

Early Childhood Connections ~ FEBRUARY 2023

NEWSLETTER



Parents as Teachers Early Head Start Head Start

February Important Dates

1	9:30– 10:30 am	Hays Playgroup at Hays Public Library
1	10:00-11:00 am	Russell Playgroup at Russell Library
7		SPRING PICTURES
8	10:00 -11:00 am	La Leche League at Cross Point Church
10	8:15-9:15 am	Parent Committee
14		Wear Pink or Red
20		In-Service No School
24	9:00-10:00 am	Playgroup at La Crosse Barnard Library



NOW ENROLLING

USD 489 Early Childhood Connections is now accepting enrollments for the Hays, Ellis and Russell Preschool Classrooms for the 2023-2024 school Year. Child must be three by August 31, 2023 to enroll. Call today to get more information about eligibility.

785-623-2430



Early Childhood
Connections
"Live the Possibilities"

If you read just one book a day to your child, they will have read **1825 books by their 5th birthday.**

Every book counts.



Not sure how to choose books to read aloud to your child? The Office of Head Start has pulled together a list of tips for choosing books that will appeal to infants and toddlers. For example, if your child is an infant, choose books with large and simple pictures that have only one picture per page.

Tips for Parents: Choosing Books for Infants and Toddlers

Reading is an important skill for future learning. Here are some tips for choosing good books for infants and toddlers. Parents, caregivers, and guardians may find these tips helpful.

The following tips sheet is provided courtesy of the **National Center for Family Literacy (NCFL)**.

Infants: Birth to 6 Months

- **Content.** Choose books with large pictures or bright and bold illustrations set against a contrasting background. Look for books that have simple pictures, one per page.
- **Language.** Infants will enjoy looking through wordless picture books, or books that have just a single word along with a big picture. But also try books that contain phrases or short sentences. It's important for infants to hear language. Nursery rhymes and verse books are good for this age, too.
- **Design.** Books for infants should be interesting and appealing to look at. Try stiff cardboard books, books with fold-out pages that create colorful panels, cloth or soft vinyl books, and books with handles.
- **Reading Aloud.** Infants want your full attention, so try reciting rhymes and songs that you remember by heart. Also, try reading to your infant while she has a toy to hold. Reading at bedtime is always a nice way to end the day!

Infants: 7 to 12 Months

- **Content.** Children this age will enjoy books with medium to large photos and bright, bold illustrations. Look for books that have simple drawings of familiar things, actions, and events.
- **Language.** Children begin to key into content and can relate pictures to their world. While they still enjoy picture books, try some books with simple stories that have one line of text per page.
- **Design.** Infants this age like to handle cloth and vinyl books, and cardboard books with stiff, thick pages.
- **Reading Aloud.** As your baby gets older, try this four-part interaction sequence:
 1. Get your baby's attention by pointing out something in a book. ("Look!")
 2. Ask a labeling question. ("What's that?")
 3. Wait for your baby to respond, verbally or non-verbally. If necessary, provide the answer yourself. ("That's a monkey!")
 4. Acknowledge your baby's response. ("Yes" or repeat your baby's word.) If your baby mislabels the picture, correct him in a positive manner. ("Yes, it's brown like a dog, but it's a monkey.")

Keep in mind that you may not get through a whole book in one reading. As your child starts to explore books, support her progress by watching, listening, and acknowledging.

Infants: 12 to 18 months

- **Content.** For children this age, try books with pictures of familiar characters, like animals, children, TV characters, or adults in familiar roles. Look for books that have action pictures - your baby is starting to be able to enjoy pictures with more details.
- **Language.** This is a great age to try books with songs and repetitive verses. Books that have a simple story line that relates to your child's own experiences will also have appeal. You might also look for theme books that show a series of related pictures and a few words. These books follow a progression of simple activities, but don't try to introduce a plot or complex storyline.
- **Design.** Even though your baby is growing fast, she'll still enjoy playing with books with handles and books with stiff, thick pages. And she'll still like having these books read to her. Books with thinner pages that are plastic-coated are also a good choice for this age.
- **Reading Aloud.** Your infant will probably still enjoy reading with you as he sits on your lap or close to you in a comfortable chair. This helps your baby associate reading with feeling secure. Connecting sounds with the pictures he sees in the books will make reading together even more fun. Make your own sounds, and don't be surprised if your baby joins in! You may also notice your child looking through the book alone and making noises (sometimes called "book babble").

Toddlers: 19 to 30 Months

- **Content.** Toddlers will continue to enjoy books with familiar characters, but they also will begin to take interest in pictures filled with information, action, and detail. Try some short stories, cause and effect stories, and fictional books that describe a problem or circumstance to overcome.
- **Language.** Try predictable books with repeated text, words that rhyme, and pictures that correspond to the text. Books with songs and repetitive verses are still a good choice for this age.
- **Design.** Toddlers can enjoy books with paper pages—but will still like books with a picture on every page and just a little bit of text.
- **Reading Aloud.** Let your toddler decide if she wants to sit on your lap while you read, or next to you on the couch or floor. Follow her cues. Talk about the characters and events in the story, relating them to your child's own experiences. Pause when you read aloud to let your child fill in a word or phrase. This works great with rhyming and repetitive books.

Written by the National Center for Family Literacy.



USD 489 EARLY CHILDHOOD CONNECTIONS

PARENT COMMITTEE

Next Meeting

Friday, February 10th

8:15 to 9:15 a.m.

MEET US IN THE BUILDING 1 ACTIVITY ROOM FOR
DONUTS & CONVERSATION

PARENTS WE NEED AND WANT YOUR INPUT!!

Be as involved as MUCH, or as LITTLE, as works for your family.
NO PRESSURE. A **SMALL** commitment with a **BIG** impact.

- Help Plan School Spirit Days!
- Engage with other family members!
 - Upcoming Program Events!
- Learn what's happening at School!
 - Win door prizes!

For more information contact
Karla or Brenda at 785-623-2430.

Early Childhood
Connections
"Live the Possibilities"

Wear **pink** or **red**

On February 14th



Use *Rosa* o *Rojo*
el 14 de febrero





Giddy-up to

KINDERGARTEN ROUND UP

Informational meeting for
PARENT(s)/GUARDIAN(s) ONLY
of incoming Kindergarten students

Spanish translators will be available.



FEBRUARY

27th at 6:30pm

Hays High School, Gym A
2300 E. 13th St.

Kindergarten Eligibility
student must be 5 years old on
or before August 31, 2023



A master contact list for incoming Kindergarteners is kept at the district office. Please call Jess Reling at Rockwell Administration Center, 785-623-2400 to put your name on that list.



¡Arre!

LA RONDA DE KINDERGARTEN

Reunión informativa para
PADRES/TUTORES SOLO para
estudiantes que ingresan a kindergarten

Habrà traductores de español disponibles

**LUNES 27 DE
FEBERO**

a las 6:30pm

**Hays High School, Gym A
2300 E. 13th St.**

Elegibilidad para kindergarten

**Los estudiantes deben tener 5 años cumplidos
el 31 de agosto de 2022 o antes**

En la oficina del distrito se mantiene una lista para los
estudiantes que ingresan a Kindergarten. Llame a Jess Reling
en el Centro de Administración de Rockwell al 785-623-2400
para poner su nombre en esa lista.



Access 2022 Tax Credits

EITC- Earned Income Tax Credit

[EITC](#) is a benefit for workers with low to moderate income. To qualify, an individual must meet specific requirements and file a tax return. If a family owes taxes, EITC can reduce the amount they owe. In other instances, EITC may provide a refund even if a family does not owe taxes. Individuals must file a tax return and claim the tax credit to receive it.

Maximum Qualifying Income by Filing Status and Number of Qualifying Children Claimed (2022 Tax Year)

The maximum amount of earned income credit an individual can receive for the tax year 2022 is:

\$6,935 with three or more qualifying children

\$6,164 with two qualifying children

\$3,733 with one qualifying child

Child Tax Credit and Credit for Other Dependents

The [Child Tax Credit](#) helps families with qualifying children afford the costs of raising children. For tax year 2022, people with children under the age of 17 may be eligible to claim a credit of up to \$2,000 per qualifying dependent, and \$1,500 of that credit may be refundable.

Families with dependents who don't qualify for the Child Tax Credit may be able to claim the [Credit for Other Dependents](#). The maximum credit amount is \$500 for each dependent who meets certain conditions.

Child and Dependent Care Credit

The [Child and Dependent Care Credit](#) is intended to offset the cost of child care. Families may qualify for the credit if they paid expenses for the care of their qualifying child under age 13 to enable them to work or actively look for work.

Free Tax Services

The [Volunteer Income Tax Assistance \(VITA\)](#) program offers free tax help to people who make \$60,000 or less, persons with disabilities, and limited English-speaking taxpayers who need assistance in preparing their tax returns. Families can usually find VITA sites in community and neighborhood centers, libraries, schools, shopping malls, and other convenient locations. Many VITA sites offer virtual or "drop-off" tax return preparation. To locate an open site near you, use the [VITA Locator Tool](#), GetYourRefund.org, or call (toll-free) 800-906-9887.

The [IRS Free File](#) offers many online resources and tax help. Find tax forms, instructions and publications, online payment options, and more. Individuals can even prepare and file their federal income tax online for free.

Please visit the following website for more information.

<https://www.irs.gov/credits-deductions/individuals/earned-income-tax-credit-eitc?cid=6765ebde25142ad892beecef720767b1>

PARENTING

with Conscious Discipline

Learn how to take everyday situations, including conflict, and turn them into valuable learning moments to teach your child impulse control, conflict resolution, social skills, and character development. You'll gain a basic understanding of brain development and learn how to use that information in everyday situations with your child!

Dates:

February 6, 13, 20, 27
March 20, 27, April 3, 10

Time: 6:30 to 8:00

Registration Fee - \$10.00

(Scholarships available)

Place: First Presbyterian Church
2900 Hall Street



FREE CHILDCARE PROVIDED

To register call Early Childhood Connections at 623-2430 by January 30th.
Sponsored by United Way of Ellis County and PACT

CRIANDO A SUS HIJOS

con Disciplina Consciente

Aprenda a tomar situaciones cotidianas, incluidos los conflictos, y convertirlos en valiosos momentos de aprendizaje para enseñarle a su hijo el control de los impulsos, la resolución de conflictos, las habilidades sociales y el desarrollo del carácter. ¡Obtendrá una comprensión básica del desarrollo del cerebro y aprenderá a usar esa información en situaciones cotidianas con su hijo!

Fechas:

6, 13, 20, 27 de febrero
20, 27 de marzo, 3, 10 de abril

Hora: 6:30 to 8:00

Cuota de Inscripción - \$10.00

(Becas disponibles)

Lugar: First Presbyterian Church
2900 Hall Street



CUIDADO DE NIÑOS GRATUITO PROPORCIONADO

Para registrarse, llame a Early Childhood Connections al 623-2430 antes del 30 de enero. Patrocinado por United Way del Condado de Ellis y PACT

Family Activity Night

Early Childhood Connections programs are responsible for facilitating and seeking the engagement of families of participating children in activities designed to help families become full partners in the education of their children. Your input ensures that the program achieves the goals of engaging families and communities to support families and boost children's school readiness. If you are interested in helping plan our future FAN please contact your child's teacher.

Helping your child prepare for Kindergarten

USD # 489 Kindergarten teachers have shared recently that many students who are entering Kindergarten lack the hand muscles and strength to properly do many of the tasks asked of them throughout the school day. Together, our school readiness committee has compiled several ideas that you can use at home to help ensure the development of your child's fine motor skills. You can find fun and simple tasks to help such skills develop in the video links below 😊

Thank you for your time and dedication to promote school readiness skills.

Fine Motor skills for Infant and Toddlers

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7iTja7x4oo>

Fine Motor skills for Preschoolers

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cL2i2oz6fpQ>

Fine Motor skills for Kindergartners

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IIFSCew7SJK>

