baking dish or pan.
3. Layer half the dry noodles, ricotta, and parmesan.
4. Top with 1 cup sauce and layer rest of noodles, ricotta, and mozzarella.
5. Top with remaining spaghetti sauce.
6. Bake 60 minutes at 350. Remove and let it set for 20 minutes top with Parmesan.



For more recipes check out
[MyPlate | U.S. Department of Agriculture](#)

Vaccines are one of the most effective ways to prevent infectious diseases and protect individuals and communities from outbreaks.
MAKE AN INFORMED DECISION AND TALK TO YOUR DOCTOR

Live: These are weakened form of the live virus or bacteria. They provide a long-lasting immune response, often with a single dose. (Ex. MMR & Varicella) These are not suitable for people with weak immune systems.

Inactivated: These are a killed version of the germ that causes the disease. In general, safer than live vaccines but may require multiple doses to achieve and maintain immunity. (Ex. Flu & Polio)

Subunit: (Conjugated): These contain specific pieces or parts of the pathogen like proteins or sugars, not the entire germ. This will minimize the side effects and be suitable for most people. (Ex. Hepatitis B & HPV)

Toxoid: These contain deactivated toxin produced by the pathogen, not the pathogen itself. They protect against the harmful effects of the toxin, rather than the disease. (Ex. Diphtheria & Tetanus)

mRNA: These use messenger RNA (mRNA) to instruct the body’s cell to produce a specific viral protein which triggers an immune response. (Ex. Covid-19)

Viral Vector: These use a harmless virus to deliver genetic material from the pathogen into the body, initiating an immune response. They are newer technology. (Ex. Covid-19 & Ebola)



Denise Musolino, BSN
Health & Nutrition Coordinator

For Enrollment Opportunities in Head Start or Early Head Start, please contact Cher McKeever, Enrollment/Recruitment Coordinator. 304-233-3290

"USDA Civil Rights Non-Discrimination Statement"

In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity.

Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language), should contact the responsible state or local agency that administers the program or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.

To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form which can be obtained online at: <https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/USDA-OASCR%20P-Complaint-Form-0508-0002-508-11-28-17Fax2Mail.pdf>, from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

mail:
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or

fax:
(833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or

email:
program.intake@usda.gov

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission is to provide a high quality family-focused program uniquely designed to prepare each child for learning and life.

VISION STATEMENT

"Building foundations for life-long growth and development"

Up and Coming

October 2025

October 2—Ohio County Family Activity Night
October 9—Magnolia Family Activity Night
October 15—Policy Council/Advisory Meeting
October 16—Hancock/Brooke Counties Family Activity Night

November 2025

November 4—Election Day: No Class
November 11—Veterans Day: No Class/No Staff
November 19—Policy Council
November 26—No Class
November 27-28—Thanksgiving Break: No Class/No Staff

December 2025

December 17—Joint Policy Council/Board Meeting
December 22-January 2—Winter Break—No Class
December 24-January 1—Winter Break—No Staff

January 2026

January 2—Staff Return
January 5—Head Start/Early Head Start Children Return
January 19—Martin Luther King Jr Day: No Class/No Staff
January 21—Policy Council/Advisory Meeting

Welcome All New Employees

Jessica White
Ariana Hickman
Kaitlynn Chapman
Hailey Knight
Karen Rogers
Alexis Lemmon
Rachel Clampitt
Carrie Forrester
Marjorie Giovinnazzo
Kathleen Lantz
Jill Gannoe
Jennifer Baciak



NPHS is always on the lookout for committed individuals who want to serve the children and families of the Northern Panhandle of West Virginia.

You can view our list of current openings, and the qualifications or requirements of each position, on our website at: <http://www.npheadstart.org/hr-and-employment/available-positions>

Full-time, part-time, and substitute positions available.

We appreciate your interest in a career at Northern Panhandle Head Start, Inc.

To learn about employment opportunities at NPHS, please contact Human Resources at 304-233-3290.

Board of Directors News

The agency is seeking area professionals who are willing to serve on the Board of Directors. Do you want to make a difference in the lives of children and families in our communities? Consider membership with our Board of Directors. This group of dedicated professionals has made a profound impact on our program. They are the driving force, along with the Policy Council, in the decision-making process. Please contact Jackie Bell, Executive Director, with any questions regarding membership roles and responsibilities at 304-233-3290 or jbelle@npheadstart.org.