



Early Intervention Child & Family Connections #15 April 2021 Family Newsletter

Will/Grundy/Kankakee/LaSalle Counties

Happy Spring!

At this time Early Intervention is continuing with Limited In-Person services for children and families. See below for more information on Live Video Visits and on the important safety protocols for In-person Early Intervention visits, as well as information on the COVID-19 vaccine. If you know someone who is concerned about their child's development please refer them to our office or share this resource on [making a referral to Early Intervention](#).

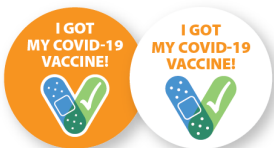


Please enjoy the information below on fun activities and support resources for all families. Don't miss [Star Net's Family Super Saturday](#) on April 24th! This month we have included information on some April awareness days and holidays! April is...

- [National Child Abuse Prevention Month](#). Which celebrates healthy, happy childhoods while raising awareness that all children deserve to grow up in nurturing, safe homes. Check out these [20 second parenting tip videos on YouTube](#) from Prevent Child Abuse Illinois.
- [National Autism Acceptance Month](#) founded by the Autism Society. Learn more about their "Celebrate Differences" campaign. Designed to build a better awareness of the signs, symptoms, and realities of autism and the shift from "awareness" to "acceptance".
- [More Move Month](#) sponsored by the American Heart Association to promote regular physical activity to support good health!
- April 10th was [National Siblings Day](#) - [SIBS \(Supporting Illinois Brothers & Sisters\)](#) is an organization that provides support to siblings of people with disabilities in IL.
- Earth Day is April 22nd - Check out [50 Earth Day Activities for kids](#) from [tinkerlab.com](#)

-The staff at CFC 15

Resource Spotlight: COVID-19 Vaccine Information and EI



All Illinois residents age 16 and over are eligible for the Covid vaccines.

For those interested in learning more about the COVID-19 vaccine and its availability in your area, go to <https://coronavirus.illinois.gov/s/>.

You may also access information on the vaccine from your local Health Department.

- [Will County Health Department](#)
- [Grundy County Health Department](#)
- [Kankakee County Health Department](#)
- [LaSalle County Health Department](#)

Click here for more information on the [State of Illinois Vaccination Plan from the Illinois Department of Public Health](#). For information on the safety and efficacy of the vaccine go to <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/index.html>.

Important Information on Early Intervention In-Person Visits

The Illinois Early Intervention Program is continuing with **limited** in-person visits for families in Early Intervention. **As of April 1st, Early Intervention Providers may see no more than 20 families for in person EI services.** According to IDHS (Illinois Department of Human Services), "Families/caregivers and EI Providers must all agree to in-person services only after a discussion about the ability to successfully provide services through LVV and Phone Consultation has occurred. If the team feels that successful implementation of the strategies created by the team cannot be achieved through coaching the family via LVV or phone, then the service can be delivered in person. Services should be delivered via LVV and Phone Consultation to the maximum extent possible during the ongoing pandemic."

It is very important that families are aware of and agree to the recommended safety protocols for In-person visits to occur. Please review the [In-person checklists for Early Intervention providers and for families](#) to help determine if it is safe to have an in-person visit. **If you or a member of your family is sick with any of the symptoms on the checklist please contact your Early Intervention providers and cancel your in-person visits.**

Video Visits continue to be a great opportunity for parents to learn from their EI providers how to help their child learn and grow each day! For information on Live Video visits go to the [Illinois Early Intervention Clearinghouse](#).

If you have questions about whether Live Video visits can work for you and your child please reach out to your service coordinator and view the following videos on youtube, from the [ETCA \(Early Childhood Technical Assistance\) Center](#). In these videos real parents share their experiences with using Live video visits for their children in Early Intervention.

- [A Family's Story: Virtual Home Visits with Ares' Family](#)
- [A Family's Story: Virtual Home Visits with Grayson's Family](#)
- [A Family's Story: Virtual Home Visits with Zander's Family](#)
- [La historia de una familia: Visitas virtuales al hogar con la familia de Liam](#)

Click here to be taken to [ETCA Center youtube videos](#) to view all their videos.



You are invited to take part in a research study conducted through Rush University titled "Experiences with Live Video Visits," about how families are experiencing the shift to live video visits. If you're willing to participate, we will ask you questions about your experiences with live video visits. The survey takes about 10 minutes. Your responses can help shape the future of early intervention! <https://redcap.link/FamilyLVVs>

If you have any questions about this survey, please email: Lauren_Little@rush.edu

Está invitado a participar en un estudio de investigación llamado "Experiencias de las familias sobre Teleterapia", acerca de cómo las familias están experimentando el cambio hacia las Teleterapias. Si está dispuesto a participar, le haremos preguntas sobre sus experiencias con Teleterapia. La encuesta toma aproximadamente 10

minutos. ¡Sus respuestas pueden ayudar a dar forma al futuro de la intervención temprana!<https://redcap.link/Teletherapies>

Do you know someone who needs help with groceries?

[My Pantry Express](#) is an online food pantry that gives those in need of food assistance the opportunity to shop once a week for a variety of free grocery items. Items can be picked up from 3 locations in Will County. Please click the link for details.

No income or residency restrictions apply.

To locate a food pantry or soup kitchen near you go to the [Northern Illinois Food Bank](#) and enter your zip code. The Northern Illinois Food Bank has a list online of [upcoming Mobil Food Pantries and Pop up Markets listed monthly by county](#). **Mobile pantries are listed in orange; pop-up markets are listed in green**. Both types of distributions are currently using a drive-thru model. **Everyone is welcome – no ID or referral is needed.**

April dates in Will County include:

- 4/17 9am-12pm Joliet Junior College, 1215 Houbolt Rd., Joliet
- 4/20 10am-11:30am Crest Hill Branch Library, 20670 Len Kubinski Dr., Crest Hill
- 4/26 1pm-2:30pm Joliet Central HS, 201 E. Jefferson St., Joliet,
- 4/27 4:30pm-6pm Faith Church, 201 E Church Rd., Beecher
- 4/29 5pm-6:30pm Bolingbrook Church, 301 E Boughton Rd., Bolingbrook,
- 4/30 4pm-5:30pm Mt. Olive Baptist Church, 1710 Carey St, Joliet

Kankakee County April dates:

- 4/17 9am-12pm Olivet - Fortin Villa ROTC building, 615 S. Main St., Bourbonnais
- 4/13 4pm-5:30pm Herscher Christian Church, 30 E. Tobey Dr., Herscher,
- 4/23 10am-11:30am St. Joseph Church, 211 N Center Ave., Bradley

Grundy County April dates:

- 4/19 4pm-5:30pm St. Lawrence Catholic Church, 135 E. Rice Rd., South Wilmington
- 4/17 9am-10:30am Goodwill, 414 Arthur Avenue, Morris
- 4/26 5pm-6:30pm Village Christian Church, 8965 South Bell Road, Minooka

[Find Food IL Community Food map](#) allows you to search by zip code for Food pantries, School meal sites, grocery stores, and SNAP & WIC offices.

To get information or help with your [SNAP \(supplemental nutrition assistance program\) application](#) click the link or call 844-600-SNAP.

Will County has created [Food Access Maps](#) where you can locate food pantries, micro pantries, mobile food pantries, and community gardens in Will and some of the surrounding counties.



Fun Family Activities | April 2021

The warmer Spring weather is a great time to get outside and play! Many places are beginning to host more in-person events! Local libraries and park districts are great resources for fun and educational activities and events for young children.

In person events

[Dupage Children's Museum](#) is offering private playtime sessions for



pre-registered guests. Please see their website for details.

[Kidsworld Children's Museum](#) in Frankfort has in person open play times, advanced sign up is required.

[Discovery Center Museum](#) in Rockford is open and reservations are required.

[The Shedd Aquarium](#) is open and tickets must be reserved in advanced.

[Lincoln Park](#) and [Brookfield Zoo](#) are open! Face coverings & advanced registration required.

[Cosley Zoo in Wheaton](#) is open with advanced registration.

[Sky Zone in Joliet](#) is open and has a Little Leapers program for kids age 7 and under on Saturdays from 10-11am. See their [calendar](#) for details.

[Field Museum](#) is open with advanced ticket purchase

[The Art Institute](#) is open with advanced ticket purchase

[Starved Rock State Park](#) is a great place to get outside and enjoy nature!

Virtual Events

- [StarNet's Family Super Saturday](#) is April 24th! This FREE online statewide event has 3 two hour sessions for the whole family on mindfulness, processing big emotions, healing, and journaling. Click the link to register for each session.
- **Michaels Crafts** stores are hosting free online events for children and adults. Check out their [Free Kids club zoom events for Mini Makers age 3 and up](#)
- [Barnes and Noble has a you tube channel](#) with virtual kids story times and many adult book club virtual events as well.
- [CSOtv](#) is your at-home access to the **Chicago Symphony Orchestra**, with many free on-demand digital performances that can be streamed on your computer, tablet, smartphone or smart TV. Go to <https://cso.org/csotv/guide/> to see available episodes for kids and adults!

For fun Events and parenting tips in **LaSalle County** go to the [Illinois Valley Area Parent References](#) Facebook page.

For more information on fun family events in the Chicagoland area go to [Chicago Parent.com](#) and [Family Time Magazine](#). Chicago Parent has an article on "[22 Fun Things to do with Kids this Weekend in Chicago and the Suburbs](#)".

[Will County Forest Preserve District has an events calendar](#) with virtual & in-person events for children and families. Don't miss the...

- [Sensory Friendly Playdate](#) on April 18th at Four Rivers Environmental Center in Channahon
- [Wonderkids Webinar on Bees!](#) on April 25th for ages 2-5 years.

Many **libraries** and **park districts** are hosting virtual story times and events for children and families. Please check out your local library and park district website for details. [Joliet Public library has virtual story times](#) for kids age 1-5.

Here a a list of websites for some of the park districts in our area:

- [Joliet Park District](#)
- [Bolingbrook Park District](#)
- [Romeoville Park District](#)
- [Lemont Park District](#) has a community garage sale on April 23rd-25th
- [Mokena Park District](#)
- [Frankfort Park District](#) has a free family Earth Day Celebration on April 24th
- [New Lenox Park District](#) click to view upcoming special events.
- [Plainfield Park District](#) click to check out their upcoming special events!
- [Naperville Park District](#)
- [Channahon Park District](#) click to check out their upcoming special events!
- [Crete Park District](#)
- [Braidwood Park District](#)
- [Wilmington Island Park District](#)
- [Godley Park District](#) has up to date info on events and programs on their [facebook page](#)
- [Bourbonnais Township Park District](#) The [Exploration station](#) is open with advanced registration. Sessions are 10am-1pm and 2pm-5pm Wed-Saturday. Register online!
- [Momence Park District](#)

Local **Special Recreation Associations** are continuing to host virtual events and beginning to host in-person events. See below for websites to some area Special Recreation Associations:

- [River Valley Special Rec Association](#) in Bradley
- [Lincolnway Special Rec Association](#) in New Lenox - Check out their [Spring 2021 brochure](#)

- [Northern Will County Special Rec Association](#) (NWCSRA) in Romeoville has a [Spring 2021 brochure](#) They have a sensory room that is available to reserve for individual use located at 10 Montrose in Romeoville. Check out this great resource! Email [Gina Petkus](#) for info.
- [SRJC](#) - Special Recreation of Joliet and Channahon
- [The NWSRA in Rolling Meadows is hosting a virtual sibshop on April 30th](#) 4:30-5:15pm. Sibshops are a way for siblings of children with disabilities to meet other siblings for peer support and fun! This month they are also hosting a parent meeting via zoom during the program. Click the link to be taken to the website or contact ljevaney@nwsra.org

Will-Grundy Counties



Family Support Resources For All Areas

The Illinois [Early Intervention Clearinghouse](#) has a **device loan program for families in EI**. Available technology includes:

- iPad with a data plan (i.e., you are requesting a device for live video visits that also has an Internet plan)
- iPad without a data plan (i.e., you are requesting a device for live video visits; you already have Internet access)
- Hotspot (i.e., you have a device for live video visits but require Internet access)

Quantities are limited. **To apply to receive the technology, please complete the [Device Loan Request Form](#).**



[The Arc of IL has an Assistive Technology Consumer Stipend Program](#) which during the pandemic will provide funds to to pay for the assistive technology (Ipad, tablets, laptops etc) needed to attend virtual events and meetings for people with developmental disabilities and their family members. Click to [download the application](#). Any questions? Call 815.464.1832 ext 1010. Completed applications can be submitted online or faxed to 815.464.5292

Parent/Family Support Programs:

Does your child with a disability have a sibling between the ages of 3-10 years old? If so [S.I.B.S. Network of IL](#) (Supporting Illinois Brothers and Sisters) has a great resource to support these special siblings called sibsacks! A Sibsack ([sibsack.com](#)) is a backpack that comes with helpful and fun items that have been developed to help you talk with your child about their sibling's disability. Please contact your service coordinator or email mvalerius@svcincofil.org if you are interested in receiving a sibsack.

Will County is hosting a [curbside Family Support Day](#) for families in need on May 15th at Singleton Elementary School in Joliet. Pre-registration is required. See link for details.

Catholic Charities of Joliet is hosting a [Breastfeeding Mom's Group "Lunch Hour Lactation"](#) every Wednesday at Noon on zoom. As well as a [Support Group for Parenting Teens](#) that will meet monthly on zoom beginning March 31st. Click the links for information on these groups.

[ACES 5 week FREE parenting program](#) will be offered beginning April 16th from 10-11 am via zoom. Please click on the link to view the program flyer or call 815-942-6389 to register.

[Institute for Parents of Preschool Children who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing](#) is a Free 2 week virtual program June 7-18th for parents of children 0-7 who have a significant hearing loss. Click the link to view the brochure. For more information Contact the Division of Specialized Care for Children at (800) 322-3722 or dscinstitute@uic.edu.

[Starved Rock Regional Center for Therapy & Child Development](#) in Ottawa IL is offering FREE developmental screenings for children ages 6 weeks to 3 years of age. Screenings last 30 minutes and include playing with your child and asking you simple questions. Call 815-434-0857 to schedule a screening at the Ottawa center.

[Erikson Center for Children and families](#) is offering in-person and virtual mental health services to parents, caregivers, and children focusing on prenatal to 5 years old. Services can be provided in both English and Spanish. For more information contact their intake line at 312-709-0508 for English and 312-934-6446 for Spanish.

[The Jump Start homevisiting Parental Training Program](#) is a parenting enrichment program offered in Will, Grundy & Kankakee counties. It is a free program that offers parent education and family support services throughout pregnancy until their child is 3 years old. **Jumpstart program is offering virtual home visits through Zoom. In Will and Grundy Counties contact Alyssa at 309-370-9998 or in Kankakee County call Tyler at 815-600-9744 or [enroll online](#).** For more information on this great program check out their [facebook page](#)

Easter Seals has a [Parent's Raising Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders Support Group](#) that meets every Wednesday of the month at 6:00 pm via Zoom. Email Laura at lgardner@joliet.easterseals.com for an invitation to join the group.

Educational & Informative webinars for parents & caregivers:

Star Net is hosting a free webinar on "[The Other Child: Providing Support for Siblings of Children with Disabilities](#)" on May 11th 7-8:30pm. Click the link to register.

[Illinois School for the Visually Impaired](#) has [posted their calendar of events for upcoming zoom webinars](#). These webinars are free for families and professionals who are interested in learning more about children's eye conditions. Also check out their [facebook page](#) for info.

[Be Strong Families](#) has a [webinar series](#) for parents to help them stay strong and positive for themselves and their children. Past webinars are also available to view. Click the link for more information or to register. Registration information is in English and Spanish.

Informational Resources:

The Child Mind Institute has created a short [video series on helping young children manage anxiety](#). Kids can go on a Journey with Nixie and Nimbo to see how thoughts and actions affect how we feel. Click here to view the [guide for parents](#) about the video series. The [Child Mind Institute](#) is an online resource for children's mental health information.

[Zero to three](#) has a [Baby Steps newsletter](#) for parents and caregivers that delivers interesting articles and resources to your inbox. Also check out the [Zero to Three facebook page](#).

[SPARK](#) - Simons Foundation Powering Autism Research - has [information and webinars for parents](#) of children on the Autism Spectrum.

[The Division of Specialized Care for Children](#) (DSCC) has several resources on their website for families related to education and childcare for children with healthcare needs or disabilities. They also have [tips and tools for remote learning for families](#)

[Family Matters Parent Training & Information Center](#) has many resources related to education and parenting during Covid-19

[The Northwestern Infant and Child Development Center](#) is inviting parents and children from newborn to age 6 to participate in a research study on how babies learn so much so fast! Click [here to sign up](#) to participate in the study.

[The Early Intervention Research Group \(EIRG\)](#) offers many research studies for young children. Click here to [view all of their current research studies](#).

[Illinois Hands and Voices](#), supports families with children who have a hearing loss. Check out their website to receive updates and new blog posts.

[The Will County AOK \(All Our Kids\) Network](#) hosts monthly meetings for professionals working with children & families, community members, and parents. They have a [resource guide](#) with information on many local resources for families.

Developmental/Educational Resources:

[Sesame Street in Communities website](#) (Produced by Sesame Workshop) is a customizable resource for parents/caregivers to provide learning opportunities and help support children through challenges such as community violence, & traumatic experiences.

PBS Kids and HBO have worked together to create a series for children called [The Power of We](#) for parents and kids to view together to learn about how to bridge differences and become upstanders against racism. [View an episode together here!](#)

[The Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development](#) has information on accessing childcare services. Caregivers can call (888) 228-1146 or visit [Phase 3 & 4 Childcare Provider Search](#) to find available child care in their area.

Northwestern University researchers are studying parent satisfaction with therapeutic services for children with disabilities during the coronavirus. To access the survey for this study go to <https://is.gd/parentingduringcovid> for questions on this survey please contact ashleymurphy2020@u.northwestern.edu

[Harvard Center on the Developing Child](#) is an informational resource for families with young children. They cover topics such as Early Childhood Development, Brain Architecture, Executive Function & Self Regulation, and Toxic Stress. Click here to view their [latest newsletter](#).

Covid-19 Information & Resources

For additional information on COVID-19 visit the following websites:

[Will County COVID-19 Response](#)

[Will County Health Department COVID-19 Information](#)

[LaSalle County COVID-19 Information](#)

[Grundy County Health Department](#)

[Kankakee County Health Department](#)

[Illinois Department of Public Health](#)

[State of Illinois Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Response](#)

[Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development COVID-19](#)

Information to support families:

- [Call 4 Calm](#) - text TALK to 552020 for English or HABLAR for Spanish if you or a loved one are struggling with stress related to the pandemic. This is free and available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.
- [Emotional Well-being Toolkit for Children, Families, and Caregivers](#) created by the [Governors Office of Early Childhood Development](#)
- [The Child Mind Institute](#) has put together resources to support families during the pandemic including facebook live chats, tips via email, and much more.
- The Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), the Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center (ECTA), the Office of Head Start (OHS), has created [a list of resources to support children with disabilities and their families](#) during the COVID pandemic.
- Parenting for Lifelong health has created [COVID-19: 24/7 Parenting](#) with information and online resources for parents during this time.
- Here is some information from Child Trends on [10 Ways to Support Children's Emotional Well-Being During COVID-19](#).

About Us:

Visit our
website

[Child and Family Connections #15](#) is the regional office serving as the point of entry for children and families into the Illinois Early Intervention Program. CFC #15 serves children age 0-3 year and their families in Will, Grundy, Kankakee, and LaSalle Counties.

*For more information about the Illinois Early Intervention Program, please visit:
[Illinois Department of Human Services](#) or [The Illinois Early Intervention Clearinghouse](#)*

****The events and information contained in this newsletter are not sponsored by Child and Family Connections #15. This newsletter contains information from many different agencies and organizations and is provided to families as a resource.****