



# Building a Solid Foundation



## LAMAR HEAD START FEBRUARY 2024

Otero College  
Child Development  
Services

February 2024

Dear Families,

Brrrr! January was a cold month to remember. This cold weather makes it challenging to go outside on those cold days. Thank you for helping your child get to school on those days that we would rather stay home nice and warm inside.

We appreciate your cooperation when we change our schedule due to frigid temperatures such as snow, ice and below zero temperatures. Just a reminder that if CDS Head Start is closed or delayed,

you will receive a text message, we will put it on our FB page and on our website [cdsheadstart.com](http://cdsheadstart.com). If you did not receive a text message please let me know.

This month, teachers will schedule parent/teacher conferences to share your child's progress. Please, keep your appointment. These conferences are Home Visits

**February Family Night is**  
February 20th @ 5:30pm  
At the Methodist Church Hall, We will provide a

meal, we will have a presenter talking about Mental Wellness and Stress Management, we will also have a parent/child activity. Then eat and dance afterwards.

Each child can have 2 guests.

Let us know if you plan on attending so that we can plan enough food and activities.

Have a Lovely Month

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### IMPORTANT DATES

**February 1**—Early Release for Students — NOON

**February 1 and 2** — Parent/Teacher Conferences

**February 15**—High Plains Dental Presentation and Screenings

**February 20**—K.I.S.S Family Night - Kids Invite Someone Special

## Preschool Dental Care

This year we are collaborating with High Plains Dental Clinic to provide our students with dental education in the classrooms and dental screenings for those children who have not yet been to the dentist. The hygienist will be at our center on February 15th. Parents are welcome to join us for the presentation starting at 8:45am.

## Understanding How Sugar Contributes to Tooth Decay

Children who frequently consume foods and beverages that contain natural sugars and/or added sugars during the day are more likely to develop tooth decay than those who consume them less frequently. Parents may not know that many of the foods and drinks they give children contain sugar.




## Finding Hidden Sugar

Many foods and drinks contain added sugar. Sugar in food can be listed by many different names. The best place to check for sugar is on the ingredient list on the food label. Look for words like:

Beet sugar	Corn sweetener	Corn Syrup	Cane juice	High fructose corn syrup			
Honey	Malt syrup	Maple syrup	Molasses	Raw sugar	White sugar	Coffee sugar	Cane sugar

# February 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 <small>Early release</small> Parent/Teacher	2 Conferences	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14 	15 High Plains Dental	16	17
18	19	20 Family Night @ Methodist Hall	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29		

## Mental Wellness and Stress Management

### 10 Ways to Support Your Mental Health in 2024

Now that we're paying more attention to our inner lives, it's also essential that we take action. Fortunately, there are a number of things that everyone can do to nourish their mental health and find moments of joy

#### 1. Try a proven way to sleep better.

Experts say that getting enough sleep is one of the most important things we can do for our mental health. If you're having trouble falling or staying asleep, studies have found that [cognitive behavioral therapy for insomnia](#), or C.B.T.-I., is as effective as using sleep medications in the short term

#### 2. Learn how to tell whether your anxiety is protective or problematic.

It's normal to feel anxious from time to time. In fact, having some anxiety can actually be useful. [Experts say](#) an internal alarm system can improve our performance, help us recognize danger and even encourage us to be more conscientious. "If you start to notice that worry and fear are there constantly, that is a signal that you need some help." Other signs to look out for include restlessness, a sense of fear or doom, increased heart rate, sweating, trembling and trouble concentrating.

#### 3. Stop the worry cycle.

If you have a tendency to ruminate, there are a few simple ways to [curb the habit](#). The first is to distract yourself: Research shows that diversions can help get your mind off whatever is stressing you out. Try playing a word game or listening to music, paying close attention to the lyrics.

#### 4. Practice '5 things tidying.'

When you're struggling with your mental health, basic tasks like washing dishes or doing laundry can feel impossible. But living amid mess can make you feel even worse. Your home doesn't have to be perfect, but it should be livable. An efficient way to keep things from getting out of hand is to practice what she calls "five things tidying." Tackle the five main categories of clutter — trash, dishes, laundry, things with a place and things without a place — one at a time to help cleaning feel more manageable.

**5. Embrace gratitude** [Gratitude](#) is a positive emotion that can arise when you acknowledge that you have goodness in your life and that other people — or higher powers, if you believe in them — have helped you achieve that goodness.

#### 6. Be optimistic about aging.

Research shows that mindset really matters when it comes to health, and it can even [extend your life](#). A classic study found that people who were optimistic about aging lived seven and a half years longer than those who had negative perceptions of it.

#### 7. Participate in the arts.

The notion that [art can improve mental well-being](#) is something many people intuitively understand but don't necessarily put into practice. You don't need talent to give it a try, experts say. Writing a poem, singing or drawing can all help elevate your mood, no matter how creative you consider yourself to be.

#### 8. Look for a little bit of awe every day.

Sometimes we have to remind ourselves to [connect with the physical world](#) around us. Enter the [awe walk](#). Pick a walking spot (either new or familiar) and imagine that you're seeing it for the first time. Then pay attention to your senses. Feel the wind on your face, touch the petals of a flower. Simply notice the sky. It can be more restorative than you might expect.

#### 9. Take a tech break.

If you're having trouble focusing, it's not just you. Research has found that over the past two decades, the amount of time we spend on a given task has shrunk to an average of just 47 seconds, down from two and a half minutes. [Technology is often to blame](#). Try taking "tech breaks." Set a timer for 15 minutes, then silence and set aside your phone. When time is up, take one or two minutes to check your favorite apps — that's your tech break — and get back to work for another 15-minute cycle. The goal is to gradually increase the time between your tech breaks, building up to 45 minutes (or more) away from your phone.

#### 10. Take a deep breath.

One of the fastest, easiest ways you can calm your mind and body is by taking slow, deep breaths. Doing so helps to turn up your parasympathetic nervous system — the counterbalance to the "fight or flight" stress response — and lower your blood pressure and regulate your heart rate.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2023/12/28/well/mind/mental-health-stress-management.html>