



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

Will/Grundy/Kankakee/LaSalle Counties

Hello Fall!



Looking for something fun to do? Chicago Parent has information on the [Best Things to Do with Kids this Fall in Chicagoland](#).

Check out these [60+ Engaging and Playful Fall Activities for Preschoolers](#) from [fun-a-day.com](#)

Go to the *"Fun Family Activities"* section below for links to pumpkin patches in your area!



Reading together [early and often](#) is a great way to spend time with your child while boosting their language and social emotional development.

Need some reading inspiration?

- [Chicago Parent Magazine has a Fall book list for children](#)
- Zero to Three has info on [Books for Families Facing Tough Times](#).

Remember to visit your local library to find these and other great books to read with your child. Most libraries also have storytimes for children of all ages and abilities.

Please enjoy the information on **fun activities** and **support resources** for all families in this newsletter. This month we have included information on **some October awareness days** (this is not a list of all Awareness days for this month).

October is...

- [Breast Cancer Awareness Month](#)
- Domestic Violence Awareness Month the [National Domestic Violence Hotline](#) is available 24/7 1-800-799-7233
- National ADHD Awareness Month - information from the [ADHD Awareness Month Coalition](#)
- National Down Syndrome Awareness Month - information from the [National](#)

- [Association for Down Syndrome](#) and the [National Down Syndrome Society](#)
- Pregnancy and Infant Loss Awareness Month - information from the [Star Legacy Foundation](#) and [Share Pregnancy and Infant Loss Support](#)
- World Cerebral Palsy Day was Oct. 6th learn more about CP from the [Cerebral Palsy Foundation](#) and [My Child at Cerebralpalsy.org](#)
- [Spina Bifida Awareness month](#)
- Mental Illness Awareness week is Oct 3rd-9th learn more at [NAMI.org](#). Also check out the [resources on children's mental health](#) in the September newsletter from the Center on the Developing Child from Harvard University.

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](#).
-The staff at CFC 15

Important Information on Early Intervention In-Person Visits

Depending on provider availability, families can choose to have Early Intervention Services In person, or through Live Video Visits. It is important that the delivery method is a team decision that takes into consideration potential risk factors to all team members since all children in EI are unvaccinated. Therefore it is very important that all families are aware of and agree to the recommended safety protocols for In Person visits below:



- To the maximum extent possible individuals providing in-person support be vaccinated.
- Masks are to be worn when meeting indoors.
- Teams consider conducting in-person visits outdoors or in well-ventilated areas.
- Team members continue to utilize good handwashing practices and sanitize items that are used across homes before each use.
- Nothing unnecessary should be brought into a home/child care such as toy bags or other personal items.
- Maintain physical distance during indoor EI visits to the degree possible.
- In-person services should not occur if any individual participating has tested positive for COVID-19 in the last 14 days or if they are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19.
- If individuals who are not fully vaccinated have been exposed to someone who tested positive for COVID-19 in the last 14 days, in-person services should not 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 any upcoming in-person visits.

Live Video Visits (LVV) will continue as an option for EI services for all families. *See information in the section below on resources for families regarding accessing equipment and internet access for LVV services.*

Live Video Visit Information, Resources, and parent survey

Live Video Visits continue to be a great opportunity for parents to learn from their EI providers how to help their child learn and grow! There are programs available for families to help provide technology devices and internet access for Video Visits.

[The Emergency Broadband Benefit Program](#) is a Federal Communications Commission (FCC) program that provides a temporary discount on monthly broadband bills for qualifying low-income households. If your household is eligible, you can receive:

- Up to a \$50/month discount on your broadband service and associated equipment rentals
- Up to a \$75/month discount if your household is on qualifying Tribal lands

- A one-time discount of up to \$100 for a laptop, tablet, or desktop computer (with a co-payment of more than \$10 but less than \$50)
- Go to www.getemergencybroadband.org or www.fcc.gov/broadbandbenefit to check if you qualify and apply online. You may also sign up through a participating broadband provider or by calling (833) 511-0311 between 9 a.m. and 9 p.m. any day of the week to request a mail-in application and more information about the program.

The [Illinois Early Intervention Clearinghouse](#) also continues to offer a device loan program for all families in Early Intervention. 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 Early Intervention Clearinghouse has an Everyday EI parent pack available for families containing tip sheets, a beach ball, a pen, a bookmark, and two KN95 masks. [Click here to complete the form to request your parent pack!](#) The EI Clearinghouse also has a [facebook page](#), a [newsletter for families](#), and a [blog](#) with lots of information on the EI system.

[The Arc of IL has an Assistive Technology Consumer Stipend Program](#) which provides 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

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, 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 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

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.



The Northern Illinois Food Bank has a list online of [upcoming Mobil Food](#)



Will County has created [Food Access Maps](#) where you can locate food pantries, micro pantries, mobile food

Items can be picked up from 3 locations in Will County. Please click the link for details.

No income or residency restrictions apply.

[Pantries and Pop up Markets](#) listed monthly by county. Both types of distributions are currently using a drive-thru model. **[Everyone is welcome – no ID or referral is needed.](#)**

pantries, and community gardens in Will and some of the surrounding counties.

[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.

Fun Family Activities | October 2021

See below for some fun family events in your area!

Pumpkin Farms, corn mazes, and fun Fall events:

- [Bengtson's Pumpkin Farm](#) in Homer Glen
- [Benoit Greenhouse](#) in Kankakee
- [Boggios's Orchard & Produce](#) in Granville
- [Bronkberry Farms](#) in Plainfield
- [Butterprint Farm Pumpkin Patch](#) in Monee
- [Cosley Zoo Pumpkin Fest](#) in Wheaton
- [Crosswind Farms](#) in Manhattan
- [Dollinger Family Farm](#) located in Channahon
- [Goebbert's Pumpkin Patch](#) in Pingree Grove
- [Heap's Giant Pumpkin Farm](#) in Minooka
- [Johansen Farms](#) in Bolingbrook
- [Koncow's Corn Maze](#) in Homer Glen
- [Kregels's Pumpkin Patch](#) in Lowell IN
- [Kuiper's Family Farm](#) in Maple Park
- [Odyssey Fun Farm](#) in Tinley Park
- [Puckerville Farms](#) in Lemont
- [Siegel's Cottonwood Farm](#) in Lockport
- [Tom & Zach's Pumpkin Farm](#) in Lockport
- [The Children's Farm at the Center](#) in Palos Park



Apple Picking is a fun event to do as a family this time of year! Check out these links for orchards around the Chicagoland area:

- [U-Pick apples near Chicago and the Suburbs](#) from kidlist
- [10 of the Best Places to Pick Apples around Chicago](#) from Secretchicago.com
- [Where to Go Apple Picking Near Chicago](#) from Chicago Parent
- [Best Orchards for Apple Picking Near Chicago with Kids](#) from Mommypoppins

[Dupage Children's Museum](#) is open & pre-registration is required. See the website for details.

[Kidsworld Children's Museum](#) in Frankfort is open for in person play.

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

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

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

[The Museum of Science and Industry](#) is open with advanced ticket purchase. [Click here](#) to see their FREE days for Illinois residents!

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

[Lincoln Park](#) and **[Brookfield Zoo](#)** are open! Face coverings are required in all buildings.

[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.

[Starved Rock State Park](#) and **[Matthiessen State Park](#)** both located in LaSalle County are great places to get outside and enjoy nature!

Virtual Events

- **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.

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

- [Trick or Treat in the Woods on Oct 16](#) at Hickory Creek Preserve and [October 21st](#) at Messenger Woods Nature Preserve
- [Stop Drop & Roll Pumpkin Composting](#) on November 6th at Plum Creek Nature Center

For more information on fun family events in the **Chicagoland** area go to [Chicago Parent.com](#) and [Family Time Magazine](#). Check out the [September/October Issue of Chicago Parent Magazine](#) this issue has an interesting article on ["The Power of Words. The tug and pull of people-first vs diagnosis-first language and why it matters."](#)

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

For fun events in **Kankakee County** visit the [Kankakee County Calendar of Events page](#).

Many **libraries** and **park districts** are hosting in-person events for children and families. Please check out your local library and park district website for details.

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

- [Joliet Park District](#)
- [Bolingbrook Park District](#)
- [Romeoville Park District](#) - Click to view their Fall Brochure
- [Lemont Park District](#)
- [Mokena Park District](#)
- [Frankfort Park District](#)
- [New Lenox Park District](#) click to view upcoming special events.
- [Plainfield Park District](#) click to view their Fall Activity guide
- [Naperville Park District](#) click to view their Fall program guide
- [Channahon Park District](#)
- [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 online registration!
- [Momence Park District](#)

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

- [River Valley Special Rec Association](#) in Bradley
- [Lincolnway Special Rec Association](#) in New Lenox - Check out their [Fall 2021 brochure](#)
- [Northern Will County Special Rec Association](#) (NWCSRA) in Romeoville. Check out their [Fall 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 NorthWest Special Recreation Association in Rolling Meadows](#) hosts online sibshops for siblings, who are ages 8-12 year old, of children with disabilities to meet other siblings for peer support and fun! Contact [ljevaney@nwsra.org](mailto:ljevanev@nwsra.org) for more information.

Family Support Resources For All Areas

Parent/Family Support Programs:

[Holiday Food Basket sign up](#) from Will County Center for Community Concerns began September 13th Please click the link for information on how to sign up. Holiday Baskets include: A new coat, hat, and gloves, a gift for each child, food for your holiday meal and more.



[We Care of Grundy County](#) is hosting an Adopt a Family Program for 2021, an income-based Christmas assistance program for Grundy County families in crisis. Deadline to register is November 12th. Click the link to be taken to their website or view the [application here](#).

[Share Fest in Will County](#) Sunday October 24th 10am-2pm at Providence Catholic HS in New Lenox. Free books, clothes, food and more!

[The Special Fathers Network](#) is a Dad to Dad mentoring program for fathers raising children with special needs. They host zoom calls on the 1st and 3rd Tuesday of each month for Dads to connect. [Click here to view the list of previous and upcoming zoom calls](#).

[ACES 5 week FREE parenting program](#) is a parent education program that provides parents with information on trauma, toxic stress, brain science, and how adverse experiences may be impacting your child. The next session begins October 20th, 9-11am at We Care of Grundy County. Free childcare and meals are provided. Please call 815-942-6389 to register.

[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. **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 or other Social Interaction/Communication Disorder](#) that meets the first Friday of each month 11am-12 pm via Zoom. Email Alicia ahann@joliet.easterseals.com for the zoom link to join the group. They also offer [a Spanish Speaking group that meets weekly on Fridays at 3pm](#).

[Easter Seals is offering Free walk in mental health screenings for children](#) age 1-17 years old. Following the screening, families will be provided with information, resources, & tools if needed. Screenings are held the 2nd Friday of every month from 9am-11am, or to schedule a virtual appointment call 815-927-5466. [Screenings are also offered in Spanish](#).

[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 available in English and Spanish. For more information contact their intake line at 312-709-0508 for English and 312-934-6446 for Spanish.

Educational & Informative webinars for parents & caregivers:

[Chicago Parent Magazine is hosting ParentEd Talks](#) which is a FREE virtual speaker series featuring some of the nation's top parenting experts! Virtual events are now through June 2022. Click the link for more information and to register.

[Illinois School for the Visually Impaired has a listing of recorded 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 Online 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. The [Child Mind Institute](#) is an online resource for children's mental health information.

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

[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.

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

[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 Online Resources:

[The Division of Specialized Care for Children](#) (DSCC) has several resources on their website related to education and childcare for children with healthcare needs or disabilities.

[First Words Project](#) is an online resource for parents with downloadable resources, videos, & information to support their child's development from birth-24 months.

[Family Matters Parent Training & Information Center](#) has many resources related to education, support, and advocacy for parents of a child with a disability.

[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](#).

[The Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development](#) has information on resources for families with young children such as accessing childcare services.

[Harvard Center on the Developing Child](#) is an informational resource for families with young children. They cover topics such as Early Childhood Development, Brain Development, Self Regulation, and Stress.

[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.

[Big Heart World](#) helps families to learn about social emotional learning. They share content each month, which will empower you to teach your children about themselves, others & relationships.

COVID-19 Information

All Illinois residents age 12 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/>.

The [Illinois Department of Public Health website](#) is a resource for information on the current regional COVID 19 conditions and the activities permitted within each region.

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](#)

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
- 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.



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.****