



★ Minnetonka Early Childhood Family Education (ECFE)



Registration Opens May 1 at 8 AM
Visit minnetonkacommunityed.org or scan the QR code.



Welcome to Early Childhood Family Education



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In all that we do, parents are our partners. We look forward to walking alongside you and your child throughout their educational journey—and connecting with your family as part of our school community.

-Superintendent David Law



Families of our Youngest Learners,

Welcome to Minnetonka Public Schools! In our District, each of our students is valued, nurtured, and inspired to excel with confidence and hope. Students of all ages explore and engage with the world around them and are prepared for a future of possibilities.

Our Early Childhood Family Education (ECFE) and Preschool programs can be a family's first steps with Minnetonka Schools. As you review our program opportunities, I hope you find that our ECFE and Preschool classes stand out in several important ways. We offer innovative and flexible class options, designed with families in mind and meant to fit a wide variety of interests, schedules, and needs. Most importantly, we have expert teachers and staff, who provide individualized learning in a warm and welcoming environment.

In all that we do, parents are our partners. We look forward to walking alongside you and your child throughout their educational journey—and connecting with your family as part of our school community.

With warm regards,

David Law | *Superintendent of Schools*



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Contact Us

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<i>Billing & Enrollment</i>	
Attendance Line	952-401-6813
Child & Family Support Program	952-401-6820
Early Childhood Screening	952-401-6840
Early Childhood Special Ed.	952-401-6808
Family Coaching & Support	952-283-8191
Health Office	952-401-5993
Helping Us Grow	952-283-8185
MCEC Front Desk	952-401-6800
School Readiness	952-283-8191
Youth Programs	952-401-6800

**Be Kind.
Be Safe.
Be Helpful.**

Our preschool and ECFE programs are built on these values, helping children and families learn, play and grow in a nurturing environment.



Follow us on Instagram and see how we practice these values!





What is Early Childhood Family Education?

ECFE is based on the idea that parents provide their child's first and most significant learning environment.

ECFE works to support you as a parent/caregiver and to strengthen and empower families. The goal is to enhance the ability of all parents and other family members to provide the best possible environments for their child's learning and development.

MN Department of Education. Early Childhood Family Education.
<https://education.mn.gov/MDE/fam/elsprog/ECFE>

See what an ECFE class looks like!



ECFE is for parents, caregivers and children (birth through Pre-K)

Weekly classes include parent-child interactive activities along with educator led discussions. Follow your child's lead during parent-child time (first half of the class). Parent discussion time (second half of the class) is led by a licensed parent educator. This is an opportunity for parents to process joys and concerns, problem solve and share insights and resources. Topics may include sibling relationships, toilet learning, child development, self-regulation, temperament, sleep and more.



Meet our ECFE Team

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As the proverb goes, it takes a village to raise a child. Grow your village through ECFE!

— ECFE Team



From Left to Right, Anne Levine, *Parent Educator*, Molly Bahneman, *Coordinator of Minnetonka Preschool, ECFE & Junior Explorers*, Jennifer Wenner, *Parent Educator* Sarah Ridgway, *Early Childhood & Parent Educator*, and Linda Morantez, *Early Childhood & Parent Educator*

Early Childhood Family Education (ECFE) plays a vital role in building the village every family needs when raising young children.

It brings together parents and caregivers from a wide range of backgrounds in a welcoming, inclusive environment where they can share experiences, learn from one another, and receive meaningful support. Children are given opportunities to play, explore, and develop in a safe and nurturing setting, while adults connect with others who understand the challenges and joys of parenting. These shared experiences often lead to lasting relationships, including lifelong friendships that continue well beyond the classroom. By honoring our diverse cultural backgrounds, perspectives, and parenting styles, ECFE fosters a strong, respectful community where all families feel valued and supported. More than just an educational program, ECFE strengthens the bonds between families and helps lay the foundation for confident parenting and healthy child development.

Our model of separation is gradual

Strong adult-child relationships provide young children with a sense of **comfort, safety, confidence,** and **encouragement** as they grow more independent. The gradual separation progression in our ECFE classes is an intentional, developmentally appropriate practice that supports the attachment relationship.

What does separation look like in ECFE?

- **Non-Separating Classes:** Parents remain in the parent-child room for the entire session.
- **Gradually Separating Classes:** Parents transition from being in the parent-child room to a separate discussion room over time.
- **Separating Classes:** Parents move to a different room for discussion after the parent-child activity time, while the children enjoy a light snack and further explore the classroom with guidance from a licensed Early Childhood teacher and support staff.

Explore Our Classes

ECFE classes start the week of Sept. 15 | Ages are by Sept. 1, 2025

The * symbol denotes classes with sibling care available.
Learn more about sibling care on page 14.

For
class pricing
see the Sliding
Fee Scale on
page 14

Early Childhood and Family Education: Ages and Stages

ECFE Ages and Stages Classes are designed to foster strong parent-child relationships through interactive activities and educator-led discussions at each developmental stage of your child's life. Join our engaging weekly classes, where mutual support, shared growth, and collaboration embody the spirit of "it takes a village to raise a child."

Title	Age	Description	Class Type	Class Information
On the Move	6-12 mos.	As your newborn transitions into babyhood, you encounter a world of new experiences and milestones together.	Gradually Separating	Tuesdays, Sept. 16-June 9, 9-10:30 AM *
Just Toddling	12-18 mos.	Toddlers are inquisitive and always on the move. Explore parenting your adventurous child during this rapid growth phase.	Gradually Separating	Mondays, Sept. 15-June 8, 9-10:30 AM * or Tuesdays, Sept. 16-June 9, 10:45 AM-12:15 PM *
Curious Climbers	18-24 mos.	Your curious toddler is into everything and expanding their vocabulary daily. Discover how to support their development through play.	Gradually Separating	Tuesdays, Sept. 16-June 9, 9-10:30 AM * or Wednesdays, Sept. 17-June 10, 10:45 AM-12:15 PM *
Big Little Kids	24-36 mos.	Learn how to parent a toddler who is talking, becoming independent, and challenging rules with newfound confidence.	Separating	Tuesdays, Sept. 16-June 9, 10:45 AM-12:15 PM * or Wednesdays, Sept. 17-June 10, 9-10:30 AM *





NEW!

Empowered Parenting: Topic-Focused Learning

Dive deeper into the world of parenting with our Empowered Parenting: Topic-Focused Learning. These classes are designed for parents eager to explore specific topics in greater detail. Whether you're a new parent or a seasoned veteran, you'll find valuable insights and practical strategies to enhance your parenting journey.

Each session focuses on a different aspect of parenting, providing you with the tools and knowledge to navigate the challenges and joys of raising children. Engage in meaningful discussions, share experiences with fellow parents, and gain expert advice tailored to your needs. Join us for an enriching experience that will empower you to be the best parent you can be. Let's grow and learn together in a supportive and nurturing environment. This course is a separating course. Parents move to a different room for discussion after the parent-child activity time, while children enjoy a light snack and further classroom exploration with guidance from a licensed Early Childhood Teacher and staff.

Title	Age	Description	Class Type	Class Information
Emotions	18-36 mos.	Gain practical tools and insights to create a harmonious and supportive environment for both you and your child.	Separating	Thursdays, Sept. 18-Dec. 18, 9-10:30 AM *
Discipline and Limits	18-36 mos.	Learn techniques to set clear limits, foster positive behavior to create a respectful and nurturing relationship with your child.	Separating	Thursdays, Jan. 8-March 12, 9-10:30 AM *
Parental Stressors	18-36 mos.	Discover effective methods to manage parental stress, gaining valuable insights and strategies to confidently and resiliently handle the demands of parenting.	Separating	Thursdays, April 9-June 4, 9-10:30 AM *

The * symbol denotes classes with sibling care available.

Specialized Classes

Oh Baby | Birth-12 months | Non-Separating

Meet other families with newborns and enjoy time with your new baby. Spend the entire class together, engaged in sensory and movement activities and a licensed educator-led discussion. Learn about your baby's growth and development, how to develop healthy eating and sleeping habits and what research tells us about your baby's important first experiences. Sign up for the whole school year or 10 weeks at a time.

Mondays, Sept. 15-June 8, 11 AM-12:15 PM *

Thursdays, Sept. 18-June 4, 10:45 AM-12 PM *

Saturdays, Jan. 10-March 21, 10:45 AM-12 PM *

NEW! Rhythm and Rhyme - Music Class | Birth-36 months | Non-Separating

Join us for a delightful music class designed for children birth to three. In this engaging and interactive class, your little one will explore the world of music through singing, dancing, and playing instruments. Each session is filled with fun activities that promote rhythm, coordination, and social skills. Parents and caregivers are encouraged to participate, making it a wonderful bonding experience. Come and discover the joy of music with your child in a supportive and nurturing environment.

Fridays, Sept. 19-Dec. 12, 9-10 AM *

Fridays, January 9-March 13, 9-10 AM *

Fridays, April 10-June 5, 9-10 AM *

Rise & Shine | 1-4 years | Separating

Experience a winter Saturday morning learning adventure. Enjoy quality time playing and learning together through activities designed for you and your child. Enhance your parenting skills through engaging discussions while your children interact with their peers and teachers. During separation, your child will enjoy a snack and playtime in the gym. Register for Rise & Shine on its own, or add Stay & Play to extend the fun with an additional 30 minutes in the MCEC gym after class.

Saturdays, Jan. 10-March 21, 9-10:30 AM

**For class pricing see the
Sliding Fee Scale on page 12**

The * symbol denotes classes with sibling care available.

ECFE for Everyone | Ages 1-4 | Separating

Join other families with young children for fun, hands-on activities followed by discussion with a licensed parent educator. Conversation topics may range from behavior strategies to sleeping routines to sibling relationships. This class can be a great fit for families with multiple children between the ages of 1-4. Please register each child separately.

Thursdays, Sept. 18-June 4, 8:45-10:15 AM *

Fridays, Sept. 19-June 5, 10:45 AM-12:15 PM *

Parenting in the Great Outdoors | 3-4 years | Non-Separating

At ECCE, we know the importance of cultivating in children (and adults) a love of nature. We have a lovely outdoor space adjacent to our building and are offering a parent-child class that connects young learners with nature, creativity and scientific inquiry. This is a non-separating class where children and parents explore the natural world. We spend as much time outdoors as possible; when weather prevents outdoor activity we bring nature in.

Fridays, Sept. 19-June 5, 9-10 AM *

Ready-Set Preschool | 30-35 months | Separating (on parent-child day)

We recognize that children develop along a continuum and this class is perfect for children who are working towards the independence skills needed for preschool. This unique blend of parent-child time and peer group interaction offers an introductory preschool experience. The child-only day gives your child a chance to interact independently with peers and is led by a licensed early childhood teacher. The parent-child day is playtime together, followed by a separate discussion led by a licensed parent educator.

Mondays, Sept. 15-June 8, 8:45-10:45 AM &

Wednesdays, Sept. 17-June 10, 8:45-10:15 AM *



Finding Community with Minnetonka ECFE

The Azaria family joined ECFE in September 2024, starting with the Big Little Kids class for their three-year-old son and regularly attending Free Fridays. Their five-year-old daughter is enrolled in Pre-K at Minnetonka Preschool.

After moving to the area from out of state last summer, the Azarias discovered Minnetonka Preschool while searching for a preschool program for their daughter. A family friend who had loved the school years earlier also recommended ECFE classes—perfect timing for a family with both a toddler and a preschooler.

Their favorite part? “The sense of community they’ve provided for my family and me.” ECFE helped them build relationships with other parents and caring staff.

“I have felt so welcomed and supported by every staff member in the building, especially the teachers who are so incredibly kind, thoughtful, and helpful.”

One of the most impactful aspects has been the gradual separation model in classes like Big Little Kids. “Before Big Little Kids, my son had separation anxiety... Now he runs off to separation time with barely a wave goodbye (in a good way!).”

“

My favorite part about Minnetonka ECFE is the sense of community they’ve provided for my family and me.

— Emily Azaria



Family Education

Our programs support caregivers of children from birth through the teen years.

Parenting and family support for every stage.
We are here to help you navigate.

Led by licensed educators and professionals, our classes provide evidence-based strategies to strengthen family relationships, enhance child development, and address real-life parenting concerns. Join us to learn, share, and grow alongside other families in a welcoming and supportive environment.

For parents with children ages 3-4

Elevate Your Parenting: Proven Strategies for Success

Our parent-only workshops are designed to provide you with the tools, knowledge, and support you need to navigate the complexities of parenting. Each workshop focuses on utilizing evidence-based resources to provide you with valuable insights and applicable strategies. Engage in meaningful discussions with fellow parents, learn from a licensed parent educator, and gain the confidence to implement effective parenting techniques. Join us for an enriching experience that will empower you to create a positive and nurturing environment for your family. *Includes enrollment in Lunch Bunch for your preschooler.*

Title	Description	Class Information
Positive Solutions for Families	Based on the research-based practices utilized in the social and emotional learning framework, the Pyramid Model, families will learn how to support your child's social and emotional skills and development, understand the why behind challenging behaviors and discover positive parenting approaches to help children learn appropriate behavior.	Wednesdays, Sept. 17-Nov. 19, 11:30 AM-12:30 PM *
The Way of Play	The Way of Play helps parents to nurture calm listeners, cooperative problem solvers, and respectful communicators. "Kids often want parents to play with them, but many parents don't know how to play or see it only as an (often boring) way to kill time." Learn how to lean into playfulness to create moments of connection in the everyday activities of raising a family.	Wednesdays, Jan. 7-March 11, 11:30 AM-12:30 PM *
Good Inside	This class, inspired by Dr. Becky Kennedy's acclaimed book "Good Inside," offers a transformative approach to parenting. Dr. Kennedy shifts the focus from merely shaping children's behavior to cultivating the essential skills needed to raise kind, resilient, and well-rounded individuals.	Wednesdays, April 8-June 10, 11:30 AM-12:30 PM *

See [page 14](#) for class pricing.

Erin Walsh is a parent, speaker, and author who helps families and educators navigate the complexities of adolescence, parenting, and technology. As co-founder of Spark & Stitch Institute, she translates research into practical strategies and is the author of *It's Their World: Teens, Screens, and the Science of Adolescence* (May 2025).

From Apps to Laps: What Young Children Need From Us in a Digital World

Mark your calendar!

Free Workshop for Families & Caregivers
October 22, 2025, 6-8 PM

Young children are immersed in digital technology, yet parents and professionals face conflicting advice—some claim media boosts intelligence, while pediatricians recommend limits. Erin Walsh will simplify the latest research, using stories, warmth, and humor to explore how technology impacts learning and development. She'll provide practical strategies to help young children thrive in a screen-filled world.



Individualized Parent/Caregiver Coaching & Family Support

Children don't come with instructions and parenting does not have a manual! Family education is a state supported program within school districts. FREE coaching is available to parents/caregivers to meet individually with a licensed Parent Educator to discuss or strategize ways to support your unique family. Whether it's the toddler or the teenage years, we can all use a little support!



Scan Here

Helping Us Grow (HUG)

Helping Us Grow



HUG...

because early learning lasts forever.

We can't wait to meet your new arrival! Schedule your free parent coaching visit today.

Did you know? Every family in the Minnetonka School District with a child from birth-36 months is eligible for a free gift and parenting

resource bag courtesy of Minnetonka Schools, local community partners, and Helping Us Grow. A licensed parent educator will come to your home to drop off the bag and set up a time to meet with you either virtually or in person. We would love the opportunity to get to know you and your family!



Scan Here



Free Fridays

10:30-11:30 AM • See class dates online.

Free Fridays are a great opportunity to experience our early childhood programs at no cost! These one-hour classes provide a fun and engaging environment for children, alongside their caregivers. Registration opens two weeks before each class date—come and try us out!

Title	Description	
Friday Friends <i>For all ages</i>	<i>Let's play!</i> This class is designed to give your child the opportunity to connect with others through play. This class takes place in an environment specifically designed for little ones and provides them the opportunity to practice their budding social and emotional skills. Facilitated by a licensed parent educator, parents will learn how to support the skills necessary for children to thrive in social situations.	
Once Upon a Storytime <i>For ages birth-36 months</i>	<i>Let's read!</i> Minnetonka ECCE and Helping Us Grow (HUG) invite you and your family to join us for story time. Your family will have a chance to visit with other parents with small children and enjoy stories and songs. Older siblings are welcome. Each family will go home with a free book!	
Science Fridays <i>For ages 1-4 years</i>	<i>Let's experiment!</i> Through guided activities we will begin the process of inquiry and exploration. Each activity can be easily replicated at home to provide hours of fun for you and your little one.	



Early Childhood Screening

Early Childhood Screening is a free and easy check-up on your child's growth and development, required by the State of Minnesota for preschool-aged children (ages 3-5) before entering public school.

Learn about your child's

- Vision
- Hearing
- Height and Weight
- Large and fine muscle skills
- Thinking, language and communication skills
- Social and emotional development
- Immunization status

Schedule a screening today!



ECFE in the Community



Parents as Partners

We'd love to hear from you!



Your help means a lot!

Join our team!

We are a group of volunteer parents committed to supporting our school. We organize fundraising events, host community outreach activities like play dates & family fun events, & meet monthly to coordinate with MCEC staff to plan all our exciting initiatives.

We'd love to meet you! You can email us at mtkapreschoolpto@gmail.com or scan the QR code to learn more!



THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS **Maynards** **ALERUS**



The Minnetonka Preschool & ECCE PTO Presents

SPRING FAIR

Friday, May 30th

- LIVE MUSIC WITH THE JOLLY POPS
- FOOD TRUCKS
- SILENT AUCTION
- FACE PAINTING
- TONKA PRIDE SALE
- TROLLEY TOURS AND MORE!!

Join us 5-7pm at MCEC all are invited!



“

My favorite part about ECCE is feeling safe, welcomed and supported to share any feelings as a parent and also knowing my toddler is in safe, welcoming, supportive hands.

— ECCE Parent

Pricing & Policies

ECFE class fees are based on a sliding fee scale.

2025-26 ECFE Sliding Fee Scale				
Gross Annual Household Income	Weekly ECFE Classes	10 Week Classes	Sibling Care Per Child	Sibling Care Per Child (10 weeks)
Over \$130,000	\$655	\$182	\$340	\$94
\$100-129,999	\$558	\$155	\$326	\$90
\$80-99,999	\$459	\$127	\$280	\$78
\$60-79,999	\$361	\$100	\$219	\$61
\$40-59,999	\$263	\$73	\$147	\$41
Under \$40,000	No Fee	No Fee	\$27	\$8

The fees listed on the Sliding Fee Scale below are based on your family's combined gross household income, per Minnesota law.

Sibling Care | 3 months-5 years

The * symbol denotes classes with sibling care available. Trained paraprofessionals provide a warm and friendly atmosphere with weekly art activities. Register for sibling care at the same time as ECFE classes. See sliding fee chart above for sibling care fees. The drop-in sibling care fee is \$15 and based upon availability. *Please note: Parents must remain in the building while their children attend sibling care.*



Learn more about
our policies



Cancellations & Refunds

Full refunds are given when Minnetonka Preschool & ECFE cancels a course you are registered for (you will be notified via email). If you need to withdraw from a class, the request must be submitted via email to Dorothea.McCabe@MinnetonkaSchools.org. Please include your child's name, name of the class and the last day attending in the email.

For ECFE families, refund requests must be received 5 business days before the first day of class for a full refund minus a \$20 cancellation fee. No refunds are given for missed classes. No refunds are issued when requests are received less than 5 business days before the first day of class.

1000 Hours Outside

An Evening with Ginny Yurich

Join us
in May!

Free Workshop for Families and Caregivers

Excelsior Elementary
Tuesday, May 6, 2025 | 6-8 PM

Learn how to get back to a healthier, more engaging relationship with the world outside. With a mom's heart and an educator's eye, Ginny shows you:

- The importance of unstructured play for children
- What boredom actually contributes to our brains
- The value of sunlight and social play
- The role of play in lifelong learning



Preschool Open House 2026

Join us for the 2026 Minnetonka Preschool Open House on Saturday, January 31, 2026. At this event you will be able to meet the teachers, tour classrooms, ask questions, and learn more about Minnetonka Preschool.



How to Register

Registration opens on
May 1 at 8 AM



ONLINE

minnetonka.ce.eleyo.com



VIA PHONE

952-401-6812



IN PERSON

4584 Vine Hill Road,
Excelsior, MN



See the fun in action!

**Follow Us on Facebook
& Instagram!**

@minnetonkapreschoolecf
@minnetonkapreschool



Minnetonka Community Education
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Excelsior, MN 55331

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Hopkins, Minn.



Start Your Educational Journey With **Minnetonka Preschool**

For students ages 33 months-5 years

**Space Still
Available for
the 2025-26
School Year!**



To register, visit minnetonkacommunityed.org or scan the QR code.