

Our current and past family newsletters are posted to our website. Check them out at <https://firststepscentralmn.org/for-families>

Practicing Self-Compassion

(taken from <https://tinyurl.com/h63j473m>)

Take a moment in your day to practice self-compassion. This activity is especially useful in a moment of stress, or when you notice self-criticism coming to the surface.

1. Take a deep breath and a long slow exhale
2. Acknowledge and name the emotion you are feeling
3. Notice how your body feels—is there any tightness or discomfort? Where?
4. Now, place one or both hands on your heart
5. Take a deep breath and a long slow exhale
6. Intentionally bring kindness to yourself.
7. If it helps, imagine this kindness as a soft golden light that fills your chest. If this is difficult, imagine how you might comfort a dear friend who is suffering and turn that nurturing support toward yourself.
8. Take a few deep breaths with your hand on your heart
9. Relax and open your eyes

Alcohol During Pregnancy

Alcohol crosses the placenta during pregnancy and can damage the central nervous system and other organs of an unborn baby. Alcohol use during pregnancy is the leading preventable cause of birth defects in the US. All types of alcoholic beverages contain chemicals (called teratogens) that can impact baby's development and permanent disability with lifelong effects. Prenatal alcohol exposure as early as 3 weeks after conception can disrupt the development of baby's brain, spinal cord, and heart.

Bottom line--

During pregnancy, there is no safe kinds, time, or amount of alcohol consumption.

Learn more at <https://tinyurl.com/2ys4tc> and talk to your healthcare provider and PHN for additional resources to have a healthy pregnancy and baby.

"Compassion for others begins with kindness to ourselves."

– Pema Chodron

MN Women, Infant & Children Nutrition Program (WIC) is increasing the fruit and vegetable cash value benefit for participants to \$35 a month for four months. Currently, children receive \$9 and women \$11 a month for fruit and vegetable purchases. Minnesota WIC will be implementing this increase beginning June 1, 2021 through September 30, 2021.

Many WIC eligible families are not currently enrolled in the WIC program and could use the additional food support. For more information about WIC, how to apply, and how to find your local WIC agency, check out:

<https://www.health.state.mn.us/people/wic/>

READING COLORS

Your WORLD



Join us June 7 to August 7 For our Summer Reading Program
"Reading Colors Your World! For Pre-readers (0-3), ages 3 to 6th grade, and Teens.

Keep track of your reading and do fun activities throughout the summer to enter prize drawings. Pick up a reading log at your library or log with Beanstack at griver.beanstack.org or on the Beanstack Tracker app.

Learn more at: <https://griver.org/kids/summer-reading-program>

See page 5 for a print out of the Summer Reading Log

GRRL also offers Storytime in the Park across the region. More details found at:

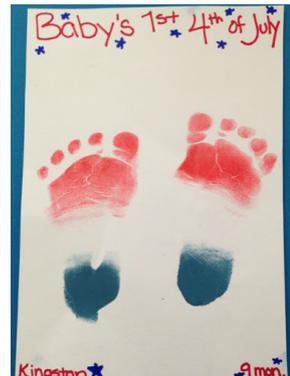
<https://tinyurl.com/aapshvxj>

Date	Event	Branch	Time
Fri Jul 2, 2021	● Storytime	Big Lake	10:30 AM
Tue Jul 6, 2021	● Storytime	Becker	10:30 AM
Tue Jul 6, 2021	● Zoom Color Storytime-YELLOW	Saint Cloud	10:30 AM
Wed Jul 7, 2021	● Flower Garden Storytime	Albany	11:00 AM
Wed Jul 7, 2021	● Flower Garden Storytime	Melrose	1:00 PM
Thu Jul 8, 2021	● Treehouse Storytime	Saint Michael	10:30 AM
Fri Jul 9, 2021	● Storytime	Big Lake	10:30 AM
Mon Jul 12, 2021	● ECFE Story Time at the Library Session 1	Kimball	10:15 AM
Mon Jul 12, 2021	● LIVE Family Storytime presented via Zoom	Rockford	10:30 AM
Mon Jul 12, 2021	● Story Time at the Library	Elk River	10:30 AM
Mon Jul 12, 2021	● ECFE Story Time at the Library Session 2	Kimball	11:00 AM
Mon Jul 12, 2021	● Drive-thru Storytime: Things that Fly	Monticello	12:30 PM
Tue Jul 13, 2021	● Zoom Color Storytime-BLACK & WHITE	Saint Cloud	10:30 AM
Wed Jul 14, 2021	● Space Storytime	Melrose	9:00 AM
Wed Jul 14, 2021	● Space Storytime	Albany	11:00 AM
Fri Jul 16, 2021	● Storytime	Big Lake	10:30 AM
Mon Jul 19, 2021	● ECFE Story Time at the Library Session 1	Kimball	10:15 AM
Mon Jul 19, 2021	● LIVE Family Storytime presented via Zoom	Rockford	10:30 AM
Mon Jul 19, 2021	● Story Time at the Library	Elk River	10:30 AM
Mon Jul 19, 2021	● ECFE Story Time at the Library Session 2	Kimball	11:00 AM
Tue Jul 20, 2021	● Storytime	Becker	10:30 AM
Tue Jul 20, 2021	● Zoom Color Storytime-PURPLE	Saint Cloud	10:30 AM
Wed Jul 21, 2021	● Animated Ocean Storytime	Melrose	9:00 AM
Wed Jul 21, 2021	● Animated Ocean Storytime	Albany	11:00 AM
Wed Jul 21, 2021	● Drive-thru Storytime: Rainbow Fun!	Monticello	12:30 PM
Fri Jul 23, 2021	● Storytime	Big Lake	10:30 AM
Mon Jul 26, 2021	● LIVE Family Storytime presented via Zoom	Rockford	10:30 AM
Mon Jul 26, 2021	● Story Time at the Library	Elk River	10:30 AM
Tue Jul 27, 2021	● Zoom Color Storytime-RED	Saint Cloud	10:30 AM
Wed Jul 28, 2021	● Pete the Cat Storytime	Melrose	9:00 AM
Wed Jul 28, 2021	● Pete the Cat Storytime	Albany	11:00 AM
Thu Jul 29, 2021	● "I Love Minnesota!" Storytime	Royalton	3:00 PM
Fri Jul 30, 2021	● Storytime	Big Lake	10:30 AM

Craft Corner

Here are activities to do with your child to celebrate special days in June:

- July 1: International Joke Day
 - Check out some riddles at <https://tinyurl.com/r7ej3356>
- July 4: Independence Day
 - Yogurt Sensory Play: <https://tinyurl.com/9ck24uxa>
 - 4th of July Footprint Keepsake: <https://tinyurl.com/bmzrh3js>



- July 13: Cow Appreciation Day
 - Paper Plate Cow <https://tinyurl.com/3ftawd7u> Have your toddler tear the black paper to make the cow's spots and strengthen their fine motor skills.



- July 14: National Mac & Cheese Day
 - Pasta & Play Dough <https://tinyurl.com/tp5crknv>
 - Spaghetti Cutting Bin Scissor Skills Activity <https://tinyurl.com/4hfm5f5f>



Summer Self-Care

Make a list of goals

Sit in the sunshine

Make lemon water

Go on a hike or walk

Spend time in water

Let yourself be a kid

Eat lunch outside

Unplug for the day

Drink your water

Make a fruit salad

Relax to nature sounds

Go out for ice cream

Dress up to feel cute

Make a summer playlist

Make your own popcicles

Eat a watermelon

Take a mid-day nap

Go to a Farmer's Market

Make s'mores or grill

Try watergun painting

Take a ton of pictures

Watch the sunrise

Go on a road trip

Do yoga outside

Focus on being happy

Use sidewalk chalk

Read a good book

Spend all day laughing

Write something beautiful

Go star gazing

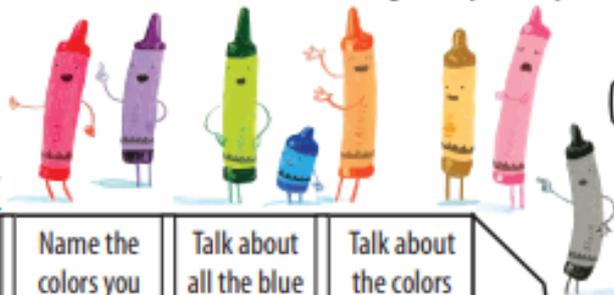
BlessingManifesting

<https://www.blessingmanifesting.com/2017/06/summer-self-care-challenge.html>

READING COLORS Your WORLD

June 7 to August 7 for ages 0 to 3

Complete at least two activities in each crayon, and return to your library for a prize. Or, log at griver.beanstack.org OR the Beanstack Tracker app. (Feel free to sub 15 minutes of reading for any activity!)



TALK

Say words that rhyme with "red."	Name the colors you see during a walk.	Talk about all the blue things you see.	Talk about the colors of fruits & veggies.
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WRITE

Draw with colored chalk on sidewalk.	Draw a rainbow.	Use a crayon on a plate to make a sun.	Mix colors of paint in a zipper bag.
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Contact information you provide here is protected under Minnesota Data Practices statutes. Providing this information is strictly voluntary and will be used only for the specific GRRL program or service advertised. It will be available only to authorized library personnel.

SING

Make up a song about the colors in the rainbow.	Sing a song while finger painting.	Sing a song while outdoors.	Clap to a favorite rhyme.
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PLAY

Use old socks to make puppets. Put on a show!	Roll a ball back and forth.	Tape strings to a stick. Twirl it in the air!	Pretend to paint the sidewalk with water.
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READ

Look through a book about colors.	Look for your favorite color as you read a story.	Read a book with a yellow cover.	Read a book outside.
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Return this to your local library for a chance at a prize!

Name _____

Phone _____

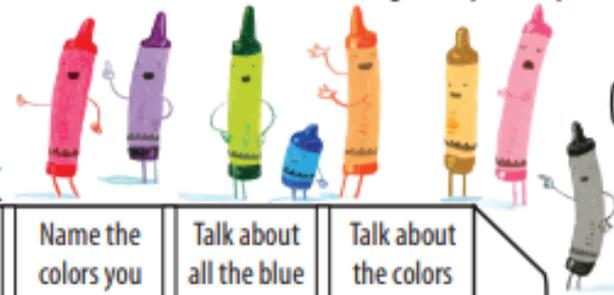
Age _____



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help me



Connect Families with their Local Communities

Help Me Connect is an online service navigator that helps providers connect pregnant individuals and families with young children (birth-8 years old) with services in their community.

When young families thrive, we all do.

Find Families Services and Resources



Healthy Development and Screening

Parenting programs and identify concerns early



Developmental and Behavior Concerns

Services for early intervention, special education and mental health



Disability Services and Resources

Community and family support for children with disabilities



Early Learning and Child Care

Education and child care programs



Family Well-Being and Mental Health

Support the whole family's safety, physical health and mental health



Tribal and American Indian Families

Resources and supports for American Indian families



Additional Caregiving and Community Support

Resources for homeless, immigrants, refugees, teen parents and other family situations



Dental Care

Find and access affordable dental care



Basic Needs

Help with food, housing, transportation and more



Legal Services

Low-cost or free legal services and information



Emergency Resources

Support during crises

How to use

1. **Visit:** helpmeconnectmn.org
2. **Select:** A category to see list of services
3. **Enter:** An address to find services nearby
4. **Create:** Favorites for future use
5. **Contact:** HelpMeConnect@state.mn.us for more information



Help Me Connect is an interagency collaboration between Minnesota's Departments of Education, Health and Human Services. This product is made possible using federal funding, 93.434 - ESSA Preschool Development Grants Birth through Five. Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the Office of Child Care, the Administration for Children and Families, or the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Learn more on the [Preschool Development Grant webpage](https://education.mn.gov/MDE/dse/early/preschgr/). <https://education.mn.gov/MDE/dse/early/preschgr/>