

CONNECTIONS

October 2026



Basics for a child's good mental health:

- Unconditional love
- Self-confidence and high self-esteem
- Opportunities to play with other children
- Encouraging teachers and supportive caretakers
- Safe and secure surroundings
- Appropriate guidance, instructive discipline
- Praise & encouragement
- Realistic & age-appropriate goal
- Make time to play with your child
- Avoid nagging, threats and bribery
- Avoid sarcastic remarks

Mental Health Matters



Children will develop self-confidence, high self-esteem, and a healthy emotional outlook on life when they have good mental health. With good mental health, children will be able to think clearly, develop socially, and learn new skills.



EAU CLAIRE
AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT



CONTACT INFORMATION



Prairie Ridge Early Learning School:
3031 Epiphany Lane, Eau Claire, WI 54703
Phone Number & Attendance Line: 715-852-3600

ECASD Superintendent - Michael Johnson
mjohanson@ecasd.us
715-852-3006

Director of Early Learning & Elementary
Programming - Heather Grant
hgrant@ecasd.us 715-852-3102

Early Learning Principal - Laurie Haus
lhaus@ecasd.us
715-852-3610

Special Education Program Support - April Krall
akrall@ecasd.us
715-852-3137

Head Start Program Coordinator - Leah Olson
lolson@ecasd.us
715-852-3627

Early Learning School Social Worker -
Morgan Deering
mdeering@ecasd.us 715-852-3240

Family & Community Partnership
Coordinator - Jill Italiano
jitaliano@ecasd.us 715-852-3607

Early Learning School Counselor -
Amanda Nelson
anelson3@ecasd.us 715-852-3612

Bi-Lingual Family Services Facilitator - Spanish
Dianna Babbitt
dbabbitt2@ecasd.us 715-852-3622

Prairie Ridge Secretary - Alyssa Fahrenkamp
afahrenkamp@ecasd.us
715-852-3601

Family Services Facilitator - Brian Doxsie
bdoxsiel@ecasd.us
715-852-3650

EC4T Secretary - Missy Devine
mdevine@ecasd.us
715-852-3608

Bi-Lingual Education Assistant/Family Services
Facilitator - Hmong - Tia Lor
tlor2@ecasd.us 715-852-3642

Head Start Secretary - Karen Rodriguez
krodriguez@ecasd.us
715-852-3603

Bi-Lingual Education Assistant/Family Services
Facilitator - Spanish - Maria Kirby
mkirby@ecasd.us 715-852-3614

Student Transit
715-839-5116

ECASD Central Office
715-852-3001

NOTE FROM PRINCIPAL LAURIE HAUS

October 2026

Dear Families,

We are off to a great school year! It's fun to see students learning school routines and play skills and building relationships with staff and other students!

We implement PBIS (Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports). Our motto at school is "We are safe, we are helpful, we are ready". We practice what this means in the classroom, on the playground, and all school environments. Throughout the year we focus on different character traits to make us strong and more resilient. We started the year with a focus on kindness. Now, we will be learning about respect. We define respect as seeing value in all people and things and treating them with care. We practice this in all we do at school. We hope you can extend this at home.

Please take a few minutes to read this newsletter so you can learn about resources and more information about the ECASD Early Learning program.

Please reach out to your child's teacher or the Early Learning office (715-852-3600) if you have any questions. We are here to partner with you and support your child's growth this year.

Laurie Haus
Early Learning Principal



Prairie Ridge
Early Learning School



SCHOOL DAYS CALENDAR & MENUS

Eau Claire Area School District Prairie Ridge School					OCTOBER 2026				
Monday					Tuesday				
Wednesday					Thursday				
Friday					Saturday				
Breakfast Pineapple Tidbits Assorted Cereal Lunch French Bread Pizza Steamed Carrots Celery Sticks Chilled Peaches					Breakfast Seedless Grapes French Toast Sticks Lunch Cheesy Breadsticks Bush's Baked Beans Broccoli Buds Banana				
Breakfast Spiced Applesauce Egg & Cheese Bite w/Toast Lunch Fish Sticks w/Breadstick Steamed Broccoli Cherry Tomatoes Mandarin Oranges					Breakfast Chilled Pears Blueberry Mini Loaf Lunch Beef Walking Taco Whole Kernel Corn Tossed Green Salad Fresh Plum				
Breakfast Mixed Fruit Cinnamon Apple Mini Loaf Lunch Oven Baked Popcorn Chicken Whipped Potatoes Cherry Tomatoes Chilled Pears					Breakfast Mandarin Oranges Sausage & Biscuit Lunch Cheese Pizza Whole Kernel Corn Cucumber Slices Pineapple Tidbits				
Breakfast Pineapple Tidbits Assorted Cereal Lunch Baked Chicken Tenders w/Breadstick Bush's Baked Beans Cauliflower Florets Fresh Apple					Breakfast Applesauce Scrambled Eggs w/Ham & Toast Lunch Mandarin Orange Chicken w/Rice Steamed Broccoli Baby Carrots Chilled Peaches				
Breakfast Pineapple Tidbits Banana Mini Loaf Lunch Cheesy Breadsticks Green Beans Baby Carrots Frozen Fruit Juice Cup					Breakfast Applesauce Breakfast Scrambler Pizza Lunch Mini Corn Dogs Sweet Potato Fries Celery Sticks Banana				
Breakfast Chilled Peaches Pancake & Sausage Bites Lunch Crispy Chicken Patty on a Bun Green Peas Broccoli Buds Fresh Plum					Breakfast Fresh Apple Assorted Cereal Lunch Soft Shell Beef Taco Bush's Texas Ranchero Beans Tossed Green Salad Chilled Pears Cookie				

100% Juice is served with all breakfasts
Milk is included with all meals

NO SCHOOL

NO SCHOOL

NO SCHOOL

NO SCHOOL

NO SCHOOL

This Institution is an Equal Opportunity Provider

All menus are subject to change due to availability.

If you believe you may qualify for
free or reduced meals, please go to
myschoolapps.com or use the
QR code to the left

MY SCHOOL BUCKS
PAY FOR MEALS ONLINE
MySchoolBucks.com

TO REPORT YOUR CHILD ABSENT:

1. CALL STUDENT TRANSIT

715-839-5116

2. CALL THE EARLY LEARNING

ATTENDANCE LINE:

715-852-3600

OR

ENTER THE ABSENCE IN

INFINITE CAMPUS



FAMILY EVENTS

Upcoming Events in October:

Monday, October 12th 5:00-6:30 PM Early Learning Visits the Apple Orchard

Thursday, October 15th Family Conferences

Tuesday, October 20th 5-7 PM Triple P Parenting Class

Friday, October 30th 9:30-11 AM Storytime at Prairie Ridge

ECASD Early Learning offers many ways for families to get involved. Family events are FREE and open to any preschool age children and their families, unless specified. If ECASD schools are closed due to the weather, the event is cancelled.

Register for any of the events online at this link:

[Click here](#)



SPONSORED THE EAU CLAIRE AREA SCHOOL
DISTRICT'S EARLY LEARNING PROGRAM

CORN MAZE!
PLAYGROUND!
APPLE TREES!

FREE!

Early Learning Visits the APPLE ORCHARD

MONDAY,
OCTOBER 12TH

TIME: 5:00-6:30PM

BUSHEL AND A PECK ORCHARD
18444 COUNTY HWY OO,
CHIPPEWA FALLS

WAYS TO REGISTER:

715-852-3622

DBABBITT2@ECASD.US

REGISTER BY CLICKING [HERE](#)

EVERY CHILD THAT
ATTENDS WILL RECEIVE A
FREE APPLE FROM THE
ORCHARD



ECASD EARLY LEARNING



EAU CLAIRE 4 TOMORROW



HEAD START

Parenting Class

Join this free four week parenting class, hosted by Prairie Ridge Early Learning in collaboration with the Family Resource Center and Triple P

INCENTIVES

- Free on-site child care
- Free light dinner from 5-5:30
- Door prizes at each class
- If you attend all 4 classes, your family will receive a \$30 Walmart gift card

DATES

All time 5 PM to 7 PM

- October 20
- November 3
- November 17
- December 1

REGISTRATION

[Click here](#)



for every parent

For more information call 715-852-3650 or email bdoxsie1@ecasd.us



***Head Start Families
Welcome!***

**Policy
Committee
Meeting**

**October 20th at
1:30**

Come join us, see what we do,
share ideas, meet the team, and
share the leadership.

Virtually Every 3rd
Tuesday of the month

Interested contact :

Anna Trippler onatripp22@gmail.com
or Leah Olson lolson@ecasd.us

Sponsored by the Eau Claire Area School District's Early Learning Program

STORYTIME AT PRAIRIE RIDGE

Friday, October 30th 9:30–11:00 am



Ways to register:

715-852-3650

Email bdoxsie1@ecasd.us

[Click Here](#)

Scan QR Code to register
online



PLAYTIME!
CRAFTS!
SNACKS!
TOYS!

All are welcome! Join this fun, free, and interactive group for pre-school aged children. You and your child will experience story time, hands on activities, and lots of learning through play. Snack will be provided.



Prairie Ridge Early Learning School 3031 Epiphany Lane Eau Claire, WI 54703

COMMUNITY PARTNER EVENTS



Storytime

September 22–December 11
Youth Program Room

All storytimes feature an assortment of age-appropriate stories, rhymes, fingerplays, flannels, music, and movement to help your child develop early literacy and school readiness skills.



Bouncing Babies

Tuesdays • 1 p.m. (20 minutes)
Geared for 0–12 months (pre-walkers) and their caregivers, followed by play group.



Little Movers

Tuesdays • 10:15 a.m. (20 minutes)
Geared for babies on the move (up to 24 months) and their caregivers, followed by play group.



Toddler Storytime

Wednesdays • 10:15 a.m. (20 minutes)
Geared for two- and three-year-olds and their caregivers.

→ Join us after Toddler Storytime for bonus play activities at Toddler Time.



Preschool Storytime

Fridays • 10:15 a.m. (30 minutes)
Geared for three- to five-year-olds and their caregivers, but can be enjoyed by the entire family.

→ Join us after Preschool Storytime for bonus play activities at Preschool Play.

→ Monster Bash will replace Preschool Storytime on October 30.



For more
Storytime info,
scan the QR
code.



No registration required • 715-839-5007
ysstaff@eauclaire.lib.wi.us • ecpubliclibrary.info/kids

COMMUNITY PARTNER EVENTS

Youth Services Calendar of Events

October 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
 Chippewa Valley Book Festival 2026 October 19–24 To view all the lineup details and info visit www.cvbookfest.org				1 Teen BookBox available	2 10:15 a.m. Preschool Storytime 10:45 a.m. Preschool Play	3 10:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m. Dabble Box Open Lab 10:30 a.m. Pablo Center ARTmobile
4 	5 3:30–6 p.m. Dabble Box Open Lab	6 10:15 a.m. Little Movers 1 p.m. Bouncing Babies 3:30–6 p.m. Dabble Box Open Lab	7 10:15 a.m. Toddler Storytime 10:45 a.m. Toddler Time 5 p.m. Book Scouts (Grades 2–4)	8	9 10:15 a.m. Preschool Storytime 10:45 a.m. Preschool Play 7 p.m. There's Been a MURDER: Teen Late Night	10 10:30 a.m. Pablo Center ARTmobile
11 	12 3:30–6 p.m. Dabble Box Open Lab	13 10:15 a.m. Little Movers 1 p.m. Bouncing Babies 3:30–6 p.m. Dabble Box Open Lab 6:30 p.m. Teen Litwits	14 10:15 a.m. Toddler Storytime 10:45 a.m. Toddler Time 5:30 p.m. 3D Print Design Workshop: Photographic Light Ornaments	15 11 a.m. Laser Engraving Workshop: Pet Tags 2 p.m. Peculiar Planters 5 p.m. Laser Engraving Workshop: Pet Tags	16 10 a.m. Communication Screenings 10:15 a.m. Preschool Storytime 10:45 a.m. Preschool Play 1 p.m. Circus Science Spectacular	17 10:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m. Dabble Box Open Lab 10:30 a.m. Pablo Center ARTmobile
18	19 11 a.m. V.T. Bidania Book Festival Event 1 p.m. Minecraft Party 3:30–6 p.m. Dabble Box Open Lab 5:30 p.m. Teen Interactive Movie: Labyrinth	20 10:15 a.m. Little Movers 1 p.m. Bouncing Babies 3:30–6 p.m. Dabble Box Open Lab	21 10:15 a.m. Toddler Storytime 10:45 a.m. Toddler Time	22 5 p.m. Book Scouts (Grades 5–7)	23 10:15 a.m. Preschool Storytime 10:45 a.m. Preschool Play 4:30 p.m. Matt Forbeck: Playing with Books	24 10:30 a.m. Pablo Center ARTmobile
25 	26 3:30–6 p.m. Dabble Box Open Lab	27 10:15 a.m. Little Movers 1 p.m. Bouncing Babies 3:30–6 p.m. Dabble Box Open Lab	28 10:15 a.m. Toddler Storytime 10:45 a.m. Toddler Time	29	30 10:15 a.m. Monster Bash	31 10:30 a.m. Pablo Center ARTmobile
 • Infant/Preschool events • School-age events • Teen events • Family events		 To see ALL events, scan the QR code.		715-839-5007 ysstaff@eauclaire.lib.wi.us 		
				 Registration is required for some events. See reverse for details.		

Youth Services Events • October 2026

Storytime

September 22–December 11 • Youth Program Room

All storytimes feature age-appropriate stories, rhymes, fingerplays, flannels, music, and movement. No registration required.

Bouncing Babies Storytime • Tuesdays • 1 p.m.

Little Movers Storytime • Tuesdays • 10:15 a.m.

Toddler Storytime • Wednesdays • 10:15 a.m.

→ Join us after Toddler Storytime for bonus play activities at Toddler Time.

Preschool Storytime • Fridays • 10:15 a.m.

→ Join us after Preschool Storytime for bonus play activities at Preschool Play.

→ Monster Bash will replace Preschool Storytime on October 30.

Free Communication Screenings (Ages 2-5)

Friday, October 16 • 10 a.m.–12 p.m. • Youth Services Department

Speech, language, and/or hearing screenings will take approximately 15 minutes and will be completed by graduate student clinicians in the Communication Sciences and Disorders program at UW-Eau Claire. Registration recommended.

Monster Bash

Friday, October 30 • 10:15–11:45 a.m. • Riverview Room

Bring your little ghosts and ghouls to the library for an interactive storytime, creepy crafts, spooky snacks, a prowling parade, and more. Costumes are encouraged!

Book Scouts Book Club (Grades 2-4)

Wednesday, October 7 • 5–6 p.m. • Youth Program Room

Book Scouts explore a variety of literary genres (such as science fiction, fantasy, mystery, and non-fiction) in both chapter book and graphic novel formats. Join us for lively discussions, games, and artistic projects inspired by our monthly read. Registration required.

WI Science Festival: The Circus Science Spectacular (Grades K-6)

Friday, October 16 • 1–2 p.m. • Riverview Room

This innovative and entertaining educational offering uses the magical world of circus to teach concepts like Forces and Motion, Simple Machines, Matter, Air Power, Chemical Reactions, and more! No registration required.

Book Scouts Book Club (Grades 5-7)

Thursday, October 22 • 5–6 p.m. • Youth Program Room

Discuss books and do hands-on activities inspired by our monthly read. Participants vote for their book selection each month, and we will explore a variety of genres (novels, graphic novels, non-fiction, etc.). Registration required.

EVENTS FOR TEENS (Grades 7-12)

To register for teen events, go to www.ecpubliclibrary.info/teens or call Youth Services at 715-839-5007.

There's Been a MURDER: A Teen Late Night

Friday, October 9 • 7–10 p.m. • Library Wide

Join other teens in solving a "murder" mystery after-hours in the library. Expect clues and silly fun, mixed in with choose-your-own activity free time. Snacks served. Registration and parent permission slip required.

For more Storytime info, scan the QR code.



Teen Litwits Book Club

Tuesday, October 13 • 6:30–7:30 p.m. • Carnegie Room

Talk about books you love (or hate) without fear of non-readers getting you down. Registration required.

3D Print Design Workshop: Photographic Light Ornaments

Wednesday, October 14 • 5:30–6:30 p.m. • RCU Dabble Box

Turn any photo-quality image into a decorative ornament using your own digital photos or generated themed images. We will be using AI to tile the image, so please set up an account on leonardo.ai before the workshop. Registration required.

Laser Engraving Workshop: Pet Tags (Grades 9+)

Thursday, October 15 • 11 a.m.–1 p.m. or 5–7 p.m. • RCU Dabble Box

Learn how to use the library's laser engraver to create your own pet tag. Choose to attend one of the two available sessions. Registration required.

Peculiar Planters

Thursday, October 15 • 2–3 p.m. • Innovation Lab

We're putting the "horror" in horticulture. Sculpt an eyeball, a skull, or creepy crawly critters on a planter. Registration required.

Teen Interactive Movie: Labyrinth

Monday, October 19 • 5:30–7:15 p.m. • Riverview Room

Get ready for a memorable, interactive viewing experience of the beloved 1980s classic, *Labyrinth*! Audience members will receive props and cues to use throughout the movie. Snacks served. Registration is required.



CHIPPEWA VALLEY BOOK FESTIVAL EVENTS

For the complete list of events, visit www.cvbookfest.org

V.T. Bidania: A History Stretching Across Oceans & Generations (Grades K-12 and families)

Monday, October 19 • 11 a.m.–Noon • Riverview Room

Author V.T. Bidania will give a brief overview of the history of the Hmong and their resettlement in the US, and discuss her new middle grade verse novel, *A Year Without Home*. No Registration required.

Minecraft Party (Grades K-12 and families)

Monday, October 19 • 1–3 p.m. • Youth Program Room

Drop in for a high-energy, hands-on celebration of all things Minecraft. Take on creative building challenges, craft your own pixel-inspired creations, and jump into games inspired by the books written by Matt Forbeck. No registration required.

Matt Forbeck: Playing with Books (Grades K-12 and families)

Friday, October 23 • 4:30–5:30 p.m. • Riverview Room

Join *New York Times*-bestselling author and award-winning game designer Matt Forbeck for a discussion of the intersection of stories and games and how they interact in books. He will talk about two of his latest projects: a Minecraft game book series called *Minecraft: Roll for Adventure* and the *Marvel Multiverse Role-Playing Game* line. No registration required.

FAMILY RESOURCES

UW-Extension

MONEY \$MART

Issue 1

In This Issue

- What makes a strong goal?
- What if I have a BIG goal?
- How can I increase my chances for success?
- For More Information
- To \$um It Up

Setting Goals for Your Money

A "goal" is a purpose. It's something to aim for. A goal can point you in the direction you want to take.

A good place to start is thinking about what's important to you. You can set goals for your health, your habits, your work, your education, or for your family. Once you know your goal, you can decide how to move forward.

What makes a strong goal?

- It says *specifically* what you want.
- It says *when* you want it.
- It says *why* you want it.
- It says *how much* you need.
- It is *written down* (think about carrying a picture of your goal in your wallet or posting it on the refrigerator).

What if I have a BIG goal?

Big goals can be easier if you break them down into some smaller goals, to be tackled one at a time. As you meet each small step, you will be building confidence, motivation, and a good track record.

When you have a money goal, it's helpful to think about how long it might take to reach it because not many of us can come up with a pile of money overnight.

- Goals to meet in the next few months are called *short-term goals*. Short-term money goals might be saving for the holidays, opening a bank account, or checking your credit report.
- *Medium-term goals* can take a year or two to meet. They take more patience and planning. Some medium-term money goals might be paying off the car, going back to school, or finding a different place to live.
- A money goal that will take more than a couple of years is a *long-term goal*. Long-term money goals could be having a down payment on a house, saving for a child's education, or saving for retirement. Long-term goals can be challenging because it's so easy to put off getting started because "there's always tomorrow."



UW-Extension Money Smart

What if I have more goals than money?

To get to your medium and long-term money goals, you may need to give up something you want right now so you can get something even better in the future.

Besides having too many goals at once, other reasons people might not meet their goals are:

- The goal is out of reach for the amount of time and money available
- Another goal took priority
- The goal is too broad or unclear

How can I increase my chances for success?

Think back to something you needed or wanted in the past.

- How did you get there?
- What support did you need?
- Who helped you reach that goal?
- How did it feel when you got there?

Consider what worked for you in the past, what road blocks came up and how you handled them, and what you learned from that experience.

Be sure to celebrate your success along the way, like when you open a savings account or cut \$20 from your spending.

What else do I need to succeed?

For More Information...

Visit our website for more financial education resources.
finances.extension.wisc.edu

Contact your local Extension Educator:
counties.extension.wisc.edu

For help with balancing your monthly spending plan, contact the nonprofit National Foundation for Credit Counseling (NFCC) at www.nfcc.org or 800.388.2227.

Before you set your money goals, it's helpful to talk about plans, dreams, and values with your family and friends. Having a conversation with those who are close to you can help them understand what you want to do and why. Your friends and family are much more likely to support you if they know why your goals are important to you.

If you have children at home, this may be a good time to talk with them about *needs* (things required to live like food, shelter, transportation) and *wants* (extras that make life more fun and comfortable, or things they'd like to have but that aren't necessary to survive). Needs and wants are different for every person and for every family.

If you begin with the end in mind, you will have a great head start on the goals you want to reach!

To \$um It Up:

- \$ You are more likely to meet your goals when you work on only one or two at a time.
- \$ Too many goals mean you have less money, less time, and less energy to put toward any of them.
- \$ Share your goals with family and friends and ask for their support.
- \$ People who write down their goals are much more likely to reach them.
- \$ If you don't plan where you want to go, you may not like where you end up.

"Money Smart" is provided by UW-Madison Division of Extension as part of the "Money Smart in Head Start" Financial Capability Project funded through the Arvill E. Casey Foundation and reviewed by Peggy Olive, Financial Capability Specialist, UW-Madison Division of Extension. Authored by Sarah Siegel, UW-Extension Wood County. Copyright © 2022 by the Board of Regents of the University of Wisconsin System doing business as the University of Wisconsin-Madison, Division of Extension. All rights reserved. An EEO/AAE employer, University of Wisconsin-Madison Division of Extension provides equal opportunities in employment and programming, including Title VI, Title IX, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act requirements.



HEALTH AND NUTRITION

HEALTHY EATING



National Center on

Health, Behavioral Health, and Safety

Healthy Habits Start Early



Good eating habits begin early in your child's life. As early as infancy, you can help your child grow lifelong healthy eating habits. You are your child's best role model so while you help her to eat healthy, try to do the same too!

Healthy Feeding and Eating

For Your Infant

- It is important to breastfeed for at least 6 months. She will be more likely to have a healthy weight as she gets older.
- Put breast milk or formula, not cereal, in your baby's bottle. Cereal adds extra calories that she doesn't need.
- Try to wait until your baby is around 6 months to start healthy solid foods like pureed vegetables, jarred baby foods, and infant cereals. Starting solid foods too early can lead to problems with overweight and obesity later.
- Around 8 or 9 months try offering your baby small amounts of healthy finger foods like grilled chicken, cooked carrots, and cut up strawberries. This will help your baby learn to eat healthy.
- Breast milk, formula, and water are the best drink choices for your baby. Soda pop, 100% fruit juice, and sport drinks add extra calories to her diet and can harm her new teeth.



For Your Toddler

For Your Toddler

- Offer your toddler healthy snacks like small cubes of cheese, sliced banana, or whole grain crackers two to three times per day. This will help him stay full in between meals and reduce hunger-related temper tantrums.
- Try to be patient with picky eaters. He may need to try a food 10 to 15 times over several months before he will eat it.
- Try giving your toddler a choice between two healthy options. He will be more likely to eat healthy food if he picks it out.
- Milk and water are the healthiest drink choices for your toddler. Soda pop, 100% fruit juice, and sport drinks add extra calories to his diet and can harm his teeth.

For Your Preschooler

- Let your child help you in making healthy meals and snacks. She will be more likely to try healthy foods if she helps out.
- Try to keep your kitchen stocked with simple, healthy snacks like carrots, sliced apples and peanut butter, or string cheese. This will help you and your preschooler eat healthy, even on busy days.
- Milk and water are the healthiest drink choices for your preschooler. Soda pop, 100% fruit juice, and sport drinks add extra calories to her diet and can harm her teeth.

For Yourself and Family

- Your child is learning healthy habits by watching you. Try to eat healthy too.
- Set playtime, mealtime, and bedtime routines to make day-to-day life less stressful.
- Talk with your child's doctor, Head Start staff, and other parents to get healthy eating tips.

