

Babies!



Micco Alexander Lee Gilbert

Born April 4, 2019

Since the day you were born, your heartbeat took lead on my soul's drum.



Home Visiting graduates: Brittany Patrick and her son, Axsel

Congratulations to Brittany Patrick for graduating from the Home Visiting program!

Brittany entered the program right before her son, Axsel, was born and participated until he turned 3 this March. She actively engaged in the program, sharing her thoughts, ideas and asking questions.

As a parent, Brittany grew in her knowledge, skills and confidence over the years.

She had this to say about the program. "A million times over I'd recommend it to everyone. It makes all the difference. I don't know what I'd have done without it. All the lessons keep me at ease knowing my son's development is good. It provides stress relief in knowing I'm doing good. It reassures me."

Congratulations, Brittany!

Congratulations, Head Start graduates! Nutrition is the foundation of health

By Nancy Ludwig, MS, RDN, LD,
Siletz Tribal Head Start Nutritionist

Another Head Start class graduates soon. Congratulations! May the healthy behaviors learned bring health and nourishment for the entire graduating class, their families and the entire community.

As part of my role as consultant nutritionist to Siletz Tribal Head Start, I offer information for families and remind readers that I am available to support Head Start families by discussing nutrition-related concerns via telephone at no charge through the program.

This year's topics included the following titles (October to April): "Head Start Nutrition," "Squash Breakfast Ideas without Grains," "Healthy Winter Holiday Strategies," "ACE Impacts Digestion & Health," "Food Additives & Children's Behavior/Health," "But I Don't Like to Drink Water," and "Why Check My Child's Hemoglobin?"

Each article contained common messages. Nutrition is a community concern. Everything that is important in Head Start is also important to the community.

Nutrition is the foundation of health. Health requires access to wholesome, safe, clean foods. Traditional food practices generally demonstrate a path to optimal nutrition.

In our current environmental and economic challenges, the concepts are stretched to include nutritional equivalents that can be purchased at stores and prepared within a busy schedule. Key points are highlighted in the paragraphs below. Full articles are archived on the Tribal website.

Head Start has specific nutrition requirements and performance standards. These include identification of nutritional needs, nutritional services, meal services, family assistance with nutrition, and food safety and sanitation. Simply put, Head Start focuses on the needs of the children and helps connect needs with services.

Head Start provides nutritious food choices through snacks and family-style meals supported with nutrition cur-

riculum. Students are coached to explore foods by tasting and describing them, growing them, learning about why some are nutritious and how they may fit as traditional foods or their nutritional equivalents. Food safety and sanitation is followed, monitored and taught.

A modern look at traditional foods helps people who struggle with illness, including diabetes, celiac, rheumatoid arthritis, multiple sclerosis, lupus, Hashimoto's thyroiditis and more. The nutritional concept is to avoid (or limit) grains, starches and sugar. Squash is a traditional food and can be prepared in convenient delicious ways to support health. It can even be eaten for breakfast.

During the winter months, we set the stage to continue healthy habits with reminders as we are faced with temptations in the name of celebration. It is important to reflect, anticipate, be conscious and learn while truly celebrating with gratitude. What is truly important? What examples do you want to set for your children?

Make a plan in advance. Be mindful and form better habits through awareness. Remember what and why you are celebrating. Gratitude goes a long way to improve how we are nourished by our food to support our health.

Adverse childhood events (ACEs) are correlated with negative, lasting effects on health and well-being. ACEs are potentially traumatic events that range from physical, emotional or sexual abuse to parental divorce or the incarceration of a parent or guardian.

Possibly the most under-exposed risk factor on health across a lifetime for all major chronic health conditions in the world today is the effect of unresolved emotional trauma from childhood.

Trauma isn't always a direct experience with memory. Trauma can be a collective experience, inherited or passed down through families and groups. Collective or intergenerational trauma is at work in the Native population and adds a burden to health.

Healing emotional trauma is one of the most important aspects to address in

all chronic complex illnesses. Unresolved emotional trauma leads to pain and is at the core of addictive and destructive health patterns.

Unresolved trauma leads to a state of chronic stress and inflammation, which perpetuates illnesses and leads to beliefs that sabotage our ability to recover. Stress and trauma interfere with digestion, even when nutritious vital food is consumed. Everything is connected – nothing in our body stands apart.

Digestion is at the core of health, yet more than what we eat influences our digestion. When we learn about and support children's needs, we help Head Start children and their families. Likewise, if we didn't get the support we needed as children and we address it now, we also help children, their families and a much greater world.

We are all connected. Let's support each other to be well.

Our diet impacts our health beyond how much we weigh. It also impacts how we feel and what our moods are each day. When we change a child's diet, behavior changes.

Did you know that more than 10,000 chemicals are allowed in foods, but are not all tested for food safety? These chemicals play a role in health and behavior.

Tips for chemical avoidance are provided below:

1. Consume fresh or frozen fruits and vegetables when possible.
2. Avoid processed meats, especially maternal consumption during pregnancy.
3. Avoid microwaving food or beverages in plastic (including infant formula and pumped human milk).
4. Avoid washing plastics in the dishwasher.
5. Use alternatives to plastic, such as glass or stainless steel.
6. Look at the recycling code on the bottom of products to avoid plastics with recycling codes 3 (phthalates), 6 (styrene), and 7 (possible bisphenols) unless plastics are labeled as "biobased" or "greenware," indicat-

ing they are made from corn and do not contain bisphenols. This step helps determine the plastic category in order to avoid chemicals that can migrate into your foods (indirectly).

7. Wash hands before handling foods and/or drinks, and wash all fruits and vegetables that cannot be peeled.

Water is essential to health. Adequate hydration can improve mood, memory and brain performance. Water can help flush nasty toxins out of your body so you have more energy, a stronger immune system and better breath, and it can even help you achieve healthy weight. Attention is needed to be certain that your water quality is pure.

Try to drink a glass of water upon rising each day. If you or your children drink flavored, sweetened beverages, a practical tip is to begin to dilute the beverages. Have your eye on the goal of drinking pure water.

Unfortunately, part of Tribal trauma includes toxic exposures from unwanted pollution. Thank you to the brave Native voices who are speaking out on environmental concerns for the good of all people!

Hemoglobin is a measurement that Head Start offers to monitor health and identify when additional support or help may be needed. Hemoglobin carries oxygen around in the body. Without enough oxygen transport, the body does not function well.

There are many reasons why low hemoglobin may occur. Some reasons can be addressed with diet; other reasons may need medical attention. It is simple to get the test. Yet if it is low, it may require exploration to determine the cause and best treatment.

Please remember, lead exposure can cause low hemoglobin. Therefore, it may be a good idea to say yes to the test for lead as well.

As the Head Start consultant nutritionist, I enjoy supporting families by providing articles and discussing nutrition-related concerns. Congratulations to another class of Head Start graduates!