

# ECL Monthly

news & updates

October|2023

October 2023						
Notes	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
1 Try a new food today	2 Put small objects in a sealed plastic container. Challenge the child to find them.	3 Show your child the sign "Please" during a snack.	4 Practice early gestures. Will your child reach to be picked up?	5 Look at family photos. Does your child attend to pictures?	6 Try on silly hats or shoes in front of a mirror.	7 Point to people and animals sitting in books.
8 Watch football together and practice clapping	9 Dip your child's spoon into the bottom of the bowl to get jam. How do you feel?	10 Pull a toy out from the bottom of the box to explore	11 Play Peek-a-Boo.	12 Practice scooping and pouring with water or dried beans.	13 Use stuffed animals to keep body parts like nose and mouth. "How's Tummy?"	14 Let your child explore a pumpkin.
15 Does your child understand when you say "Thank you"?	16 Take a walk. Point to any cars you see. "Car!"	17 Explore play dough. Will they use their fingers to squish it?	18 Will your child know when they aren't wearing, by feeling with their hands?	19 Talk about what you are doing. "How is this?" "How is that?"	20 Use of objects. Will your child know a date, age or animals?	21 Have someone ask you a question. "Where's mommy?"
22 Watch football together. High five and say "Yay!"	23 Let your child explore together. High five and say "Yay!"	24 Sing The Itzy Bitzy Spider	25 Let your child explore the texture of fall leaves.	26 Carve a pumpkin. Explore the messy seeds inside.	27 Carve a book and feel your child's face.	28 Blow bubbles. Can your child blow into a straw?
29 Play in front of a mirror.	30 Visit the library today	31 Wear a costume today. What are you?				

Early Communicator Calendar

October 2023						
Notes	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
1 Look for people and animals sitting in books.	2 Put coins in a piggy bank. Say "it."	3 Practice signing "please" during a snack.	4 Have a scavenger hunt outside. Look for fall things like pumpkins.	5 Practice "you." Point to photos of your child and ask "Who's that?"	6 Try on silly hats or shoes in front of a mirror.	7 Turn off the lights and point to things with a flashlight. What do you see?
8 Watch football together. Practice action words	9 Play tag. Say "Chase me!"	10 Play with stuffed animals. Will they copy your actions?	11 Put objects in a bag. Can you guess what they are by feeling them?	12 Make a simple recipe. Use tall mix. Practice measuring and pouring.	13 Put stickers on body parts like hands and feet.	14 Have a "wiggly" hunt in the playroom. Look for pumpkins, apples and corn.
15 Point to pictures of your favorite foods in your neighborhood	16 Take a walk. Look for cars in your neighborhood	17 Play with play dough. Can your child make a pumpkin?	18 Say the word "too" when you see child make a question?	19 Organize your clothes. Blush your hair.	20 Follow directions. Brush your hair.	21 Name the part of a clock - "Lantern's face."
22 Watch football together. High five and say "Yay!"	23 Read a book about fall leaves.	24 Sing The Itzy Bitzy Spider	25 Make stamp art using yogurt and an apple cut in half.	26 Carve a pumpkin. Explore the messy seeds inside.	27 Read a book about cats.	28 Have your child help sweep outside. "Help Me!"
29 Play in front of a mirror. Practice saying "me"	30 Visit the library today	31 Wear a costume today. What are you?				

First Words Calendar

October 2023						
Notes	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
1 Have your child "read" their favorite book.	2 Talk about your favorite book.	3 Will your child use phrases? "More please!"	4 Have a "scavenger hunt" outside. Look for fall things like pumpkins.	5 Practice "me." Point to photos of your child and ask "Who's that?"	6 Try on silly hats or shoes in front of a mirror.	7 Turn off the lights and point to things with a flashlight. What do you see?
8 Watch football together. Practice action words	9 Play Simon Says. (Run, jump, then sit down)	10 Play with stuffed animals	11 Use objects in a bag. Can you guess what they are by feeling them?	12 Make a simple recipe. Use tall mix. Practice measuring and pouring.	13 Put stickers on body parts like hands and feet.	14 Have a "wiggly" hunt in the playroom. Look for pumpkins, apples and corn.
15 Talk about different foods you see in grocery aisles. Do you know food groups?	16 Take a walk. Look for cars in your neighborhood	17 Play with play dough. How many colors can you make?	18 Talk about clothes in a catalogue. "Wash, Super Hero..."	19 Organize your clothes. Blush your hair.	20 Follow directions. Brush your hair.	21 Name the part of a clock - "Lantern's face."
22 Watch football together. High five and say "Yay!"	23 Read a book about fall leaves.	24 Sing The Itzy Bitzy Spider	25 Make stamp art using yogurt and an apple cut in half.	26 Carve a pumpkin. Explore the messy seeds inside.	27 Read a book about cats. What are they doing?	28 Have your child help sweep outside. "Help Me!"
29 Practice emotions in front of a mirror. "Show me sad!"	30 Visit the library today	31 Wear a costume today. What are you?				

Expanding Language Calendar

# Tried & True Tips from a Therapist

by Kathryn Crane, OTR, SC

## It's Never too Soon to Start Reading to Your Child



You may have heard that reading to your child supports early development and lifelong learning, but did you know that kids that are read to for only 5-minutes every day take in 282,000 new words every year and that 80% of children have increases in specific areas of the brain when they're read to daily!

So when should you start reading with your child? Well, it's never too soon to start! Research shows that there is a "critical window" from birth to three

years of age as more than 80% of a child's brain is formed during their first three years of life and what they experience during this window can irreversibly affect how their brain develops.

When reading to your child, they hear you using many different emotions and expressive sounds. This supports social and emotional development. Reading with your child also encourages them to look, point, touch, and eventually answer questions. This helps with social development and thinking skills. Your child improves language skills by copying sounds, recognizing pictures, and learning words. However, the most important reason to read aloud with your child is the connection it makes between the two of you. The attention and nurture your child receives during shared reading time actually supports healthy brain development.

### Different Ages and Ways to Read:

#### Birth to 4 months old:

- At this age, your baby is using their senses to explore their world. Even if babies don't understand the process of reading, they are engaging all their senses during this activity by smelling you near them, looking at the images on the pages, listening to how you say words, and perhaps feeling the pages. The best books for newborns are those with black-and-white illustrations. According to research, these types of images send the strongest visual signals to your baby's brain. Also, be sure to keep the book within 8 to 12 inches from your baby's face since this is as far as they can see at this age.

#### Babies 4–6 months old:

- Your baby may begin to show more interest in books. Your little one will grab and hold books, but will mouth, chew, and drop them as well. Choose sturdy vinyl or cloth books with bright colors and familiar, repetitive, or rhyming text. Also, you shouldn't expect your baby to concentrate on the content in the book for longer than 90 seconds, therefore, don't worry about reading the words on the pages, instead, focus on pages your baby enjoys and talk about what they see on those pages.

#### Babies 6–12 months old:

- Your baby starts to understand that pictures represent objects, and may start to show that they like certain pictures, pages, or even entire stories better than others. Your baby will respond while you read, grabbing for the book and making sounds. By 12 months, your little one will turn pages (with some help from you), pat or start to point to objects on a page and repeat your sounds.

#### 12 months to 18 months:

- Your child might have their first words and is probably pointing at different pictures. Expand on this by reading "see and say" books. You can point out different pictures and describe them to your child and in turn, your child will enjoy pointing to the pictures and hearing you identify

what they are seeing in front of them.

18 months to 2 years:

- During this time your child will start to have more patience for “real” story time and may want to “read” with you. They might ask questions, want to turn the pages back and forth, and request that you read specific parts of the book that are interesting to them. Encourage this! They may also fixate on a “favorite” book that they want you to read over... and over... and over again but that is alright! Change it up by making funny noises or sounds, use a different voice for different characters, but most importantly, play and have fun!

2 to 3 years:

- Allow your child the chance to choose his/her own books and provide models of interesting questions and examples of possible answers (e.g., “I wonder what is going to happen next? I think the bear might be lost... what do you think?). Look for books about things that interest your toddler (e.g., cars, princesses, animals, etc.). Make connections between the pictures and your child’s life (e.g., if you’re reading about animals and come across a cow you can say, “We saw a cow last week, didn’t we?). Repeat familiar phrases and get your toddler to fill in the words in familiar stories or try pausing and letting your toddler finish the sentences for you (for example: “Mr. Funny Bunny didn’t want to be a possum, he wanted to be a...”) and the child says what comes next.

No matter your child’s age, try to make reading a routine and try to share at least one book every day. Choose a special space where you and your child go to read and try to reduce outside distractions in the environment (i.e., turn off the TV, put your phone on silent, find a quiet space to read) so your child can focus and listen to your voice.

In summary, reading with your child starting at birth provides numerous cognitive (brain), emotional, and social benefits. It lays the foundation for their future academic success, fosters a love for learning, and strengthens the parent-child bond. Encouraging reading at an early age is a valuable investment in a child’s development and sets the stage for a lifelong love of reading and learning!

## Resources:



Your local library! Search for locations and events online or call 210-207-2500.

[San Antonio Public Library Locations](#)

Find a Free Little Library near you!  
This provides 24/7 book access via book-sharing boxes that are open 7-days a week, 24 hours a



day and are freely accessible to all, removing barriers to book access!

Little Free Library Locations

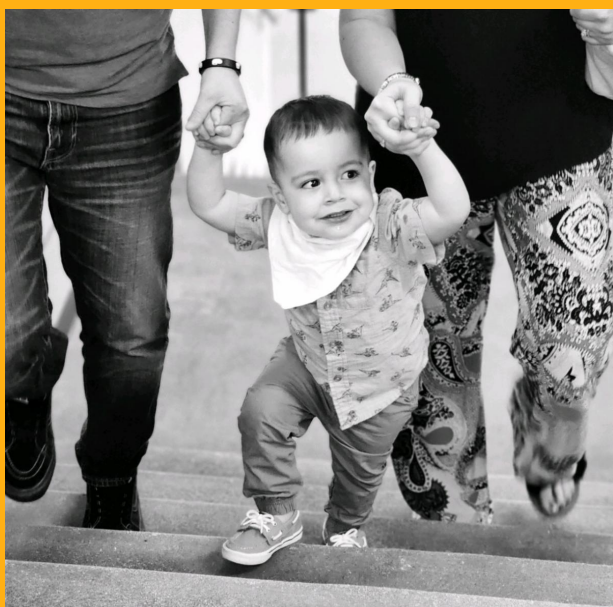


Books Beginning at Birth

Find Out More

Books Beginning at Birth  
Sign up to receive free books and gain access to their online digital library.

## Spotlight Story - Lucas Espinoza



By Amanda Espinoza

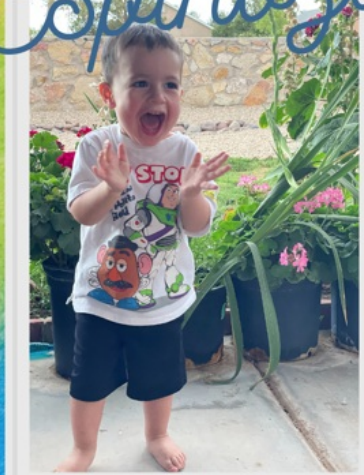
Easter Seals has been such a blessing to our family! We are so grateful for everything they have done with our son, Lucas. When we noticed he was not quite babbling or walking at 17 months, we were very concerned and knew he needed Early Childhood Intervention. We just had no idea what to do or where to start. From the communication and assistance provided by Amy, the Public Outreach Coordinator,

we knew instantly that Easter Seals was exactly what Lucas needed. When he started services with his wonderful therapists, Becky, Kelli, and Erin, our miracle began.

Becky, Lucas' amazing SLP, began working with him immediately and confirmed he had speech delay. Lucas instantly connected with her because she is the type of person you just know is so friendly. She worked with him both at school and at our home. Becky got Lucas to use sign language and provided strategies to us so we could continue developing his speech work at home. Lucas is now two and a half years old and is mimicking what he hears, can say his alphabet, can count to 12, and is now verbally stating phrases and short sentences! He also loves loves LOVES to read books! Becky has broken him out of his shell, and he is a nonstop talker!



# LUCAS *Espinosa*



Kelli, Lucas' PT, began working with him and quickly identified what exercises and physical therapy he needed to get him to start walking. She not only serviced him at daycare, but also went out of her way to service him at our home. Kelli showed us what we could do with him daily to have him practice. Lucas is not only walking independently, but he is running, jumping, and loves going up and down stairs! He has made so much progress that he is officially "graduating" out of physical therapy next month! It's such a bittersweet moment for us all!

Erin, Lucas' EIS, has been working on his social skills at daycare. Lucas had been very shy, timid, and not socially interactive when he was around other kids his age. With the hard work of Erin, Lucas now knows how to take turns with toys/books, fully participates in circle time, verbally tells you who his friends are, and even knows how to say please and thank you when appropriate!

If it wasn't for ECI with Easter Seals, we don't know where Lucas would be today. They truly have been miracle workers with our son. From the very first form of communication from Amy, to our son progressing beyond his age appropriate skills, Easter Seals has been there for us every step of the way. Thank you all, from the bottom of our hearts, for helping our Lucas get to where he is today. We love Easter Seals!

## We Are Looking For Spotlight Stories for Upcoming Newsletters



Is Your Child The  
*next*  
**E C I**  
*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!

### Reminders

#### Place Your Order for Free At-Home COVID-19 Tests

As of September 25, 2023, residential households in the U.S. can order one set of 4 free at-home tests from USPS.com again. Here's what you need to know about your order:

- Limit of one order per residential address.
- One order includes 4 individual rapid antigen COVID-19 tests (**COVIDTests.gov has more details about at-home tests**, including extended shelf life and updated expiration dates).
- Orders will ship free starting the week of October 2, 2023.



Order Now

#### When to Cancel Therapy

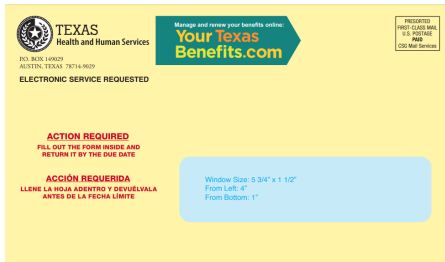
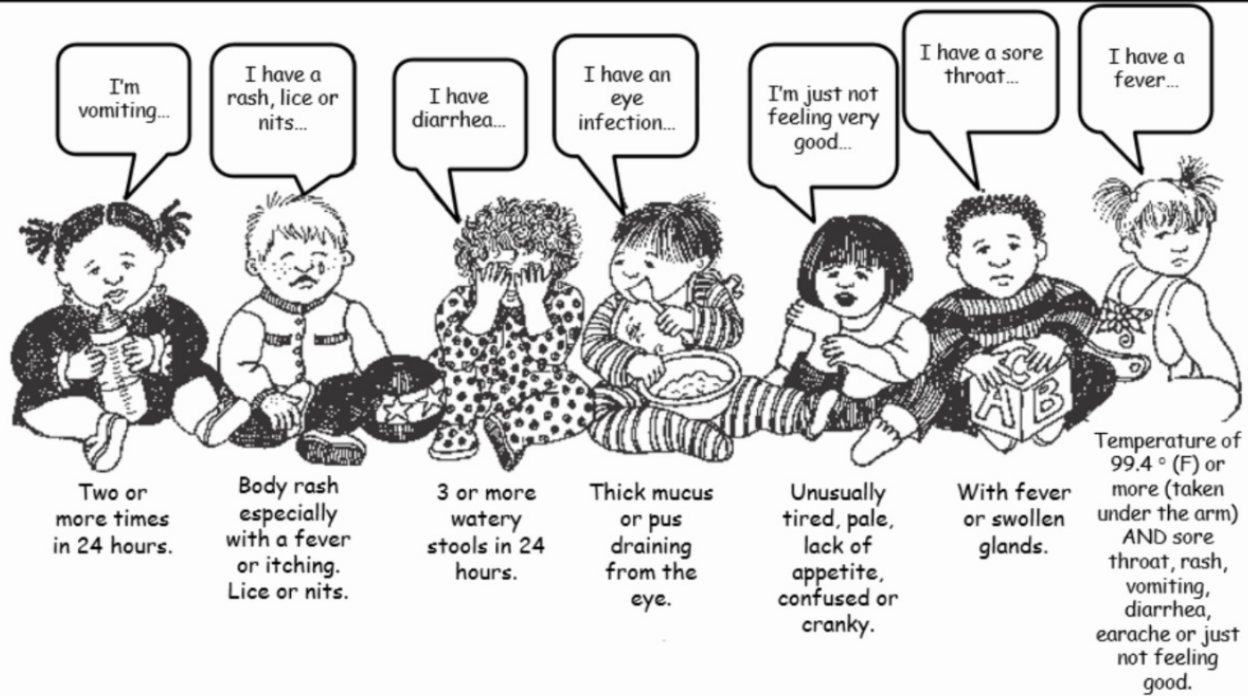
As we enter fall and with several illnesses going around, please help us prevent widespread sickness throughout our program.

Telehealth is available if your child is well enough for therapy, but you're concerned about spreading germs. If your child is not well enough for any type of therapy, please cancel with your therapist. Remember, when we leave your home, we go to see other children and families.



**Let's all work together to keep everyone as healthy as possible.**

# I might have to cancel or reschedule if...



[More Info](#)

## Continuous Medicaid Coverage Ending

Beginning **April 1, 2023**, all Medicaid members, including children receiving ECI services, will need to have their Medicaid eligibility redetermined. Medicaid members should look out for renewal notices mailed in an envelope that says "Action Required" in red or sent electronically to members signed up for electronic notices.

## October Awareness Observations

**Thank you to all of our wonderful physical therapists!  
October is National Physical Therapy awareness Month**





## Month-Long

- Breast Cancer
- Bullying Prevention Month
- Breast Cancer Awareness Month
- Colon Cancer
- Dental Hygiene Month
- Depression Education
- Disability Employment
- Diversity
- Domestic Violence
- Down Syndrome
- Dwarfism
- Dysautonomia
- Eczema
- Emotional Intelligence
- Fire Prevention Month
- Infant Loss and Miscarriage
- Pharmacy Month
- Physical Therapy Month
- Pregnancy and Infant Loss
- Raynaud's
- Rett Syndrome
- Selective Mutism
- Spina Bifida

## Days

- October 5 - World Day of Bullying Prevention
- October 6 - World Cerebral Palsy
- October 9 - PANDAS / PANS
- October 10 - World Mental Health Day
- October 13 - Metastatic Breast Cancer
- October 15 - World Blind Day / World Sight Day
- October 15 - Blind Americans Equality Day
- October 15 - Pregnancy and Infant Loss Remembrance Day
- October 22 - Phelan-McDermid Syndrome - International Day of Awareness
- October 22 - International Stuttering
- October 23 - Kabuki Syndrome
- October 25 - Spina Bifida
- October 25 - Hydrocephalus Day
- October 25 - 31 - International Epidermolysis Bullosa Awareness Week
- October 29 - World Stroke Day





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**TEXAS**  
Health and Human  
Services

*Early Childhood Intervention*

Easter Seals Rehabilitation Center  
is a contracted provider of  
Texas Early Childhood Intervention  
Services and partially funded by  
Texas Health and Human Services.

Easter Seals Rehabilitation Center | 2203 Babcock Road, San Antonio, TX 78229

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