



## Community Services for Children

# Family Connection Newsletter ~ ELRC Region 13 January 2023

Serving Berks & Schuylkill Counties

## Region 13 News

Si desea ver este boletín en español, haga clic [aquí](#)

### Family to Family Class

Family to Family is a free 8 session course to support families in understanding the importance of mental health and communication strategies. Sessions begin 2/6/23 and meet every Monday evening in Shillington.



Please see this [flyer](#) for more information. Questions can be directed to National Alliance on Mental Illness at 484-769-1027.

### Financial Literacy Series

PA CareerLink Berks County is collaborating with Neighborhood Housing Services of Greater Berks, Inc. to present a series of workshops regarding Financial Literacy. Sessions will be held every Friday from 11:00 am - 1:00 pm at the Berks CareerLink office starting January 13<sup>th</sup> until February 24<sup>th</sup>. The series is designed for individuals to participate in every module but interested parties can register for one (or more) specific sessions should they be interested. Workshops are led by Neighborhood Housing Services and the materials are in English. Staff will provide spoken interpretation in Spanish.

Please see this [flyer](#) for more information.

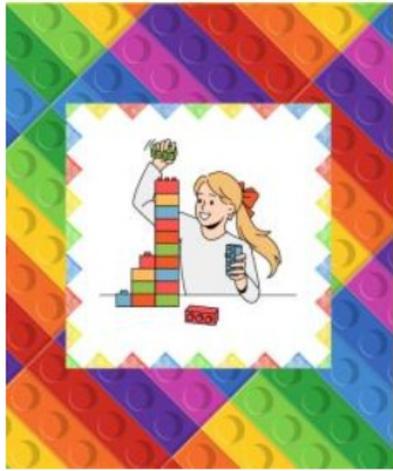
### Local Happenings

January Rocks - Kids' craft



Saturday January 28, 2023 1:00pm  
Orwigsburg Area Free Public Library  
216 West Independence Street  
Orwigsburg, Pa 17961

Please register 570-366-1638  
[www.orwigsburglibrary.org](http://www.orwigsburglibrary.org)



## Lego Club

Every 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday 4:00pm  
Ages 6-11  
Kutztown Community Library  
70 Bieber Alley  
Kutztown, Pa 19530  
610-683-5820

[Kutztown Community Library | Berks  
County Public Libraries  
\(berkslibraries.org\)](http://berkslibraries.org)

## 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 (833) 229-6927 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

It's 2023!

As we say goodbye to 2022, many people take this opportunity to set goals for themselves for the New Year. Have you considered making small, positive goals with your child? This is something that can be fun for both of you to create together. Children have an intense enthusiasm for trying new things, and an uncanny ability to bring adults along in their quest for adventure. It is much more likely for goals to be achieved when they are positive and attainable for all involved.



Click [here](#) for some goal setting ideas with your children.

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## Resource & Referral

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### Registration Fee Assistance for Families

Beginning January 1, 2023, the Early Learning Resource Center (ELRC) will be able to further support subsidy eligible families by paying providers a fee in lieu of providers charging subsidy families a registration fee. The ELRC will pay the registration fee, directly to the provider, at initial enrollment. In addition, if the provider charges an annual re-registration fee, the ELRC will also cover this expense. The ELRC will not, however, be able to pay other types of fees charged by providers such as wait list fees, field trips fees, art project fees, etc.

Reach out to your family specialist with any questions.



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### Affordable Connectivity Program

The Affordable Connectivity Program is a federal program designed to help families who may be struggling to afford internet service. Having a reliable internet service is extremely important in today's interconnected world. The Coronavirus Pandemic has also shown us how important internet access can be to both school children and working adults.

In general, a household is eligible if the household income is at or below 200% Federal Poverty Income Guidelines, or if a member of the household is enrolled in an assistance program. Click [here](#) to for eligibility specifics and additional information on the program.

#### Two Steps to Enroll

1. Go to [AffordableConnectivity.gov](https://affordableconnectivity.gov) to submit an application or print out a mail-in application.
2. Contact your preferred participating provider to select a plan and have the discount applied to your bill. (Some providers may have an alternative

application that they will ask you to complete.)

Eligible households must both apply for the program and contact a participating provider to select a service plan.

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## Health & Safety

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### Recovering from Illness

We do everything we can to keep our kids healthy but getting sick is often unavoidable. Below are some tips to help children recover quickly.



- Stay Hydrated - Offer children plenty of liquids. If you suspect your child is dehydrated (no tears, dry lips, urinating less frequently) call your child's pediatrician.
- Treat Symptoms - When hot soup, warm baths or cool-mist humidifiers are not enough to make your little one feel better, know when to treat symptoms with medication.
- Encourage Rest - Plenty of sleep and rest can assist with the recovery process.
- Get Medical Attention - If symptoms persist or get worse, do not hesitate to seek medical guidance.
- Avoid the Spread of Germs - Clean surfaces and wash hands frequently.



### Free At-Home COVID Tests

Every U.S. household is eligible to order 4 free at-home COVID-19 tests. The CDC is still recommending you take a COVID test if:

- you begin having COVID-19 symptoms like fever, sore throat, runny nose, or loss of taste or smell, or
- At least 5 days after you come into close contact with someone with COVID-19, or
- When you're going to gather with a group of people, especially those who are at risk of severe disease or may not be up to date on their COVID-19 vaccines

Click [here](#) to order the free tests. If you need additional assistance, you can call 1-800-232-0233.

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### Oral Health for Children with Disabilities

A disability can affect a child's activities and ability to learn. Some children with disabilities need extra health services and support services. Children with disabilities are at higher risk for tooth decay and other oral health problems than children without disabilities.

## Oral Health Challenges for Children with Disabilities

- **Children with physical disabilities**, such as cerebral palsy, may not have the motor skills they need to use a toothbrush safely or to sit still in a dental chair during dental visits.
- **Children with communication disorders**, such as delayed speech and language development, may not be able to tell their parents that they have a toothache.
- **Children who get frequent medical care**, such as having many medical visits or hospital stays, may be afraid of the dental office and may not cooperate during visits.
- **Children who take medicines with added sugars or that cause dry mouth** are at high risk for tooth decay.
- **Children on special diets** may be at high risk for tooth decay. Foods that are soft or high in starch (e.g., potatoes, corn) stick to children's teeth and give bacteria in the mouth more time to cause tooth decay.

## Strategies to Help Improve the Oral Health of Children with Disabilities

- Click [here](#) to learn more about taking care of teeth, selecting the right toothbrush, adapting toothbrushes, addressing challenges, providing good nutrition, encouraging safety, and going to the dentist.
- **Give children with disabilities extra support**. Make sure children eat food and drink beverages low in sugar and that children's teeth are brushed with fluoridated toothpaste after meals. Children with intellectual disabilities may need extra time for brushing.

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## Protect Your Family from Carbon Monoxide

It's home heating season which means the risk of carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning increases. Carbon monoxide (CO) is an odorless, colorless, and deadly gas that can cause headaches, fatigue, nausea and vomiting, visual disturbances, and confusion in children and adults. CO can cause serious illness, unconsciousness, and death at high levels. Children are at higher risk for carbon monoxide poisoning. When your child breathes carbon monoxide, it harms the ability of their blood to transport oxygen. Although everyone is at risk for carbon monoxide poisoning, it is particularly dangerous for children because they breathe faster and inhale more CO per pound of body weight. CO is found in fumes produced by furnaces, kerosene heaters, vehicles "warmed up" in garages, stoves, lanterns, and gas ranges, portable generators, or by burning charcoal and wood. CO from these sources can build up in enclosed or partially enclosed spaces. There are steps you can take to help protect your family from CO poisoning.

### CO POISONING PREVENTION TIPS

- Check or change the batteries in your CO detector every six months. If you don't have a battery-powered or battery back-up CO detector, buy one soon.
- Have your heating system, water heater and any other gas, oil, or coal burning appliances serviced by a qualified technician every year.
- Keep vents and flues free of debris. Debris can block ventilation lines.
- Never leave the motor running in a vehicle parked in an enclosed or partially enclosed space, such as a garage.
- Never run a motor vehicle, generator, pressure washer, or any gasoline-powered engine less than 20 feet from an open window, door, or vent where exhaust can vent into an enclosed area.
- Never use a charcoal grill, hibachi, lantern, or portable camping stove

inside a home, tent, or camper.

- If you suspect CO poisoning, call 911 or a health care professional right away.

**CO poisoning is entirely preventable.** You can protect yourself and your family by learning the symptoms of CO poisoning and how to prevent it.

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## Arts & Crafts

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### Snowman Snow Ruler

#### Supplies:

- Black Ribbon
- Paint Brush
- Paper Plate
- Pencil
- Ruler
- Wooden Spoon (flat handle works best)
- White, Black and Orange Paint



Step 1: Using your paintbrush, paint the wooden spoon with white paint. Let dry for 1-2 hours then add a second coat of white paint. Let dry again for 1-2 hours.

Step 2: Use your ruler and set it alongside the painted spoon. Mark the painted spoon with a pencil to mark 1-inch increments on the spoon handle. Have your child count with you and identify the numbers as you are marking the 1-inch increments.

Step 3: Discuss and identify the colors of paint you will use for the eyes, nose and mouth with your child

Step 4: Using your paintbrush, paint eyes, nose and mouth on the bowl of the spoon.

Step 5: Using your paintbrush, trace over the pencil 1-inch increment measurements. Let all paint dry 1-2 hours.

Step 6: Tie the ribbon around the neck of the spoon.

Step 7: Place your snowman spoon in the snow to measure how much snow has accumulated.

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

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Visit [ELRC Region 13](#)

Community Services for Children | [elrc13@cscinc.org](mailto:elrc13@cscinc.org) | [www.cscinc.org](http://www.cscinc.org)

Connect with us



Community Services for Children | 1520 Hanover Ave, Allentown, PA 18109

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