

February 2024



KID BITS

Practice class rules

Ask your youngster to tell you about rules she follows in school. Together, pick one or two she could work on at home, such as cleaning up after herself or listening without interrupting. Then, let her know when you notice that she follows a rule. It's a win for the teacher and for you when you each encourage your child to meet the same expectations.

My turn, your turn

The next time you play a board game with your youngster, use this idea to help him learn to take turns. Have each player write his name on a card to put on the board when it's his turn. Your child will easily see whose turn it is and remember to wait for his.

Tickle the funny bone

Laughter is a known stress reliever, and it can help you and your child reconnect after a long day. You might tell jokes during dinner, do a silly dance when she plays outdoors, or read a bedtime story in a pirate voice, for instance.

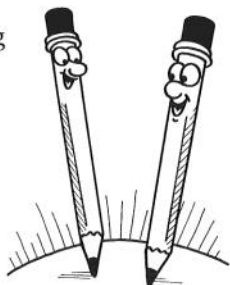
Worth quoting

"Make each day your masterpiece."
John Wooden

Just for fun

Q: What did one pencil say to the other?

A: You're looking rather sharp!



Bullying: Prevention begins now

What does bullying behavior look like among little ones? While they may not bully others the same ways older kids do, they can develop habits that lead to more deliberate bullying later. Consider these suggestions to help prevent bullying from the start.

Be gentle

Teach your child peaceful ways to get what he wants or needs. For instance, if he grabs a toy from his sister, have him give it back and think of a better choice. He might suggest trading her for a different toy or playing with something else until she's finished. He'll learn that he can achieve what he wants without being aggressive.

Express yourself

Encourage your youngster to focus on *his* behavior rather than trying to control how other kids act. Instead of "I won't be your friend if you don't __," he might say, "I want you to __ because __." Try modeling this yourself, and he'll start to pick up on it. *Example:*



"I want you to eat your vegetables because they're good for you" vs. "You can't have dessert if you don't eat your veggies."

Include others

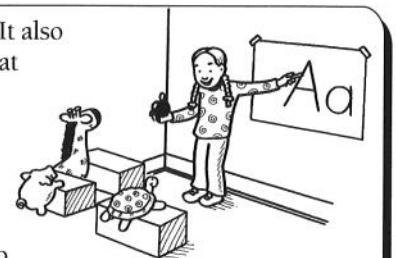
Have your child look out for kids who seem lonely or are left out. He can practice when you're at the park. Point out someone playing alone, and suggest that your youngster invite that child to play. In school, if he sees someone sitting alone or overhears kids saying "You can't play with us," he could ask the classmate to join him.♥

Let's play school

Playing school is more than just a fun game. It also helps reinforce what your youngster is learning at school. Spark her imagination with these tips.

● **Set up a "classroom."** Your child could create a "classroom" in the corner of her bedroom or the family room. Encourage her to add items she uses at school, like paper, pencils, books, and crayons. She might turn stuffed animals into "students" and hang poster board on the wall as a chalkboard, too.

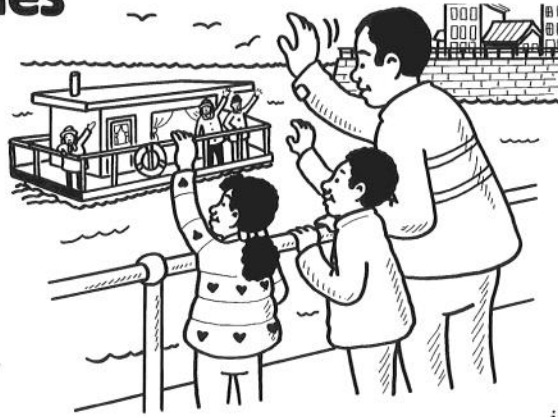
● **Give "lessons."** Take turns being the teacher. Your youngster can teach you activities she enjoys in school—maybe she'll lead you and her stuffed animals in a game of Duck, Duck, Goose. On your turn, you might read aloud to her and have her draw her favorite part of the story on the board.♥



All kinds of homes

Houses look different around the world—or even in your own neighborhood. Go on these adventures with your youngster to explore where people live so she learns about types of homes.

Near. How many different kinds of homes are in your neighborhood? Take a walk to find out. Your child might see townhomes, mobile homes, apartments, and single-family homes. Talk about how they're similar and



different. For instance, they all have doors, windows, and a roof. But some have many families living inside while others have just one family. Back at home, encourage your youngster to use blocks or craft sticks to create homes for her dolls or toy animals.

Far. Look in magazines or library books, or search online for “kinds of homes.” Maybe your child will see houseboats off the coast of a city, log cabins in a forest, and farmhouses in rural areas. Suggest that your youngster draw a picture of a home she'd like to live in—maybe a country cottage or a seaside house on stilts.♥



PARENT TO PARENT New uses for old toys

While I was cleaning out the basement, I came across toys that my son Martin doesn't play with anymore. I decided to challenge him to be creative and find new ways to play with them.



Martin came up with the idea to take his beach toys out in the snow. He enjoyed using a shovel and a bucket to make a snow castle. Then I pointed out a plastic slide he used as a toddler, and he turned it into a ramp for his toy cars.

Now my son is excited to see toys he hasn't played with in a while, and he's using his imagination as he thinks of more ways to play with them. When he had a friend over recently, I overheard them debating whether to use his old wagon as an ice cream truck or a Lego table!♥

Q & A Special time together

Q: Our daughter was so excited when her baby brother was born. But now she gets upset whenever my husband or I hold him. What can we do?

A: It's normal for older siblings to feel jealous of younger ones. Your baby needs a lot of attention, and your daughter is craving that for herself.

Try setting aside time with her each day, perhaps when her brother is napping or after he goes to bed. Play with her train set, color together, or bake cookies. Also, you might consider making time once a week or so for each parent to do something one-on-one with your daughter. Have a picnic at the park or go to the library's story hour, for instance.

Finally, try to give your daughter a special role. Maybe you'll take a walk and let her push the stroller, or ask her to “babysit” your little one while you pay bills.♥



ACTIVITY CORNER Watch a potato plant

Potatoes are easy to grow, making them perfect for observing a plant's parts and learning about its needs. Here's how your child can grow potatoes in water so he sees every step of the process.

1. Let your youngster fill a clear jar about $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way with water.
2. Have your child insert toothpicks around the middle of a potato that has begun to sprout.

Then, he should stick one end of the potato into the water so the toothpicks rest on the rim of the jar.

3. Place the potato in a sunny window, and encourage your youngster to draw a picture of it. He can check it every few days and draw new pictures when he observes changes.

(Roots will grow down into the water. The potato sprouts will get bigger, and leaves will grow.)

Note: Change the water whenever it gets cloudy.♥



OUR PURPOSE

To provide busy parents with practical ways to promote school readiness, parent involvement, and more effective parenting.



2880 Pottsville Minersville Highway, Suite 210
Minersville, PA 17954

Mental Wellness Corner



Beverly Weikel, LCSW
Mental Health Consultant

Mary Louise Fanelli, LBS
Behavioral Specialist

Stacy Meredith, LPN
Health and Development Manager

FEBRUARY—THE MONTH OF LOVE



As I was thinking of what message I could share with you that connected love with mental wellness, the obvious seemed to float to the surface but fall short of the mark. Everyone knows love is good for mental health so what unique spin could I add?

One evening in November at 2:00am (it appears most of my inspiration comes at this hour), I remembered a story I was told in November. I'd like to share with you the story of a little bouncing brown haired blue eyed beauty, who I'd like to call "T". She's a bright little nine year old who happens to have the creative imagination of a novelist, the passion of an artist and the soul of a Shaman.

About five weeks before Christmas our young lady, Miss T lost her grandmother to an eight year struggle with cancer. Grandma had the heart of a worrier and a very gentle and kind spirit. The loss for little T's heart was felt so deeply that when her parents told her of grandma's death, her only comment was, "I don't want anyone to know". In her grief, T thought like many adults, if you don't give sorrow words, maybe it won't be true.

As Christmas began to draw near, however like most of us, memories of those who love us and take the time to show us in so many little ways, well these memories come creeping into our thoughts. So it was for little T.

One day while grocery shopping with her father, she broke away from him to look for a box of Twigs Christmas Tea. She ran to the very aisle and spot on the shelf she remembered grandma taking her to buy it. The tea wasn't there—only an empty spot. Her father who had followed her, asked her what she was looking for. With great urgency in her voice and dismay, she told him she was looking for grandma's Christmas tea and explained they had always bought it together. She asserted it had always been in this spot and it just wouldn't be Christmas without it! "Dad," she said "we have to find it." Heartbroken for his daughter, the father questioned the store manager and together they searched every isle for it. Unable to locate the tea the father went home and called his mother. I need your help mom, I have to find this tea, he just couldn't let his little girl down, and truth be known, they both felt the need to find grandma's love in that cup of tea.



The important part of this true story is not the location of the tea, which by the way was eventually located in a different store; but, the real gift was grandma's time year after year shopping with her granddaughter, who came to find grandma's love in a cup of Christmas tea that would forever connect her to grandma's spirit. Proof that LOVE doesn't come in a grand flourish once a year on Valentine's Day with flowers, hearts full of chocolate candies or even homemade cards. Love comes in the everyday mundane moments, like shopping for a box of Christmas tea.

This Valentine's Day take the time to simply share the moments that connect us everyday to one another in something as simple as caring. Don't overlook the little things and hang on to your traditions. LOVE is often an over used word in our everyday lives. I love your hair, I love the weather we are having, I love your new car, I love this chocolate cake, etc. True love is seldom spoken and more often put into action. It is the simple moments when you touch someone's soul with a thought, a gesture, a simple shopping trip, a cup of tea.

Keep taking the time to create memories—no matter how busy you are and never ever forget, all around you love is happening when you least expect it—in a touch, a word, a thought, a simple cup of tea! Love is the memories we get to keep forever in our minds and in our hearts. This Valentine's Day find reasons to celebrate one another everyday!

As always, your mental health team holds you in our thoughts, in our hearts, and we wish you well. This February spread a little



Early Childhood HEALTH & DEVELOPMENT


Childhood Obesity

Childhood obesity is at an all time high. It can lead to diabetes, high blood pressure and high cholesterol. There may be no symptoms other than a child's weight is above normal. Improving the entire family's diet and exercise habits is one of the best ways to achieve a healthy weight in children.

How to treat childhood obesity?

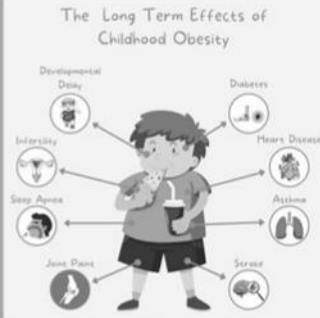
- Increase in physical activity
- Adequate sleep
- Eat 5 or more servings of fruits and vegetables each day.

Childhood Obesity



- Childhood Obesity has increased to double in the last 3 decades.
- 1 of 3 children is overweight.
- Most Childhood obesity is because of environmental factors.
- Children have lack of physical activities.
- Children are eating more fast foods than healthy family meals.
- Screen time of children has increased.
- Obesity is more than 8 times higher in children that watch more than 5 hours of TV per day.
- Portion sizes in restaurants have increased in the past 20 years.
- Children are eating large portions, high calories, and fewer vegetables.

The Long Term Effects of Childhood Obesity



Do I Really Need to Brush My Teeth for 2 Minutes Twice a Day?


Most dental problems—like tooth decay, gum disease, and other common problems—are really preventable,

If you brush for fewer than two minutes twice a day, you might not be cleaning your teeth thoroughly.

When you brush your teeth, you're not just supposed to get the outside surfaces, as in, the front of your teeth and sides closest to your cheeks.

You're also supposed to get the inside surfaces—the backs of your teeth and the sides of your molars closest to your tongue. You're supposed to clean the chewing surfaces, too, along with the places where your teeth and gums meet.

Research shows that brushing your teeth for two minutes leads to a greater reduction in plaque than brushing for one minute does.



Follow the 2 x 2 Rule

Brush twice a day for two minutes.

The answer to the question above is YES. Because when you spend less than 2 minutes, twice a day brushing your teeth, plaque remains and hardens into tartar, which can't be removed by toothbrushing. Your dentist will need to scrape it off.

Geisinger St Luke's Corner



February is National Children's Dental Health Month

A Focus On "The Purpose of Baby Teeth"

By Dr. Soumaya Bendjilali
Dentist at St. Luke's Hometown Primary Care & Dental



Habits and lifestyles are established at an early age. It's a common dental misconception that "baby teeth don't matter." Although permanent (adult) teeth usually replace primary (baby) teeth, ensuring that our children's primary teeth are healthy by starting good habits early is essential.

Primary teeth serve as little "placeholders" for the permanent teeth as they develop. Primary teeth should fall out on their own as the permanent teeth grow into their place. Any premature loss of primary teeth may lead to inadequate spacing for the permanent teeth to erupt. This can lead to costly orthodontic treatment.



Another thing to be aware of is that although permanent teeth replace primary teeth, a tooth infection may disrupt the forming permanent tooth below the infection, which may deform the permanent tooth.

We all want what's best for our children. It is important that we help them establish healthy habits early in life by teaching them good oral hygiene, helping them feel safe at the dentist by bringing them early on, and making nutritious food and drink choices.

Every February, we are reminded about the importance of establishing good oral healthcare practices with our children through **National Children's Dental Health Month**. This public health observance draws attention to this effort which is spearheaded by the ADA (American Dental Association).

St. Luke's Hometown Primary Care & Dental joins in the observance of Dental Health Month and reminds everyone that good oral health care plays an important role in maintaining overall good health. St. Luke's Hometown Primary Care & Dental is conveniently located at 34 S. Railroad Street in Tamaqua.



Jessica Brennan, Public Health Dental Hygiene Practitioner, has been with the clinic since its opening in 2019 and Dr. Bendjilali joined as its dentist in December 2020. **St. Luke's Hometown Primary Care & Dental accepts Medicaid.** For more information, contact the clinic at (570) 645-1950.

For information on community resources or Geisinger St. Luke's services, contact Angela Morgan, Community Health, Geisinger St. Luke's 1(484) 658-4022 or email at angela.morgan@sluhn.org.



**KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION INFORMATION
2024-2025**

DISTRICT / SCHOOL	REGISTRATION/SCREENING DATES	CHILD MUST BE "5"
1. Blue Mountain EAST: 570-366-1065 WEST: 570-739-4461	Tentative Registration Date: 3/18/2024* More information to follow.	on or before 9/1
2. Mahanoy Area 570-773-3443, Ext. 4038	TO BE DETERMINED* More information to follow.	on or before 9/1
3. Minersville 570-544-1400, Ext. 1014	Tentative Registration Date: 3/18/2024 BY APPOINTMENT ONLY – parents should begin calling in mid-February. Child needs to be present because health screenings will take place during this appointment. <i>(NOTE: Child must be potty trained.)</i>	on or before 9/1
4. North Schuylkill 570-874-3661	Registration Date: The WEEK OF 3/18-22/2024 BY APPOINTMENT ONLY – parents can call the elementary office beginning 2/1/2024. Parents will be sent information and a packet that must be completed and brought to appointment.	on or before 7/1
5. Panther Valley 570-669-9411, Ext. 1	TO BE DETERMINED* More information to follow.	on or before 10/1
6. Pine Grove 570-345-2731, Ext. 3	TO BE DETERMINED* More information to follow.	before 9/1
7. Pottsville 570-621-2945	ONLINE REGISTRATION Starts NOW at: https://skyward.iscorp.com/scripts/wsisa.dll/WServicewsedupottsvillepa/skyenroll.w <i>Any parent of a Child Development student that needs help with this online process, please inform your child's Teacher of Family Advocate.</i>	on or before 8/15
8. St. Clair 570-429-2716	APPOINTMENT REQUIRED Packets can be picked up at main office: DATE TBD* All forms need to be completed and returned before an appointment is given. Stay informed at: http://www.saintclairsd.org/ AND at the Saint Clair School Connections Facebook page.	on or before 8/1
9. Schuylkill Haven 570-385-6731, Ext. 3, Ext. 1	CALL NOW between 9am- 2pm to register. Screenings will take place the week of March 18, 2024 YOU MUST HAVE AN APPOINTMENT THE FOR SCREENING!	on or before 9/1
10. Shenandoah Valley 570-462-1957	TO BE DETERMINED* More information to follow.	by 8/15
11. Tamaqua 570-668-2570, Ext. 5, Ext. 0	~ APPOINTMENT REQUIRED ~ Call starting week of 3/18-21/2023 to schedule an appointment. You must first register on-line to receive more information when it becomes available:	on or before 8/31
12. Tri-Valley Hegins-Hubly Elem.: 570-682-9011 Mahantongo Elem.: 570-648-6262	https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfRkjXbWvNcmVCad3mQrMm5cECPz917isilJFfxkCrrK5sZHw/viewform <i>(This link can be found on the school district's HOME page)</i>	BEFORE 10/1

* This information will be revised as we receive updates.

CHARTER AND NON-PUBLIC		
DISTRICT / SCHOOL	REGISTRATION/SCREENING DATES	CHILDREN MUST BE "5"
1. Gillingham Charter School – Pottsville 570-955-3830, Ext. 121	Call the school for more information https://gillinghamcharterschool.org/	On or before 8/15
2. Assumption BVM – Pottsville 570-622-0106	Call the school for more information https://assumptionbvmschool.net/	by 10/15
3. St. Jerome Regional School – Tamaqua 570-668- 2757, Ext. 2	Call the school for more information http://www.sjrschool.com	by 10/15
4. St. Nicholas Ukrainian Catholic School – Minersville 570-544-2800	Registration begins during Catholic Schools Week beginning 1/28 http://www.snsminersville.com/	by 10/15



Things you need to know—all in on place!



Do we have your most current phone number?



Please make sure we do, so that you receive important text and e-mail messages regarding your child's center.

We use an automated message system to alert families and staff when the centers or the Program are closed due to inclement weather or other emergencies.

It is very important to keep your emergency contact information accurate and up-to-date. As long as we have a current cell phone number, and/or an e-mail address, we can send you an automated messages.

We also use this message system to inform and remind families of other important Program and center events.

Emergency Closings and Delays



In case of an emergency closing or delay due to weather, an announcement will be made on the local radio, television stations and on our **Facebook** page.

All decisions regarding the emergency closing or delay of either a specific center(s) or Program-wide will be made with your child's safety and well-being as our primary concern. The cancellation or delay will be aired on the stations below:

WMGH	Tamaqua	FM 105.5
WPPA	Pottsville	AM 1360
T102	Pottsville	FM 101.9
WPAM	Pottsville	AM 1450
WNEP TV	Scranton	Channel 16

The month of February is PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES/Home Visits

Check your child's Communication Folder for the date of your conference.



MEETINGS

Policy Council MONTHLY Meeting
Monday, February 26th
at 9:30 AM
Main Office & Zoom

PROGRAM GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING
Thursday, February 8 at 9:30 AM
Main Office & Zoom

PROGRAM STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING
Friday, February 16 at 10:00 AM
Main Office & Zoom

REMINDER TO FAMILIES



Friday, February 2nd
ALL centers/classrooms
will be CLOSED.
 Centers/classrooms will re-open on Monday, February 5th.

Holiday Closing

All centers & main office

CLOSED

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**Monday, February 19th**

*Happy President's Day*



## PRESCHOOL OPEN ENROLLMENT



**It's time to enroll  
your child for the fall!**

**CALL** **Child**  
Development, Inc.

**TODAY**

**1-800-433-3370**

**EXT. 212**

**CENTERS LOCATIONS:**

Fountain Springs, Mahanoy City, Pottsville,  
Saint Clair, Schuylkill Haven, Shenandoah and Tamaqua

*Qualified Teaching Staff*

*Individualized Learning Activities*

*Family Style Meals*



## WE NEED YOUR HELP! SPREAD THE WORD!

Do you have a friend or relative with a preschool age child (or children) and lives within Schuylkill County? If so, please give them this coupon to complete and return to you so you can turn it in to your child's teacher or family advocate.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Enrolled Family: \_\_\_\_\_ Enrolled Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Referred Family: \_\_\_\_\_ Child Name: \_\_\_\_\_ DOB: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Best time to call:  Morning  Afternoon

**This family is interested in the following center:**

|                                           |                                       |                                     |                                       |
|-------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fountain Springs | <input type="checkbox"/> Mahanoy City | <input type="checkbox"/> Pottsville | <input type="checkbox"/> Pottsville 2 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Saint Clair      | <input type="checkbox"/> Sch. Haven   | <input type="checkbox"/> Shenandoah | <input type="checkbox"/> Tamaqua      |

**MISSION STATEMENT**

We work with families and the community to provide high quality, comprehensive early childhood education with an emphasis on family involvement and supportive services that prepares each child for success in school and a lifetime of learning.

Child Development, Inc.  
Families \* Head Start \* PreK Counts  
Child Care \* Early Intervention \* Community

*Early Years*, Child Development, Inc.'s newsletter is distributed monthly. If you are a non-profit Schuylkill County agency that is offering a free service that you feel our families might be interested in or benefit from and would like an announcement placed in our newsletter please let us know by the 10th of the previous month. You can send your event to:

[kwolfe@childdevelop.org](mailto:kwolfe@childdevelop.org)



2880 Pottsville Minersville Highway, Suite 210  
Minersville, PA 17954