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## Community Services for Children Family Connection Newsletter ~ ELRC Region 14 April 2023

Serving Lehigh & Northampton counties

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### Region 14 News

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#### Community Bike Works

Exercise is an important part of your children's physical and mental health, which is why it's important to take part in activities that get them moving! Community Bike Works is an organization in the Lehigh Valley that helps encourage children of all ages to get outside and ride their bikes.



Community Bike Works has an Earn a Bike program which teaches children how to maintain their bike and ride it safely. Once our children complete the program your child will get to keep the bike they refurbished. Community Bike Works offer's two programs, the junior Earn a Bike program is for kids ages 7-8, and the regular program is for kids ages 9-18.

Please click [here](#) to learn more about Community Bike Works and their Earn a Bike program!

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**Save the date for Healthy Kids Day®: April 29, 2023!**



The Allentown YMCA will be hosting Healthy Kids Day on 4/29/23, 11a-2p, rain or shine. Healthy Kids Day® is the Y's national initiative to improve the health and well-being of kids and families. Vendor stands will provide health activities for children and resources for families. The Early Learning Resource Center will be one of the vendors at this event. Please join us!

## Parenting Corner

### April Family Newsletters

The April editions of several family-friendly newsletters can be found below. Each newsletter contains activities that align with the PA Early Learning Standards, book recommendations, and resources.



- [Learning is Everywhere](#)
- [Kindergarten Here I Come](#)
- [Kindergarten Here I Am](#)

### National Autism Conference

Penn State is holding a National Autism Conference for families with young children with autism spectrum disorders. There are opportunities for scholarships to cover lodging, meals and conference fees as well as a Children's Institute for kids to play while parents attend the conference.

Please click [here](#) for more conference information.

## Child Development



### Kindergarten Here I Come!

Going to Kindergarten is a big event for every child and family. You and your child may feel excited and proud about this next big step. You may also be feeling a bit uneasy and anxious.

This [article](#) by NAEYC provides helpful tips for preparing you and your child for this exciting life experience. Most school

districts begin Kindergarten registration in March and April. Each school district has different days and times that registration occurs.

Please use this [link](#) to find out the specifics for the County/School District you live in as well as what you will need to successfully register your child on time.

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## Teaching Self-Regulation

It can be frustrating supporting a child who struggles to regulate their feelings or behaviors. Some children simply have a harder time with self-regulation than others. Self-regulation is a skill that children need to be taught and then should be practiced regularly. One way to support your child's self-regulation development is to allow children to solve their own problems. Provide gentle guidance but allow your child time to think through what needs to be done to achieve the desired result.

For more information about children's regulation tips, please click this link: [Self-Regulation in Children](#)

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## Resource & Referral

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### Frequently Asked Questions about the Child Care Works Program

#### 1. Where can I find answers to my Child Care Works Questions?

The Child Care Works Family Handbook is a great resource to answer program questions. Please click [here](#) to view the CCW Family Handbook. You can also contact your Family Specialist at the Early Learning Resource Center.

#### 2. After I'm determined eligible, what comes next?

You will be contacted by the Early Learning Resource Center (ELRC) to set up an appointment for a Personal Interview to discuss the Rights and Responsibilities of the program. You will also be asked to choose a child care provider within 30 days of being authorized for funding.

#### 3. What are my rights and responsibilities? What if my information changes? What needs to be reported to ELRC?

Please click [here](#) to view your Rights and Responsibilities.

As a parent/caretaker who receives CCW, the following are your most important responsibilities.

- Submit accurate information to the ELRC
- Report changes in a timely manner
- Pay your weekly copayment timely

#### 4. How often will ELRC review my case?

When you have completed your application and meet the guidelines for CCW, the ELRC will review your case every 12 months. This process is called a redetermination of eligibility. At the redetermination, the ELRC will review your family income, work and training status and your continued need for subsidized childcare. You will be asked to provide up-to-date proof of your family's income and also proof of address if your address has changed.

#### 5. If I submit my redetermination on COMPASS, can I also submit the other

### **required documents on COMPASS too?**

No. The ELRC will only receive your redetermination on COMPASS. COMPASS does not allow for the submission of other documents such as paystubs or other forms. You will have to mail, email, fax or bring your paystubs and other documents into the ELRC.

### **6. If I want to transfer to a new provider, what is required?**

If you wish to transfer to a new childcare provider, please notify the ELRC right away. Your copay must be paid in full before the ELRC can authorize the transfer to the new site.

### **7. I know I have to pay my weekly copay to my childcare provider, but can they charge me extra?**

If your childcare subsidy does not pay the full amount that your childcare program charges, the provider may ask you to pay the difference between the subsidy payment and their private charges. The ELRC only pays for the cost of childcare and your registration fee.

### **8. Does the ELRC provide referrals to other community resources?**

Yes! Please contact the ELRC to discuss available community resources that will set you on a path to success.

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## **Important Message for Those Receiving Medicaid or CHIP**

Do you or a loved one get Medicaid or CHIP coverage through the state? As of April 1, 2023, changes to federal law mean you **MUST** renew your coverage every year or risk losing your coverage.

You will not lose your state health coverage without a chance to complete a renewal or update your information. When you complete your renewal, if you are no longer eligible for Medicaid or CHIP, you will automatically get connected to low- or no-cost health coverage so you can choose another health plan that's right for you.

Take these steps **right now** to make your renewal easier:

1. Update your contact information with the Department of Human Services. Having the correct address makes it easier to send you timely information in the mail.
2. Sign up for email and text alerts so you get important information about your health coverage and your renewal.
3. Check your renewal date then complete your renewal on time so you do not risk your coverage.

You can do all these things online or on the phone:

- Going online to [www.dhs.pa.gov/COMPASS](http://www.dhs.pa.gov/COMPASS)
- Using the free myCOMPASS PA Mobile App
- Calling 1-866-550-4355 (215-560-7226 if you live in Philadelphia)

Complete your renewal and stay covered!

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## **Legal Help for Low-Income Families**

Finding affordable legal help can be difficult, leaving

families without the legal representation they may desperately need. The Pennsylvania Legal Aid Network can assist low-income families in getting the legal advice they need in all civil matters.



Civil matters that the Pennsylvania Legal Aid Network may be able to help with include landlord tenant issues, child custody, child support, divorce, or an injury such as one caused by a car accident, medical malpractice or environmental harm. Having appropriate representation and being informed of your legal rights are important steps in protecting you and your family.

The below links may be able to help if you need any legal assistance.

- [Apply for Legal Aid from the Pennsylvania Legal Aid Network](#)
- [North Penn Legal Services- Legal assistance to low income families in Northeastern PA](#)
- [Resource for understanding PA laws](#)



## Health & Safety

### National Playground Safety Week - April 24-27, 2023

National Playground Safety Week is observed the last week in April. This is a great opportunity to think about what makes a playground safe. Below are some great tips compiled by the [National Safety Council](#).

**Check for Playground Hazards** - Watch out for and report any hazards such as:

- Improper, uneven or broken ground surfaces
- Unprotected elevated areas
- Sharp or protruding items

**Overcrowded Play Areas:** If there are too many children on a playground, it could make it difficult for children to use the equipment properly. There should also be plenty of space between playground equipment to ensure safety.

**Avoid Strangulation Hazards** - The [American Academy of Pediatrics](#) cautions that children should not wear or play with anything that could get caught on equipment and become a strangulation hazard.

- Never attach ropes, jump ropes, clotheslines or pet leashes to play equipment.
- Leave sweatshirts with drawstrings and necklaces at home.
- Remove bike helmets when playing on the playground.

**Be Cautious of Too Much Sun Exposure** - Some playgrounds have limited shade.

- Check equipment to ensure it is not hot to the touch.

- Pack the sunscreen and drinking water.
- Familiarize yourself with the signs of [heat illnesses](#).

**Allow Only Age-Appropriate Activities** - Some playground equipment is intended for specific aged children. Younger children have different needs and abilities than older children. Using equipment differently than intended may cause a danger to everyone.

Remember, there is no substitute for parental supervision, especially for young children.

Visit the [American Academy of Pediatrics webpage on playground safety](#) to learn more.

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## First Aid for Your Child's Oral Injuries

Injuries to the head, face, and mouth are common in young children. Even when parents do their best to keep children safe, oral injuries can happen. Most oral injuries happen when young children are learning to walk. The top front teeth are injured most often. Check out this flyer [oral-first-aid](#) and the tips below for more information.

**Tips to help you know what to do for common oral injuries:**

- **Tongue or lip injured.** Clean the injured area. Press a clean washcloth on it to stop bleeding. Keep your child's head up and facing forward to prevent choking. Put ice, wrapped in a clean washcloth, on the area to reduce swelling. If bleeding doesn't stop after 30 minutes, take your child to your child's dentist or doctor right away. If the dentist or doctor is not available, take your child to the nearest urgent care center right away.
- **Tooth chipped or cracked.** Clean the injured area. Contact your child's dentist or an urgent care center right away. Have your child rinse with water, if possible. If there is bleeding, press a clean washcloth on the gum around the tooth to stop it.
- **Tooth knocked out.** Contact your child's dentist right away. Do not try to put a baby tooth back into the mouth. Clean the injured area. If there is bleeding, have your child bite on the area with a clean washcloth for 15 to 30 minutes to stop it.
- **Tooth knocked loose, moved, or pushed into gum .** If your child's tooth has been knocked loose, moved forward or backward, or pushed into the gum, contact your child's dentist or an urgent care center right away. Have your child rinse with water, if possible. Press a clean washcloth on the gum around the tooth to stop bleeding.
- **Toothache.** If your child has a toothache, it is likely that the tooth has a cavity. Make a dental appointment as soon as possible to find out what the problem is and get treatment.

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## Arts & Crafts

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### Painting with Eggs



### Supplies:

- Raw eggs
- Washable paint
- Tissue paper
- Tape
- Blank Canvas
- Safety glasses
- Butter knife
- Child Safe Scissors

### Egg painting tips:

1. Read all of the directions listed below before you begin. This is an outside activity.
2. Be careful cracking the eggs. The shells are fragile.
3. Please do not waste food. Talk with your child about what you can cook or bake with the eggs and spend time in the kitchen together preparing a meal or baking something yummy.
4. After your child is finished throwing the prepared eggs, make sure to remove the leftover eggshells from the canvas.

**Step 1:** Both you and your child should wear safety glasses. Use a butter knife, and very carefully crack the top of the eggs.

**Step 2:** Carefully use your fingers to peel away enough of the shell for the yolk and egg white to pour out.

**Step 3:** Empty the eggs from the shells into an empty bowl. (Watch so the shells do not end up in the yolk, since you will want to use the eggs for cooking or baking.)

**Step 4:** Carefully rinse the eggshells with water and let dry.

**Step 5:** Have your child pick the paint colors and carefully help you fill the eggshells with the paint. (Handle the shells with care.)

**Step 6:** Carefully assist your child using the scissors to cut the tissue paper into squares big enough to cover the openings of the eggs.

**Step 7:** Place the tissue paper over the hole of the eggshell and have your child carefully secure the tissue paper with tape to each egg.

**Step 8:** Have your child help you lay down some old newspaper or cardboard outside for easy cleanup.

**Step 9:** Place the canvas your child will be using onto the newspaper or cardboard.

**Step 10:** Talk with your child to determine if you want to lean (prop) the canvas up to or lay the canvas flat on the ground.

**Step 11: Time to paint!** Have your child take the paint filled, covered eggshells

and throw them against the canvas. (The eggs might still have paint in them after the 1<sup>st</sup> throw. You can throw them a second/third time.)

**Step 12:** Let the paint dry. Clean up. Enjoy!

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

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Visit [ELRC Region 14](#)

Community Services for Children | [elrc14@cscinc.org](mailto:elrc14@cscinc.org) | [www.cscinc.org](http://www.cscinc.org)

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