WORKING TOGETHER FOR A GREAT START



October 2025



Show me

Let your youngster know that physical activity is important to you by asking what he did during outdoor play time at school. He might show you how he catches a ball or teach you a game he learned. Or visit the school playground together so he can demonstrate his climbing abilities.

Helping hands

Trace around your child's hands on paper, and ask her to name different ways she is helpful. Maybe she helps her dog by feeding him and helps you by dusting. Together, write each example on a separate finger. Then, hang up her "helping hands" to remind her how helpful she can be.

Learning to focus

Sitting still and paying attention is sometimes tough for energetic young-sters. Have your child work on this by setting aside 5–10 minutes each day for a short activity that requires him to sit and concentrate. *Examples:* Search for animals in a magazine, sort and count coins from his piggy bank.

Worth quoting

"The only way to have a friend is to be one." Ralph Waldo Emerson

Just for fun

- **Q:** What question can't be truthfully answered "yes"?
- A: Are you asleep?



Great pumpkin exploration

What's big, orange, and full of learning opportunities? A pumpkin! Head to a pumpkin patch or the grocery store, and let your child pick out the perfect pumpkin. Then, use these questions to build her math, science, and language skills.

"How big is it?"

Ask your youngster to estimate how many squares of toilet paper it would take to go around the pumpkin once. Help her carefully wrap a strip around its *circumference*, or widest part, and count the squares. How close was her estimate? She could lay the strip out flat to see how big around the pumpkin is.

"Will it float?"

Fill a bathtub with water, and have your child predict whether her pumpkin will sink or float. What happens when she puts it in the water? Suggest that she try dropping smaller objects in the water, too. She may be surprised by what sinks and what floats. (A pumpkin is big, but

it's not very dense—its molecules aren't tightly packed together—which causes it to float.)

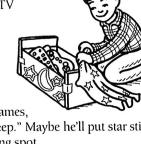
"What words describe it?"

Encourage your youngster to examine her pumpkin closely. She can look at it, touch it, and lift it. Then, take turns naming "describing" words for the pumpkin (*orange*, *smooth*, *heavy*). Cut off the top of the pumpkin, and have her scoop out the pulp and seeds. What words might describe the pulp (*slimy*, *stringy*) and seeds (*small*, *white*)?

Look, the TV is off!

Make it fun for your youngster to *not* watch TV or play video games with these ideas:

- Have your child help you develop guidelines for screen time. *Example*: "Sunny days are for playing outside." He could draw a picture to go with each idea.
- Let him decorate a shoebox where handheld games, tablets, cell phones, and remote controls can "sleep." Maybe he'll put star stickers on the box and draw a moon to create the sleeping spot.
- Suggest that your youngster make screen-free signs. For instance, he might write "No cell phones. Family eating" and post it in the kitchen.♥













Feel-good discipline

Did you know that children often behave better when they understand what they're supposed to do, rather than just being told what not to do? Gently guide your child toward good behavior with these tips.

1. Give a "redo." Offer your youngster a chance to correct his behavior by himself. *Example:* "Show me your best restaurant manners" instead of "Don't blow bubbles in your milk."



2. Explain your reasons.

When you ask your child to do something, it'll make more sense to him if he understands the reason behind it. If he throws a toy, you might say, "Take care of your toys so they don't break" (rather than "Don't throw your toys").

3. Provide pleasant consequences.

Once upon a time

Encourage good behavior by offering *positive reinforcement* for it. If your youngster waits quietly while you finish your work, you could say, "Thanks for waiting patiently. Now we have time to play a game." He'll see that behaving well pays off—and be likely to do it more often.♥



Start with a shape

This drawing game can teach your youngster about shapes and boost her creativity. And the end result will be homemade coloring pages for you both to enjoy.



Draw a shape (circle, square, triangle, rectangle) in the middle of a sheet of paper. Ask your child to name it, and let her use crayons to turn it into anything she wants. Encourage her to stretch her imagination. For instance, a circle could become a polka dot on a dress or the eye of an elephant. Or she might make a triangle into the roof on a house or one slice of a birthday cake.

When her picture is finished, it's her turn to draw a shape for you. Then, sit together and color your drawings.♥

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

PARENT TO PARENT

Stories about real life

My parents recently retired and moved away. It has been tough for my daughter Maddy, so they've tried to make it a little easier by having weekly video chats and telling her stories.

One night, my dad told her about his day. ("Once upon a time, a grandpa went to Florida. He went fishing and caught a trout.") When he finished, he asked her to tell him a story that started with "Once upon a time, a girl named Maddy..."

At first they had to ask questions like "What did Maddy have for breakfast?" and "Who did Maddy see at the park?" But she quickly got the hang of it. Our new tradition is helping Maddy stay close to her grandparents—and she is learning about storytelling.



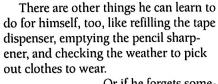
Relying on yourself

Q: I'd like my son to do more for himself. Where should I start?

A: Young children love to show how "big" they are. Look for small, everyday ways to let him show how capable he is.

For example, if he tells you the batteries in his toy are dead, show him how to replace them by matching up the plus and minus signs.

Next time, he might be able to do it by himself—with close supervision.



Or if he forgets something, prompt him instead of telling him what to do. ("What do you need to get before we go to school?")
He'll eventually learn to prompt himself. ("What should I put in my backpack?")





Not only do we miss your child when he or she is not here, but showing up on time every day is important to your child's success and learning!

The routines your child develops in preschool will continue throughout school. You can make the most of preschool by encouraging your child to attend every day!

DID YOU KNOW ... missing 10% of preschool (that breaks down to one or two days every few weeks) can make it harder to develop early reading skills and make it harder for your child to get ready for kindergarten and first grade? Developing a poor attendance pattern is also hard to break.

WHAT YOU CAN DO ... work with your child and his or her teacher to help them develop strong attendance. Your enthusiasm is a big boost to success.

Some other things that can help with good attendance is to talk to your child about going to "school" — sing about it — make it an adventure! Lay out clothes the night before and set a regular bed time and morning routine.



If, for some reason you child must miss a day of school and to ensure their safety, please let them know at the **center**—don't call the main office.

Call as early as possible and before 8am. We do not want the staff distracted by answering the phone once the children are in the classroom.

If you don't get to speak to someone personally, leave a voice message on your child's classroom voicemail. Leaving a message the night before is also fine too.

Drawing Contest Winners for 2026 Calendar Schuylkill County Society for Pediatric Orthopedics

Our students that attend our centers for the summer at Fountain Springs, Mahanoy City and Pottsville participated in an art contest for Schuylkill County Society for Pediatric Orthopedics to have their drawing included on their 2026 calendar.



FIRST PLACE Penelope Perez **Mahanoy City** Center



SECOND PLACE **Zayne Shistle Pottsville Center**



THIRD PLACE **Elias Rist Pottsville Center**



Quick Tips to Feel Physically Energized

Stretch

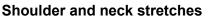
Stretching is the best way to restore blood flow to your muscles after you have been still for a long period. Try practicing Ragdoll and shoulder/neck exercises—two useful ways to stretch that you can practice anywhere. Choose your stretch and close your eyes, take a few deep breaths, relax into the posture and hold for 60 seconds.

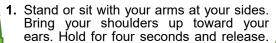
Ragdoll



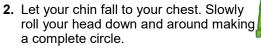
This yoga pose helps increase blood flow to the brain, which is a great way to clear your

Stand up straight, close your eyes, take a few deep breaths, then bend forward at the waist and hold for 60 seconds. Let your head hang heavy, arms fall toward the ground and hips reach to the ceiling.





Repeat three times.



Repeat in the opposite direction moving slowly. Repeat in each direction.



3. Reach your right arm upward as if you were trying to touch the ceiling. Reach for eight to 10 seconds. Reach with your left arm.

Alternate reaching with your right and left arm three times.

DRINK SOMETHING

Hydration is important under usual circumstances, but even more so when you're stressed. In the morning, grab a cup or water bottle and refill it throughout the day. You need at least 64 ounces of water every day; however, exercise, stress and humidity will increase your daily need.

EAT SOMETHING

Maintaining your blood sugar levels can help you control your focus, temper and energy. Plan ahead to take breaks for power snacks, which include a protein, fat and carbohydrate. Try these power-snack combinations: ✓ String cheese and crackers

- Hummus and carrots
- Handful of nuts and a banana
- Apple slices and nut butter



2025: Life Is A Puzzle, Solve It Drug Free.™ October 23 to October 31, 2025

Red Ribbon Week is the nation's oldest and largest drug prevention awareness campaign, which takes place annually in October. This year's theme: Life Is A Puzzle, Solve It Drug Free.™ is intended to symbolize how every choice fits into the bigger picture of one's life. By making healthy, drug-free decisions, people can build a stronger, brighter future.

It is a time for parents, educators, and communities to promote a drug-free lifestyle and educate youth about the dangers of substance abuse. The campaign encourages participation in drug prevention activities and highlights the importance of making healthy, smart decisions.



How is Red Ribbon Week celebrated?

Schools and communities across the country participate in Red Ribbon Week through various activities, including:

- Wearing red ribbons: This simple act shows a unified commitment to drug prevention.
- Educational programs and events: Schools hold assemblies, contests, and other activities to educate students.
- Themed dress-up days: Events like "Wear Red Day" or "Shade Out Drugs Day" (wear sunglasses) make the campaign engaging for students of all ages.
- Pledge signing: Students and families can take the Red Ribbon Pledge to live a healthy, drug-free life.



LEAD POISONING . . . Know the Facts

Lead poisoning is caused by swallowing or breathing lead. Children under 6 years old are most at risk. If you are pregnant, lead can harm your baby.

FACT . . . Lead can cause learning and behavior problems.

Lead poisoning hurts the brain and nervous system. Some of the effects of lead poisoning may never go away.

Lead in a child's body can:

- Slow down growth and development
- Damage hearing and speech
- Make it hard to pay attention and learn

FACT . . . Most children get lead poisoning from paint in homes built before 1978.

When old paint cracks and peels, it makes dangerous dust. The dust is so small you cannot see it. Most children get lead poisoning when they breathe or swallow the dust on their hands and toys.



FACT . . . A lead test is the only way to know if your child has lead poisoning.

Most children who have lead poisoning do not look or act sick. Ask your doctor to test your child for lead.

LEAD POISONING... Protect Your Family

1. Test your home for lead

- If you live in a home built before 1978, have your home inspected by a licensed lead inspector
- Contact your local health department for more information.

Sometimes lead comes from things other than paint in your home, such as:

- Candy, toys, glazed pottery, and folk medicine made in other countries
- Work like auto refinishing, construction, and plumbing
- Soil and tap water

2. Keep children away from lead paint and dust

- Use wet paper towels to clean up lead dust. Be sure to clean around windows, play areas, and floors.
- Wash hands and toys often, especially before eating and sleeping. Use soap and water
- Use contact paper or duct tape to cover chipping or peeling paint

3. Renovate safely

Home repairs like sanding or scraping paint can make dangerous dust

- Keep children and pregnant women away from the work area
- Make sure you and/or any workers are trained in lead-safe work practices
- Home repairs like sanding or scraping paint can make dangerous dust



Geisinger StLukess Corner



INTERESTING NUTRITION FACTS ABOUT PUMPKINS

The wonderful orange color shows that pumpkins are full of beta-carotene which the body turns into vitamin A which is helpful for our skin, vision and bone development.

It also contains vitamin C which helps strengthen our immune system to fight off colds

The potassium in pumpkin helps strengthen our bones

The carbohydrates from pumpkin help give us energy to get through the day!

You can enjoy pumpkin roasted, in soups, breads, casseroles or even desserts!

Be sure to purchase 100% canned pumpkin (if not using a whole fresh pumpkin) instead of pumpkin pie filling which will include spices and sugar!

Sources:

https://extension.sdstate.edu/sites/default/ files/2024-06/S-0001-31-Pumpkin-Schools Adults.pdf https://foodhero.org/pumpkin



Quick Tips on Good Nutrition

By Colleen Kandt, RD CSP LDN, Pediatric Outpatient Dietitian St. Luke's University Hospital

Nutrition is a key component in the growth and development of infants and children. Children are naturally good at intuitive eating - meaning they tend to listen to their bodies

As parents, it is important to provide a variety of foods in their diets. That includes meat, fish, beans, eggs, dairy, fruits, vegetables and whole grains. It is also important for children to eat at the table with no distractions like a phone, tablet or TV. This allows them to focus on eating. Kids may not like the look, smell, touch or taste



of new foods but it is very important to keep offering (but NOT forcing) them to eat. Studies show it may take fifteen tries of a new food before kids accept it. Try to be fun and creative with your food and don't be afraid to get the kids involved in the kitchen.

Children are excited when they have some ownership over the meal planning. I always tell kids to "look for colors of the rainbow on their plate" because so often their diet consists of brown/tan/yellow foods. Think mac and cheese, chicken nuggets, French fries, goldfish, cereal, etc. Many foods that have color provide our bodies with vitamins, minerals and fiber. So be sure to add color to your plate!

As far as beverages for children, water is very important! Milk will help provide protein, vitamin D, calcium and other minerals and should also be limited to 2-3 cups (8 oz per cup) daily depending on the age of the child. Keep juice limited to no more than 4-8 oz daily (eat fruit instead!). Soda and other sweetened beverages should be saved for special occasions and celebrations. Rehydration beverages may be helpful participates in sports and activities that last more than one hour. Keep that water handy and try adding fruit slices or mint leaves to naturally flavor the water.



Things you need to know—all in on place!

IN PERSON ORIENTATION

FOR NEW POLICY COUNCIL

REPRESENTATIVES AND ALTERNATES Thursday, October 23, 2025 10:00 AM at Child Development Main Office

All new Center and Community Representatives will be getting more information—please check your e-mail.

PROGRAM (G(0)



Policies Committee Meeting* Friday, Oct. 10, 2025 at 10:00 AM

Community Outreach Committee Meeting* Thursday, Oct. 16, 2025 at 3:00 PM

POLICY COUNCIL MEETING* Mon., Oct. 27, 2025 at 9:30 AM

* Meetings will be IN-PERSON and on Zoom. A ZOOM link for the meeting will be emailed to all members. When you receive the email with the link, please respond and confirm how you will be attending the meeting—IN PERSON or by ZOOM ~ In-Person Meetings are at our Main Office ~



Staff **Professional** Development

October 13th & October 31st

Centers will re-open on Tues., October 14th and Tues., November 1st

The main off will be open on both Mondays.



Oct. 5-11, 2025

FIRE PREVENTION WEEK

"Charge into Fire Safety™: Lithium-Ion Batteries in Your Home"

Parents and teachers, check out this web site to find FREE videos, lessons and activities for Fire Prevention Week.

www.sparkyschoolhouse.org



Not all learning happens in a classroom!



It happens when a child feels connected and curious.

Language and math skills are important but so are social skills. Well-developed social skills help children to:

- form positive relationships
- have conversations
- develop body language.
- learn patience and cooperation
- and play together

Good social skills are the foundation for learning.

CALL Development, Inc. TODAY

570-544-8959, EXT. 212 to talk with one of our ERSEA Advocates

Fountain Springs | Mahanoy City | Pottsville | St. Clair Sch. Haven | Shenandoah | Tamaqua



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~ REFER A FRIEND ~

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:			
Referring Family:	Child Name:		
Referred Family:	Child Name:		DOB:
Telephone Number:	_ Best time to call:	: 🗖 Morning 🗖	Afternoon
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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.

Families # Head Start # PreK Counts Child Care # Early Intervention # Community