

ECL Monthly news & updates

April|2024

Notes	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 Make silly faces in front of a mirror	2 Practice the sign for "like" during meals	3 Notice if your child turns towards sounds	4 Play peek-a-boo	5 Practice clapping and saying "yes" with your child	6 See if your child will turn toward you when you say their name
	7 Have your child make you to be picked up	8 Copy the sounds your child makes	9 Build a tower and have your child knock it down	10 Teach following directions: "Come here"	11 Read an animal book with your child	12 Practice learning body parts by sticking your child's nose	13 Sing The Wheels on the Bus
	14 Play outside in the grass with shoes off	15 Do something to make your child laugh	16 Read a book with pictures to your child	17 Blow bubbles and watch to see where they land	18 Play with cars and make car noises together	19 Give 5 people a high five today	20 Pet an animal that is soft
	21 Sing your child's favorite song. Can they do actions that go with it?	22 Wash a container from the recycling and put things inside	23 Sing Row Your Boat	24 With your child follow the directions "Give me a Hug"	25 Make an obstacle course in your living room	26 Press a ball back and forth	27 Point to pictures in a book and say what they are
	28 Use the sign "eat" during meals today	29 Play dress-up	30 Copy the sounds your child makes				

Early Communicator Calendar

Notes	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 Make silly faces in front of a mirror	2 Practice saying "like" during meals	3 Find three things that are "big"	4 Play hide and seek. Say "I see you"	5 Talk about what people you doing in a book (he is eating)	6 Repeat the word "in" when cleaning up
	7 Ask your child "Where is the 'big'?" and point	8 See if your child can point to their hair, tummy and feet	9 Build with blocks together	10 Teach following directions: "Get the big ball"	11 Read an animal book with your child	12 Ask "Who is your favorite character?"	13 Sing The Wheels on the Bus
	14 Play outside in the grass with shoes off	15 Do something silly together	16 Read a book with pictures to your child	17 Blow bubbles and talk about where they land	18 Play with cars together. Where are they going?	19 Give 5 people a high five today	20 Pet an animal that is soft
	21 Try coloring with crayons. Can your child make marks on paper?	22 Make a toy from recycled materials today	23 Sing Row Your Boat	24 Follow the directions "Give me a Hug and kiss"	25 Make an obstacle course in your living room	26 Kick a ball back and forth	27 Point to pictures in a book and say what they are
	28 Say "eat" or "eat banana" during meals today	29 Play dress-up	30 Follow directions to "Clean up". Put toys in containers.				

First Words Calendar

Notes	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 Make a tort and read a book in it	2 Make a color poster for later and jelly sandwiches next...	3 Try a color sweater hat (feel something and talk about what you see)	4 Walk around your neighborhood and talk about what you see	5 Find 5 things made of wood	6 Build something out of blocks
	7 Make silly faces in the mirror	8 Visit the zoo and talk about what you see	9 Draw a picture of your family	10 Take your dog (or a throw-it dog) for a walk	11 Make a pretend sandwich. What did you do? "I... I..."	12 Draw a picture of your bedroom	13 Plant seeds in a pot or garden
	14 Look at the stars and pretend to be an astronaut	15 Do something silly together	16 Make up a poem	17 Pretend to be a favorite character from a book	18 Make or draw a pizza with your favorite toppings	19 Give 5 people a high five today	20 Sing the alphabet
	21 Draw a picture of something you did this week	22 Earth Day: Make a craft from recycled materials	23 Cook packages for dinner	24 Call a family member who lives far away	25 Make an obstacle course in your living room	26 Tell someone about your favorite birthday party	27 Be a superhero and help someone
	28 Get dressed all by yourself	29 Does your child use pronouns: I, me, my, mine, you, he, she, they, them	30 Try a new food				

Expanding Language Calendar

Tried & True Tips from a Therapist

by Sarah Hermes, OTR

Get a Grip!

Hand Strengthening Through Play



Hand strengthening is an important part of developing your child's fine motor skills. Strong hand muscles enable children to grasp objects securely, manipulate toys effectively, and engage in activities to support their cognitive and motor development.

Strong hand muscles lay the foundation for future fine motor skills that are crucial for

independence with self-care tasks, such as buttoning clothes and tying shoelaces. From simple tasks like picking up small objects to more complex activities such as scribbling with crayons and stacking blocks, hand strength plays a pivotal role in allowing for exploration and learning experiences.

Resistive hand activities are activities that provide resistance against your child's hands, which helps to develop hand strength. Resistive hand activities are also integral for providing proprioceptive sensory input to children. Proprioception refers to the body's ability to sense its position, movement, and force exertion. When children engage in resistive hand activities, such as squeezing Playdoh, participating in animal walks, or using pop tubes, they experience resistance against their hand muscles, joints, and tendons. This resistance sends sensory signals to the brain, helping your child develop a better understanding of their hand's position and movement in space.

Some examples of resistive hand activities that can be used to build hand strength and provide proprioceptive sensory input are:

- Tearing or crumpling paper
 - Click [here](#) for an Earth Day torn paper craft idea.
- Rolling dough and using cookie cutters
 - Get FREE playdough mats [here](#).



- Mega blocks and Duplo blocks
- Tongs and tweezers
 - This [idea](#) combines the above two objects for hand strengthening.
- Mr. Potato Head
- Spray bottles and sponges
 - The weather is warming up! Here are three techniques to [paint](#) with spray bottles. Work on hand strength and end up with an original work of art!
- Pulling tape, stickers, or Velcro
 - Send your child on a rescue [mission](#) while building strength!

The ideas mentioned here are just some ways to increase hand strength and fine motor skills in your child. There are so many FUN ways to build these foundational skills. Get creative! If you have any questions or need guidance,

Spotlight Story - Josiah Bridgewater

by Alanna Bridgewater

Our family moved from Virginia to San Antonio in 2022. At that time Josiah's speech started to regress which really concerned us. When we were introduced to Easter Seals my son could only say 2-3 words at the age of 2. Now he has progressed to a point where I cannot count the many words he knows.

His speech therapist Becky and EIS Juli were so attentive, caring, and patient. They showed immense care during each session. They not only helped my son but they helped me by giving me tools, techniques, and advice on how to keep him progressing. When Josiah showed signs of Autism they kindly expressed their concerns and provided sessions with Jenny, one of the occupational therapists. She was with us briefly before Josiah aged out of the program but gave so much guidance in such a short time.

Each therapist showed me how much they cared by the effort they continued to put forth three times a week. Even when he got older they helped me transition to another program through NISD. The love and effort shown to my family and me by Ms. Becky, Ms. Juli, and Ms. Jenny and Easter Seals will always be appreciated.



**JOSIAH
BRIDGEWATER**



In Need of Future Spotlight Families



Is Your Child The
next
ECI
SuperStar?

We'd love to share your child's ECI journey!
If you'd like to be featured in the **"ECI Spotlight Story"** segment, click below.

[I'm a SuperStar!](#)

April Awareness Observations



Month-Long

- American Cancer Society Month
- Autism
- Child Abuse Prevention Month
- Community Service Month
- Hypoxic Ischemic Encephalopathy (HIE)
- Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS)
- Limb Loss
- Oral Health Month

- Volunteer Appreciation Month

Days

- April 2 - World Autism Awareness Day
- April 4 - Auditory Processing Disorder
- April 6 - Bohring-Opitz Syndrome
- April 7 - World Health Day
- April 8 - Fibromyalgia (FND) (International)
- April 16 - National Stress
- April 17 - World Hemophilia Day - (UN)
- April 22 - Earth Day
- April 25 - World Meningitis Day
- April 29 - Make-A-Wish Day



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Early Childhood Intervention

Easter Seals Rehabilitation Center
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