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## Community Services for Children Family Connection Newsletter ~ ELRC Region 11 November 2024

Serving Bradford, Sullivan, Columbia, Montour, Luzerne and Wyoming counties

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### Region 11 News

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Please note that the ELRC offices will be closed on Thursday, November 28th & Friday, November 29th for the Thanksgiving holiday.



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### Luzerne County Cares Community Expo

Luzerne County's Human Services Division is sponsoring this free event on Tuesday, December 3<sup>rd</sup> at the Mohegan Resort in Wilkes Barre. There will be opportunities to mingle with community agencies, listen to exciting presenters, visit community resource tables and enjoy light refreshments. We look forward to seeing you there! Please see the attached flyer for more information on the location and times.



## The Plains Lions Club KidSight Program and an Upcoming Parade!

Lions KidSight is a free children's vision screening program focused on children as young as 6 months up to 8 years. KidSight uses a digital-touchless camera that provides highly accurate

and instant results. The results are then used by parents to consult with an optometrist as needed. You can learn more about the KidSight program [here](#) and talk to your child's teacher or child care provider about scheduling an onsite screening with a group of 30+ children.

The Lions Club is also having an upcoming free event for you to attend if you enjoy parades! A Christmas Parade will be held on 11/30 beginning at 11:00am starting at the Wolfpack Wilkes Barre Area High School.

## Osterhout Free Library

[The Osterhout Library](#) offers so many unique events, classes, activities, etc. for community members to attend. There is something for everyone! The library is located at 71 South Franklin St., Wilkes Barre, PA 18701.

If you do not live close to the library in Luzerne County, please click on the [The Osterhout Library](#) link to view and take advantage of all the online resource this website has to offer.

## Child Care Works Notification

The Pennsylvania Subsidized Child Care Eligibility regulations provide information to families regarding their responsibilities to pay the copayment for subsidized child care. Failure to pay co-payment is identified as an Intentional Program Violation and may result in loss of subsidy benefits.



Please see the following notification to fully understand your co-pay responsibilities. Reach out to your family specialist with any questions.

- [Intentional Program Violation - English](#)
- [Intentional Program Violation - Spanish](#)

## Make the First Five Count

Here is a great resource for parents and caregivers of young children! Make the First Five Count is Easterseals Eastern PA's FREE online access to Ages and Stages Child Development (ASQ-3) and Social-Emotional (ASQ:SE-2) Questionnaires for children 0-5 years old. If your family qualifies, Easterseals can provide guidance, strategies, and education using the results of the screenings. Easterseals Eastern PA serves children in Berks, Carbon, Lehigh, Monroe, Northampton, Pike and



Schuylkill Counties. See the flyers below for more information.

- [MtFFC Flyer English](#)
- [MtFFC Flyer Spanish](#)

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## Looking for a Career Change?

Do you love children and want to make a difference in the lives of young families? Check out ECE hire for job postings in early childhood education. Click on the logo below to access the latest listings:



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## Parenting Corner

### Rapid Response Team

Rapid Response Team is a short-term intervention designed to support children who may be experiencing challenging behaviors in the early learning setting. This team observes the child at the child care facility and will offer strategies to the teacher and parent. If appropriate, referrals to community resources and services are shared with the family and provider as well.



*If you have concerns that your child may be suspended or expelled from child care and could benefit from the Rapid Response Team supports, you can begin the referral process here: [RRT Referral](#)  
(This program does require parental and provider consent)*

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### November- World Kindness Day!

The month of November is centered on giving thanks and gratitude, but did you know that there is a World Kindness Day? While there are many activities in November centered on being thankful, there are also ways to tie kindness into those activities!



It can be as simple as encouraging your children to write a kind note to someone telling them how thankful you are for them or to write positive messages on sticky notes to leave around for someone to find. You can also donate books to a local library or clothes and toys to a local shelter. Another way to show thankfulness and kindness is to leave cards or treats out for delivery drivers or the mailman. Making someone feel good is where kindness starts. Teaching your

children about the importance of making someone feel special can leave such an impact on others and can make you feel special too!

Visit <https://www.randomactsofkindness.org/kindness-ideas> for more ideas!

## DID YOU KNOW?

Language develops in a baby's brain before they can talk -- reading and speaking to your child early is important!

### Parent Project Podcast

Community Services for Children has been hosting the Parent Project Podcast to engage families in areas of common concern for parents. Experts provide perspectives on topics of health & safety, mental health, child transition and other important subjects.

This month, we are joined by Dr. Brown from the Children's Clinic at Lehigh Valley Health Network. She shares information about promoting healthy brain development in young children. Click [here](#) to listen.

# PARENT PROJECT PODCAST



## Child Development

### Routines: Part 2

Last month we talked about the benefits of establishing routines at home. This month we are going to look at how to make the routines successful. Here are a few ways to ensure the routine you have established is going to be successful:

- Rewards for following the routine. Rewards can be a special handshake, being a helper, deciding an activity for the family time, or choosing their lunch for the next day.
- Include your child in making their routine.
- Allow for transition time. Don't expect your child to jump from one activity to the next. Building time to gradually transition to the next activity will make routines less stressful for everyone.

When making a routine for home feel free to include your child. Give your child simple choices such as what story you will read before bed or what snack they pack for lunch. This will help them be excited for the day and give them a sense of control. Be sure to be:

- Flexible if needed. Not every routine will be followed every day. Leaving room for flexibility allows children to expect changes in life.
- Keep it simple.
- Be consistent. Keep each morning/evening as similar as possible.

*"There is no perfect routine for every family. Each household is different, and your routine will be based on many factors - number of children, number of caregivers, whether parents work and if they have flexible hours. Your routine is all about finding what works for your family."* Dr. Natalie Escalante.

Find what works for your family! For more information, please visit:  
<https://www.childrens.com/> and [Head Start Early Childhood Learning and](#)



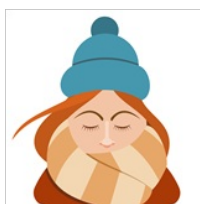
## Resource & Referral

### Health Insurance Enrollment

November 1 begins open enrollment for Pennie, which is Pennsylvania's official health insurance market place and the only place to get financial savings to help lower the cost of coverage and care.



Visit the website at <https://pennie.com/>



### Energy Assistance

The Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) is now accepting applications. LIHEAP is a federally funded program administered by the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services (DHS) that provides assistance for home heating bills so those Pennsylvanians meeting eligibility and income guidelines can stay warm and safe during the winter months. Assistance is available for renters and homeowners.

LIHEAP can help you keep your home warm and safe during the coldest seasons. From **November 4, 2024, to April 4, 2025**, you can apply for a cash grant to help pay your heating bill. You can receive from \$200 to \$1,000 based on your household size, income, and fuel type. The cash grant is a one-time payment. The grant will be sent directly to your utility provider or fuel company to be credited on your bill.

Pennsylvanians can apply for LIHEAP and other public assistance programs online at [www.compass.state.pa.us](http://www.compass.state.pa.us) or by phone at 1-866-550-4355. On-site County Assistance Office (CAO) services are available if clients cannot access online services or need assistance that cannot be accessed through the COMPASS website, the myCOMPASS PA mobile app, or by calling the Customer Service Centers 1-877-395-8930.

## Health & Safety

### ECELS Health & Safety Newsletter

Early Childhood Education Linkage System (ECELS) publishes a monthly newsletter full of valuable health & safety tips and resources for children and families.



Click [here](#) to download the most recent newsletter.

## Child Safety & Protection Month

November is National Child Safety and Protection Month, intended to raise awareness about child injury statistics and to educate parents and caregivers on how to create safe environments for their young children. Most childhood injuries can be prevented, whether they occur at home or in other settings. Child care programs are mandated to maintain these safety measures (as well as many more), and these tips can help parents at home as well.

- Keep all medicines, cleaning supplies and chemicals locked away or stored out of reach of young children.
- Ensure that medication containers have childproof lids.
- Cover electrical outlets with childproof covers.
- Secure heavy furniture and appliances to the wall.
- Keep the phone number for Poison Control in an easily accessible location.

When searching for quality child care, parents can quickly scan the classroom space to ensure that all of these safety measures are in place.

For statistics on child injuries and more tips for child safety at home, please use the link below.

[November is Child Safety Month - Here's What You Need to Know](#)

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### Oral Health Tip

Before visiting a dentist, complete this form: [Getting to Know Me: Information for Your Child's Dental Office](#).

The form gathers information about your child's ability to cooperate during dental visits. It also includes suggestions about approaches that might work best for your child. This information will help the dental office staff understand and meet your child's needs.



### Preparing for Emergencies

Young children have unique needs, especially during a disaster or emergency. Using everyday moments in children's lives to help them learn and build skills will help them in an emergency.

Take a look at the resource below for brain-building tips for preparing, responding, or recovering from an emergency.

- [Emergency Tips for Families](#)
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## Family Engagement

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### Facial Expressions

Facial expressions are important for children

because they help them understand their emotions, develop social skills, and navigate their social environment. Facial expressions are a mirror of our emotions, and children can use them to identify and understand their own feelings. This awareness helps them regulate their emotions and express themselves in healthy ways.

Look at some examples below of how you can help your child develop an awareness of expressions:



**Infant:** Infants are keenly aware of caregivers' facial expressions. Bath time is an ideal time to engage in sounds and facial expressions. Hold your infant up to the mirror to show them his or her facial expressions.

**Toddler:** Play a quick game of follow the leader with facial expressions. The adult makes a face and the child needs to copy it. Check to see how closely your faces match in the mirror.

**Pre-Kindergarten:** Ask children to demonstrate facial expressions. "Show me your \_\_\_\_\_ face." Insert words like surprised, angry, or happy.

**Kindergarten:** Extend the face game for kindergarteners by having them name the facial expressions you are making, then have them do the same expression.

Suggested Books:

*Do Pirates Take Baths?* By Kathy Tucker & Nadine Bernard Westcott

*Little Faces Big Feelings: What Emotions Look Like* by Amy Morrison

Visit ELRC Region 11

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