



Community Services for Children Family Connection Newsletter ~ ELRC Region 11 January 2025

Serving Bradford, Sullivan, Columbia, Montour, Luzerne & Wyoming
Counties

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Region 11 News

Please note that the ELRC offices will be closed on Thursday, January 16th for staff training. We will also be closed on Monday, January 20th in observance of Martin Luther King, Jr's birthday.

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 copayment is identified as an Intentional Program Violation and may result in loss of subsidy benefits.



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

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

Power Kids: Pennsylvania's Electronic Library

Do you know about **Power Kids**, Pennsylvania's electronic library? With Power Kids, you and your child can access things like:



- BookFlix: Watch videos and read books
- CyberSmarts: Learn how to be a safe, responsible and smart citizen with eBooks
- TrueFlix: Learn about people, places, nature, history and science from videos and eBooks
- Chat with a Librarian

In addition, many libraries throughout Pennsylvania offers their members access to downloadable or streaming eBooks and audiobooks. Enjoy new bestsellers and old favorites on your digital device! Check with your library for additional info.



The Early Learning Resource Center would like to welcome the following new child care providers to our region! The ELRC staff are here to assist you in locating a quality child care program that fits your family's needs and to provide you with local resources and referrals.

- The Learning Tree Child Care Center LLC, Millville
- Mechy Vargas Daycare LLC, Hazleton
- Once Upon a Time LLC, Shavertown

WinterFest is Back!

Bundle up and get ready for WinterFest on Saturday, January 25, 2025 from noon to 3 pm at Nesbitt Park, located between Market and Pierce Streets in Wilkes Barre. This free event will help you break the cabin fever with fun activities and environmental programming for the whole family!



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:



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)*

Parenting Corner: Transitions

Transitions throughout the day can be challenging- especially when we are trying to transition our children from a preferred activity such as outside time or to a non-preferred activity such as nap or bedtime.



Here are some tips to help make these transitions easier:

- 1. Consistent routines are essential to smooth transitions:** Creating a predictable routine for daily activities such as bedtime, mealtime or cleaning up after playing gives your child clear expectations and make transitions much more smooth.
- 2. Transition time signals:** Give your child a verbal or visual (or both) time signal when nearing a transition of activities. For example when it's almost time to go inside from playing outside, give a verbal prompt "five more minutes, then we go inside." It also may be helpful to use a visual timer. A great strategy is to tell, remind and repeat! After the 5-minute warning, give a 2-minute warning.
- 3. Acknowledge feelings!** Transitions can cause big feelings! It is important to stay calm and acknowledge your child's feelings. See the links below for more strategies and tips!

[Transition Time Tips for Kids of All Ages - ParentPowered@](#)
[Transition Activities: Tips for Parents/Guardians](#)

DID YOU KNOW?

80% of a child's
brain develops in
the first 3 years.

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 sleep habits for children. Click [here](#) to listen.

PARENT PROJECT PODCAST



Child Development

Helping Your Child Learn Responsibility

Children are not born with the executive function skills to be responsible. This is a part of their development and they need help. Children must notice what needs to be done, think of useful options, and take pride in their contributions. Here's how to encourage responsibility.

Notice and narrate

Draw attention to strategies that work. "Moving your puzzle to the table is a good idea. It's easier to keep track of the pieces," "You and your sister made up great rules."

Ask instead of tell

Support your child's independent actions. Ask, "What's a safe place to put your cup?," instead of saying, "Put your cup on the counter." Note, "I see toy cars in front of the stairs. Where should they be moved?" instead of insisting, "Someone could trip on the cars. Please move them."

Put your child in charge

Ask questions that inspire your child to solve problems. "We need a good way to get everyone to the table for dinner. What do you think we should do?" and "We need to find a better place for the boots [bikes, socks, mittens, toys] so we can find them easily. Where do you think they can go?"

Celebrate success

When you notice your child being responsible, show your appreciation. "Hurray! All the coats got hung up today," "Awesome work setting the table! Dinner was very elegant," "Thanks for putting the snack wrappers in the garbage. I loved working on a clean counter."

Resource & Referral

Home Water Bills

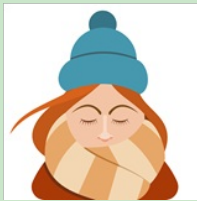


More than two million Americans live without running water and basic indoor plumbing. The Office of Community Services is working to address the barriers that prevent families and communities from accessing safe water and wastewater with the [Low Income Household Water Assistance Program \(LIHWAP\)](#).

The Low Income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP) is a federal program that provides funding to states, territories, and tribes to assist households with low incomes in paying past due bills and rates charged to the household for drinking water, wastewater services, or both. LIHWAP prioritizes assistance to households whose services have been disconnected due to non-payment or are about to be disconnected.

Low Income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP) helps households with low incomes pay their water and wastewater bills, to prevent shutoffs or restore services.

To connect with LIHWAP resources , [click here](#).



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 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

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.

Yellow Dot Program

The Yellow Dot Program alerts first responders to check your glove box for vital information in the event of an accident on the roads. Sign up below and PennDOT will mail you a Yellow Dot kit that you can fill out with vital information and place the related decal on your vehicle's rear window.

Click [here](#) for more information.

Get help in the
GOLDEN HOUR
of an emergency

YELLOW DOT PROGRAM

PA



Prevent Winter Illness

The excitement of the holidays and festive gatherings with family and friends often brings with it an increase of contagious illnesses at home and at child care centers. These sicknesses, whether the common cold, RSV, COVID-19, the GI bug, or the flu, can spread very quickly and easily between both children and adults. It is important to take the necessary steps to help prevent the spread of illness by following some important guidelines.



Below are just a few helpful tips to remember:

- Thorough handwashing is the easiest way to stop the spread of germs
- Check children for signs of illness before dropping them off at a child care center
- Keep your children home if they have symptoms of illness and call your pediatrician for testing and care instructions
- Remind your children to cover their coughs with their elbows and wash their hands immediately
- In most cases, your child may return to care only when they are fever free for 24 hours without a fever reducer or any new symptoms
- A cough needs to be improving, and the child should be seen by a healthcare provider
- GI symptoms, including vomiting should be resolved overnight and the child should be able to hold down food and liquid before returning to care
- Diarrhea should be improved without any accidents and no more than 2 bowel movements in 24 hours.

Remember, the goal of these guidelines is to stop the spread of illness and to enjoy a Happy and Healthy New Year!

For more guidelines and information, please visit <https://www.pa.gov/agencies/health/diseases-conditions/infectious-disease/respiratory-viruses/flu/child-care.html#accordion-0ac84bfa89-item-8c1f271671>.

First Aid for a Child's Oral Injuries

Injuries to the head, face, and mouth are common in young children. Even when adults do their best to keep children safe, oral injuries can happen. Most oral injuries happen when young children are learning to walk and the top front teeth are injured most often. Check out this [flyer](#) 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 the 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, the child should be taken to see a dentist or doctor right away. If the dentist or doctor is not available, the child should be taken to the nearest urgent care center.
- **Tooth chipped or cracked.** Clean the injured area. The child's dentist or an urgent care center should be contacted right away. Have the 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.** The child's dentist should be contacted right away. Do not try to put a baby tooth back into the mouth. Clean the injured area. If there is bleeding, have the 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 a child's tooth has been knocked loose, moved forward or backward, or pushed into the gum, the child's dentist or an urgent care center should be contacted right away. Have the child rinse with water, if possible. Press a clean washcloth on the gum around the tooth to stop bleeding.
- **Toothache.** If a child has a toothache, it is likely that the tooth has a cavity. The child needs a dental appointment as soon as possible to find out what the problem is and get treatment.

Tips for Winter Water Maintenance

Please remember to run your water during cold spells. When there are extreme frost conditions, the risk of frozen water lines may occur. If your home has had issues in the past, please make sure you are running your water.



Monitor the temperature of your water. If your water temperature reaches below 40 degrees F or lower, you should IMMEDIATELY start running a continuous pencil size stream of cold water from one faucet. Monitoring temperatures is your first line of defense.

Also, if you see or hear water running from any neighboring properties (especially vacant properties) please notify your water authority immediately.

Other measures that can be taken to prevent winter water disasters:

- Make sure all water lines to outside faucets are turned off and drained.
- Eliminate drafts. Check around the home for areas where water supply lines are located in unheated areas and take measures to prevent the flow of cold air in these areas. Look in the basement, crawl space, attic, garage, and under kitchen and bathroom cabinets for these supply lines
- Consider wrapping or insulating your water lines, especially those lines near outside walls, under the house, or in the attic. Insulation supplies are available at your local home improvement/hardware store. Be sure to insulate hot and cold water lines in these areas, as either line could freeze in cold weather.
- If you plan to be away from your home, keep the thermostat at a reasonable temperature to ensure all areas with water lines stay above freezing.
- Open the cabinets beneath any place with a water supply, such as the kitchen and bathroom sinks. This will allow warm air to circulate. (Remove any toxic substances first if there are small children in the home)
- If a pipe does freeze, open the cold water faucet nearest the frozen pipe to relieve the pressure of expanding ice, which may lead to a burst pipe.
- Never try to thaw a line with an open flame or torch.

Family Engagement

8 Benefits of Baking and Cooking with Your Child

1. Baking is a great way to spend quality time together.
2. Baking and cooking are creative activities that encourage imagination and experimentation. Children are able to express themselves and come up with new ideas.
3. When baking or cooking with your children, you have an opportunity to teach them about healthy ingredients. This promotes healthy eating habits for a lifetime. In addition, children are more likely to eat meals they helped create.
4. Baking and cooking can be challenging, but when children are successful in making something delicious, it can be a real confidence booster.
5. Baking and cooking require responsibility, from following directions to cleaning up afterward. This helps teach responsibility and accountability.
6. Time management is another skill learned as the multiple steps give children the opportunity to plan and prioritize their time.
7. The more baking and cooking done with your child, the more your child learns about recipes, experimenting with different ingredients, and discover new techniques on their own. While cooking and baking, children are learning math skills as they measure and mix ingredients. For older children, they could calculate the cost of the shopping list or the breakdown of what each sweet treat or meal costs. Letter recognition and reading is part of reading the recipe. These are all practical life skills that are naturally happening during this time.
8. Most important of all, this is a great way to have fun and create memories that will last a lifetime.



Visit ELRC Region 11

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Connect with us



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