



Early Intervention Child & Family Connections #15 January 2023 Family Newsletter

Will/Grundy/Kankakee/LaSalle Counties

Welcome to 2023!!

This month we would like to highlight **STAR NET** which is a statewide Support and Technical Assistance Regional NETwork that supports families with young children and professionals in Early Childhood.

[Star Net Region VI](#) is located in Oak Forest and supports families and professionals in Will, Grundy, Kankakee, & LaSalle Counties as well as South Suburban Cook County. Throughout the year Star Net offers workshops and family events such as these below:



This month they are hosting a Family webinar entitled:

["One Family's Encounter with Life and Special Education"](#)

presented by Sheila Jacobson, Parent and Life Coach. In this webinar Sheila will share her and her son Zander's experiences with Special Education. This is a great opportunity for families whose child will be turning three this year and transitioning to the school district. This webinar is being presented specifically for parents with children age 3-5 years old on two dates:

[January 17th from 10am-11:30am](#) or [January 30th from 6pm-7:30pm](#)

Please click on the link for more information on click on the webinar date to register for that session.

In March, STAR NET Region VI in collaboration with the Illinois Early Intervention Training Program will hold the 16th annual

[Early Childhood Today Conference](#)

in-person in Tinley Park on March 8, 2023.

This conference is **FREE** for families, caregivers and professionals who shape the lives of children ages birth to 5 years old. There will be two sessions for the conference and you must register separately for the sessions. There will be Raffle Prizes at each session and a break between sessions for lunch on your own.

1. The AM session is offered 8:30 AM to 11:00 AM and is entitled "Keep The Day Flowing Smoothly: Effective Transition Strategies That Support Children's Needs" Presented by Marilyn Peterson, education consultant. [Click here for more information and to register for this session.](#)
2. The PM session is offered 12:30-3pm and is entitled "Getting to The Bottom of Anxiety & Behavioral Challenges for Everyday Success" Presented by Nisha S. Sanghvi, OTR/L [Click here for more information and to register for this session.](#)

If you have questions about these events or want to learn more about Star Net, email them at starnet@swcccase.org.

Thank you to Star Net for providing these opportunities for families!

Please enjoy the information on **fun activities** and **support resources** for all families in this newsletter, as well as information on **some January awareness days and holidays.**

January is....

- [National Blood Donor Month](#)
- [National Birth Defect Awareness Month](#)
- [Thyroid Awareness Month](#)
- Martin Luther King Day on January 16th - [check out these MLK day events for families](#)
- [National Popcorn day](#) is January 19th
- [National Hug Day](#) is January 21st
- January 22nd is [Chinese New Year](#)
- January 30th is [National Hot Chocolate Day](#)



If you know someone who is concerned about their child's development please give them the number for the Child and Family Connections 15 Referral Coordinator, (815) 768-3730.
-The staff at CFC 15

Fun Family Activities | January 2023



Will/Grundy County Events

[Downtown Lemont Ice & Light Fest](#)
 January 21st 3:30-6:30pm

[Will County Forest Preserve District events calendar](#) has virtual & in-person events for children and families, such as their [Wild Child](#) outdoor event for kids age 3-5 years.

Check out your local park district to find fun family events in your area!

- [Joliet Park District](#)
- [Bolingbrook Park District](#)
- [Romeoville Park District](#)
- [Lemont Park District](#)
- [Mokena Park District](#)
- [Frankfort Park District](#)
- [New Lenox Park District](#)
- [Plainfield Park District](#)
- [Naperville Park District](#)
- [Channahon Park District](#)
- [Crete Park District](#)
- [Braidwood Park District](#)
- [Wilmington Island Park District](#)



Kankakee County Events

Exploration Station is hosting a [Special Needs Family Time after hours](#) on January 25th from 5:30-7pm \$5/per child, adults and children under 12 month are free.

[Mattea's Joy Gala](#) February 4th

[River Valley Special Rec Association](#) is hosting a **Garage sale & bake sale** on February 18th and a **Winter Carnival** on January 21st

Check out your local park district to find fun family events in your area!

- [Bourbonnais Township Park District](#)
- [Kankakee Valley Park District](#)
- [Momence Park District](#)



LaSalle County Events

[Sled Dog Demonstration](#)
 at Starved Rock State Park February 5th

For fun events and parenting tips in LaSalle County go to:

[Illinois Valley Area Parent References](#) Facebook page

[LaSalle County Calendar of Events](#)

[Ottawa IL Pick Us calendar of events.](#)

To find fun events in the south suburbs go to the [Chicago Southland visitors bureau](#)

For events in Will County go to the [Visit Will County website](#).

To find more fun events in Kankakee County go to the [Kankakee County Calendar of Events](#).



For family events in the Chicagoland area go to [ChicagoParent.com](#). Check out the [Fun things to do with kids in Chicagoland this weekend](#) and view the [January/February Issue of Chicago Parent Magazine](#).

Click [here to see information about Free Museum Days for Chicago Museums](#)

Fun and educational places for families:

[DuPage Children's Museum](#) in Naperville.

[Kidsworld Children's Museum](#) in Frankfort.

[Discovery Center Museum](#) in Rockford

[Chicago Children's Museum](#) has a **Play for All: Adaptive Sports Event for Children and Families with Disabilities** on January 21st [Click here to register](#).

[The Shedd Aquarium](#)

[Field Museum](#) masks are recommended.

[The Museum of Science and Industry](#) masks required in certain areas

[Peggy Notebaert Nature Museum](#) masks recommended, not required.

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

[Lincoln Park Zoo](#)

[Brookfield Zoo](#)

[Cosley Zoo](#) in Wheaton

[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!

Theatres with Sensory Friendly Movie Times

[AMC Theatres](#) in New Lenox, Naperville, Lombard and Morris

[Marcus Theatres](#) in Orland Park and Chicago Heights

[NGC Cinema](#) in Yorkville

[Emagine](#) in Frankfort

Special Recreation Associations host virtual and in-person events for kids of all ages:

- [River Valley Special Rec Association](#) in Bradley
- [Lincolnway Special Rec Association](#) in New Lenox
 - Check out their [Winter 2023 Program Guide](#).
 - Families can reserve time in the [Nest Sensory Room](#)
- [Northern Will County Special Rec Association](#) (NWCSRA) in Romeoville.
 - Check out their [Winter/Spring 2023 brochure](#).
 - Their **sensory room** is available to reserve for individual use located at 10 Montrose in Romeoville. Email [Gina Petkus](mailto: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:ljevane@nwsra.org) for more information.

Ways to support your child's development

Social Emotional Tip: Help babies and young children learn to put words to their feelings by talking about, acknowledging, and validating their emotions. It is never too early to start talking with your child about their feelings.



Being a parent is hard and knowing what to do to best support your child's development is no easy task! This month we are sharing information from [Healthy Steps](#) which is a program created by [Zero to Three](#) to support children's early development.

Click the following link to access their [developmental handouts for parents and caregivers with tips to support development from birth - 36 months.](#)

INSTEAD OF SAYING
"USE YOUR WORDS,"
HELP CHILDREN DEVELOP LANGUAGE TO DESCRIBE THEIR FEELINGS:



KIDS CAN'T "USE THEIR WORDS" UNTIL
WE TEACH THEM HELPFUL WORDS TO USE.

NATIONAL CENTER for
YOUTH ISSUES

ATTRIBUTED TO:
NANCY KAPMAN

Is your Child Turning 3 soon and leaving EI?

Do you understand the Transition process out of Early Intervention when your child turns 3? Here are a few resources to help you during this time.

- [Transition: Understanding Family Rights](#) from the EI Clearinghouse
- ["When I'm 3, Where will I be"](#) Transition workbook for families from IL State Board of Education.
- The Parent Guide - [Educational Rights and Responsibilities: Understanding Special Education in Illinois](#) from the Illinois State Board of Education

If you have any questions about your child's transition out of the Early Intervention Program, please reach out to your service coordinator.

Information on Early Intervention Visits

[In-person checklists for Early Intervention providers and for families](#) help determine if it is safe to have in-person visits.

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.

If you have to cancel your In-person visit for any reason, consider trying a Live Video Visit for that week! Please reach out to your service coordinator with any questions.

Live Video Early Intervention Visits are an opportunity for parents to help their child learn and grow! If your child is waiting for In-Person EI services consider trying Live Video Visits.

The [Illinois Early Intervention Clearinghouse](#) continues to offer a device loan program for all families in Early Intervention. Available technology includes: Ipads, hotspots, & Ipad stands. To apply to receive a device from the EI Clearinghouse, please complete the [Device Loan Request Form](#)



If you want to learn more about Early Intervention Video visits, see these videos from [ETCA](#) (Early Childhood Technical Assistance) Center of families talking about their experiences with EI

Video Visits.

- [A Home visit with Zander's Family](#) 14 min
- [A Home visit with Sam's Family](#) 8 min
- [A home visit with Ares' Family](#) 9 min

Family Support Resources

Parent/Family Support Programs:

[Diaper Depot](#) is a program of United Way of Will County. Families in need can pick up FREE pre-packaged diaper packets once a month from one of three locations in Will County. Click the link for more information.

[Text for baby](#) is an app that helps you track you babies, health, growth, and development from birth through your babies first year.

[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.

[ParentEd talks from Chicago Parent](#) are back! Click the link to register. The 2022-2023 series features experts sharing insights on parenting topics such as overcoming trauma, ADHD, understanding depression and anxiety, and more!

[Free ACES Parenting class](#) held at We Care in Morris. This 5 week program runs periodically throughout the year and usually meets from 5-7pm, with meals and childcare provided. If your child has experienced trauma or trauma is impacting your ability to parent call 815-942-6389 for more information on this program.

[2-1-1 is now available in all counties](#) 211 is a 24/7 resource/crisis line that families can call to get connected to local human services and crisis intervention resources in their area.

[9-8-8 is a new mental health suicide and crisis hotline](#) that is free, confidential and available 24/7 to anyone experiencing mental health related distress.

[Count the Kicks](#) is an app for expectant parents to help monitor their baby's movement in the 3rd trimester. The app is free and available in 12 languages! Click the link to learn more.

The [IL Cares for Kids website](#) was created to support all IL families with children from birth through school age. The offer a FREE text program called [Ready4K](#).

- Ready4K is a FREE researched-based text program for families with kids ages 0-11.
- Families can expect to receive 3 texts a week with fun facts and tips on ways to help their child learn and grow, as well as links to local resources.
- TEXT IL4KIDS to 70138 to register or visit illinoiscaresforkids.org

[Aunt Martha's Healthy Families Program](#) in Cook, Will, & Kankakee Counties has a home visiting Program to support new and expectant parents. Click the link for more information.

[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 815-725-2194 and ask to speak to someone in the Jump Start Program, or in Kankakee County call Tyler at 815-600-9744. Families can also [enroll online](#).** For more information on this great program check out their [facebook page](#). See their [current flyer here](#).

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. They also offer [a Spanish Speaking group that meets weekly - 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 8 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.

[Family Resource Center on Disabilities](#) is Chicago's Metropolitan Area Parent Training and Information Center and supports families in 8 IL counties including **Will & Grundy Counties**. Call 312-939-3513, email: info@frcd.org, or go to the [FRCD facebook page](#)

[Family Matters Parent Training and Information Center](#) supports families in 94 IL counties including **LaSalle and Kankakee Counties** to provide information, referral, linkages, and training to parents, students with disabilities, and special education professionals. They can be contacted toll-free: 1-866-4FMPTIC (1-866-436-7842), or [FMPTIC facebook page](#). They host a [Virtual Parent-to-Parent Chat](#) via Facebook Live on the first Tuesday of every month (except June, July and Aug.) from 12:30 to 1:30 p.m.

[The Illinois Respite Coalition](#) has a Free statewide respite hotline. If you are in need of respite services please call 866-455-7377.

[Will County Center for Community Concerns](#) in Joliet has many supports for low income families. See below for information on some of their programs or call 815-722-0722:

- [LIHEAP](#) - utility assistance
- [Tax Preparation](#)
- [Case Management services](#)
- [Scholarship Program for low income students](#)

[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.](#)

To view additional informational online resources for families related to Early Intervention and Child Development please [click here.](#)

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 multiple locations in Will County. Please click the link for details.

No income or residency restrictions apply.



The Northern Illinois Food Bank has a list on their website of [upcoming Mobil Food 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.**



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.

[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.

[The Salvation Army in Kankakee](#) has a walk through family-choice food pantry open Tuesdays from 10:00am-12pm-1:00-3:00pm. 148 Harrison Ave in Kankakee.

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

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.****

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