

CONNECTIONS

Early Learning Program

Eau Claire 4 Tomorrow, Head Start, & Special Education

Linking Home and School for Success



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What is Mindfulness & Self-Care?

Mindfulness is the ability to be conscious of your mind and body. Being aware of where you are, what you are doing and not overreacting or feeling overwhelmed. Learning to recognize feelings will give us the opportunity to learn what to do to sooth ourselves.

Ways to practice Mindfulness:

Mediation—sitting, walking, standing or moving

Short pauses we inset into our everyday loves

Exercise—yoga, stretching,, playing sports



Self –Care is the practice of talking action to preserve or improve one’s own health. Basically, what people do for themselves to establish and maintain a healthy body, mind, and soul.

Ways to practice Self-Care:

Eat healthy and mindfully—enjoy a dinner with no distractions

Mediation—time with yourself to reconnect, reset, and reflect

Listen to music—listen to something that helps you relax and step away from the everyday routine

Positive self-talk—say positive things about yourself

Get enough sleep—track your sleep partners

Unplug—disconnect from your social media, computer, phone, tablet

[What is Mindfulness? - Mindful](#)

ECASD EARLY LEARNING



EAU CLAIRE 4 TOMORROW



HEAD START

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

Si desea que alguien
le traduzca esta car-
ta o si tiene pregun-
tas,
(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
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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,

Happy New Year! We look forward to a fun and successful 2024! January is an important time for us to reflect on our student's growth and progress and set goals for the remainder of the school year. Thank you for the positive support you provide your child at home. We value the partnership we have with you and your family. Information about mid-year family conferences will be sent soon, so watch for that information in mid-January.

There are a few dates when school won't be in session in January. Students will not attend school on **January 15** in honor of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day and on **January 22-23** because staff will be having professional development and instructional planning time.

This month's focus for social emotional learning in the classroom is Perseverance with an emphasis on following directions. We will learn about steps for listening (eyes are ready, ears are listening, brain is focused, heart is caring) and following directions (pay attention to directions, ask questions when confused, do what you are asked). I encourage you to use this language at home for more practice.

Please check out this month's family events. I hope your family can join for at least one event this month.

Take care,

Laurie Haus

Early Learning Principal



Family Events

UPCOMING EVENTS & HAPPENINGS IN JANUARY

- **January 8th ~ Triple P & Parent Meeting**
- **January 12th ~ Water Safety Skills & More**
- **January 19th ~ Play Group**
- **January 29th ~ Music Movement & Dance**



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](#)



ECASD Early Learning & Head Start

Parent

MEETING



Connect with Other Families and Learn How to Support Your Child's Growth! As parents, we all want the best for our children. Free dinner and child care provided.

Training Topic: Triple P "The Power of Positive Parenting"

5:00-5:30 Dinner & Parent Meeting

5:30-7:00 Triple P Presentation

Located at Prairie Ridge; 3031 Epiphany Lane

JANUARY

8

**REGISTER
TODAY!**



Ways to Register:
Call 715-852-3630
jitaliano@ecasd.us



[Click Here](#)



Triple P
Positive Parenting Program

Sponsored by ECASD Early Learning Program

KIDS

WATER SAFETY SKILLS & MORE

FREE

Learn basic water safety skills, including simple swim techniques with the Eau Claire YMCA Aquatics Director, Lori Kleist

- Due to limited space, only 1 child (Early Learning student) and 1 parent/guardian will be allowed in the small pool - all other family members may watch from the pool deck.
- All children MUST be accompanied by a parent/guardian (in the water & on the pool deck).
- Only REGISTERED families will be allowed entrance. Please register for Session 1 or Session 2.
- Bring your own towels, toiletries, swimsuits & swim diapers (if your child is not potty trained).
- Free snack provided.

Friday, January 12th, 2024

Session 1: 1:00-2:00 PM

Session 2: 2:00-3:00 PM

Location: EC Downtown YMCA ~ 700 Graham Ave

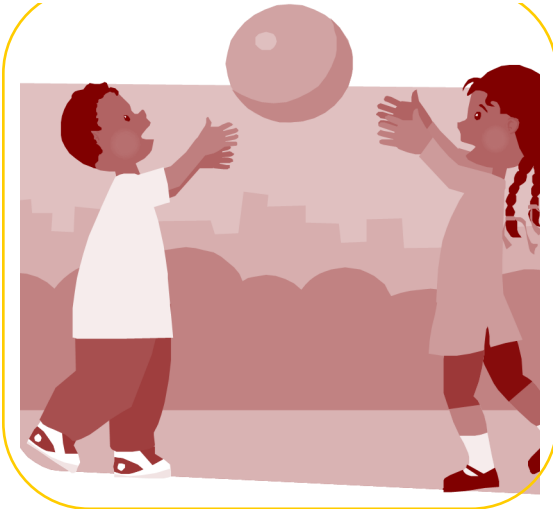
REGISTER NOW!

Must Call or Email to Register: 715-852-3607

jitaliano@ecasd.us

Your spot will be confirmed by ECASD Staff Member





Play N' Learn Play Group

Friday,
January 19th, 2024
9:30-11:00 am

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

Future Play N' Learns

February 16th

March 15th

April 19th

May 10th



Location:

Prairie Ridge EL School

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

Music, Movement, & Dance Class

Help your preschool aged kids stay active this winter with our exciting *Music, Movement, & Dance class*.

Monday, January 29th, 2024

5:00-7:00 PM

5-5:30 Dinner

5:30-6:00 Prop make n' take

6:00-7:00 Class

@ Prairie Ridge

3031 Epiphany Lane

Sponsored by ECASD Early Learning

Led by Ms. Katie Rhoten and Ms. Emily Monsrud, Prairie Ridge 4K & Head Start teachers. You and your child will learn some fun ways to move, explore music and try out a few dance moves!

Ways to Register:

Call 715-852-3676

Email nbrenner@ecasd.us



[Click Here](#)



District News

Open Enrollment is February 5 through April 30, 2024

What is Public School Open Enrollment?

Wisconsin's inter-district public school open enrollment program allows students and families who don't live in our district to open enroll into the Eau Claire Area School District.

Who May Participate?

Wisconsin residents in grades K-12 may apply to participate in open enrollment. Students in pre-kindergarten may participate in limited circumstances; parents should call the Executive Director of Business Services at 715-852-3010 to find out if their preschool-aged children qualify.

How and When May Parents Apply?

The regular open enrollment application window will be February 5, 2024, through April 30, 2024, for the 2024-2025 school year. Parents may submit online applications beginning February 5, 2024, at the Wisconsin Department of Instruction website at <https://dpi.wi.gov/open-enrollment>. Please call 715-852-3127 or email districtadministration@ecasd.us for more information.

Have you moved out of the district during the 2023-2024 school year?

If so, you must apply for a Tuition Waiver to continue attending the Eau Claire Area School District for the remainder of the 2023-2024 school year. Contact the Enrollment Office at 715-852-3127 or email districtadministration@ecasd.us for an application.

Students Currently Attending the ECASD Through a Tuition Waiver

Students who have moved outside of the district during the 2023-2024 school year and are currently attending school under a Tuition Waiver must apply for open enrollment during the regular application window, February 5, 2024, through April 30, 2024, to continue attending during the 2024-2025 school year.

Current Open Enrollment Students

Students currently attending the Eau Claire Area School District under the open enrollment law do not need to reapply.

Other Information

Students who move into the district after January 2024 and anticipate moving out of the district before the 2024-2025 school year will not be eligible for a Tuition Waiver. Students must apply for open enrollment during either the regular open enrollment or alternative open enrollment period to be eligible to attend the Eau Claire Area School District during the 2024-2025 school year.

School Placement

By completing an open enrollment application, you are applying to attend the Eau Claire Area School District. You have the opportunity to indicate which school your child would prefer to attend; however, the district will determine placement based on space availability.

Questions?

If you have any questions about open enrollment or the application process, please contact the Enrollment Office at 715-852-3127 or email districtadministration@ecasd.us.

ECASD—Family Resources



Are You Currently Homeless?



Families experiencing homelessness can contact ECASD Homeless Program Coordinator, Dani Graham (715) 852-3044 for help with transportation to school and other resources necessary for school, including referrals to community agencies. Assistance is confidential.



Food and Clothing Assistance



If you are in need of food, clothing or other resources ECASD Early Learning Program can help. We have children's clothing, snow boots, coats, hats, mittens, and snow pants. Prairie Ridge has a food pantry. Any family with a child enrolled in the ECASD Early Learning Program is welcome to take advantage of these resources.



For more information, call 715-852-3677

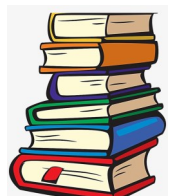


Did you know? Custodial parents or guardians of a student, who is under the age of 16, may choose to access their student's library account. ECASD students have an individual login account which allows them to check out both print books and eBooks. If you wish to get a copy of your student's login information, please contact the school librarian.

mmacleod@ecasd.us

Directions for accessing student library accounts may be found by going to the district homepage and clicking on Media Resources:

[Link](#)



Family Information-Mental Health

Take a look at The Feelings Thermometer: [OCMH Feelings Thermometer \(wi.gov\)](http://OCMH Feelings Thermometer (wi.gov)). This is a visual tool that helps kids and adults measure how you are doing emotionally and what steps you can take to shift your mood when things are getting tough. Learn more about our School Based Mental Health program at:

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

Self-Care with Kids

Try these activities to encourage self-care as a family.



Color Me Calm

1. Have all fold a paper in half, color one side their favorite color, the other their least favorite color.
2. Point to the favorite color, breathe in, imagining it filling you up.
3. Point to the least favorite color and breathe out, imagining all the bad thoughts leaving your body in a cloud of the bad color.

Muscle Makeover—another soothing activity you can do alongside your kiddos:

1. Sit upright in your chair.
2. Scrunch up your entire face like you smelled something stinky. Hold for 5 seconds and then let your entire face relax. Repeat.
3. Clench your fists as tight as you can and hold for 5 seconds, then release. Repeat.
4. Hold your arms out, stretching them as far as you can for 5 seconds. After 5 seconds, release your arms and let them hang by your sides. Repeat.
5. Push the soles of your feet into the floor as hard as you can, holding onto your chair for leverage. Hold for 5 seconds and release, relaxing your legs. Repeat.
6. Curl your toes as tight as you can, holding for 5 seconds. Release your toes to lie flat and relax. Repeat.

Bibliotherapy—here is how to make reading into a self-care activity:

1. Tell your kids how much you love a particular book (share your excitement for spending time with them). This will make them feel good and want to engage with you even more.
2. Read the book aloud, stopping along the way to do the following fun, expressive activities:
 - A. Make up a funny signal for everyone to show when you read a certain, repeating word.
 - B. Turn and Tell— what just happened in the story?
 - C. Get silly and act out the story during the read aloud.
 - D. Process the self-care themes in the book with the following discussion questions:
 - How does the character take care of her/himself?
 - How do people in our family take care of themselves to feel better?
 - What makes you feel better?
 - What did you like best and least about the story? Why?

Thank you for all you are doing for your children and for allowing us to be a part of their learning and growing. Know that you are doing a wonderful job and we are so thankful to be able to partner with you.

Happy New Year—Amanda Bennett, ECASD School Counselor



Here For You
EAU CLAIRE
AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT
ECASD School Based Mental Health

Nutrition Information

January

Keeping your family active during the winter months can be tricky, but with these creative ideas for 2-4 year olds you'll stay fit and have fun, even when storms and sub-zero chill keep you indoors

Move
More
Watch
Less

Dance Breaks
Even if you do not take dance lessons, turn up the radio and let loose. Dancing is a fun way to be active with your kids.

Create your "Active Space"
You can be active anywhere in your home, but it might be fun to set up a special place with activities you like to do. This could range from hanging a basketball hoop (socks in a laundry basket) on the wall or taping hopscotch to the floor.

Build an Obstacle Course
Make an obstacle course inside or outside. Use different household items like carpets and laundry baskets to jump or zig zag around. Create a path or have them jump over obstacles. Use blankets over chairs to crawl under.

Go Sledding or Tubing
Find a hill that requires walking up, and your kids are sure to have a blast while getting in exercise (without even realizing it!)

Eau Claire County WIC
Find out if WIC can help your family be healthy!
Visit: wic.echhealthdepartment.org
Or call: 715-839-5051

Make Every Bite Count

Fresh Grapefruit Juice Smoothie

- * 1 1/2 cups freshly squeezed grapefruit juice
 - * 8 strawberries
 - * 2 medium bananas, sliced
 - * 1 (8 oz.) container strawberry banana yogurt
 - * 2 tbs honey
 - * 1 cup crushed ice
- Directions: Put all ingredients in a blender, and blend well.

Grapefruit

Fruit
of the
Month



Broccoli



Veggie
of the
Month

Broccoli Alfredo

- Ingredients**
- 4 cups of broccoli, cooked
 - *4 cups whole wheat pasta, cooked
 - *2 cups of milk
 - *1 cup of parmesan cheese
 - *1 tsp basil
 - *1/2 tsp garlic powder
 - *2 tbs cornstarch
- Directions:**
- 1) Heat milk over medium heat and then add basil and garlic powder. When hot, add Parmesan cheese.
 - 2) Mix cornstarch with 2 or 3 Tbsp of milk and add to hot mixture. Heat until thickened.
 - 3) Pour mixture over pasta and broccoli. Serve.

Make Every Sip Count

Drink Water Your Way

1. Allow your child to choose a special container to drink their healthy beverage.
2. Sip your drinks with a cool straw!
3. Add a garnish to your glass such as a citrus slice on the edge or piece of fruit.



This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer. This material was funded by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program - SNAP. The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) provides nutrition assistance to people with low income. It can help you buy nutritious foods for a better diet. To find out more, contact your local Fit Family Project.

CROCKPOT RECIPE CHICKEN & DUMPLINGS



1 CAN OF CHICKEN



2 CANS OF CREAM OF CHICKEN SOUP



1 CAN OF DRAINED MIXED VEGETABLES



1 CAN OF REFRIDGERATOR BISCUITS IN PIECES



HOW:

PLACE CROCKPOT ON A HEAT SAFE SURFACE

DRAIN MIXED VEGETABLES




DUMP CHICKEN, CREAM OF CHICKEN SOUP AND CAN OF VEGETABLES INTO CROCKPOT AND COOK FOR 2.5 HOURS

ADD BROKEN UP BISCUITS TO THE TOP AND COOK UNTIL BISCUITS ARE DONE (30 min)

SERVES 3-5

Safety Information

Wisconsin child passenger safety

Type of seat	Wisconsin law	Safest practice
Rear-facing Car Seat 	Children must ride in a rear-facing car seat until they are 1 year old and weigh 20 pounds.	Children should ride in a rear-facing car seat until at least the age of 2. Keep children rear facing as long as they are within the height and weight requirements for the car seat.
Forward-facing Car Seat 	Children must ride in a forward-facing car seat with a harness until they are 4 years old and weigh 40 pounds.	Children should ride in a forward-facing car seat with a harness as long as they are within the height and weight requirements for the car seat.
Booster Seat 	Children must ride in a booster seat until they are 8 years old or weigh 80 pounds or are 4 feet 9 inches tall (4'9").	Children should ride in a booster seat until they are tall enough to sit on the vehicle seat without slouching, and the seat belt fits snugly across the top of the thighs and across the shoulder.
Seat Belt 	Children must be restrained in a seat belt when they outgrow the requirements of a booster seat.	Children should ride using a lap and shoulder belt until they have outgrown their car or booster seat.
Back Seat	Children required to ride in a rear-facing or forward-facing car seat must be restrained in the back seat.	Children under 13 years of age should ride in the back seat using a lap and shoulder belt.

How do I keep my child warm and safe in a car seat?

CORRECT:



- ✓ Child is wearing thin layers.
- ✓ Harness straps are buckled and tight.
- ✓ Put coats or blankets **over** the buckled and tight harness.

INCORRECT:



- ✗ Child is wearing a bulky jacket.
- ✗ Bulky jackets make you think the straps are really tight, but the straps are really too loose.
- ✗ Jackets or blankets are between the harness straps and the child.

Always properly buckle children aged 12 and under in the back seat!



Using the correct car seat or booster seat can be a lifesaver. Make sure your child is always buckled in an age- and size-appropriate car seat or booster seat.



REAR-FACING CAR SEAT

Birth until age 2-4

Buckle children in a rear-facing car seat with a harness until they reach the maximum weight or height limit of their car seat. Keep children rear-facing as long as possible. Never place a rear-facing car seat in the front seat. Front passenger air bags can injure or kill young children in a crash.



FORWARD-FACING CAR SEAT

After outgrowing rear-facing car seat and until at least age 5

When children outgrow their rear-facing car seat, they should be buckled in a forward-facing car seat with a harness until they reach the maximum weight or height limit of their car seat.



BOOSTER SEAT

After outgrowing forward-facing car seat and until seat belt fits properly

When children outgrow their forward-facing car seat, they should be buckled in a booster seat until the seat belt fits properly without a booster seat. Proper seat belt fit usually occurs when children are age 9-12.



SEAT BELT

When seat belt fits properly without a booster seat

Children no longer need to use a booster seat when the seat belt fits them properly. A seat belt fits properly when the lap belt is across the upper thighs (not the stomach) and the shoulder belt is across the center of the shoulder and chest (not on the neck/face or off the shoulder).

Keep children age 12 and younger properly buckled in the back seat.

*Recommended age ranges for each seat type vary to account for differences in child growth and weight/height limits of car seats and booster seats. Use the car seat or booster seat manual to check for important information about installation, the seat weight and height limits, and proper seat use.

Child passenger safety recommendations: American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) 2018.

www.cdc.gov/transportationsafety/child_passenger_safety



CS326166A

Family Information-Health

Tips for Families from the National Center on Early Childhood Health and Wellness



HEALTHY BREATHING AT HOME



Help Prevent Asthma by Keeping Your Home Smoke Free!!

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Children should be in places that are smoke-free, all of the time.

Secondhand and thirdhand smoke are triggers for asthma, but you can avoid them.

Cigarette smoke and e-cigarette smoke contain chemicals, including some that can cause cancer.

WHAT ARE E-CIGARETTES OR VAPES?

E-cigarettes produce vapor-containing flavored liquids and nicotine. The vapor is not harmless and can damage children's growing up. Studies being conducted currently, are bringing awareness of increased realization of the adverse effects of inhaled oils.

WHAT IS ASTHMA?

Asthma is a condition that causes swelling and narrowing of the airways. Asthma can cause chest pains and tiredness, and make people wheeze and cough.

WHAT IS SECONDHAND SMOKE?

Second hand smoke is tobacco smoke in the air. It is the smoke that people breathe in from cigarettes, e-cigarettes or vapes, pipes, and cigars.

WHAT IS THIRDHAND SMOKE?

Third hand smoke is smoke that stays on surfaces and fabric even after someone finishes smoking.

THINGS YOU CAN DO TO HELP YOUR CHILD

The most important thing you can do to help a child with asthma is to have a smoke-free home.

Secondhand smoke is never safe. Secondhand smoke can cause infections.

Because children are smaller and still growing, secondhand smoke is even more dangerous for them than it is for adults.

Children are in the hospital for asthma more often than for most other health problems.

Children with asthma miss more days of school than children without asthma.

If a child has asthma, breathing in secondhand smoke can cause more severe asthma attacks.

Being near secondhand smoke can cause children without asthma to have asthma-like symptoms.

Chemicals from tobacco smoke (thirdhand smoke) may stay in the air and on your clothes for days or weeks after a cigarette is put out.

Thirdhand smoke is never safe. Your pediatrician can help you or others quit smoking.



NATIONAL CENTER ON
Early Childhood Health and Wellness