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EARLY CHILDHOOD COUNCIL

LOGAN - PHILLIPS - SEDGWICK

Every child can learn, play & succeed!

December 2025 Newsletter

Announcements

To wrap up our segment featuring our wonderful childcare providers, we are featuring **Paris Medina**. Paris became licensed in August 2025. In May, she lost her childcare position when Sunshine closed their doors. She had been a teacher to six children, many of whom she had cared for since they were babies. Knowing that her classroom families were now without care weighed heavily on her. She made the decision to open her home as a childcare program. She began with three children, along with her own son. She was hesitant to pursue licensing, because the process felt overwhelming, but she's grateful that she did. She became fully licensed in three months. Her dream is to open her own center in the near future. This is her passion, and she is committed to growing, learning, and building a program that supports families and enriches the lives of young children in our community. One of her favorite things about her program is the sense of community they have built together. She wants her program to feel like a home - not a center, not a classroom, but a place where children feel safe, seen and truly connected. They cook, play, and learn together, and support one another through every moment - big and small, and they celebrate as a team. Children thrive when they feel they are part of something bigger than themselves. She is so grateful for all of the support she has received, and couldn't have succeeded without it. We're grateful you are serving our community, Paris!

ECCLPS News

*Colorado Gives Day is December 9th this year! We would like to invite you to consider donating to your favorite nonprofits. We understand that times are tough, and it can be difficult to justify spending extra money, but if you have found value in any of the programs and events that are sponsored by our communities nonprofits, and would like to see them continue, please share what you can. We graciously accept donations of any size. Your impact can go even further this Colorado Gives Day! When you start a monthly gift, Colorado Gives Foundation will match your first donation up to \$100! NOW is the best time to give monthly! Set up your recurring donation today at ColoradoGives.org/ECCLPS

*First Bank's Trivia Week is back, December 1 - 5! Play along on their [blog](#) for a chance to win an extra \$1,000 for ECCLPS! Don't miss your shot to show off your trivia knowledge and boost our impact this Colorado Gives Day. Imagine the amount of good we can do together!

*In January, we're starting a new segment - welcoming and introducing you to our Partners and fellow nonprofit organizations. If you know of an organization that should be included, please send [Aileen](#) an email so we can feature them. Thank you, and have a blessed holiday season!

Noteworthy Items

****You can use the QR Code below to enroll a child under 5 in the program, and also to donate to our program at any time. Or click www.imaginationlibrary.com**



Please join us on KPMX 105.7 the second Wednesday of each month at 9:00 AM to stay up to date on what's happening at ECCLPS.

[Logan County Events](#)
[Sedgwick County Events](#)
[Phillips County Events](#)
[KPMX 105.7](#)
[Media Logic Radio Events](#)

If you have information you would like us to share in our newsletters, please send to [Aileen](#). You can view past issues of our newsletters [HERE](#)

Here's a friendly reminder that our Lending Library is available for your Family Child Care Home. Check out all the great things we have to offer!
[ECCLPS Lending Library](#)

If you need to get fingerprinted for a background check, Identogo has new hours at Family Resource Center. You **must** make an appointment **online** at

<https://www.identogo.com/locations/colorado>

They are open Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9:30 AM - 4:30 PM, and Wednesdays from 9:30 AM - 12:00 PM

[Holiday Survival Guide: Tips for Reducing Stress During the Holidays](#)

Some helpful tips, categorized by age, for keeping holidays joyful.

Save the Date

December 1 - **Country Christmas**

Peerless Theater Gym, Holyoke

3:00 - 8:00 PM **Parade of Lights** at 6:15 PM

December 2 - **Hometown Christmas**

Haxtun Town Hall

5:00 - 8:00 PM

December 2 - **Hometown Christmas**

Logan County Fairgrounds Exhibit Center

5:00 - 7:00 PM

December 4 - **Holiday Parade**

Downtown Julesburg

6:00 PM

December 4 - **Parade of Lights**

Downtown Sterling

6:00 PM

December 6 - **Cookies & Cocoa w/ Santa**

Hippodrome, Julesburg

10:00 - 11:30 AM Free movie to follow

December 16, 18 - **Parade of Trees**

Sterling Public Library 420 N 5th Street

5:00 - 7:45 PM

December 19 - **Cookies with Santa**

1001 E Johnson St. Holyoke

4:00 - 6:00 PM

December 22 - **NO ECCLPS Partner Meeting**

December 22 - **NO Professional Development Training**

December 23 - January 5 - **ECCLPS office closed**. We will return to the office January 6

January 31 - **ECCLPS/NJC ECE Conference**

E.S. French Atrium at NJC 1110 Sidney Ave, Sterling

7:30 AM - 4:30 PM Register [HERE](#)

If the link isn't active yet, try again later.

Learning & Development

ECCLPS Professional Development Training - We will not host a Professional Development Training until February 2026
Please join us at the ECE Conference on January 31st at NJC! Register [HERE](#)
Early bird pricing ends January 16 at midnight
registration closes January 23 at midnight.

[Supporting Social-Emotional Growth through Everyday Classroom Activities](#)

When you provide a safe environment for children to explore and express emotions, you create the foundation for lifelong skills.

[Remove the Bubble Wrap: Why Over-Protection Hinders Healthy Child Development](#)

If we don't allow children the freedom to move their bodies in different ways, how do we expect them to become capable of navigating their environment without getting hurt?

[Cultivating Gratitude in the Classroom](#)

Gratitude is a strong emotion that can shape how children view the world. By teaching gratitude, we show them to always appreciate what they have, recognize the kindness of others, and develop an overall positive outlook on life.

[How to Make the Most of Rainy-Day Recess](#)

Preschool teacher-tested strategies for turning outdoor play into adventurous social and emotional learning - no matter the forecast.

[Are You An Early Educator?](#)

You could get up to \$2,943 back in your 2025 Colorado state tax refund! These two tax credits recognize your essential role providing care and education for Colorado's youngest learners and support your financial stability. Learn how [HERE](#)

[Wins at the Polls for Colorado Children and Families](#)

Learn about some of the items that passed state-wide and gain access to additional resources.

Partner News Links

[Chop-Chop Family](#)

[Baby Bear Hugs](#) - Scroll to bottom to subscribe

[Child Care Aware of America](#) - Scroll to bottom to subscribe

[DECC Newsletter](#) - Click to subscribe

[Green Child Magazine](#) - Click to subscribe

[Our Voice](#) - Subscribe

[CDE The SPARK Newsletters](#)

[ELV Newsletter](#)

[Colorado Shines](#) - Subscribe

[Healthy Child Care Colorado](#) - Scroll to bottom to subscribe

[RMPBS](#) - subscribe

[The Scoop](#) - New and past issues online (weekly publication)

[CDEC](#) - [subscribe](#) or [view online](#)

[PDIS](#) - Petey's PDIS Newsletter

[Mealtime Memos](#) from CACFP

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ECCLA [grants and scholarships](#)

CDE [scholarships](#)

CDHE [resources](#)

COAEYC [funding](#)

PDIS [funding](#)

UC Denver [funding](#)

Daniels Fund [scholarship](#)

NJC [scholarships](#) [T-PREP](#)

[CDEC](#) new grants see if you qualify -

Applications open now

[CDEC](#) Stimulus Matrix

[Preschool Development Grant 0-5](#)

[FFN Grant](#)

[Community Facilities Direct Loan & Grant](#)

[Program in USDA's Rural Development](#)

[Caplan Foundation for Early Childhood](#)

[Grants](#)

[Grant Watch](#)

Family Support and Education

Throughout this month's newsletter, you'll notice a theme - "Less is More". During this holiday season, every parent wants their children to have more. We have provided some insight showing that just isn't what children need. The only thing they really do need more of is love...

Myths, Not Science, with Professor Emily Oster

Emily Oster debunks some common parenting misconceptions, and offers a data-driven perspective that can help alleviate parental anxiety.

Understanding Temperament in Infants and Toddlers

From the very beginning, infants and toddlers demonstrate distinct patterns of behavior that influence how they explore, connect with others, and adapt to change.

Habits for Family Well-Being in a Digital Age

This online course equips providers and parents to support families and young children with digital well-being strategies and engaging content to foster safe, connected, and enriching media experiences - both online and offline. (You will have to create an account to access the course, but it is no cost.)

Should Joining Social Media Be Treated Like Getting a Driver's License?

While many experts hesitate to set a firm number, it can be argued that clear benchmarks make decisions about when their children should get a smartphone or social media easier for families.

It's a Tough World. Here's How Parents Can Raise Resilient Kids

We need to give kids opportunities to build confidence and resilience. To prepare kids for an uncertain future, parents should help their offspring learn how to cope, connect with others, and cultivate important competencies. This offers direction to parents on how to best promote them.

How Autism Rates are Rising - and Why that Could Lead to More Inclusive Communities

While autism does present challenges, this author's professional and personal experiences have taught him that creating space for autistic people's perspectives afford opportunities for making the world a more vibrant place.

10 Research-Backed Ways to Cultivate Close, Connected Relationships

These work, not only with children, but with all of the humans in your life. Start with just one that resonates with where you and your family are right now, and work on small consistent changes.

Less Really is More: How to Parent Like a Minimalist

Every generation wants to give their children more than they had themselves. My intention was no different—I wanted to give my children more. More love. More protection. More opportunities. [More toys.](#)

How to Teach Your Child the Importance of "Less is More" in a Society of Overconsumption

Unfortunately, that excessive lifestyle is something many people unknowingly pass on to their children. What's worse, the more our kids expect, the less content they are likely to be. Is that what you want them to learn?

Child Health and Well-Being

24 Ways to Make the Holidays Kid-Friendly

The holidays can be a wonderful time of year, but for children with sensory processing challenges, ADHD, autism, anxiety, and other challenges, it can feel very uncomfortable and overwhelming. Here are some strategies to help families sidestep common sources of stress.

Sensory Integration: Swinging Not Just for Recess

As you become familiar with [sensory integration](#), you understand that all children need to develop each part of their senses from birth to adulthood. A child's developmental growth encompasses multiple stimulations from touch, smell, movement, taste, and body awareness to hearing sound and reacting to bright light. When your child's brain is developing, exposure to activities and exercises to improve this sensory integration is critical for their future learning development.

No Kitchens in Kindergarten: Why the Disappearance of Play Hurts Kids

Ask any teacher, and they will tell you up to a quarter of their third graders can't read grade-level words or share a pack of markers without a meltdown. Districts want kindergartners reading by spring and expect expert-level focus for elementary-aged kids.

How to Encourage Independent Play in Children

Does your child struggle to play without adult help? Does it feel like they won't play unless you play too? This post is for you. It's filled with support, guidance, and an action plan if your child struggles with independent play.

Montessori Musings on "Less is More"

I'm not the first to say it; and I won't be last. But "less is more" certainly fits well with the Montessori approach in your home.

Seeing Children do More with Less

Sometimes you just have to remove yourself from their play, so they can become fully immersed in their "work".

Why Fewer Toys Will Benefit Your Kids

Toys are not merely playthings. Toys form the building blocks for our child's future. They teach our children about the world and about themselves. They send messages and communicate values. And thus, wise parents think about what foundation is being laid by the toys that are given to their kids.

Kid's Guided Meditation: You Are Loved

This script helps kids remember all the wonderful things one feels when they know they are loved.

This holiday season, consider giving gifts that are both meaningful and practical for the children in your life. Think beyond toys and focus on items they truly need—like cozy winter clothes, sturdy shoes, or a pair of warm pajamas. Books are another wonderful option—they spark imagination, can be enjoyed again and again, and are easy to share once outgrown. If you're on a budget, giving a set amount of cash can be a thoughtful choice, too. It not only makes shopping easier but also helps children learn about budgeting and making smart spending decisions—a gift that lasts far beyond the holidays.

We're not saying skip the toys entirely, but rather, choose gifts with intention. Pick something they'll love and use, not something that will be forgotten—or tossed—by spring. Thoughtful giving creates joy that lasts.

Northeast Colorado Health Department's Children's Hospital Colorado Specialty Clinics

If your child is 21 years of age and younger and has received a referral to Children's Hospital Colorado for a Neurology or an Orthopedic/Rehab appointment, you may be able to get an appointment at one of Northeast Colorado Health Department's local clinics held in our Fort Morgan or Sterling offices. Specialty clinics are held by appointment only.

To schedule your 2026 appointment, call Children's Hospital.

→ 2026 Neurology Clinics

Fort Morgan

January 15

March 26

May 21

Neurology Scheduling: 720-777-6895*

Sterling

February 19

April 16

June 18



→ 2026 Orthopedic/Rehab Clinics

Clinics are held three times a year in Fort Morgan and Sterling

Please check the website for dates: nchd.org/healthcare-program-for-special-needs

Orthopedic/Rehab Scheduling: 720-777-6600*

***Ask for NCHD Outreach Clinics**

For more information contact Kirstin Schelling, Health Integration Manager

kirstins@nchd.org or 970-854-2717 x 5023

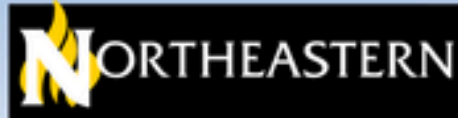
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Every child can learn, play & succeed!



ECCLPS/NJC ECE Conference 2026

"Full STEAM Ahead"

January 31, 2026

E.S. French Hall ~ Northeastern Junior College

Keynote Speaker ~ TBA

Lunch Keynote ~ TBA

We have an amazing list of presenters this year,
with a focus on **Science, Technology,
Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics.**

While it might not occur to an adult that a 3-year-old could be exploring engineering or technology, but when we look through the lens of child development, we realize these skills are naturally woven into play!

A child that learns how to use tools to make their "work" easier, or function better, is learning technology. A child that learns that they need to make their ramp at a greater angle so the cars move, or less of a decline so the cars don't just fall off the ramp, is learning engineering. Art is part of EVERYTHING!

We don't need worksheets or formal lessons to nurture these skills. What children truly need is **time, space, and freedom to play, explore, and create**, because that's where the real learning happens.

**FULL S.T.E.A.M. AHEAD
2026**



To register for the conference,
use this link:

<https://forms.gle/ZKoK9MKvShsZDn1r8>

Registration closes at midnight on January 23rd. Early bird pricing ends at midnight on January 16th. If registration is not functional yet, please try again later.

Snow Goose

*The lesser snow goose is what we see in this area of the U.S. It has two color plumage morphs, white (snow) or gray/blue (blue), thus the common description as “snows” and “blues.” White-morph birds are white except for black wing tips, but blue-morph geese have bluish-gray plumage replacing the white except on the head, neck, and tail tip. The immature blue phase is drab or slate-gray with little to no white on the head, neck, or belly. Both phases have rose-red feet and legs, and pink bills with black tomia (“cutting edges”) giving them a black “grin patch”. The colors are not as bright on immature birds. The head can be stained rusty-brown from minerals in the soil where they feed. They are very vocal and can often be heard from more than a mile away.

*White- and blue-morph birds interbreed and the offspring may be of either morph. They were once thought to be separate species; since they interbreed and are found together throughout their ranges, they are now considered two color phases of the same species. The color phases are genetically controlled. The dark phase results from a single dominant gene and the white phase is homozygous recessive. When choosing a mate, young birds will most often select a mate that resembles their parents’ coloring. If the birds were hatched into a mixed pair, they will mate with either color phase.

*Long-term pair bonds are usually formed in the second year, although breeding does not usually start until the third year. Females are strongly philopatric, meaning they will return to the place they hatched to breed.

*Nesting usually begins at the end of May or during the first few days of June, depending on snow conditions. The female selects a nest site and builds the nest on an area of high ground. The nest is a shallow depression lined with plant material and may be reused from year to year. After the female lays the first of 3 - 5 eggs, she lines the nest with down. She incubates for 22 to 25 days, and the young leave the nest within a few hours of hatching. The young feed themselves, but are protected by both parents. After 42 to 50 days they can fly, but they remain with their family until they are 2 - 3 years old.

*Snow geese breed from late May to mid-August, but they leave their nesting areas and spend more than half the year on their migration to-and-from warmer wintering areas. During spring migration, large flocks fly very high and migrate in large numbers along narrow corridors, more than 3,000 miles from traditional wintering areas to the tundra.

*The lesser snow goose travels across prairie and rich farmland to their wintering grounds on grassland and agricultural fields across the U.S. and Mexico. Traditionally, lesser snow geese wintered in coastal marsh areas where they used their short but strong bills to dig up the roots of marsh grasses for food. However, they have also since shifted inland toward agricultural areas, likely the cause behind the unsustainable population increase in the 20th century. This shift may help to contribute to the increased goose survival rates, leading to overgrazing on tundra breeding grounds.

*In winter, snow geese feed on left-over grain in fields. They migrate in large flocks, visiting traditional stopover habitats in spectacular numbers. Snow geese in North America have increased to the point where the tundra breeding areas in the Arctic and the saltmarsh wintering grounds are both becoming severely degraded, and this affects other species using the same habitat.

*Major nest predators include Arctic foxes and skuas. The biggest threat occurs during the first couple of weeks after the eggs are laid and then after hatching. The eggs and young chicks are vulnerable to these predators, but adults are generally safe. They have been seen nesting near snowy owl nests, which is likely a solution to predation. Their nesting success was much lower when snowy owls were absent, leading scientists to believe that the owls, since they are predatory, were capable of keeping competing predators away from the nests. A similar association as with the owls has been noted between geese and rough-legged hawks. Additional predators at the nest have reportedly included wolves, coyotes, and all three North American bear species. Few predators regularly prey on snow geese outside of the nesting season, but bald eagles and golden eagles will readily attack wintering geese.

Snow Goose - continued

*The breeding population of the lesser snow goose exceeds 5 million birds, an increase of more than 300% since the mid- 1970s. The population is increasing at a rate of more than 5% per year. Non-breeding geese (juveniles or adults that fail to nest successfully) are not included in this estimate, so the total number of geese is likely higher. Lesser snow goose population indices are the highest they have been since population records have been kept, and evidence suggests that large breeding populations are spreading to previously untouched sections of the Hudson Bay coastline. The cause of this overpopulation may be the heavy conversion of land from forest and prairie to agricultural usage in the 20th century.

*Since the late 1990s, efforts have been underway in the U.S. and Canada to reduce the North American population of lesser snow geese to sustainable levels due to the documented destruction of tundra habitat in nesting areas. Increased hunter bag limits, extended length of hunting seasons, and adding new hunting methods have all been successfully implemented, but have not reduced the overall numbers of snow geese in North America.

Cool Facts about Snow Geese

*Snow geese chicks are well developed when they hatch, with open eyes and down-covered bodies that already show whether the adult will have white or dark plumage. Within a few days they are able to maintain a constant body temperature on their own. They grow very quickly, with males outpacing females.

*The creamy white eggs of snow geese stain easily. People can tell in what order the eggs were laid, just by the color of the shells (the dirtiest shells belong to the oldest eggs).

*In wintering and migrating flocks that are feeding, lookouts keep an eye out for eagles and other predators. Upon sighting a threat they call out to the rest of the flock, which may take flight.

*They make epic journeys by air, but they are impressive on foot, too. Within the first three weeks of hatching, goslings may walk up to 50 miles with their parents from the nest to a more suitable brood-rearing area. Molting geese can outrun many predators.

*Females forage up to 18 hours a day once they arrive at breeding grounds, but eat little once they begin incubating the eggs.

*Snow goose hunting in the eastern U.S. was stopped in 1916 because of low population levels. Hunting was allowed again in 1975 after numbers had recovered. Since then, their numbers have continued to grow, to the point that some areas of tundra nesting habitat are suffering.

*The oldest snow goose on record, a blue morph, was shot in Idaho in 2020. It was 30 years, 8 months old and was originally banded in Arizona in 1990.

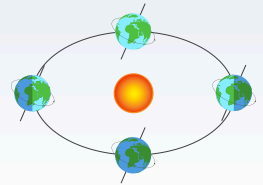
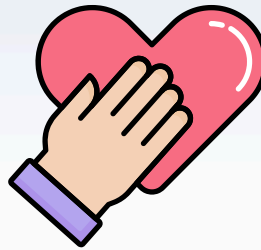
*Snow geese maintain monogamous, lifelong pair bonds.

Sources [1](#), [2](#), [3](#) Listen to them [HERE](#)



Holidays and Special Occasions in December

December 2 - [Special Education Day](#)
December 2 - [World Pollution Prevention Day](#)
December 3 - [Coats and Toys for Kids Day](#)
December 3 - [Giving Tuesday](#)
December 4 - [World Wildlife Conservation Day](#)
December 5 - [Walt Disney Day](#)
December 6 - [Mitten Tree Day](#)
December 9 - [Colorado Gives Day](#)
December 10 - [Dewey Decimal System Day](#)
December 10 - [Human Rights Day](#)
December 10 - [International Animal Rights Day](#)
December 13 - [National Cocoa Day](#)
December 15 - [Bill of Rights Day](#)
December 21 - [Winter Solstice](#)
December 24 - [Christmas Eve](#)
December 24 - [National Eggnog Day](#)
December 25 - [Christmas Day](#)
December 28 - [Pledge of Allegiance Day](#)
December 31 - [New Year's Eve](#)



December 4 - 10 - [National Human Rights Consciousness Week](#)
December 5 - 9 - [Inclusive Schools Week](#)
December 6 - 12 - [Computer Science Education Week](#)



December is
[Month of Giving](#)
[National Drunk and Drugged Driving Prevention Month](#)
[Universal Human Rights Month](#)



Any Time is a Great Time to Give Where You Live
ECCLPS Accepts and appreciates donations through out
the year! If you would like to donate, please go to:

[ECCLPS Colorado Gives](#)

~ ECCLPS TEAM ~

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GENERAL INFORMATION

Office Hours Tuesday - Friday 9:00 - 4:00

ECCLPS Partner Meetings

4th Monday of the Month (September - May)
11:50 AM - 12:50 PM

ECCLPS Professional Development Trainings

4th Monday of the Month (September - May)
6:30 PM - 8:30 PM

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