



Community Services for Children Family Connection Newsletter ~ ELRC Region 12 April 2025

Serving Susquehanna, Wayne, Lackawanna, Pike, Monroe & Carbon Counties

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Region 12 News

Welcome!

We are pleased to welcome our newest employee to the ELRC- Region 12 Team, Leana Quinones. Leana joined our team in January 2025 as a Family Specialist and serves families in Monroe County. We are excited to have her join our team!



Blood Lead Screenings

FREE Blood Lead Screening is available for children between 1 and 6 years old. The PA Department of Health in Lackawanna County is providing this service through July 2025. An appointment is needed to complete your child's screening.

- [Department of Health flyer](#)



Mobile Community Days

ELRC staff are out in the community to meet with families at our

mobile site locations. The mobile sites allow families to meet with family specialists in locations that may be more convenient for them.



Please stop by to obtain information on the Child Care Works program, pick up/drop off applications, or to receive assistance in finding resources in your local community. Please click [here](#) for upcoming dates and locations. We look forward to see you there!

Community Events

Healthy Kids Day

Healthy Kids Day is a national initiative to encourage kids and parents to commit to keeping the body and mind active. There are two events happening for families and children to enjoy and both are FREE!

[Greater Carbondale YMCA Healthy Kids Day](#) - Saturday 04/26/25; 10am-12pm

[Greater Scranton YMCA Healthy Kids Day](#) - Saturday 05/03/25; 10am-2pm

Children's Roundtable

[Monroe County's Children's Roundtable](#) presents Community Night at North Hampton Community College. Tuesday, 05/06/2025; 4pm-8pm

FREE Admission, FREE Workshops, FREE Kids Activities, FREE Resources.

PEAL Center

[The PEAL Center](#) is excited to bring you a Spring Training Series that focuses on transitions, 504 Plans and educational advocacy. Register and join as many virtual sessions as you can throughout the series. All sessions begin at 12pm via Zoom starting on Tuesday, April 15th, 2025.

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)



Learning Through Play at Home

Playtime isn't just for fun! There can be a lot of learning happening during unstructured playtime. Children are not only able to cultivate their communication and social skills but their problem solving skills can develop during this time as well. Certain games and toys can teach children trial and error and problem solving. Experiences through play teach children to question what comes next and make predictions about the world around them. Allowing them to question the world around them increases their problem solving skills and short-term/working memory.



Example of activities that parents and caregivers can have at home to help grow these skills are:

- Puzzles
- Shape sorts
- Matching games
- Sorting baskets
- Toys that respond to a child's interaction

References: [Developmentally Appropriate](#) [American Psychological Association](#)



Lifting Family Voices Workshop

Are you pregnant or a parent/caregiver of a child/children birth to age five in Pennsylvania? If so, Pennsylvania's Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL) invites you to register for the ***Lifting Family Voices: Using your Story to Strengthen Programs and Spark Change*** workshop on June 12th, 8:30am - 4pm in Harrisburg, PA. In this workshop, you will gain tools and tips to help you develop and share your family's story and experiences. Learn how to make your voice heard, influence decisions, and create a more supportive community for all.

Reimbursement for childcare and travel expenses such as lodging and mileage within guidelines will be provided.

Registration is **due by May 16, 2025**. Seats are limited and will be provided on a first come first serve basis. See the flyer below for more details.

- [Lifting Family Voices Workshop flyer](#)

DID YOU KNOW?

Children who receive early childhood education are 25% more likely to graduate high school and four times more likely to complete a college education.

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 Susan Lettera, former Director of Lehigh County Integrated Services. Susan shares her expertise regarding family group decision making. Families know best what their children need and can work with a coordinator to assist in decision making process. Click [here](#) to listen.

PARENT PROJECT PODCAST



Child Development

IEP/IFSP

Does your child have an Individualized Education Program (IEP)/ Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP)? Keystone STARS 2-4 programs ask for a copy of your child's IEP/IFSP to ensure that they can provide the appropriate support and accommodations for your child's unique needs. Here are several key reasons why they request this information:



1. **Tailoring Care to Your Child's Needs:** The IEP/IFSP outlines specific goals, accommodations, and support strategies that are designed for your child. By reviewing this document, your childcare provider can better tailor their curriculum, environment, and teaching methods to support your child's individual development and learning needs.
2. **Providing Consistent Support Across Settings:** If your child has an IEP/IFSP for services or accommodations at school, sharing this information with the childcare program ensures consistency in the support your child receives. This helps to maintain a cohesive approach, so the strategies and services used at home or school can be effectively continued at childcare, allowing your child to thrive in multiple environments.
3. **Coordinating Services:** The IEP/IFSP may include recommendations for therapies or interventions (such as speech, occupational, or behavioral therapy) that your child is receiving. By having a copy of the IEP/IFSP, your childcare provider can collaborate with those service providers and see that your child receives the full spectrum of support they need.
4. **Tracking Progress and Adjusting Support:** The IEP/IFSP includes measurable goals and objectives for your child. By reviewing it, your childcare provider can track your child's progress over time and adjust their approach to support ongoing growth and development. This helps ensure that your child's educational and developmental needs continue to

be met as they evolve.

5. **Building Stronger Partnerships with Families:** By asking for a copy of the IEP/IFSP, your childcare provider demonstrates a commitment to working with families to support the child's overall development. Sharing this information fosters open communication and collaboration between you and the childcare providers, helping to create a team approach to your child's care and learning.
6. **Early Identification and Intervention:** The IEP/IFSP often highlights any developmental delays or challenges your child may be facing. By having access to this information, providers can recognize potential concerns early and implement strategies or interventions to support your child's growth, minimizing potential gaps in development.

By giving your childcare program a copy of your child's IEP/IFSP, you help ensure that they are fully equipped to meet your child's unique needs, create a positive and supportive learning environment, and work in partnership with you to provide the best care and educational experience.

Resource & Referral

Parent Networking

Does your child receive services through Early Intervention? If so, You are invited to the second virtual Parent Café Series: *You are Not Alone:*

Building Connections hosted by Parent to Parent

of PA. Join in for this networking event for PA families with children receiving Early Intervention Services and/or Home Visiting Family Supports. Connect with other parents and caregivers and share your parenting journey.



Please click [here](#) to view the flyer for more information, including registration.

National Prescription Drug Take Back Day Saturday, April 26th

National Prescription Drug Take Back Day is held twice each year, in the Spring and Fall. It is important to dispose of unwanted, unused, and expired medications from your home to prevent misuse and death. Too many people die each year due to drug poisoning or overdose.

Add your medicine cabinet to your spring cleaning list and remove unused, unwanted, and expired medications.

Click [here](#) to find a collection site near you.

Health & Safety

ECELS Health & Safety Newsletter

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



Seasonal Allergies in Children

Now that spring is here, you may start to see the symptoms of seasonal allergies. Allergies affect 1 in 5 children ages 2 and up and can be very unpleasant. Symptoms of seasonal allergies can include stuffy or runny nose, sneezing, itchy eyes and nose, sore throat, cough, and dark circles

under the eyes. Allergies can also lead to fatigue, poor focus, ear and sinus infections and behavioral issues from a lack of sleep.

There are ways to minimize the exposure to season allergies!

- Have children wash their hands and face as soon as they come in from playing outside.
- Check the forecast for pollen levels and limit outside time or limit time around grass and trees.
- Wash clothes after being outside and dry laundry in a dryer rather than outside.
- Have children take their bath at bedtime.
- Vacuum often.
- Keep windows in your home and car closed and use air conditioning to filter the air.

There are also ways to treat seasonal allergies in children, but be sure to read labels carefully and talk to your family health care provider to find the best option.

- Use nasal saline sprays and rinses
- Use oral antihistamines
- Topical treatments for itchy, swollen, watery eyes

For more information on how to prepare for the allergy season, visit <https://www.chop.edu/news/health-tip/preparing-pollen-season> or visit <https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/seasonal-allergies.html> for more information. To check the difference between colds and allergy symptoms, visit <https://www.childrens.com/health-wellness/allergies-vs-colds-in-children>

Reading to Children about Oral Health

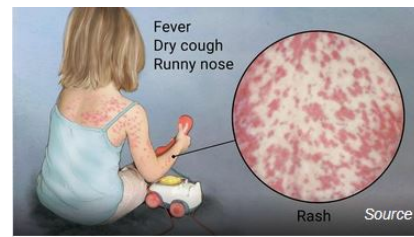
Reading to children is an important way you can help them develop language skills and learn information about the world. Reading to children about oral health can help them be prepared to visit the dentist and to learn about caring for their teeth.



Check out these book lists for young children: [Books about Going to the Dentist](#) and [Books about Teeth](#). Happy reading!

Measles

Recent measles outbreaks have many families concerned but most people who have gotten sick were not vaccinated against measles. This is a reminder of the importance of making sure your child(ren) are fully vaccinated. The measles vaccine is very effective in protecting against measles. However, no vaccine is 100% protective so very rarely, people who are vaccinated may develop measles. Two doses of MMR protect 97-99 of every 100 people.



Measles was once a common childhood disease and almost an expected part of growing up. While most children recovered from the measles without problems, in some cases, the infection caused pneumonia, encephalitis (infection of the brain) and even death.

The measles virus spreads easily through the air when an infected person sneezes or coughs and someone nearby inhales the infected droplets. It can also be transmitted by direct contact with fluids from the nose or mouth of an infected person. The most recognizable measles symptom is a very high fever accompanied by a red or brownish blotchy rash, although this is not the only symptom. Before the rash appears, children with measles develop cold-like symptoms, including: cough, runny nose, fever, red, watery eyes. These symptoms tend to get worse during the first 1 to 3 days of the illness.

For more information visit [How to Protect Your Children During a Measles Outbreak - HealthyChildren.org](#)

Family Engagement

April Showers Bring May Flowers!

It could be a rainy month for family fun but there are many activities you can do with or without the rain. Here are a few ideas for some family fun and memory making.

1. Have Fun with Rainbows
 - Create rainbow crafts
 - Eat rainbow food
 - Read rainbow books
2. Play in the Rain
 - Get outside and splash in some puddles
 - Explore and discuss the water cycle
 - Study the remarkable rain
3. Celebrate Earth Day on April 22nd.
 - Create some arts and crafts to celebrate Earth Day.
 - Attend and Earth Day Festival or Celebration.
4. Have fun outside.
 - Go fly a kite.
 - Visit local gardens or garden shops.



These ideas are sure to guarantee family times filled with fun, laughter, and memories that will last a lifetime. Please visit this [website](#) for more suggestions and guidance for each of the activities listed above.

Other Family-Friendly Newsletters

The April releases of the Office of Child Development and Early Learning's family-friendly newsletters for families and providers of children, ages birth to kindergarten, are now available. The newsletters feature fun early learning activities that align with the Pennsylvania Early Learning Standards, resources, and information to help families as their child's first and most important teacher.

Look and share it with families and friends, then [subscribe](#) to get the next release directly into your inbox.

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

Visit ELRC Region 12

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