



Community Services for Children Family Connection Newsletter ~ ELRC Region 14 December 2022

Serving Lehigh & Northampton counties

Region 14 News

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The ELRC offices will be closed on 12/26/22 & 1/2/23. We wish you all a safe and healthy holiday season!

Behavioral Health Services for Children

As children adjust to being back in a classroom after the pandemic, some challenging behaviors can also emerge. These challenging behaviors may cause children to be absent, suspended, or even expelled by their school. This disruption in school and routine can have lasting effects on a child's early development and learning.



Intensive Behavioral Health Services (IBHS), formally known as, Behavioral Health Rehabilitation Services (BHRS), provides support by working with your child in their school, community and home. IBHS services are tailored to meet your child's needs and will develop goals for your child with input from the entire family.

To obtain IBHS services you must choose from an approved provider. Once a provider is found a psychologist will evaluate your child to see if they are eligible for services. IBHS services may not be best suited for every family, and are for children with significant behavioral or mental health needs. Please click [here](#), to learn more about IBHS services.

If you currently receive your health insurance through the state of Pennsylvania's medical assistance program at the County Assistance Office, your mental health insurer is Magellan, click on the link [here](#) to be taken to Magellan's website to find a provider near you. If you are interested in learning more about other providers in our area, click on the links below.

- [Access Services](#)
- [Carbon Lehigh Intermediate Unit 21](#)
- [PA Mentor](#)

If you need help finding a childcare provider you can also use the state of Pennsylvania's search tool by clicking on the link below.

- [Child Care and Other Early Learning Programs](#)



Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) in Children

Lehigh Valley Health Network has released information to help guide and educate family's whose children may have come down with RSV. Please click on the link below to learn more about the virus and what to do if your child is sick.

- [Respiratory Syncytial Virus \(RSV\)](#)



Lehigh Valley Community Events for Families

Hibernia Fire Station
643 Ridge Avenue, Allentown PA 18102
Every Friday- Kids & Teens Eat for Free from
3pm-4pm

Bethlehem Public Library- Southside Branch

Parenting Corner

Importance of Concrete Supports for Families



Concrete supports are a protective factor that can buffer and support children and families during good times and bad. Concrete supports can provide access to things like:

- Food
- Housing
- Clothing
- Health care
- Legal advice
- Crisis counseling
- Emotional support

If your family is ever in need, it is important to seek help from the community resources available to you. Reach out to the Early Learning Resource Center at (800) 528-7222 and we can confidentially connect you with local service providers.

In addition, the following link provides contact information to many resources available to help meet your family's needs.

[Child Welfare Information Gateway](#)

Child Development

The holidays are here!

This time of year can bring a lot of joy but the added financial strain, busy schedules and changes to routines can add stress to your family. Most children will have a break from school and some parents may take a few days off from work.

Between November and January, these holiday-related changes and situations may increase challenging behavior for some children who struggle to regulate their emotions, communicate and adjust to changes. Below is a link to help identify challenging behaviors your child might exhibit and some strategies you can use to help them cope.

- [Think: Kids : 9 Ways to Improve Challenging Behavior During the Holidays](#)
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Resource & Referral

PPL Assistance Programs

If you're struggling to pay your electric bill, PPL may be able to help. The **OnTrack Payment Plan** makes managing your bill easier with lower fixed monthly payments and debt forgiveness.

Check out PPL's income guidelines at the following link [PPL Electric Utilities](#). If you qualify, click "apply now" and sign in if you are a PPL customer. Your OnTrack credit is determined by your primary heating source and your household income. If your home is heated by electric, the maximum OnTrack credit you'll receive, over 18 months, is \$4,027. If your primary heating source is natural gas or oil, your maximum OnTrack credit will be \$1,310. The credit will be applied monthly to cover the difference between your actual bill and your fixed OnTrack payment.

Operation HELP is a PPL Electric program that provides grants to eligible families struggling with their energy bills. To see if you qualify and to apply for a HELP grant, click on the following link [PPL Electric Utilities](#)

PPL WRAP Program provides income-eligible customers with a no-cost energy assessment, free energy saving products, and energy tips for long-term savings. To apply for this program, click on the following link [PPL Electric Utilities](#). A specialist will review your application and let you know whether you've been accepted.

Health & Safety

Holiday Safety

This time of year is very festive and busy for many families. Below are a few tips to keep your home and family safe and healthy.

1. **Weather and Travel** - Monitor weather conditions to ensure safety when traveling and dressing your children. Dress them in appropriate outdoor clothing to stay warm and dry. When traveling, buckle up and plan to take extra time if weather conditions are poor. Do not drink and drive or travel with those who are under the influence.
2. **Prevent and treat illness** - There is nothing worse than being sick and missing out on holiday fun. To prepare for the season, ensure your family is properly vaccinated and regularly screened by a doctor. To avoid the spread of germs remember to wash your hands. Whenever possible stay home when you are ill.
3. **Monitor children and new surroundings** - As your family visits different places and as your children get new gifts or toys, keep an eye out for potential dangers. Ask yourself if toys are age appropriate for your child. Do they have small parts that may cause choking hazards for small children? Are there foods, drinks, household items or other objects present that may cause an injury or accident?
4. **Practice fire safety** - Have an emergency plan. Be sure that you monitor food cooking on the stove and items such as candles, fireplaces and space heaters. These and other items such as electrical outlets or extension cords are a frequent cause of fire in the winter months.

5. **Eat healthy, stay active** - Prepare food safely and ensure hands and surfaces are cleaned regularly. Cook and store food at proper temperatures. Eat nutritious food like fruits and vegetables and limit portion sizes. Limit foods or beverages that may be less healthy or high in fat, salt, and sugar. Also, help kids to be active for at least 1 hour a day.
6. **Manage stress** - This time of year is wonderful but it can also be very stressful for many people; including children. If you or your children feel stressed, take a break. Get plenty of rest and seek support if you feel overwhelmed.
7. **Safe toys** - As you plan to purchase toys and gifts for children, click [here](#) to read this article about preventing toy related injuries.

How Smoking Affects Oral Health

Smoking can lead to disease and disability, harming nearly every bodily organ. More than 16 million Americans are living with a disease caused by smoking. Secondhand smoke is also dangerous to both adults and children.

Smoking traditional cigarettes, e-cigarettes, cigars, pipes, water pipes, and smokeless tobacco can all cause health problems. Smoking makes it more likely that a person will have tooth decay, gum disease, oral cancer, and poor birth outcomes. It also causes stained teeth, bad breath, and reduced ability to taste and smell.

Not smoking or quitting smoking is important for overall health, including oral health. When a smoker quits, it improves their health and quality of life. It also improves the health and quality of life of those around them, especially young children.

Visit www.smokefree.gov to find out about different ways to quit smoking.

Arts & Crafts

Colorful Lights



Supplies:

- Black marker
- White paper

- Paper plate
- Different colors of finger paint

Step 1: Using your black marker, draw a line with swirls in it.

Step 2: Using your black marker, draw little squares along the line, spacing them out to be the top of the bulb.

Step 3: Place the different colors of paint on the paper plate.

Step 4: Dip your child's finger in the different colored paints

Step 5: Press the child's' painted fingers underneath the black squares.

- Ask younger children to count each light as you stamp their fingerprint. Go back and practice identifying colors once dry.
- Older children can try to create patterns of colored lights.

***Always supervise children closely when using tools like scissors or items that could be a choking hazard.**

Visit [ELRC Region 14](#)

Community Services for Children | elrc14@cscinc.org | www.cscinc.org

Connect with us



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