

CONNECTIONS

Early Learning Program

Eau Claire 4 Tomorrow, Head Start, & Special Education
Linking Home and School for Success



Cold Weather Safety

Children are more vulnerable than adults to the effects of cold weather. These tips will help keep children safe, healthy and warm in the winter.

- **Children are at greater risk for frostbite than adults.** The best way to prevent frostbite is to make sure children dress warmly and don't spend too much time outside in extreme weather. Have children come indoors periodically to prevent hypothermia and frostbite.
- **Dress children in layers of warm clothing.** If the top layer gets wet, they will still have a dry layer underneath. Tuck scarves inside coats and jackets to prevent them from becoming strangulation hazards.
- **Car seats and winter coats don't mix.** Bulky coats can compress in a crash and create a loose car seat harness. Instead, lay the jacket or a blanket over children once you've safely strapped them into their car seat.
- **Test smoke alarms at least once a month.** Keep anything that can burn at least three feet away from heating equipment, including furnaces, fireplaces, wood stoves, and portable space heaters. Set up a three-foot "kid-free zone" around open fires and space heaters. Remember to turn portable heaters off when leaving the room.
- **Cold weather does not cause colds or flu.** However, viruses that cause a cold and the flu are more common in the winter when children spend more time indoors. Keeping everyone's hands clean is one of the most important ways to avoid getting sick and spreading germs to others. Wash hands with soap and clean running water, and rub them together for at least 20 seconds. Teach children to cough or sneeze into their upper sleeve or elbow, not their hands.

[Cold Weather Safety | ECLKC \(hhs.gov\)](https://www.hhs.gov/eclkc/cld101/0000012.html)

IN THIS ISSUE:

Contact Information

School Days Calendar

Event Flyers

Menus

District News

ECASD EARLY LEARNING



Yog Koj Xav Tau
 Daim Ntawv No
 Txhais Ua Lus
 Hmoob, Hu Tuaj Rau
 715-852-3555

Si desea que alguien
 le traduzca esta carta
 o si tiene preguntas,
 (715) 852-3614

Contact Information

Prairie Ridge Early Learning School
 3031 Epiphany Lane, Eau Claire, WI 54703
 Main Phone Number & Attendance Line 715-852-3600



Name	Position	Email	Phone
Michael Johnson	Eau Claire Area School District Superintendent	mjohnson@ecasd.us	715-852-3006
Heather Grant	Director of Early Learning and Elementary Programming	hgrant@ecasd.us	715-852-3102
Laurie Haus	Early Learning Principal	lhaus@ecasd.us	715-852-3610
Leah Olson	Head Start Coordinator	lolson@ecasd.us	715-852-3627
Alyssa Fahrenkamp	Prairie Ridge Secretary	afahrenkamp1@ecasd.us	715-852-3601
Doni Peterson	Head Start Secretary	dpeterson1@ecasd.us	715-852-3630
Missy Devine	EC4T Secretary	mdevine@ecasd.us	715-852-3608
Jill Italiano	Family and Community Partnership Coordinator	jitaliano@ecasd.us	715-852-3607
Nancy Brenner	Family Services Facilitator	nbrenner@ecasd.us	715-852-3676
Kellie Holliday	Family Services Facilitator	kholliday@ecasd.us	715-852-3677
Tia Lor	Family Services Bilingual Education Aide — Hmong	tlor2@ecasd.us	715-852-3642
Anna Grosman	Family Services Bilingual Education Aide, — Spanish	agrosman@ecasd.us	715-852-3614
Amanda Bennett	Early Learning Counselor	abennett@ecasd.us	715-852-3612
Morgan Deering	Early Learning Social Worker	mdeering@ecasd.us	715-852-3240
April Krall	Special Education Program Support	akrall@ecasd.us	715-852-3628
Student Transit	715-839-5116	ECASD Central Office	715-852-3000

VISIT OUR WEBSITE!! [ECASD | Home](#) Click on Schools; Click on Early Learning

If you would like someone to help you with this newsletter for you or if you have questions, **call Jill Italiano at (715) 852-3607.**

Lus Hmoob * Yog koj xav tau tus neeg Hmoob txhais daim ntawv no ua lus Hmoob rau koj los yog koj muaj lus nug txog daim ntawv no, **hu rau Blia Schwahn (715) 852-6850.**

En Espanol * Si desea que alguien le traduzca esta carta o si tiene preguntas, **llame a Anna Grosman al (715) 852-3614.**

Note from Principal Laurie Haus

Dear Families,

This month's focus for social emotional learning is Empathy. One way to think about Empathy is "understanding and connecting with other people's feelings."

Empathy is a practice that can help students (and adults) grow strong relationships. Empathy is 1 of 3 traits we will focus on throughout the year that helps students **Be Kind**. Throughout our classrooms, students will be developing skills like perspective-taking, conflict resolution, and leadership. This will be introduced to students in a developmentally appropriate way and these skills will grow each year. Your support and extension at home will be beneficial.

I hope you find value in the information in this month's newsletter. I encourage you to choose a family event over the next month to participate in with your family. Enjoy reading all about the tips and resources available to you!


























Take care,

Laurie Haus

Early Learning Principal



December 2023 School Days Calendar & Menu's

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
				1 
4  Breakfast Pineapple Tidbits Assorted Cereal, String Cheese Lunch Baked Mini Chicken Corn Dogs Green Beans Baby Carrots Frozen Fruit Juice Cup	5  Breakfast Mandarin Oranges Omelet & Toast Lunch Cheese or Pepperoni Pizza Whole Kernel Corn Banana Tossed Green Salad	6  Breakfast Chilled Peaches, Yogurt Lemon Breakfast Bread Lunch Baked Crispy Chicken on a Bun Bush's Baked Beans Cucumber Slices Seedless Grapes	7  Breakfast Fresh Sliced Apple Waffles Lunch Baked Chicken Waffle Bites Green Peas Broccoli Buds Mixed Fruit	8 
11  Breakfast Mixed Fruit & Yogurt Assorted Cereal Lunch Baked Chicken Strips Mixed Vegetables Baby Carrots, Breadstick Chilled Peaches	12  Breakfast Mandarin Oranges Bacon & Egg Breakfast Pizza Lunch Spaghetti w/ Meat Sauce Whole Kernel Corn Tossed Green Salad Banana	13  Breakfast Banana, Yogurt Berry Breakfast Bread Lunch Butterball Turkey Hot Dog on a Bun Bush's Baked Beans Cherry Tomatoes Chilled Pears	14  Breakfast Chilled Pears, Pancake Turkey Sausage on a Stick Lunch Chow Mein w/ Rice Green Beans Cauliflower Florets Pineapple Tidbits	15 
18  Breakfast Pineapple Tidbits Assorted Cereal, String Cheese Lunch Baked Chicken Nuggets Whipped Potatoes Celery Sticks Chilled Pears	19  Breakfast Fresh Orange Waffles Lunch Soft Shell Taco Bush's Fiesta Beans Tossed Green Salad Banana	20  Breakfast Mandarin Oranges Omelet & Toast Lunch French Bread Pizza Whole Kernel Corn Cauliflower Florets Mixed Fruit	21  Breakfast Chilled Pears, Yogurt Mini Breakfast Bread Lunch Cheese Omelet, Pancakes Green Beans Baby Carrots Applesauce	22 
25 	26 	27 	28 	29 
NO SCHOOL  WINTER  BREAK  				

Class Times (Monday—Thursday)	If Your Child is Going to Miss School:
AM Session Start: 8:25 AM—End 11:55 AM	Call Eau Claire Student Transit 715-839-5116
PM Session Start: 12:45 PM—End 4:15 PM	Call ECASD Early Learning Attendance Line 715-852-3600

Attendance MATTERS! Every student, EVERY DAY!

District News



Your child will be going outside each day unless the temperature is below zero. Please send your child to school each day wearing snow pants, snow boots, a winter coat, hat and mittens.

If you need assistance with winter gear, please call 715-852-3607.

The holidays are here again! While this can be a great time to enjoy family and friends, it can also be stressful. Here are some tips on decreasing stress to you can increase fun.

 [7 Tips for Reducing Holiday Stress](#)

Learn more about ECASD school based mental health

[ECASD | School Based Mental Health Services](#)

Are you looking for community resources and events? Check out the link to the Eau Claire Area School District's webpage "Community Events/Resource Flyers".

[ECASD | Community Events/Resource Flyers](#)

Family Resources

WIC CAN CONNECT YOU TO MANY RESOURCES.

Children up to age 5 can qualify for WIC.

Call us today at 715-839-5051 to learn how WIC can provide moms, dads, and other caregivers with nutrition benefits, education, breastfeeding support and more!



For your safety and convenience, all WIC appointments currently take place over the phone.



Family Information-Mental Health

Stress Buster

A bit of stress is good for us. It teaches us to be resilient and develop healthy coping skills. What happens to the brain and body with chronic stress? To put it simply, we are not built to withstand prolonged cortisol (stress hormone) levels. Repeated stress in the body causes inflammation. Prolonged inflammation results in many health issues, including diabetes, heart disease and depression. Below are simple ways to manage your daily stress:

- 1. Make a task list:** When things pop into your head that you need to do, write them down. The physical act of writing things down helps your body calm down.
- 2. Pick one item from your list that is easier to finish and get it done:** Add some easy things to your list or write things down that you already completed. This helps see progress and gives credit for what you have already accomplished.
- 3. Take three measured breaths-4 counts in, hold for 5, out for 7.** Breathing is so important for our bodies. Use belly breathing to release the stress that you are holding onto.
- 4. Tune into the physical body and notice what you might do to be more comfortable-put on a sweater, relax the jaw muscles, lower the shoulders.** Listening to your body and being present is another great grounding technique.
- 5. Take 5 minutes and step outside for fresh air.** Being out in nature leads to positive effects. You can try parking further away to get more fresh air, or take a short break outside.

Want the good news?

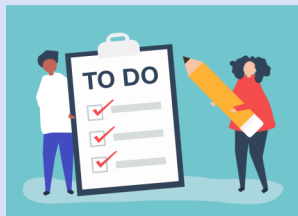
Neurologists have found that the physiological sensation of a feeling only lasts 90 seconds. What keeps emotions lingering are the stories we tell ourselves about them. When we practice letting go of the stories, our emotions will dissipate.

So, tune into what your brain is telling you and work on replacing those stories with another thought. Some options: It doesn't all need to be done today. I am one person and capable of doing only one thing at a time. A clean house may make me feel better but it doesn't make me a better person. One thing at a time.

What's your favorite thing to say to yourself when you are overwhelmed?

Let me know if something worked out well for you or if you have another tip to share.

Amanda Bennett
School Counselor
abennett@ecasd.us



Nutrition Information

To find out if your family is eligible for WIC, visit: wic.ehealthdepartment.org or call 715-839-5051.

December

Eat Healthy, Be Active, Your Kids Are Watching

Ways To Role Model

Show by example

Eat vegetables, fruits with meals or as snacks. Let your child see that you like to munch on raw vegetables.

Go food shopping together

Grocery shopping can teach your child about food and nutrition. Discuss where vegetables and fruits come from. Let your children make healthy choices.

Get creative in the kitchen

Cut food into fun and easy shapes with cookie cutters. Name a food your child helps make. Serve "Janie's Salad" or "Jackie's Sweet Potatoes" for dinner. Encourage your child to invent new snacks. Make your own trail mixes from dry whole-grain, low-sugar cereal and dried fruit.

Focus on each other at the table

Talk about fun and happy things at mealtime. Turn off the television. Take phone calls later. Try to make eating meals a stress-free time.

Limit screen time

Allow no more than 2 hours a day of screen time like TV and computer games. Get up and move during commercials to get some physical activity.

Encourage physical activity

Make physical activity fun for the whole family. Involve your children in the planning. Walk, run, and play with your child—instead of sitting on the sidelines. Set an example by being physically active and using safety gear, like bike helmets.



Eat Healthy
Be Active
Your kids are watching

Make Every Bite Count

Enjoy these sweet citrus fruit on its own by peeling and eating the pre-sliced goodness. Add the slices into a salad with a spinach or lettuce base

Asparagus

Veggie of the Month



Mandarin Orange



Fruit of the Month

Move More... Watch Less

Active Play Ideas

- Build snowmen
- Snow angels in the snow
- Build a fort of snow
- Dancing
- Active play bath toys
- Active games such as Twister or Charades.
- Jump rope
- Foam basketball/football/baseball
- Indoor obstacle course
- Sledding



Active play is important for toddlers to develop healthy behaviors. It is essential to development because it adds to the cognitive, physical, social, and emotional well-being of children and youth.

Orange Delight

Ingredients

4 cups non-fat or 1% milk
6 ounces frozen orange juice concentrate (about 3/4 cup)
1 teaspoon vanilla

Directions

Place all ingredients in a blender. Put the lid on tightly. Blend for about 30 seconds or until smooth. Serve and enjoy. Refrigerate leftovers within 2 hours



Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees F.
2. Wash asparagus spears and trim off tough ends.
3. In a large bowl, toss spears with the oil, salt, and pepper.
4. Place spears in a single layer on a large baking sheet. Lining the baking sheet with foil or baking parchment will help with clean-up.
5. Roast for 12 to 15 minutes or until the asparagus pieces are lightly browned. Thick spears will take a longer baking time.

Ingredients:

3 pounds fresh asparagus spears
1 Tablespoon oil
1/8 teaspoon salt
1/8 teaspoon pepper

PRAIRIE RIDGE— LOST AND FOUND

Please contact your child's teacher or call 715-852-3607 to claim an item from our lost and found.



Family Events

UPCOMING EVENTS & HAPPENINGS IN DECEMBER

- **December 5th S.M.A.R.T.**
- **December 9th Date with Dad Block Party**
- **December 11th Purposeful People**
- **December 15th Play Group**



ECASD Early Learning offers many ways for families to get involved. Family events are **FREE** and open to any preschool age children and their families, unless specified. If ECASD schools are closed due to the weather, event is cancelled.

Register for any of the events online at this link:

[Click Here](#)



S.

M.

A.

R.

T.

S.M.A.R.T. Kids Play to Learn

Stimulating Maturity through Accelerated Readiness Training (S.M.A.R.T.)

Tuesday, December 5th,

5:00-7:00 PM

Prairie Ridge 3031 Epiphany

Lane Eau Claire

WAYS TO REGISTER

CALL 715-852-3676

EMAIL nbrenner@ecasd.us

Register by Clicking

[Click Here](#)



ECASD EARLY LEARNING



EAU CLAIRE 4 TOMORROW



HEAD START



FREE!

Families, join us for S.M.A.R.T.!!

S.M.A.R.T. is a program that helps children's brains and bodies get ready to learn by using fun, play activities that promote natural, healthy, brain development. S.M.A.R.T. family sessions parallel activities used in EC4T & Head Start.

This session includes a light dinner, time in the gymnasium, and parent-child interactive activities focusing on developing your child's gross motor skills (balance, core strength, reflexes) and fine motor skills (pencil grip, hand-eye coordination, left to right tracking). Event is free & open to any pre-school age children & their families in our community.

Sponsored by the ECASD Early Learning Program

Date with Dad

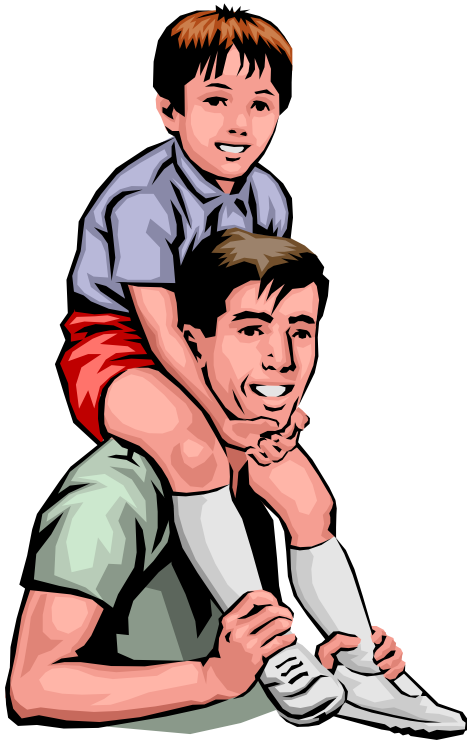
“Block Party”

A special time for dads and preschool-age kids to enjoy together!

ECASD Date with Dad is part of the Head Start Fatherhood Initiative. We understand that children have families with diverse structures. Therefore, we encourage any significant male role model to attend (dad, step-dad, grandpa, uncle, foster-father, big brother, significant other, etc.)

Anyone who is a significant role model for the child is welcome to attend.

Saturday, December 9th , 2023



LOCATION: Prairie Ridge

3031 Epiphany Lane

9:00-11:00 AM

- Families will build and play with blocks, cardboard boxes, and other manipulatives.
- Explore “Owl Mountain’s Secret Tunnel”.
- Engineer & build all kinds of structures.
- Learn how to foster creativity, imagination, problem solving and self expression through block play.
- Free event—a free snack will be provided.

WAYS TO REGISTER:

CALL 715-852-3676

NBRENNER@ECASD.US



[Click Here](#)

ECASD EARLY LEARNING



EAU CLAIRE 4 TOMORROW



HEAD START

Sponsored by ECASD Head Start & Early Learning Program



Purposefull People Workshop

@ Prairie Ridge

3031 Epiphany Lane Eau Claire WI 54703

Monday, December 11th, 2023 *** 5-7 PM



“Purposefull People” by Character Strong, is the social emotional curriculum used Pre-K to Grade 5 throughout the Eau Claire Area School District.

“Skills for Life+ Character Development”

Led by Amanda Bennett, ECASD Early Learning School Counselor, this workshop will guide participants through the curriculum and give families the tools/language to support their children at home.

Free dinner from 5-5:30. Free childcare provided. Event is geared towards pre-K and is open to all in the community. Parent Meeting & training topic.

WAYS TO REGISTER:

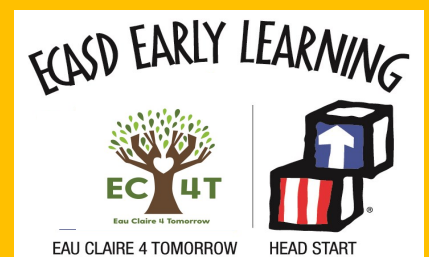
CALL 715-852-3607

JITALIANO@ECASD.US



[Click Here](#)

Sponsored by the
Eau Claire Area School District's
Early Learning Program





Play N' Learn Play Group

Friday,
December 15th, 2023
9:30-11:00 am

Future Play N' Learns

January 19th

February 16th

March 15th

April 19th

May 10th

Location:

Prairie Ridge EL School



Prairie Ridge Early
Learning School
3031 Epiphany Lane
Eau Claire, WI 54703

All are welcome! Join this fun, free, and interactive play group for pre-school aged children. You and your child will experience story time, hands on activities, and lots of learning through play! Snack will be provided.

WAYS TO REGISTER:

CALL 715-852-3677

**EMAIL
KHOLLIDAY@ECASD.US**

**SCAN QR CODE TO
REGISTER ON-LINE**

**REGISTER BY CLICKING
[Click Here](#)**



ECASD EARLY LEARNING



EAU CLAIRE 4 TOMORROW



HEAD START