

Head Start offers introduction to education

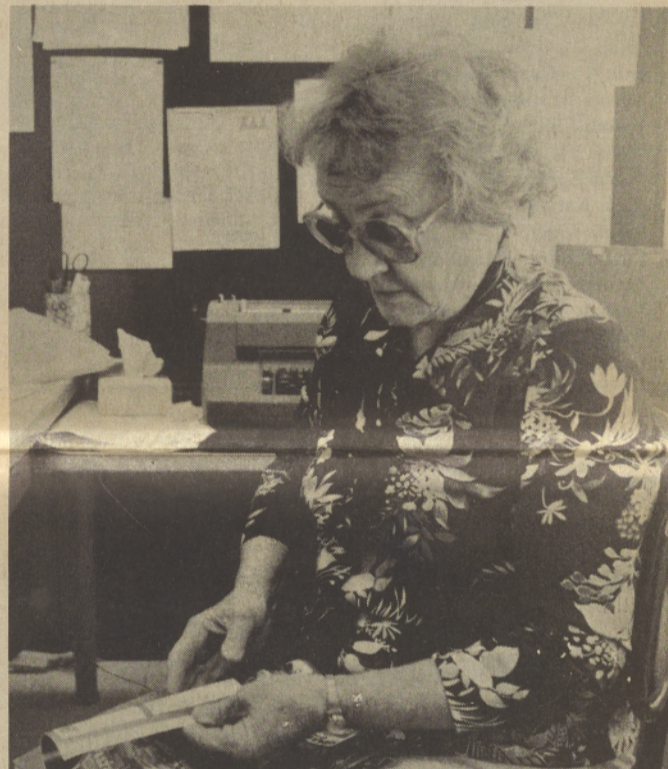


Cook's aide Sherri Smith prepares sandwiches for student's sack lunch.

Four-year-old Alice Johnson uses building toys to create various shapes.



Teacher Nola Queahpama helps Roland Kalama III and Crystal Scott learn numbers.



Curriculum coordinator and Child Development Associates trainer Dorothy Earl searches catalogue for equipment needed by handicapped children.



Advanced four-year-olds James Johnson and Estomina Made enjoy sandbox activities.



Teacher's aide Gladys Squiemphen inscribes their names on (left) Andrea Selam's and Desirae Smith's Weekly Readers.

by Donna Behrend

Warm Springs children, for the last 20 years, have willingly and excitedly attended the four-hour Head Start classes offered at the Community Center. An increase in the number of Head Start-aged children requiring care from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. necessitated the purchase of the Head Start/Day Care Trailer in the 1970s and another in 1982. Until 1984, however, overcrowding had not been a serious problem that couldn't be resolved with classroom and teacher shifts. Last year, 20 children were turned away. And only through the Working Women's program, which is no longer available, were those children included in an afternoon session at the Community Center.

Overcrowding in 1985, is a serious problem. There are 185 three- and four-year-olds on the

Warm Springs reservation. Of those, 121 were accepted into the Head Start and Head Start/Day Care programs. Thirty of the remaining 60 youngsters who were pre-registered were turned away. Enrollment was prioritized, with those with low income being accepted first and handicapped children being second. Older four-year-olds, too young for kindergarten, were enrolled last.

Parents of those children turned away wrote a letter stating their concern and upon hearing their concerns, Tribal Council asked department manager of Education, Training and Employment, Jody Calica, and Early Childhood director, Cody Soules, to gather information concerning additional classes. "It looks favorable to provide those students a preschool experience," said Calica.

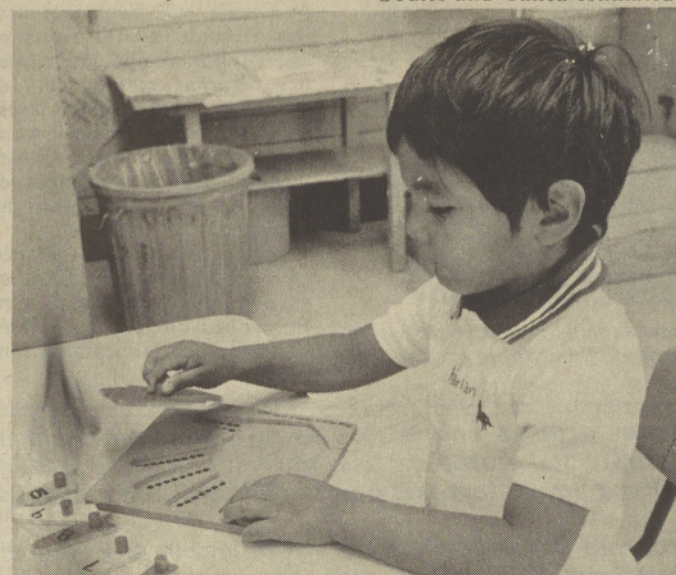
for Tribal Council that it would take less than \$50,000 to activate a program for the remainder of 1985 and \$190,000 to continue the expanded program in 1986. Tribal Council appropriated additional monies to begin the tribal preschool program this month, hopefully within the next two weeks.

Calica stated increased Head Start enrollment is due to increased population. "We're slowly getting into" a population boom. There has been a five percent growth increase per year since 1979. In 1979, 75 babies were born as compared to 110 births in 1984. The birth projection for 1985 is 115. The growth increase, said Calica, "will be more strongly felt as we progress."

Soules and Calica estimated

Because the program is partially federally funded, certain regulations must be adhered to, such as the teacher/aide ratio. According to federal standards, there must be one teacher for every eight children. However, Soules stated that the ratio is one adult to every five children in the three-year-old rooms because of volunteer help from parents. There are 21 people currently employed as teachers, aides and in other positions in both programs.

Calica said that the programs are being held within the budget and "we're trying to meet budget projections. . . We're going to find ways to get the children in the programs." The new preschool program will provide the same activities as the Head Start programs. However, there will be some noticeable differences in transportation and food services to be provided.



Harlan Waheneka concentrates on piecing together a puzzle.

Spilyay Tymoo photos by Marsha Shewczyk