



WCAC Early Head Start Newsletter

December 2021



The Early Head Start family is pleased and excited to welcome our newest member, family educator Melissa Blier. Melissa joined the team on Monday, December 6, 2021. She brings with her a wealth of experience and knowledge of early education and care. We wish her a long and happy future with Head Start/Early Head Start.

We are also extremely saddened to announce that we have and will be losing several educators by the end of this year. Please join me in saying farewell and good luck to; Kristina Sulkoski, Janet Gonzales, and Yesmeli Bueno. It is a incredible loss to our program and they will be missed. Although EHS is going through a transition period we will always provide our families the highest quality services possible.

Stay safe and well.

Best regards,

C. Lee- EHS Coordinator

Program Closed

December 24, 2021

December 31, 2021

Fuel Assistance:

Phone: 508-754-1176

Email: LIHEAP@wcac.net

Website: wcac.net/fuel-assistance/

VITA Tax Services: coming soon

Email: toliveira@wcac.net

Website: wcac.net/vita/

Financial Empowerment:

Website: wcac.net/financial-empowerment/financial-coaching

Food:

Webster/Dudley: Webster/Dudley food share.

Phone: 508-943-9171

Southbridge: Catholic charities

Phone: 508-765-5936

Oxford: Oxford Food Pantry

Phone: 508-987-1062

Charlton: Chip-In

Phone: 508-248-3292

Clothing:

Catholic Charities southern Worcester county

Phone: 508-765-5936

Healthy Living

Breakfast Parfait

Ingredients:

2 Cups Pineapple
1 Cup berries
1 Cup Yogurt
1 Banana
1/3 cup raisins
cheerios



Directions:

In a bowl or cup, layer the fruit, yogurt, and raisins. On the top add your favorite healthy cereal like multi-grain cheerios. Give your child a spoon and enjoy!

Better Together– Family Activity

Paper Plate Elf

Materials:

Paper plate
Googly eyes
Pom poms
Paint
Construction paper
Glue
Scissors
Cotton balls



Directions:

Paint your paper plate the color of your choice. While it dries, cut out two shapes for the ears, and a hat shape using construction paper. Then, glue the ears onto the side of the paper plate and the hat on top. Let your child decorate the elf as they wish with cotton balls and pom poms.

Have an Idea, We Would Love to Hear It!

We are always looking for parent contributions. If you would like to contribute something to the newsletter please email it to Stephanie at Sfard@wcac.net. We would love to include home recipes, holiday traditions, and parenting tips and tricks you would like to share.

In colder weather, parents typically dress their children in layers and winter coats. It's important to know that heavy coats can be dangerous in the car seat. When your child is going to be secured in a car seat, pick thin, warm layers to put on them before buckling the car seat, then put blankets or jacket over them and the buckles to keep warm.



Staying Balanced

Benefits of Playing Games

1. Fun, silliness, and laughter.
2. Great way to connect with your child.
3. Teaches taking turns and following rules.
4. Challenges them to try new things.
5. Games are always accessible it just takes some imagination.

Suggested games: Peekaboo, Hide and Seek, I spy, Fishing games, Scavenger hunts, toss balls/paper into basket, copycat movements where the child does what you do (I.e. Jump, skip, hop).





Dominican Republic

Christmas and New Year are the most important celebrations in the Dominican Republic. Typically, on Christmas eve Dominican families get together to enjoy a family dinner. The traditional Christmas dinner tends to always be the same. It includes pork roast, rice with pigeon peas and potato salad. For those who do not eat pork they eat chicken or lamb. Also, on Christmas eve religious people tend to go to church to celebrate the birth of Baby Jesus.

Dominicans are known for their joy and inner music. So, at Christmas time, we love to let it flow! With the Aguinaldos people, kids and friends tend to go to homes and play instruments and sing Christmas carols at the home's doors. Dominicans love to decorate with ornaments! We love it that much, that generally people start decorating their homes in early November and leave all décor up until the end of January. On Christmas, Dominicans tend to eat grapes, apples, mandarins, sweet gummies, and many dry nuts. Vendors place some street stands to sell those goods, and once you start seeing them, is when you say Christmas has begun!! Most of the Dominican companies prepare a big party for all their employees. As a way to show their appreciation for their hard work.

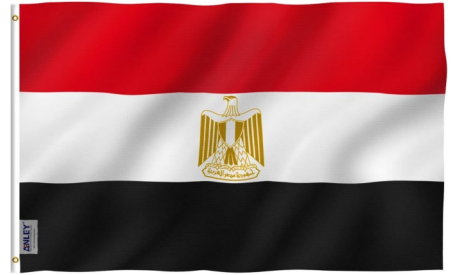
~ Yesmeli Bueno



Egypt

Before Christmas, all churches and Christian houses are decorated with trees, lights, and small cribs. On Christmas Eve each person goes to the churches with new clothes as if they were going to enjoy the joy of a party.

On Coptic Christmas Eve (6th January), Coptic Christians go to church for a special liturgy or Service. The services normally start about 10.30pm but some chapels will be open for people to pray from 10.00pm. Many people meet up with their friends and families in the churches from 9.00pm onwards. The services are normally finished shortly after midnight, but some go onto 4.00am!



When the Christmas service ends people go home to eat the big Christmas meal. All the foods contain meat, eggs, and butter - all the yummy things they didn't during the Advent fast! One popular course is 'Fata' a lamb soup which contains bread, rice, garlic, and boiled lamb meat.

On the Orthodox Christmas Day (7th) people come together in homes for parties and festivities. People often take 'kahk' (special sweet biscuits) with them to give as gifts.

In Egypt, Santa is called Baba Noël. Children hope that he will climb through a window and will leave some presents! They might leave some "kahk" out for Baba Noël.

In Arabic Happy/Merry Christmas is "Eid Milad Majid~"

~Marim Kous



Ghana

Ghanaian Christmas celebrations tend to start around the 20th of December, lasting till the New Year. There are lots of activities which go on during the festive period, with the main focus being on people travelling around the country to visit family and friends. With there being over 66 languages spoken in the country, there are many different traditions!

The celebrations are at a maximum during Christmas Eve night with the Church services. With singing and dancing, the service lasts late into the night!

Christmas day also includes a visit to Church, with everyone dressing in traditional clothing. After early morning service, the gift giving and receiving begins! Traditional Christmas food includes stew, rice, meat and fufu.



~Margaret



Haiti

Christmas Eve is when most Haitians celebrate Christmas. Almost everyone goes to a Christmas Eve service to give homage to our Lord Jesus. The services usually start an hour or so before midnight. At midnight the traditional song "Minuit Chrétien" is sung by everyone in the assembly.

Christmas Eve is an important part of the Haitian culture on this day.

"Reveillon" comes from the French word "réveil" which means "waking" and is a time to celebrate the awakening of Christ with a feast. Many people attend late-night church services on Christmas Eve, and this feast is often enjoyed after church with friends and family into the early hours of the morning.

Traditional foods can include rice with djon djon (Haitian mushrooms), rice and beans, chicken creole, fried accra, goat, pineapple upside down cake or orange cake. This feast can last the entire night as people dance and sing in celebration. Christmas Day is often a quieter day opening gifts.

Many Christians attend a special Christmas church service and time is spent with friends and family to celebrate!



~ Cathia Marc

Puerto Rico



In Puerto Rico we celebrate La Noche Buena, which means "the good-night." This special evening is celebrated on December 24. We get together with family and enjoy a big feast, which consists of several types of dishes such as penil (roasted pork), pastelles(tamales), arroz con gan-



dules (rice with pigeon beans), various salads and desserts. There is also coquito, the traditional holiday drink that is enjoyed by the adults during this special gathering, as well as throughout the month of December. It is made with coconut milk, condensed milk, and white rum. This is also the time where families would exchange gifts with one another. Some families may also attend a late-night mass on Noche Buena to commemorate the birth of Jesus Christ.

~ Melissa Blier



United States of America

America has many different traditions and ways that people celebrate Christmas, because of the multi-cultural nature of the people. The traditional meal is usually Turkey or ham with cranberry sauce, stuffing, mashed potatoes, sweet potatoes, pies, and lots of other vegetables. Americans enjoy decorating both inside the house and outside. Many families string lights outside of their house and

put-up statues of Santa Clause, snowmen, and reindeer. Many Americans attend a late-night church service on Christmas Eve and then go home to leave out cookies and milk for Santa. Christmas day is usually spent with family and friends having a nice meal together and exchanging gifts. Some other common traditions that can be found in America is the Elf on the shelf, Caroling, baking cookies, decorating the Christmas tree, hanging stockings, decorating gingerbread houses, and watching Christmas movies. A favorite tradition in my home is my children open one present on Christmas eve before bed. It is usually new pajamas, hot chocolate, popcorn, a movie, and a Christmas book.



~ Stephanie Fafard



However you wish to celebrate your holiday, we wish you and your family health, happiness, peace and prosperity during the holiday season and into the new year.

~ Early Head Start Family Educators