



# easterseals




## Easter Seals

### Rehabilitation Center




# ECL Monthly

news & updates




August 2024

Early Communicator 1							
Notes	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
							
4 Make a quick noise of your child making noise & slip back for them.	5 Tell your child the names for clothes when getting dressed.	6 Have your child name the items in the room.	7 Explore the texture of corn on the cob.	8 Play Follow the Leader. Will your child copy your actions?	9 Read a book together. Punt out early that words "bunny," "egg," "bunny."	10 Try a new book. Is it about "Mmmmm"?	
11 Visit a farmers market, point to the fruits and vegetables.	12 Fill a Ziploc bag with popcorn. Bang on it. Bang!	13 Move around and imitate your child's sounds.	14 Sing Old MacDonald Had a Farm.	15 Encourage your child to mix and match words with your child on your chest.	16 Blow bubbles. How many can you blow? Practice body parts.	17 Sing Bubble Gum. How many bubbles can you blow? Practice body parts.	
18 Get noisy! Make silly noises in a can or bucket.	19 Go swimming or play in the sprinklers. Say "swim."	20 Play with bubbles. How many can you blow? Say "swim."	21 Wave "Hi" to a neighbor. Show me your fingers and toes.	22 Practice body parts. Tickle belly or toes.	23 Have a bubble bath. Say and sign "bubble."	24 Play in front of a mirror. Body.	
25 Does your child make up when you say "What's up?" Their communication.	26 Play "I'm gonna get you!" Pause to see how they respond.	27 Take turns making silly sounds back and forth.	28 Read a book about fish. Practice the sign.	29 Fill a pan with water to splash in. Add salt to cubes if it's hot out.	30 Find people who are happy and sad in books.	31 Practice animal sounds when reading books together.	

Early Communicator Calendar

First Words 2							
Notes	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
							
4 Family movie night. Copy the names of your favorite characters.	5 Turn on the lights. Draw the names of animals and plants. Talk about names for colors.	6 Have your child name the items in the room. Punt out early that words "bunny," "egg," "bunny."	7 Peel the husk off of corn. Talk about how it feels.	8 Play Follow the Leader. Go "up" and "down" things.	9 Read a book together. Punt out early that words "bunny," "egg," "bunny."	10 Make a book together. Punt out early that words "bunny," "egg," "bunny."	
11 Visit a farmers market, talk about all the fruits and vegetables.	12 Make popcorn together. Say "Pop!"	13 Exercise together. How many jumping jacks can you do?	14 Sing Old MacDonald Had a Farm.	15 Relax. Sit quietly and practice deep breathing.	16 Blow bubbles. They them on your face. Practice body parts.	17 Pretend to go fishing. Practice sign for "fish."	
18 Get noisy! Say silly words in a can or bucket.	19 Go swimming or play in the sprinklers. Say "swim."	20 Make bubbles together. Talk about what you're doing.	21 Say "Hi" to a neighbor. Show me your fingers and toes.	22 Point to your teeth (or other body parts).	23 Have a bubble bath. Say and sign "bubble."	24 Include your child in cleaning up the dishes. "Bubble," "wiper," "wiper."	
25 Practice animal sounds. How many can you make? Say "moo" and "ooh."	26 Play chase with a dog. Say "run" and "stop."	27 Take turns making silly sounds back and forth.	28 Read a book about fish. Practice the sign.	29 Wash dirt off rocks or shells in water.	30 Find people who are happy and sad in books.	31 Practice naming animals when reading books together.	

First Words Calendar

Expanding Language 3							
Notes	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
							
4 Family movie night. Have your child read aloud happening in their favorite movie.	5 Encourage independence. Can you still get dressed by themselves? Let them decide.	6 Have your child name the items in the room. Punt out early that words "bunny," "egg," "bunny."	7 Peel the husk off of corn. Can you child describe corn?	8 Play Follow the Leader. Go "up" and "down" things.	9 Read a book together. Punt out early that words "bunny," "egg," "bunny."	10 Make a book together. Punt out early that words "bunny," "egg," "bunny."	
11 Visit a farmers market, talk about all the fruits and vegetables.	12 Follow directions to make popcorn.	13 Exercise together. How many jumping jacks can you do?	14 Sing Old MacDonald Had a Farm.	15 Relax. Sit quietly and practice deep breathing.	16 Blow bubbles. They them on your face. Practice body parts.	17 Pretend to go fishing. Practice sign for "fish."	
18 Get noisy! Make silly noises in a can or bucket.	19 Go swimming or play in the sprinklers. Say "swim."	20 Make bubbles together. Talk about what you're doing.	21 Say "Hi" to a neighbor. Show me your fingers and toes.	22 Point to your teeth (or other body parts).	23 Have a bubble bath. Say and sign "bubble."	24 Include your child in cleaning up the dishes. "Bubble," "wiper," "wiper."	
25 Practice animal sounds. How many can you make? Say "moo" and "ooh."	26 Play chase with a dog. Say "run" and "stop."	27 Take turns making silly sounds back and forth.	28 Read a book about fish. Practice the sign.	29 Wash dirt off rocks or shells in water.	30 Find people who are happy and sad in books.	31 Practice naming animals when reading books together.	

Expanding Language Calendar

# Tried & True Tips from a Therapist

by Elizabeth Young, MA, LPC-S, CCATP



# Discovering the Importance of Infant Mental Health Services in Early Childhood Intervention

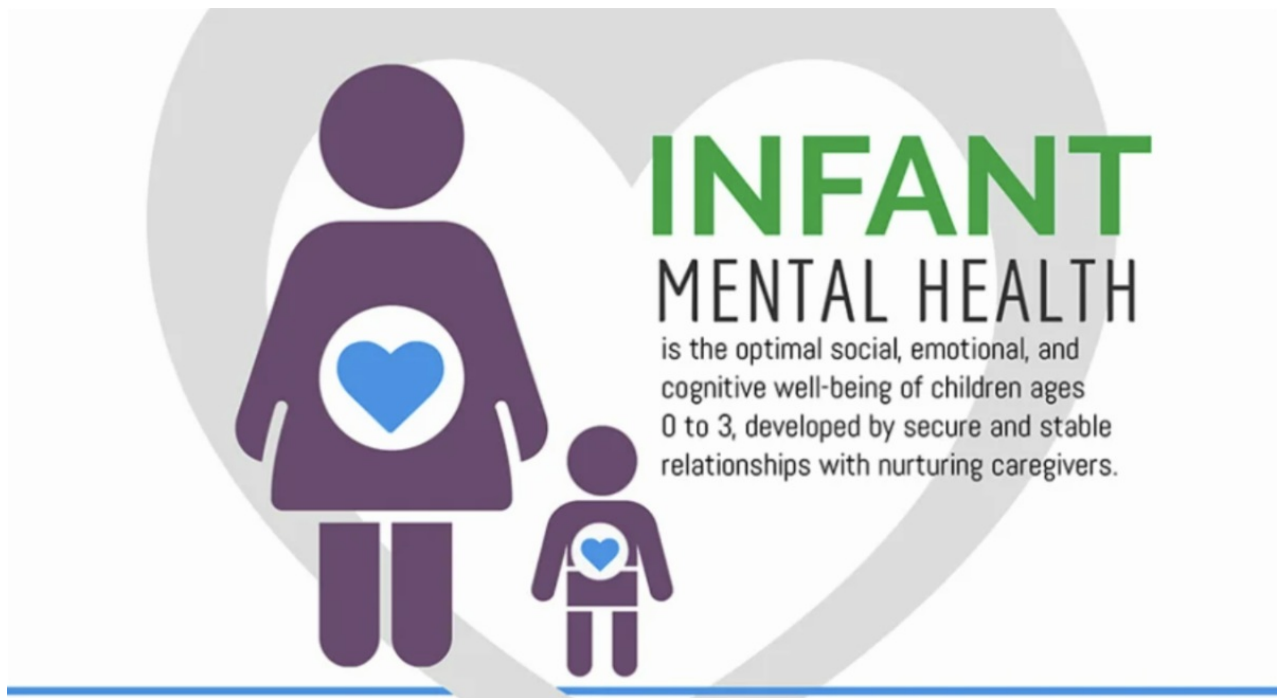
How does a person learn who they are, how to relate to others, and what they are feeling? These questions don't start in our 20s or 30s, they start the minute we are born. Newborns enter the world with highly impressionable neurological systems wired to form connections with the world around them. It is through the connections with their caregivers a child forms an understanding of concepts of self, others and feelings which creates the foundation for confidence, emotional and physical regulation, empathy for others, and academic success.

Positive interactions with caregivers foster secure attachments, allowing children to explore their environment safely. Through safe secure exploration and encouragement, children try new things, developing confidence and trust within themselves. When this exploration is disrupted (hospitalization, illness, prolonged separations, parental stress/depression, lack of knowledge of how to respond/awareness, etc.) children become unsure of the world around them and social emotional development may slow or regress. Cultural connections play a significant role in shaping how parents and caregivers understand and promote healthy social and emotional development. These connections influence coping mechanisms, child-rearing beliefs, and expressions of love and nurturing.

## **What is Infant Mental Health?**

- Focuses on the social-emotional well-being of infants and children zero to age three.
- Key components to support a young child's mental health: secure

attachment to a primary caregiver, consistency, and a nurturing safe environment.



### What Are Concerning Behaviors?

- Poor sleep patterns
- Persistent crying
- Distress/Fearful
- Restlessness (difficulty with focusing/completing activity)
- Physically acting out (hitting/biting/throwing/spitting)
- Repetitive behavior
- Attachment concerns: insecure/anxious/overly friendly (lack of boundaries)
- Change in Feeding/Eating Patterns/Behaviors
- Change in activity level: less curious/disinterested or unfocused/roaming
- Change in behavior
- Developmental regression



### What Do I Do If I'm Concerned?

Mental health is as vital as physical health for infants and young children, influencing their brain and body growth as well as their social and emotional development throughout life. Recognizing and addressing mental health issues early can have a profound impact on a child's development, with about 10-15% of young children experiencing mental health conditions. Early support and intervention are key to optimizing each child's potential. If you are concerned about your child's social-emotional development or mental health, reach out to your service coordinator.

“Babies remember. They just remember it differently. We remember with our brains, -babies remember in their bodies” -Meghan Schmelzer Senior Manager, Infant & Early Childhood Mental Health, Zero to Three.

## Spotlight Story - Garrett & Landon Buckingham

By Kelly Buckingham

Our ECI journey started when my twins, Garrett and Landon, were born prematurely at 33 weeks. They spent six weeks in the NICU, but as soon as we were discharged I made sure their paperwork was sent to Easter Seals, as I knew beginning early intervention would be crucial. Landon was aspirating thin liquids and had positional plagiocephaly from being in his isolette. Garrett was doing great, but we wanted him to have additional support to follow him as he grew, and I knew getting him an evaluation would ensure he got help if he needed it.

Our amazing ECI team initially included Deanna for feeding and Jenna for PT. They helped the babies, as well as my husband and I, as we learned to juggle life with two tiny babies. As the months went by, we began to see a reversal in each boy's progress. Landon started meeting his milestones, but we noticed Garrett slip further and further behind. Our therapy team supported us every step of the way. We were able to address concerns as soon as we noticed them, and we were able to add Marcy for OT and Sarah for SST as we saw needs arise.

This May, our Developmental Pediatrician initiated genetic testing to try to find a cause for all of Garrett's delays. The results came back with a rare genetic condition called Lamb-Schaffer Syndrome. It was discovered in 2012 and has only been diagnosed in around 600 people worldwide. This news, while heartbreaking and life-changing, has provided so many answers. It has checked all the boxes for what had been baffling his many doctors, from the global delays, hypotonia, and vision problems, down to his pale optic nerve and overlapping toe.

Our journey with Lamb-Schaffer is just beginning. But I am so thankful we have been getting ECI therapies from the beginning. Our team of therapists continue to come weekly, rain or shine, and getting this diagnosis hasn't changed the amazing work we were already doing with him. He is making great progress already, and we have the tools to give him the strongest possible start in life.





**LANDON & GARRETT**

**BUCKINGHAM**



## We Are Looking For Spotlight Stories for Upcoming Newsletters



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!

## August Awareness Observations



### Month-Long

- Autoinflammatory Disorders Awareness
- Children's Eye Health and Safety
- Children's Vision and Learning
- Digestive Tract Paralysis (DTP)
- Immunization Awareness
- Neurosurgery Outreach Month
- Never Leave a Child Unattended in a Car, Purple Ribbon Month
- Spinal Muscular Atrophy Awareness

### Days

- August 6 - National Wiggle Your Toes Day
- August 7 - Purple Heart Day
- August 8 - Happiness Happens Day
- August 8 - Severe ME Awareness Day (Severe & Very Severe Myalgic Encephalomyelitis).
- August 12 - International Youth Day



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Easter Seals Rehabilitation Center  
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