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Erie Early Childhood Cntr.
Merrill School
Northside School
Prophetstown Elementary
Tampico Elementary
Wallace Education Center

Administered By

Whiteside County Regional
Superintendent's Office

Funded By

State Board of Education
Erie Dist. #1
Prophetstown Dist. #3
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Whiteside County

PARENTS AS TEACHERS

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Sterling, IL 61081

Office Phone 625-1495
Library Warm Line 625-6331

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Why do we offer home visits to enrolled families?

Whiteside County Parents As Teachers is based on the belief that parents are their child's first and most influential teachers. It is our goal to help you give your child the best possible start in life.

Personal visits individualize the program for your family. During these visits, you and your home visitor can discuss child development and child rearing issues that come up at various ages. Your parent educator will help you know what to expect as your child grows so that as you observe your child's accomplishments, you can appreciate how significant they are. She will try to answer your questions or find the answers for you. Each time she visits, she will share an age-appropriate activity and book with you and your child. She will bring written materials about what to look for in your child's development and things you can do to encourage their growth.

What do we ask of you?

Please be there for your scheduled visit. If you or your child are sick, please call your parent educator and let her know. She will be glad to reschedule the visit whenever possible.

Please provide a quiet place to visit. This will enable you and your parent educator to hear your child clearly and concentrate on the discussion.

NEW Early Bird Prekindergarten Classrooms Opening in Sterling and Rock Falls Elementary District 13

Rock Falls Elementary District 13 and Sterling Unit 5 are offering FREE preschool for children ages 3 to 5. Some classes have already begun, but there are still openings available in these, and new classes are set to start soon. Sterling will also be offering a bilingual prekindergarten class.

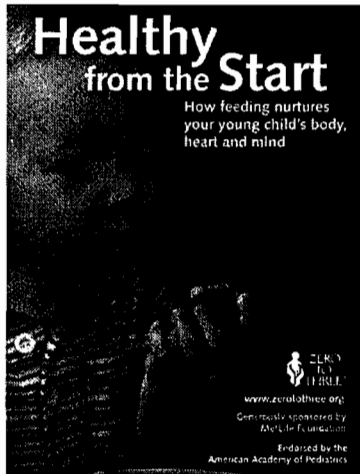
The Sterling classes are located at Wallace Education Center and in Rock Falls at Merrill School.

For more information or to set up a screening for your child, please call Kim Burge at 625-3000.



Welcome Prekindergarten Families

If you have a child enrolled in one of the prekindergarten programs in Whiteside County, you are invited to attend Parents As Teachers group meetings and borrow items from our toy lending libraries. We will keep you informed of activities through this newsletter. You may call Pat at 625-1495 if you have any questions.



Healthy Eating Tips For Infants And Toddlers

Mealtimes are rich opportunities to connect with your child and support his or her overall healthy development.

(NAPS)—Feeding is one of a parent’s most important jobs. It helps children grow healthy and strong. But meal and snack times also give parents a chance to help their children feel important and loved; understood and respected; and learn to trust that others will care for them. Here are some tips about how to nurture a child’s overall healthy development through feeding from the experts at ZERO TO THREE, a nonprofit child development organization:

- **Remember: Meals are about more than food.** They are a time to connect with your child. Talk with her and don’t let her eat alone.
- **Create routines around mealtime.** Routines help children feel loved and secure. You might say a blessing or share something about your day before each meal.
- **Establish regular meal and snack times beginning when your child is 9 to 12 months old.** This helps children learn to link their feelings of hunger with eating at regular times across the day.
- **Offer three to four healthy food choices at each meal—among those your child likes.** Research shows that children will choose a healthy diet when they are offered a selection of healthy foods.
- **Don’t force your baby or toddler to eat.** This often results in children refusing the food and eating less.
- **Offer your child a healthy snack between meals if you think he is hungry—**so if he doesn’t eat much at a meal, he doesn’t have to wait long to eat again.
- **Limit juice to no more than four to six ounces a day.** Juice has lots of sugar. Add water to the juice or offer fresh fruit instead.
- **Be flexible about letting little ones get up from the table when they are done.** Babies and toddlers can’t sit for long. Plan for three meals a day of about 10 to 20 minutes and two to three snacks of about five to 15 minutes.
- **Don’t give up on new foods.** You may have to offer your child a new food 10 to 15 times before he will eat it. Encourage your child to touch the new food, lick and taste it. Let him see you eat it.
- **Turn off the TV (computers, etc.) at mealtimes.** The television can distract children from eating and takes time away from talking as a family.
- **If you are concerned about your child’s weight or activity level, talk to your child’s health care provider.**

To order copies of the full booklet “Healthy From The Start” and for more information on feeding and other parenting topics, visit www.zerotothree.org.



Consejos Alimenticios Saludables Para Bebés y Niños Pequeños

Las comidas son oportunidades ricas para conectarse con su hijo o hija y apoyarlos en su desarrollo en general.

(NAPSM)—La alimentación es una de las labores más importantes de los padres. Ayuda a que los niños crezcan sanos y fuertes. La hora de las comidas le dan a los padres la oportunidad de ayudar a sus hijos a sentirse importantes y amados; comprendidos y respetados; y a aprender a confiar en que los demás se preocuparán por ellos. Aquí le brindamos algunas sugerencias sobre cómo contribuir a un desarrollo saludable de un niño a través de la alimentación, de parte de los expertos de ZERO TO THREE, una organización sin fines de lucro dedicada al desarrollo infantil:

- **Recuerde: La hora de comer es un momento para conectarse con su hijo.** Hable con él y no deje que coma solo.
- **Cree rutinas en torno a la hora de comer.** Las rutinas ayudan a los niños a sentirse seguros y amados.
- **Cuando su hijo tenga entre 9 y 12 meses, establezca horarios habituales para las comidas y los refrigerios.** Esto ayuda a que los niños aprendan a relacionar su sensación de hambre con el acto de comer.
- **Ofrezca entre tres y cuatro opciones de alimentos a la hora de cada comida.** Las investigaciones demuestran que los niños elegirán una dieta saludable cuando se les ofrezca una selección de alimentos saludables.
- **No obligue a su bebé o niño pequeño a comer.** Esto suele ocasionar que los niños rechacen los alimentos y coman menos.
- **Ofrezca a su hijo un refrigerio saludable entre las comidas si usted cree que tiene hambre;** de modo que, si no come lo suficiente en una comida, no tiene que esperar mucho tiempo antes de volver a comer.
- **Limite el jugo a no más de cuatro a seis onzas por día.** El jugo tiene un alto contenido de azúcar. Añada agua al jugo u ofrezca frutas frescas en su lugar.
- **Permita que los pequeños se levanten de la mesa cuando hayan terminado.** Los bebés y los niños pequeños no pueden permanecer sentados mucho tiempo. Planee tres comidas por día de aproximadamente 10 a 20 minutos cada una, y entre dos y tres refrigerios de aproximadamente 5 a 15 minutos.
- **No se rinda, puede que deba ofrecer a su hijo un alimento nuevo por lo menos 10 a 15 veces** antes de que éste lo acepte. Anime a su hijo a tocar, y probar el alimento nuevo.
- **Apague el televisor a la hora de comer.** La televisión puede distraer a los niños de comer, y priva de tiempo para hablar en familia.
- **Si usted está preocupado por el peso o nivel de actividad de su hijo, hable con el proveedor de atención médica de su hijo.**

Para ordenar copias del folleto completo, Saludable Desde el Comienzo y para mayor información sobre alimentación y otros tópicos para padres, visite www.zerotothree.org.

Young Children's Mental Health: What Is Essential?



When we think of children's health, we usually think of their physical well-being. "Are they active and fit? Do they get sick often?" Mental health is just as important as physical health. "Mental health" includes how we feel about ourselves and other people, and how we cope with life. Mental health in young children is related to their social and emotional development.

Caregivers, teachers, and family members all have roles to play in fostering young children's mental health.

- ★ For good mental health, young children need—
 - safe places to live and play
 - the right amount of healthy food to eat
 - love, care, and comfort from caregivers and family members
 - plenty of time for active play with other children
 - time to relax and follow their own interests
 - caregivers and teachers who are supportive and encouraging
 - experiences that help them feel confident and capable
 - time to express and understand their own emotions
 - guidance and discipline that are firm but not harsh
- ★ A child's mental health is probably good if he or she *usually*—
 - seems to feel safe and comfortable rather than fearful
 - shows a range of emotions, both positive and negative
 - is interested in other people's well-being and treats them with respect
 - treats animals with kindness
 - can "bounce back" from disappointments or frustrations
 - can show anger without hurting self or others
 - chooses to act in ways that are safe
 - uses positive ways to get attention
 - stands up for himself or herself
 - gets involved in activities at home and in the classroom
 - is willing to try new things (activities, foods, friendships, etc.)
 - will persist when trying a challenging task
 - can express feelings to some trusted person, instead of keeping them "bottled up"
- ★ What factors might contribute to a young child's mental health problems?
 - illness or genetic factors
 - exposure to lead, mercury, or other environmental poisons
 - abuse or neglect
 - natural disaster that disrupts family life
 - exposure to violence in the family or community
 - difficulties related to poverty
 - serious family problems, including divorce or death of a loved one
- ★ For related Web resources, see "Young Children's Mental Health: What Is Essential?" at <http://illinoisearlylearning.org/tips.htm>.

Any opinions, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed in this tip sheet are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Illinois State Board of Education



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Illinois State Board of Education

For more tip sheets on other topics, please go to <http://illinoisearlylearning.org>

5/06

La salud mental de los niños pequeños: puntos esenciales



La salud de los niños frecuentemente nos hace pensar en su bienestar físico. "¿Son activos y tienen una buena forma física? ¿Se enferman con frecuencia?" Así como la salud física, la salud mental es igualmente importante. La 'salud mental' abarca nuestros sentimientos acerca de nosotros mismos y para con otras personas, y cómo lidiamos con la vida. La salud mental de los niños pequeños está relacionada con su desarrollo social y emocional.

Tanto los cuidadores y maestros como los familiares desempeñan un papel en estimular la buena salud mental de los niños pequeños.

✧ Para gozar de una buena salud mental, los niños pequeños necesitan:

- lugares seguros donde vivir y jugar
- la cantidad adecuada de alimentos saludables
- amor, cariño y consuelo ofrecido por cuidadores y familiares
- mucho tiempo para jugar activamente con otros niños
- tiempo para relajarse y seguir sus propios intereses
- cuidadores y maestros que den apoyo y ánimo
- experiencias que los ayuden a sentirse confiados y capaces
- tiempo para expresar y comprender sus propios sentimientos
- guía y disciplina que sean firmes pero no muy severas

✧ Un niño probablemente goza de una buena salud mental si *usualmente*:

- parece sentirse seguro y cómodo en vez de tener miedo
- manifiesta una variedad de sentimientos, tanto positivos como negativos
- se interesa por el bienestar de otras personas y las trata con respeto
- trata con bondad a los animales
- puede recuperarse después de experimentar desilusiones o frustraciones
- puede expresar el enojo sin lastimarse a sí mismo ni a otros
- decide portarse de maneras seguras
- llama la atención de maneras positivas
- se defiende y no deja que otros lo traten injustamente
- participa en actividades en casa y en la clase
- está dispuesto a tener experiencias nuevas (intentar desarrollar actividades, probar alimentos, entablar amistad, etc.)
- persiste cuando intenta hacer una tarea que lo desafía
- puede expresar sus sentimientos con una persona de confianza, en vez de mantenerlos 'encerrados'

✧ ¿Cuáles factores pueden contribuir a que un niño pequeño tenga problemas de salud mental?

- enfermedades o factores genéticos
- exposición a plomo, mercurio u otras sustancias tóxicas en el ambiente
- abuso o descuido
- desastres naturales que perturban la vida de la familia
- exposición a violencia en la familia o la comunidad
- dificultades relacionadas con la pobreza
- problemas graves en la familia, entre ellos el divorcio o la muerte de un ser querido

English Title: Young Children's Mental Health: What Is Essential?



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Para más páginas de consejos acerca de otros temas, favor de visitar el: <http://illinoisearlylearning.org>

December Parent and Child Activities

For all Parents As Teachers and Prekindergarten Families

CHRISTMAS WORKSHOP AND STORY TIME

Date: Tuesday, December 5
Time: 6 - 7 p.m.
Place: Merrill School Gym, Rock Falls

Bring the family for an evening of Christmas fun. We will have a variety of crafts for you and your children to make together. Refreshments will be served.

Sauk Valley Story Spinners will be here to entertain all with a holiday story. Stories are a great way for children to learn to use their imagination and gain skills in listening. As parents, telling stories is a great way to help your child develop their first literacy skills.

Hosted by Sue Austin, Linda Berentes, Sandy Davis, Mary Etnyre, and Deb Jacobs.

FIESTA DE NAVIDAD

Cuando: el 5 de diciembre (el martes)
Hora: 6 - 7 por la noche
Donde: Escuela de Merrill, Rock Falls
En el gimnasio

Vengan todos a la fiesta de Navidad para leeremos un cuento, comer galletas, tomar chocolate, y leche. ¡El divertido es para toda la familia!

Anfitriona: Devorah Jacobs.



TRIM YOUR TREE

Date: Friday, December 8
Time: 9 - 10 a.m.
Place: Prophetstown Elementary School
Prekindergarten Room

A Christmas tree becomes beautiful when you put on the trimmings. We will have a variety of ornaments for children to make and take home to make your tree special.

Hosted by Laura McCullough.

TRIM YOUR TREE

Date: Friday, December 8
Time: 11:00 - 12:00 noon
Place: Northside School Prekindergarten Room
Morrison

A Christmas tree becomes beautiful when you put on the trimmings. We will have a variety of ornaments for children to make and take home to make your tree special.

Hosted by Laura McCullough and Morrison Prekindergarten Program.






LAPSIT: PUPPIES

Date: Thursday, December 14
Time: 10:00 - 10:30 a.m.
Place: Rock Falls Public Library
1007 Seventh Avenue

Lapsit is a playtime designed especially for parents and children ages 1 - 3. You and your toddler will enjoy songs, finger plays, a simple activity, and time to share books.

Sponsored by the Rock Falls Public Library.

December Toy Lending Library Hours

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					<p>1</p> <p>Wallace Library 9:30-10:30 a.m.</p> <p>Wallace Gym 10:30-11:30 a.m.</p>	<p>2</p>
<p>3</p>	<p>4</p>	<p>5</p> <p>Merrill Library 9:30-11:30 a.m.</p>	<p>6</p>	<p>7</p>	<p>8</p> <p>Wallace Library 9:30-10:30 a.m.</p> <p>Wallace Gym 10:30-11:30 a.m.</p>	<p>9</p>
<p>10</p>	<p>11</p>	<p>12</p> <p>Merrill Library 9:30-11:30 a.m.</p>	<p>13</p>	<p>14</p>	<p>15</p> <p>Wallace Library 9:30-10:30 a.m.</p> <p>Wallace Gym 10:30-11:30 a.m.</p>	<p>16</p> 
<p>17</p>	<p>18</p>	<p>19</p> <p>Library Closed for the Holidays</p>	<p>20</p>	<p>21</p>	<p>22</p> <p>Library Closed for the Holidays</p>	<p>23</p>
<p>24</p> 	<p>25</p>	<p>26</p> <p>Library Closed for the Holidays</p>	<p>27</p>	<p>28</p>	<p>29</p> <p>Library Closed for the Holidays</p>	<p>30</p>
<p>31</p>						



Oh, the weather outside is frightful...

When the schools are closed due to bad weather, all Parents As Teachers activities will be cancelled, and the toy lending libraries will be closed. If you should have questions about any of our scheduled activities, please call your parent educator at home or Pat at 625-1495.

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