

ECL Monthly

news & updates

February|2023

February 2023						
Notes	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
1 Make a list of what your child is interested in. Spend more time doing those things.	2 Groundhog Day. Go outside. Do you see your shadow?	3 Write your child's name and look at you when you call their name?	4 Give high fives today.	5 Practice home safety and talk about things that are "hot".	6 Talk about emotions. You look sad, happy, etc.	7 Send a card to a loved one. Put "hello" in the mail.
8 Play "I Spy" with your child. Use colors. Can your child identify colors?	9 Sing Pat-A-Cake. Can your child imitate movements?	10 Make your own finger paints by adding food coloring to yogurt.	11 Explore something cold today, like snow or ice cubes.	12 In your child's name, list 2-3 things they like to do.	13 How does your child ask for help? Cry, sign or hand you something?	14 Tell someone "I love you".
15 Follow basic directions: Come here, Stop, No.	16 Build a book about kindness.	17 Do a random act of kindness.	18 Show me your teeth. What other body parts do you know?	19 Practice the word "you" while looking at photos.	20 Follow the directions: "Clean up" your toys.	21 Read a fairy tale today.
22 Follow the directions: "Clean up" your toys.	23 Follow the directions: "Clean up" your toys.	24 Make an indoor obstacle course. Go in, out and on.	25 Make an indoor obstacle course. Go in, out and on.	26 Read a fairy tale today.	27 Follow the directions: "Clean up" your toys.	28 Dress up like a super hero. What action can you do? Fly, jump, help?

Early Communicator Calendar

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First Words Calendar

February 2023						
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Expanding Language Calendar

Tried & True Tips from a Therapist

To Sleep is to Grow

by Marcy Roca, Pediatric Occupational Therapist

Sleep! There is so much emphasis put on baby sleep. There are countless products marketed towards sleep, many schools of thought and old wives' tales. Before baby comes home, people tell you things like, "sleep while you can," "happiness is a sleeping baby," and "always sleep while baby is sleeping." Once the child comes home, how do you manage sleep for those crucial first years of development? How much should baby be sleeping and how do we achieve those sleep goals? What's safe, what's not, and why is sleep so important?

Your Guide To Sleep for Children Birth - Three

**Remember to adjust age for prematurity*

AGE	TOTAL DAILY SLEEP	AVERAGE TIME AWAKE	# OF NAPS	
MONTH	16-18 HOURS	45 MINUTES	MANY NAPS	
1-2 MONTHS	16-18 HOURS	45 MIN TO 1 HOUR	MANY NAPS	
3 MONTHS	14-16 HOURS	1 HOUR 15 MIN	4-5 NAPS	
4 MONTHS	14-15 HOURS	1 HOUR 30 MIN	4-5 NAPS	
5 MONTHS	14-15 HOURS	1 HOUR 45 MIN	3-4 NAPS	
6 MONTHS	14-15 HOURS	2 HRS TO 2 HRS 30 MIN	3 NAPS	
AGE	TOTAL NIGHT TIME SLEEP	TOTAL DAYTIME SLEEP	# OF NAPS	TOTAL SLEEP
6-9 MONTHS	11-12 HOURS	3-4 HOURS	3 NAPS	14-15 HOURS
9-12 MONTHS	11-12 HOURS	2-3 HOURS	2 NAPS	13-14 HOURS
12-18 MONTHS	11-12 HOURS	2-3 HOURS	1-2 NAPS	13-14 HOURS
18-24 MONTHS	11-12 HOURS	2 HOURS	1 NAP	13-14 HOURS
2-3 YEARS	11-12 HOURS	1-2 HOURS	NAP	12-13 HOURS

Sleep is vital for the physical, cognitive and emotional growth of babies and young children. Children really do grow while they sleep! Growth hormones are released during REM sleep. From birth to age two, children spend more time asleep than they do awake. This is when their brains are busiest growing and developing skills such as language, attention, impulse control, and emotional regulation.

It's important to understand the importance of sleep for your child and recognize the signs of sleepiness. This allows you to put the child down to rest before they are overtired and over stimulated. Putting a child to bed drowsy as opposed to soundly sleeping helps the child learn good sleep habits and self-soothing techniques. Taking full advantage of wake windows by playing, reading, and interacting with your child provide the stimulation needed to ensure they are tired when it comes time to sleep.

How Baby Communicates

CRIES, COOS & SOUNDS

FACIAL EXPRESSIONS

EYE PATTERNS

MOUTH MOVEMENTS

HAND MOVEMENTS

OVERALL BODY MOVEMENT

Tired Cues

CRIES, FRUSTRATES EASILY; WHINES

STARING, SLOW BLINKING

RED EYEBROWS

REACHING FOR SLEEP ASSOCIATES (CRIB, PACIFIER)

RELAXED HANDS

RESTING HEAD ON YOUR SHOULDER

Sleep safety is also a topic of concern. The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) updated their safe sleep recommendations in June of 2022. The AAP maintains that Back is Best without anything in the crib except the mattress and a tight-fitting, fitted crib sheet. The AAP promotes human milk, pacifier usage, and room (not bed) sharing. Supervised, awake tummy time is also encouraged to facilitate development and decrease the risk of positional plagiocephaly (flat head). You can read the entire statement from the AAP regarding Safe Sleep [here](#). The **Safe Sleep 360** checklist can help ensure you have a safe sleep space for your baby.



Sleep is important for the developing children in the home and the caregivers providing care. If sleep is a struggle in your home, voice your concerns to your child's pediatrician and your ECI team. If positional plagiocephaly is a concern, please consider having the child evaluated by a pediatric PT or OT or referred to ECI if not currently enrolled.

Spotlight Story - Isaac Young



by Diana Young

Our son smiles now! That may not seem like a big deal to most, but when your baby boy almost never smiled for the first two years of his life, a smile on his face is the best thing in the world! Isaac had a hard beginning. He came from the NICU to live with our family and was in foster care the first year and a half of his life. He captured our hearts immediately and we were overjoyed when he became our forever son.

Isaac's pediatrician referred us to ECI for a speech delay. At the time, he only had three words in his vocabulary, which he hardly ever used. We started speech therapy with our brilliant, wonderful therapist, Ms. Debra. After a few visits, she was able to see that there were other issues that we could use help with and that there was an underlying reason for Isaac's speech delay. She arranged for Isaac to have the perfect team. He gained an occupational therapist, Ms. Barbara, Ms. Kristi, who through play helps us address behavioral challenges in the most creative ways, and Mr. Kevin who I believe Isaac views as one of his best friends...He comes to play with Isaac while he counsels me and my husband on how to best navigate all the aspects of life with a child with special needs. Isaac has developed a sweet bond with each of his therapists and asks for them by name. He looks forward to his "play time" with them and gets excited when he knows they're coming. I too have become attached to each of these people. They have become like good friends to me. They have earned my respect and trust. The knowledge and wisdom that they have imparted on us has been life changing for our family. They have been such an encouragement and help. I have confided in them, cried with them, laughed and rejoiced with them. I believe they love my son and he feels it too. Therapy isn't just a job for these people. They are each so passionate about making a difference and helping their kiddos.



Isaac's occupational therapist has taught us about sensory processing disorders, which I had no idea Isaac was struggling with until she came along. She has educated us to understand how his brain works and



how his sensory system affects almost everything, including his ability to feel regulated and happy. We now understand how we can help our son regulate his sensory system so his brain can learn, so he can regulate his emotions and anxiety, and so he can feel happy and SMILE! Ms. Kristi has come along side, complementing this and has helped us be better parents for

Isaac. She has worked on so many behavioral related things, strategizing with us on how to help Isaac be the best version of himself in ways that are tailored to him and his needs. He now attends a mother's day out preschool program twice a week and is doing great there, following directions, participating, and being with other kids his age! What a victory! Ms. Debra has helped get Isaac on track with his speech. It's amazing! Every week, he is articulating more and more. She doesn't just work with him one hour per week, she teaches us what to do so we can continue working with him all week. Her strategies have been ingenious and his speech is one of his success stories. He now knows how to tell us what he needs, how he feels, and if he needs help. The ability to communicate with him has been such a blessing! Mr. Kevin has been such a valuable sounding board for me as we navigate through all the challenges, questions, dynamics, and feelings that come with our journey. His advice, guidance, and reassurance has been priceless.

We want to say "Thank you!" from the bottom of our hearts to each of these amazing therapists and all of Easter Seals for educating, encouraging, and guiding us and for helping our Isaac thrive. You have given us a solid foundation to help him be his best awesome self as he grows. You have greatly attributed to his story of redemption, love, and success!



In Need of March and April Spotlight Families



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!](#)



HHSC-ECI Quality Assurance Site Visit

Thank you to the 11 families and two preschool centers that participated in the visits observed by the HHSC QA team on January 25 and 26, 2023. The HHSC ECI QA (Quality Assurance) team provides programs throughout Texas with information, training, and support in delivering quality services to children and families enrolled in local ECI programs. This visit was conducted by the QA

team to determine how well our ECI program is implementing training of new providers and delivery of ECI services using the coaching model to children and families enrolled in our program.

Thanks to the Easter Seals ECI providers that were randomly selected by the QA team to be observed. Juli Alexander, Barbara Arispe, Stephanie Davila, Martha Gonzalez, Cathryn Fernandez, Emily Johnson, Michelle Fleckenstein, Susan Morgan, Meredith Plesko, Paige Tesalona, Allie Templin, Brenda Thut and Alexandra Sanchez were the providers selected by the QA Team to be observed over a two-day period.

Overall the initial results of both their review of records and observations of visits have been positive. The QA Team offered some very helpful information regarding strategies that will help our providers be even better at implementing the coaching model when serving our ECI families. This information will be shared with all service providers in the program over the next few weeks.

The QA Team just loved each child and family they observed. They were very pleased at the great job families and caregivers are doing working collaboratively with their ECI partner while using the coaching model! Their suggestions will help us to be even more effective at working together to reach outcomes together!

COVID-19 Updates

Check our [website](#) periodically for the latest memos from our Executive Director, Linda Tapia, click on the orange alert bar at the top on the page.



Resources:

[Valentine Craft Ideas for Babies](#)

[Valentine Activities and Crafts for Toddlers](#)

[Seeing Other People Wearing Masks-A Social Story \(English\)](#)

[Usa Mascara \(Spanish\)](#)

If you are in need help accessing resources, please contact your service coordinator. If you are in need of someone to talk to to help cope with the changes revolving around COVID-19, please contact your service coordinator to reach out to our counseling department. They will follow up with you to help in this critical time.

February Awareness Observations



Month-Long

- Black History Month
- Boost-Your-Self-Esteem Month
- Children's Dental Health Month
- Heart and Stroke Month

Days

- February 2 - Rheumatoid Arthritis
- February 4 - World Cancer Day
- February 11 - World Day of the Sick
- February 12 - International Day of Women's Health
- February 15 - International Childhood Cancer Day
- February 20 - World Day of Social Justice
- February 22 - National Heart Valve Disease
- February 27 - Anosmia
- February 28 - Rare Disease 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.

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