



FAMILY NEWSLETTER

Pregnancy & Parenting

Pelvic Floor Exercises

Kegel exercises or "kegels", also called pelvic floor exercises, help strengthen the muscles, tissues, and ligaments that support the uterus, bladder, intestines, and bowels. Toning these muscles can help reduce urinary incontinence and risk of hemorrhoids during your pregnancy and promote perinatal healing postpartum.



To find your pelvic muscles, urinate and squeeze your muscles to stop mid-stream. Kegels are exercises where you repeatedly squeeze those muscles (when not urinating) to strengthen them. Practice squeezing these muscles for 5-10 seconds, then relax, repeating 10-20 times throughout the day.

Childcare

There are several ways to look for childcare. For a step by step guide for finding childcare, see:

<https://www.parentaware.org/learn/finding-child-care-a-guide-for-families/>



When you are ready to start your search, check out the following sites:

- In-home licensed daycares:
<https://licensinglookup.dhs.state.mn.us/>

- If looking for daycares that are Parent Aware rated, use:
<https://www.parentaware.org/>



For more information about Milestones Early Learning Scholarships, visit:

<https://www.milestonesmn.org/early-learning-scholarships>



If you have a family member, friend, or neighbor providing childcare, there are resources available to support their work, including trainings and grants. Visit: <https://www.milestonesmn.org/family-friend-and-neighbor/>



Child Growth & Development

Early Literacy

It is never too early to read to your child.

- Read to your infant daily. A few minutes between diaper changes, feedings, and naps add up. Aim for a total of 30 minutes throughout the day.
- Look for small, sturdy board books that have simple text and a variety of objects, including rhyming words and/or faces of people.
- It is okay if you don't read all the words in the book or look at all the pages. Point at the pictures and talk about what you see.
- You can read anything to your infant. Your baby doesn't understand the words yet, but they feel safe in your loving arms, hearing the familiar sound of your voice.
- Let your infant become familiar with books by opening and closing them, holding them, or even chewing on them.
- Singing songs and lullabies are great ways to introduce more words to your child in a fun way and help them get ready to read.



Libraries are a free way to expose your child to many books. Find your local library at: <https://griver.org/>

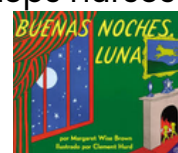
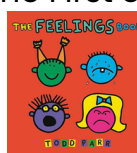


Imagination Library is another way for your child to receive one free book per month to age 5. See if this program is available where you live at:

<https://tinyurl.com/bddtc5z3>



Check out children's book recommendations from some of the First Steps nurses on page 3.





Activities of the Month



Rubber Band Toy Grab:

<https://tinyurl.com/4t463chz>

No Mess Earth Day Painting in a Bag:

<https://tinyurl.com/3mxvsck5>



Mindfulness Moment

7 Daily Reminders for Parents

Read or listen more from Janet Lansbury about this topic at:

<https://tinyurl.com/ycu5ezys>



- Let the feelings be. It's okay to feel whatever you are feeling.
- Acknowledge. Let your child know that you hear them and that you want to know.
- Wait. Let children experience all of their experiences.
- Set limits early. Understand that with children, much of their behavior is impulsive. Stay calm.
- Concerning behavior is a request for help. Help your child when they can't help themselves. They're doing the best they can in any given moment.
- I won't let you. Meaning, I'm here to help and I'm going to stop the behavior and set limits early. Create a "Yes Space."
- Confident momentum in transitions. Our comfort and our confidence eases our child's mind.

Lastly, remember to be good and patient to yourself. Parenting is a journey. We just keep going, showing up, and learning along with our children.

Safety & Resources

April is Child Abuse Prevention Month

Safety resources available in central MN:

- **Anna Marie's Alliance:** provides safety, shelter, support and referral services to survivors of domestic violence and their children. 24/7 phone line: 320-253-6900
- **Central MN Sexual Assault Center:** 24/7 crisis intervention services to people affected by any form of sexual violence, 320-251-4357
- **National Domestic Violence Hotline:** call 1-800-799-SAFE, text "START" to 88788, or chat online <https://www.thehotline.org/>
- **Rivers of Hope:** advocacy services for youth and adults impacted by domestic violence, serves Wright & Sherburne Counties, 763-295-3433
- **Terebinth Refuge:** shelter & safe home for sexually exploited and trafficked women, 320-428-4704

Refer a Friend or Family Member

Do you know someone who is pregnant or recently had a baby? We would love to connect with them to share how our nurses can support them on their parenting journey and build their support network! They can call or text 763-276-0441 or self-refer from our website at <https://tinyurl.com/uv75eerp>

Drop-In Feeding Support

Mondays

- 10a-12p, Monticello Community Center

Tuesdays

- 9a-11a, Princeton ECFE Family Center
- 9:30a-11:30a, St. Cloud YMCA**



Wednesdays

- 9:30a-11:30a, Wright County Historical Society, Buffalo
- 1:30p-3p, Maple Grove Hospital



Fridays

- 10a-12p, Options for Women - Cornerstone, St. Michael



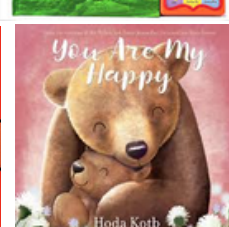
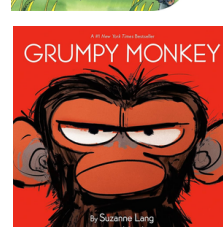
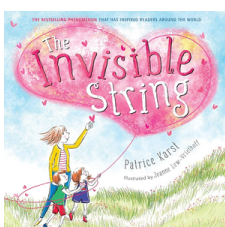
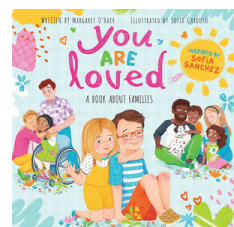
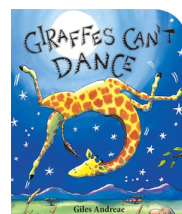
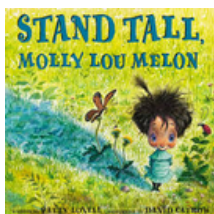
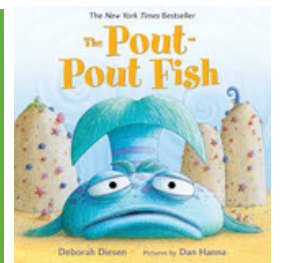
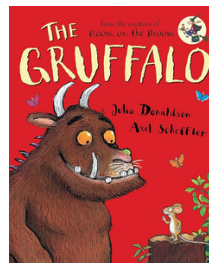
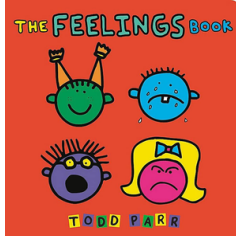
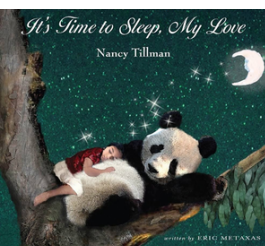
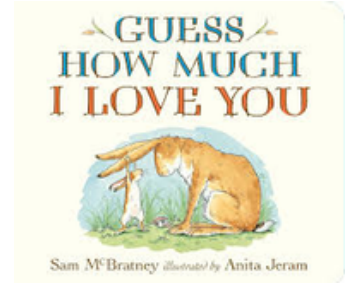
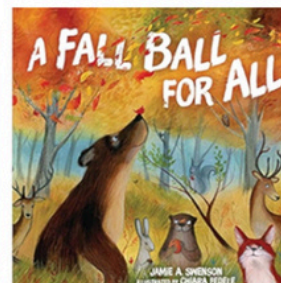
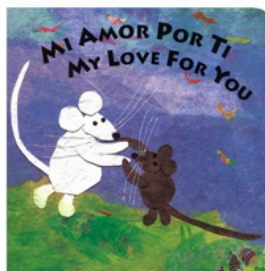
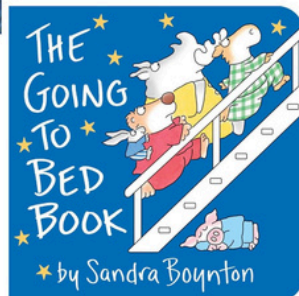
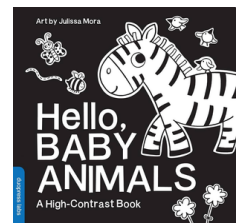
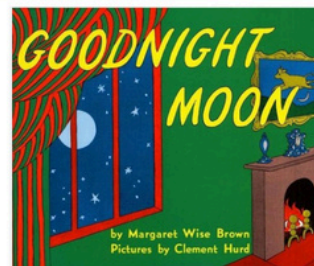
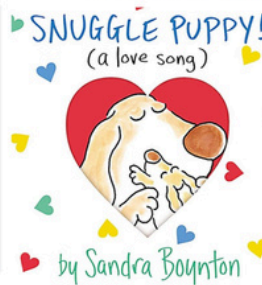
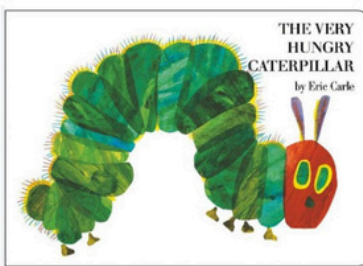
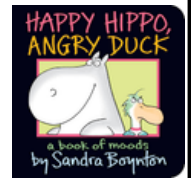
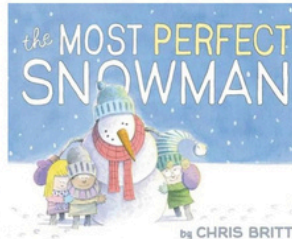
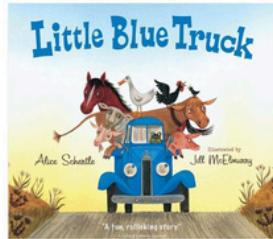
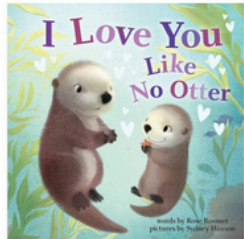
=First Steps staff present

**St. Cloud Baby Cafe is hosting its Spring Fling on 4/1 during Baby Cafe. More details will be shared at: www.facebook.com/stcloudbabycfe



CHILDREN BOOK RECOMMENDATIONS FROM OUR NURSES

Read and listen to hundreds of books online at Unite for Literacy: <https://www.uniteforliteracy.com/>





CAR SEAT CLINIC

HOSTED BY: ST CLOUD AREA CHILD PASSENGER SAFETY COLLABORATIVE

Learn how to confidently install car seats and keep your little ones safe with our certified car seat technicians!

What to Bring:

- ✓ Bring your vehicle and car seat manuals
- ✓ Clear your backseat for accessibility

WEDNESDAY
APRIL 16TH
3PM-4PM
501 Pinecone Rd S



(320) 251-7393

Call today to schedule an appointment

For Those Raising & Working with Young Children

How much is too much? Find out if screen time is a healthy part of a child's life or if it is taking over!

For Parents & Caregivers

The Science of Screen Time:
Raising Thriving Kids in the Early Years

- Struggling with screen time limits?
- Get clear, research-based guidance.
- Cut through conflicting advice easily.
- Learn science-backed strategies with humor.
- Help kids thrive in a digital world.

Date: Thurs, May 1st, 2025

Time: 6 p.m. - 7:15 p.m.

Location: VIRTUAL

Zoom link will be emailed

REGISTRATION

Use the QR code or this link to register:
<https://forms.gle/8YvscnQ3c15SwbF6>

Attend live for a chance to win a book recommended by Erin



FREE

For Professionals

From Apps to Laps:
Developmentally Appropriate Uses of Technology in Early Childhood

- Get the latest science on screen time.
- Learn practical strategies for healthy media use.
- Understand screen time's impact on development.
- Gain tools to support families effectively.
- Engage in a research-based, interactive workshop.

Date: Friday, May 2nd, 2025

Time: 12 p.m. - 2 p.m.

Location: VIRTUAL

Zoom link will be emailed

Cost: \$30

(scholarships available)

REGISTRATION

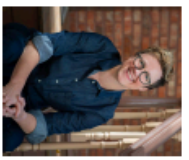
Use the QR code or this link to register:
<https://forms.gle/E59nEZwRwAgwC16>



Events will be recorded and available for 30 days after the event.

Erin Walsh, M.A.

Co-founder, Spark & Stitch Institute



Erin Walsh is a parent who has worked with communities across the country to help them navigate the challenges of raising kids in today's digital world. As the co-founder of Spark & Stitch Institute, she partners with parents, schools, and communities to make sense of child development—especially in relation to technology and screens. Her signature down-to-earth approach and sense of humor help families and educators engage with complex topics, leaving them feeling capable and motivated.

Thank you to our amazing sponsors, this event is free! (Additional sponsors needed!)

Sauk Rapids-Rice Elem Parent-Teacher Associations



milestones Ellison Center

office@ellisoncenter.org

CAREGIVER
SUPPORT PROGRAM

Do you ever find yourself...

Wishing your child would just listen better?

Struggling with chaos at bedtime or mealtime?

Feeling overwhelmed when your child tantrums or acts out?



We Can Help!

Raising children is important work, and sometimes it presents unique challenges! Ellison Center's Caregiver Support Program helps families of young children build their "caregiving toolkit" through individualized support for each family. This is not a parent support group!

You choose the goals and priorities that you would like assistance with while working one-on-one with a member of our team.

Participating families will receive up to seven visits. This Caregiver Support Program is FREE to families thanks to grant funding.

Caregivers are adults currently providing primary care for a young child. Culturally responsive services are available for English, Spanish, and Somali speaking families.

Get Connected:

For more information on this Caregiver Support Program or to refer a family please contact Sara Falk at 320-413-6413 or Sara@elliscenter.org. Or access the referral form by clicking the arrow or scanning the QR code below.



Family Eligibility

Families living in the central Minnesota area with a child age 8 or younger are eligible to participate in the Caregiver Support Program at no cost.



Caregiver Visits

Visits are 45-50 minutes long and can occur in our office, virtually, or your home (for families living in the St. Cloud metro area).

Supporting you in your caregiving role is the primary focus of these visits. Visits will be with an Ellison Center team member and adult caregivers.

Children may participate in Caregiver Support visits when it is determined helpful in meeting the caregiver's goals.

Disabilities Resource Fair

This free event provides resources and support to families of individuals with disabilities of ALL ages (birth to adulthood). All are welcome to attend, including those who do not live in the Buffalo-Hanover-Montrose School District.

Seminars

“What Are They Trying To Tell Me?”

Bridging communications through a person-centered lens
 Nick Vasquez, LMFT
 Heather Wilford, BCBA with Mains'l Services

5-6 p.m.

5-8 p.m.

Discovery Center
214 1st Ave. NE, Buffalo, MN

5-8 p.m.

Tuesday
April 22



Details

- Enter Discovery Door #6.
- This is a sensory friendly event, and break spaces will be available as needed.
- Buffalo Pizza will provide food for purchase.

Vendor Fair

Representatives from nearly 40 agencies will provide information and answer questions about community integration, county services, health and wellness, life planning, housing, transportation, employment and much more.

More info

Contact BHM Special Services at 763.682.8715, or use your phone to scan this QR code.



**Sponsored by Autism Allies and the
Special Services Department of BHM Schools**

