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## Community Services for Children Family Connection Newsletter ~ ELRC Region 14 June 2026

Serving Lehigh & Northampton Counties

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### Region 14 News

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***Please note that the ELRC offices will be closed on Friday, June 19th for the Juneteenth federal holiday and Friday, July 3rd.***

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#### Child Care Works Reminders

If your children receive CCW funding, here are a few reminders as we move into the summer months:

- If your child is returning back to care or has changed providers for the summer, please reach out to your Family Specialist to report this change.
- CCW funding does not cover "drop-in" care. Your child must be enrolled with a provider and have a set weekly schedule.
- CCW children are allowed up to 40 days of absence per year. If you are close to that limit, know that this count will reset on 7/1/26. Please note that absences can accumulate quickly, especially over the summer months if you don't take your children on their scheduled days for care.



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#### Free Summer Meal Locations in Allentown

If you're looking for free summer meals for children and teens in Allentown in 2026, the City of Allentown and Allentown School District are partnering with local



organizations to provide meals at multiple community sites.

**Community Meal Sites (No registration required) City of Allentown**

**St. Luke's at Star Community Health**

450 W Chew St.

June 17 – Aug 21 (Tues–Thurs)

11:30 AM

Grab & Go meals only, while supplies last

**Lehigh Valley Hospital – School of Nursing**

1628 W Chew St

June 23 – Aug 15

11:30 AM – 1:00 PM

Grab & Go meals

**Allentown Public Library**

1210 Hamilton St.

June 23 – Aug 1

12:30 PM – 1:30 PM

Lunch served in the community room

**The Caring Place**

931 W Hamilton St.

July 7 – Aug 15

Breakfast 9:30–11:30 AM, Lunch 12:00–2:00 PM.

**Mack Pool**

1901 Mack Blvd.

June 23 – Aug 1

12:00 PM – 3:00 PM

Grab & Go meals

**Casa Guadalupe**

218 N. Second St.

June 30 – Aug 7

9:00 AM – 2:30 PM

Grab & Go meals

**Allentown School District Meal Sites**

**South Mountain Middle School**

709 W Emaus Ave.

June 23 – July 31

Breakfast 7:30–8:00 AM, Lunch 11:00–11:45 AM.

**Trexler Middle School**

851 N 15th St.

June 23 – July 31

Breakfast 7:30–8:00 AM, Lunch 11:00–11:45 AM.

**Additional Summer Programs-City of Allentown.**

- Summer Playground Program – Free lunch served at 18 playground sites (ages 7–15) from June 16–Aug 7; register online [here](#).
- Firehouse Friday – Free meals for children 18 and under at Hibernia Fire Station (returning Sept 12, 2026)

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**Summer Playground Program 2026**

The City of Allentown is offering a free eight-week summer playground program for children aged 7 to 15 from June 22nd to August 13th, 2026. This program includes a variety of fun playground activities and provides free lunch.

## Program Details

### Activities Schedules:

- Mondays: 1:00 pm - 3:30 pm
- Tuesdays through Fridays: 9:00 am - 3:30 pm

### Lunches:

- Free lunches will be served from Tuesday through Friday, starting in June.
- Click [here](#) to register or call 610-437-7750.
- Click [here](#) to see the flyer.



## Color of Autism

### Parent Support Group



The COA Parent Support Group is your go-to place for connection, understanding, and guidance. It's where parents and caregivers of children on the autism spectrum come together to share experiences, access resources, and build a strong community of support.

Join them to connect with others who truly understand your journey and gain valuable insights to help you and your child thrive. Together, members of this support group are here to empower and uplift each other on this remarkable path of autism parenting.

- Click [here](#) to register today.

## 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

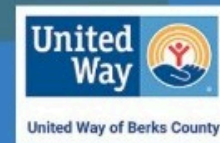
Rapid Response Team is a short-term intervention designed to support children who may be experiencing challenging behaviors in the early learning setting. This team observes the child at the child care facility and will offer strategies to the teacher and parent. If appropriate, referrals to community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

**DID YOU KNOW?**

**Playtime with  
you beats any  
app or video.**



### **Why is Play Important?**

Play is central to your child's learning and development. When your child plays, it gives them many ways and times to learn.



Play also helps your child:

- build confidence
- feel loved, happy and safe
- understand more about how the world works
- develop social skills, language and communication
- learn about caring for others and the environment
- develop physical skills.

To continue reading about play and why it is important, click [here](#).

**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 Katie Fries a registered play therapist and owner of [All of You Therapy, LLC](#). She walks listeners through the ways to meet a child's emotional needs. Click [here](#) to listen.



## Child Development

### What Does Quality Early Childhood Education Look Like?

Quality early childhood education is much more than preparing children for kindergarten. It creates a strong foundation for lifelong learning, healthy relationships, and future success.



#### A Quality Program will Demonstrate:

- Warm and Responsive Relationships: Quality programs focus on building positive relationships between children and caring adults. Teachers get to know each child's personality, interests, strengths, and needs. Children learn best when they feel safe, valued, and supported.
- Learning Through Play: Young children learn by exploring, creating, questioning, and playing. In a quality classroom, you will see children building with blocks, pretending in dramatic play areas, creating art, reading books, investigating science materials, and engaging in hands-on activities that promote learning across all developmental areas.
- Safe and Engaging Environments: High-quality programs provide clean, organized, and welcoming spaces where children can learn and grow.

Materials are accessible, age-appropriate, and designed to encourage exploration, independence, and creativity.

- **Individualized Learning:** Every child develops at their own pace. Quality educators observe children's progress, celebrate their achievements, and plan activities that meet children where they are developmentally. Learning experiences are adapted to support each child's unique strengths and needs.
- **Strong Family Partnerships:** Families are a child's first and most important teachers. Quality programs build respectful partnerships with families through regular communication, shared decision-making, and opportunities for involvement. When families and educators work together, children benefit.
- **Supporting the Whole Child:** Quality early childhood education focuses on more than academics. Children are supported in developing social skills, emotional regulation, problem-solving abilities, language and communication skills, physical development, and self-confidence.
- **Continuous Improvement:** Quality programs are committed to ongoing growth. Teachers participate in professional development, reflect on their practices, and use current research and best practices to provide the best possible experiences for children.

### What Families Can Look For

When visiting an early childhood program, ask yourself:

- Do children appear happy, engaged, and secure?
- Are teachers interacting positively with children?
- Is learning happening through play and exploration?
- Is the environment safe, clean, and welcoming?
- Does the program communicate regularly with families?
- Are children's individual needs and interests respected?

High-quality early childhood education helps children develop the skills, confidence, and curiosity they need to thrive in school and in life. Together, families and educators can create meaningful learning experiences that support every child's growth and success.

## Resource & Referral

### Kids Bowl Free

***EVERY DAY, ALL Summer Long!***

- Unlock a Summer of Fun, Laughter, and Lasting Memories - All at No Cost
- 2 Free Games Every Day - Enjoy a daily dose of fun and excitement.
- Family-Friendly Activity - Perfect for making memories together.
- Click [here](http://www.kidsbowlfree.com) to find a bowling center near you!



### Free Mom Hugs

Free Mom Hugs is a nonprofit dedicated to supporting the LGBTQIA+ community through love, visibility, and advocacy. Founded in 2015, the organization mobilizes volunteers to offer encouragement, education, and simple acts of compassion—like hugs—to ensure everyone feels accepted and valued.

To get involved, visit their website to find a local chapter, volunteer opportunities, or upcoming events, or follow them on social media to stay connected and show support.

Click [here](#) to find a local chapter!

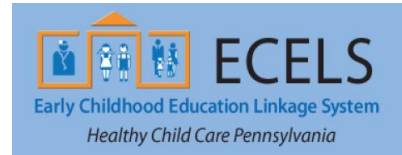
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## Health & Safety

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### 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.

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### Water Safety

Summer is here! Many of us like to cool off during the hot summer days in pools or at the beach. It is important to understand the dangers bodies of water pose and some tips to make it a safe and fun experience for all.

**Active Supervision.** Never assume that because there are a lot of adults around, someone is watching your child. Determine who will be watching and remain close to your child the entire time they are in and around water, without being distracted. Download this [Water Watch Card](#) so it is clear who is currently responsible for the children in and around the water.

**Learn CPR.** You never know when you'll need it. If nothing else, it will give you peace of mind. Check with your child care provider for agencies in your area who offer CPR.

**Swim/survival skills lessons.** Necessary survival skills include floating and treading water, exiting safely, enter and resurfacing, breath control, and the ability to move to safety. Local YMCAs or your community pool will often offer swim lessons for children.

**Bright Bathing Suits.** The color of your child's bathing suit can determine how easy it is to see them when they are in the water, especially in an emergency situation.



## The Dangers of Leaving Children in a Hot Car

Leaving a child in a parked vehicle, even for a few minutes, can have tragic consequences. On warm days, the temperature inside a car can rise rapidly, becoming dangerously hot within minutes. Children's bodies heat up much faster than adults', making them especially vulnerable to heatstroke, dehydration, brain injury, and even death.



Many incidents occur when a caregiver becomes distracted, experiences a change in routine, or mistakenly believes the child has already been dropped off. These situations can happen to anyone, making prevention essential.

### Steps to Prevent Leaving a Child Behind

1. Place an important item in the back seat such as a purse, briefcase, phone, or employee badge, so you must check the rear seat before leaving the vehicle.
2. Always look before you lock. Make it a habit to open the back door and check every seat before walking away.
3. Set reminders. Use smartphone alarms, calendar alerts, or vehicle reminder systems when traveling with a child.
4. Communicate with caregivers. If someone else is expecting the child, ask them to call if the child does not arrive as scheduled.
5. Keep vehicles locked when parked to prevent children from entering unattended.
6. Act immediately if you see a child alone in a vehicle. Call emergency services and take appropriate action if the child appears to be in distress.

By creating simple routines and staying alert, parents and caregivers can greatly reduce the risk of leaving a child in a hot car and help keep children safe.

## Preventing Window Falls

With nice weather comes the urge to open windows and let the fresh air in. It's the perfect time to take a moment to check that those open windows are safe and secure when children are in your home. While active supervision is an important

step in preventing falls, it only takes a second for an accident to occur. Here are a few additional steps you can take to help prevent window falls:



- Only open windows that are out of a child's reach. Make sure there is no furniture nearby that a child can climb on to access the window.
- Install window guards or stops to prevent windows from opening more than 4 inches. Screens keep bugs out, but they are not designed to keep a child in.
- Use window locks to prevent children from opening windows.
- When possible, open windows from the top rather than the bottom.
- Keep play areas away from windows.

Taking a few simple precautions can make a big difference in keeping your children safe while still enjoying fresh air at home. For more information and additional tips, visit [National Safety Council](#).

## Oral Health Tip

*Getting to Know Me Dental Form*



Getting to Know Me  
Information for Your Child's Dental Office

Before visiting a dentist, it is very helpful if a child's parent or guardian completes 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.

## Family Engagement

### June Activity Calendar for Families

Spending time together as a family offers many opportunities for learning, exploring, and making memories. Here are some special days in June and ways to celebrate while engaging with your child(ren).



**June 18: International Picnic Day** – Have a picnic with your child/ren at a local park, on the balcony, or in your backyard.

**June 19: Juneteenth** – Read age-appropriate books with your child/ren about Juneteenth and talk about the importance of the holiday.

**June 21: Summer Solstice** – Take your child/ren on a nature walk, do a summer nature scavenger hunt, and talk about the changing seasons.

**June 21: National Selfie Day** – Take silly selfies with your child/ren and create a photo album together.

**June 23: National Pink Day** – Dress up in pink and have a tea party with your child/ren.

**June 24: National Pralines Day** – Learn all about pralines and make pralines together.

**June 25: National Strawberry Parfait Day** – Make a delicious strawberry parfait with preschoolers, featuring layers of yogurt, fresh strawberries, and granola.

**June 27: National Sunglasses Day** – Have child/ren create their own sunglasses using paper plates, markers, and pipe cleaners.

**June 29: National Camera Day** – Teach child/ren the basics of photography and head outdoors and have them take pictures of their favorite things.

Source: <https://homeschoolsuperfreak.com/activities-for-the-month-of-june/>

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

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