

## *Sticking Together!*

Early Childhood is a very special time! It opens the door to lifelong learning because every child is born ready to learn. Positive interactions with caring adults can give young children the confidence they need to explore their surroundings and take delight in their day to day discoveries. Children learn best when they are actively involved with materials and with peers and other adults.

We hope to help families connect with other families and learn together how to best handle the challenges and joys of raising a child, keeping in mind how to best handle situations in ways that are developmentally appropriate. By joining the ECFE family, you will build connections with other parents who are in the midst of raising children of similar age and stage of life.

Please consider joining our ECFE classes or come enjoy some of our special events that we are offering throughout the year. I look forward to seeing many of you in a few short weeks!!

**See you at ECFE activities!**

**Megan Koenigs**  
Early Childhood Educator  
megan.koenigs@sleepyeye.mntm.org



Thank you to the United Way of Brown County for providing funding to Sleepy Eye's Early Childhood Family Education program.

**Find us on Facebook! Sleepy Eye - ECFE**



## *What is ECFE?*

- Early Childhood Family Education provides families with the opportunity to strengthen and grow together in an inviting atmosphere with the support of other parents and specialized staff.
- Early Childhood Family Education is where moms, dads, grandparents, and young children discover new things by spending time together and apart.
- Parents and children attend classes one time per week. Classes range from 1–1 ½ hours in length. Classes are held at the public school. All families are welcome.
- During the first years of a child's life, major development takes place that will impact the rest of their lives. Early Childhood Family Education parents are given credit for being the first and most important teachers of their child.
- We are funded by a combination of state aids, local levy, and participation fees. No one will be denied participation due to the inability to pay. Accommodations are made for people with disabilities.

## Winter Class Offerings

A child's age as of September 1 is used to determine which class to enroll in. We suggest that parents not consider moving their child ahead if s/he has a fall birthday. The teachers take into consideration children's developmental levels when planning activities for each class. When a child is placed ahead, consider that the child will eventually have to repeat an ECFE class before reaching Kindergarten.

A minimum of six children per class is needed to offer a class or age groups will need to be combined. Classes have been approved by the Brown County Family Services Center Training Credit for family day care and foster care providers. Payment for classes should be mailed with registration form, paid the first night of class, or dropped off at the Community Education office located in room 109 in the Sleepy Eye High School. Please register early so teachers have time to prepare for classes.

### Babies

#### **Saturday, 9:30-10:30 a.m.**

Class dates: 1/20, 2/10, 3/9, 4/13

Meet in Room 318

A special time to meet other parents and discuss topics related to parenting babies. Classes are available to babies who are not yet walking.

### Toddlers and Twos

#### **Mondays, 5:15-6:30 p.m. (8 classes)**

Class dates: 1/29, 2/5, 2/12, 2/26, 3/4, 3/11, 3/18, 3/25

Meet in Room 320

Come for ideas, motivation, and support to stay ahead of your curious, active child. Have fun learning through various age appropriate activities. Parents will separate from their child for the last thirty minutes of class during parent discussion time.

### All Ages (0-5 years)

#### **Thursdays, 8:30-9:45 a.m. (7 classes)**

Class dates: 2/8, 2/15, 2/22, 2/29, 3/7, 3/14, 3/21

Meet in Room 320

Come for ideas, motivation and support to stay ahead of your curious, active child. Have fun learning through various age appropriate activities. Parents may separate from their child for parent discussion time.

### Mixed Ages (3-5 years)

#### **Thursdays, 4:30-6:30 p.m. (8 classes)**

***Come when you can, stay as long as you are able to.***

Class dates: 2/1, 2/8, 2/15, 2/22, 2/29, 3/7, 3/14, 3/21

Meet in Room 320

Play is your child's work. These classes are intended to encourage play through dramatic play areas, reading corners, art, and other centers that encourage hands on learning. Parents will participate in a discussion for thirty minutes of the class led by a parent educator.

### How Do I Register?

1. Mail - SE Community Ed  
400 4<sup>th</sup> Ave SW  
Sleepy Eye, MN 56085
2. In Person – Room 320 during class or Room 109 other times
3. By phone – 507-794-7873
4. Via email



## Special Family Events

### Inclement Weather Policy

If school closes early for the day or is cancelled, all afternoon and evening classes are cancelled. We will try to make up any missed classes at the end of the session.

Please watch our Facebook page for weekend events if the weather is questionable.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to call.

### Literacy Night

**When:** Monday, March 4 (tentatively)

**Time:** 5:00-7:00 p.m.

**Where:** SE Public School

We will again be joining the Elementary School when they host their Literacy Night. Come join the fun and take part in the activities we have planned for preschoolers based on books! Watch for more details as they become available.

### Daddy & Me-Night with Dad

**When:** Friday, March 15

**Time:** 5:30-6:30p.m.

**Where:** SE Public School, Cafeteria

**Who:** Children & Dads/Uncles/Grandfathers

**Cost:** \$2 per child/\$5 per family one food shelf item for donation per person

Come and join us as we create a project. We will meet in the Cafeteria. If Dad is working or busy, that's okay! You can bring any one that you want to build with you.

### End of the Year Vehicle Fair

**When:** Tuesday, May 14

**Time:** 4:30-6:30 p.m.

**Where:** SE Public School Parking Lot

**Cost:** Free Will Donation

Join us for an evening to explore different vehicles up close! We will have tractors, trucks, cars, and machinery! There will be a small concession stand and activities as well.

### Open Gyms

**When:** Saturday, January 27; 3:30-5:00 pm

Saturday, February 24; 3:30-5:00 pm

Saturday March 9; 10:30-12:00 pm

**Where:** SE Public School Elementary Gym

**Cost:** \$2 per child/\$5 per family or one food shelf item for donation per person

Family gym time is a wonderful opportunity to let kids run, jump, climb, play ball and so much more. Join us in the Sleepy Eye Elementary gym for some great fun!

### Grandparents Day

**When:** Saturday, February 17

**Time:** 9:00-10:30 a.m.

**Where:** SE Public School, Room 320

**Who:** Children and their Grandparent(s)

**Cost:** \$2 per child/\$5 per family one food shelf item for donation per person

Please bring your grandparents to our classroom for a morning of fun. Your children will enjoy showing their grandparents their classroom and some of the fun things they do while they are here in school.

### Ladies Night Out: Cookie Decorating

**When:** April, date TBD

**Who:** Any lady who needs a night away! ☺

Watch the Facebook page for more information when it gets closer!

Join us for a night free of kids and full of laughter and fun as we learn how to decorate cookies from Sam, of Sammy's Sweets!

### HELP WANTED!

Individuals certified in Early Childhood or Parent Education are encouraged to send a letter of interested and resume to ECFE, 400 4<sup>th</sup> Ave SW, Sleepy Eye, MN 56085 or fill out an application on the district website, [sleepyeyeschools.com](http://sleepyeyeschools.com).

The program is in need of additional staff including, teachers, substitute teachers, and paraprofessionals for our ECFE classes.

## Father/Daughter Snow Ball

**When:** Sunday, January 28

**Time:** 1:00-2:30 p.m.

**Where:** SE Event Center

**Cost:** *ADVANCE* \$10 per couple, \$5 for extra daughter  
*AT THE DOOR* \$12 and \$7

- This event is for girls ages 3 years to third grade
- Dads, grandfathers, uncles, stepfathers, big brothers, and other special men are invited to be escorts
- Dads are encouraged to wear shirt/tie, sweater, sport coat, or suit.

## Mother/Son Sweetheart Soirée

**When:** Sunday, February 11

**Time:** 1:00-2:30 p.m.

**Where:** SE Event Center

**Cost:** *ADVANCE* \$10 per couple, \$5 for extra son  
*AT THE DOOR* \$12 and \$7

- This event is for boys ages 3 years to third grade
- Mothers, grandmothers, aunts, stepmothers, big sisters, and other special women are invited to be escorts
- Moms are encouraged to wear a dress.

The afternoon will include dancing, pictures, refreshments and quality time with the one you love.

Tickets are required for admittance and can be purchased in the Community Education office or at ECFE classes. You can order by mail and tickets will be sent to you or held at the registration table.

We appreciate all individuals and businesses that have been co-sponsoring these events. Monetary gifts, gift certificates or coupons, snack items, and bottled water have all been appreciated. For more information, call 507-794-7873.

## Snow Much Fun

### Paper Snow Flakes

Grab some paper or a coffee filter and have your child fold it multiple times and ways. Have them make cuts, or assist them with cutting different shapes/slits in the paper. Unwrap the paper and see the snowflake you created together!



### Indoor Snowball Fight

Crumple up some old or new paper into balls and throw them INDOORS for an inside snowball fight. Does a tighter crumpled snowball go further than a loose, crumpled snowball? Let's find out!!



### Play Outdoors Together

Whether they want to build a snowman, go sledding, make a snow angel, or have a snowball fight, play outside together. You can make a snow fort, go tubing, skiing, or maybe just enjoy throwing snow in the air and watching it float back down to the ground!



## **Dolly Parton Imagination Library**



Parents of children are invited to register their child for the Dolly Parton Imagination Library. The program provides one book every month to your child from the time you enroll until they turn five for *FREE*. The program is managed by the United Way of the Brown County Area. Sign up at [www.unitedwaybrowncountyarea.org](http://www.unitedwaybrowncountyarea.org)

## **1000 Books Before Kindergarten**

This program is sponsored by the Brown County Early Childhood Initiative. The goal of this program is to promote reading and encourage children to have 1000 books read to them by the time they enter kindergarten.

*To enroll in this program you can register at ECFE classes/events, or the Dyckman Library. Once enrolled, children will receive a log to track the books being read to them. If you read a book twice, mark it down twice. After each 100 books read, children will receive a small prize or sticker. Special incentives will be awarded to children when they complete 300, 500, 700 or 1000 books.*

## **Dyckman Free Library**

Story Time continues every Thursday at the Dyckman Free Library on West Main Street at 10 a.m. During the school year, it is geared for preschoolers. Stop by and check out the selection of children's books and obtain a library card for your children and yourself.

## **ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS**

Laura Petersen	Megan Koenigs
Pat Stevermer	Darla Remus
Kendra Guyer	Kayla Jacobsen
Brittany Sharpe	Erika Garcia
Stephanie Montemayor	Kristina Marti
Alicia Beltz	Emily Ferk
Dulce Magana	Mikayla Bruggeman
Julie Seifert	

The ECFE Advisory Board helps promote our Early Childhood Family Education Program and make recommendations about how to implement our programs. Contact any of the members listed if you have any suggestions for our ECFE program.

We are always in need of new members; please consider joining this board which meets four times a year to plan special events and fundraisers, discuss budget, update members on classes, and discuss and implement ways to promote our programs.

Parents are a great asset to this board, as you are engaged in our programs. We want to hear your feedback and insights on how to continue the growth of our ECFE and Preschool Programs!

## **South Country Health Alliance Discount**

All South Country Health Alliance (SCHA) members may take up to a \$15.00 discount per class. Members must be on SCHA at the time of registration, and throughout the duration of the classes. You must include ID number when registering.





## Preschools

Registration for 2024-2025 preschool has been taking place and interested families are encouraged to sign up early.

School District #84 offers a three year old **Discovery Time** preschool three days a week for two hours and fifteen minutes. Parents also attend ECFE classes with the child.

**Voluntary PreK** is available for four year olds and meets five days a week for two hours and thirty minutes. A voluntary PreK grant has been applied for the 2024-2025 school year. It will provide for 140 days of free preschool.

Scholarships are available for qualifying families and busing is available in town.

Other preschools are available at Grace Lutheran School and St. Mary's Catholic School.

## Welcome to Kindergarten!

Area schools will be offering informational sessions for children who are entering Kindergarten for the 2024-2025 school year.

Sleepy Eye Public School Kindergarten Round Up: Tuesday, March 5 at 4:00p.m.

St. Mary's Catholic School Kindergarten Round Up: Tuesday, March 19 at 6:30p.m.

## Babysitting Clinic

Each summer a Babysitting Clinic is held for youth ten and older. Topics covered include child growth and development, cleanliness, handling the small baby, emergency and safety measures, playing with children and discipline. Permission is needed for a child to be added to the **babysitting list** that is available in the Community Ed office. Call 507-794-7873 for a copy or pick one up at an ECFE class.

## Early Childhood Screening

It is state law that every child entering kindergarten in a public school have completed a developmental screening. A child can go through screening in the Head Start Program, at Public Health Nursing Services, or come to an Early Childhood Screening. The ECFE program works with county agencies and offers early childhood screening when a child is three to four years of age. We hold screenings once in the fall and once in the spring.

**Spring Early Childhood Screening is scheduled for Thursday, February 1, beginning at 8:30 a.m. Call ECFE @ 794-7873 to make an appointment.**

### **What to Expect:**

Children will participate in an evaluation of speech, language, and fine and gross motor skills. Social and emotional development, hearing, vision, and height/weight measurement will also be assessed. Parents will meet with a school nurse as well as family facilitator to complete the screening process. The entire screening typically takes one hour to complete.

### **Why children should be screened:**

The screening identifies needs that may require special attention before a child enters school.

### **Screening takes place:**

Basement of Trinity Lutheran Church, located off Hwy. 4 on the south end of Sleepy Eye.

## Brown County Help Me Grow Committee

Not all children do the same things at the same ages. If you are concerned about the development of a child less than seven years of age, living in Brown County, call (507) 359-8700 or 1-800-605-4431. The purpose of **Help Me Grow** is to develop coordination between agencies to encourage early identification and services for young children with special needs.

## **What you can do to help ECFE**

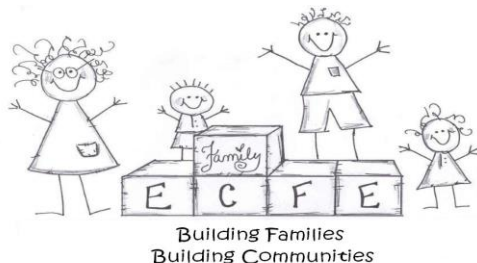
Thank you to all the families who have been so generous and have helped our program by donating items listed on our giving tree. The giving tree is located on the inside of the ECFE classroom door. Feel free to take a reminder from the tree and bring the item in for the class to use. We really appreciate the donations!

Other ways to help our ECFE program:

- Sneaker Drive
- Loaves for Learning
- RaiseRight Gift Cards
- Scholastic Book Orders

Go online, choose the books you want and pay by credit card. You need to use this ordering code PBFNQ to access the website. In return, we get free books to add to the ECFE classroom or give to the children!

You could also consider making a tax-deductible contribution as well. These contributions would support the ECFE program and assist with scholarships that the program offers to families for participation fees.



The ECFE t-shirt design is shown here. Child sizes 2-4 or 6-8 have been ordered in four different colors. They are \$10 each and are available for purchase in the ECFE room. Colors are: Saffire Blue, Helconia Pink, Purple and Lime.

Fill out the form below to place an order for T-shirts.

Family name \_\_\_\_\_

T-Shirt size(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Color(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Bring to class or send with registration form including payment.

## **RaiseRight (Scrip) Fundraiser**

- Need groceries?
- Like to eat at Subway or Hardee's?
- Need fuel for vehicles?

Why not purchase a gift card each month for each of the above categories?

You know you will use them and it's a great way to give back to our program without having to sell anything or purchase something you don't really need. You pay the exact amount for the gift cards you want, and each business gives back a percentage of the amount. We will be accepting orders by February 1 and April 1, and the cards will be delivered within two weeks. An order form will be placed on our ECFE website page, so you can print it off and send to school with your child or bring to ECFE classes. You can go online to: [www.shopwithscrip.com](http://www.shopwithscrip.com) to see what stores you can order from. We allow any business but only have a few businesses on the order form. Just write down the store name and amount on bottom of order form and we will place that order.

## **RaiseRight App**

A new option is to download the RaiseRight App on iPhone or Android phones and receive gift cards instantly.

1. Download the app
2. Select "Join a Program"
3. Enter ECFE's organization enrollment code: A56STSV5UKQZ
4. Create an account
5. Order gift cards!

## **Got Sneakers?**

Sleepy Eye Early Childhood Family Education is holding a sneaker drive! Drop off your old tennis shoes in the box found in the entrance of school or send them with your child to turn in. We will do the rest of the work for you and earn money while doing so! We kindly ask NOT to donate any non-athletic footwear.

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## Early Childhood Family Education

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### REGISTRATION FORM

Parent's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Child's Name	Birth Date	Class Title

Please check the cost that applies:

- ☐ Babies (Free)    ☐ January 20    ☐ February 10    ☐ March 9    ☐ April 13
- ☐ \$32 for Toddlers & Twos
- ☐ \$32 for Mixed Ages – payment is only needed for children not enrolled in Discovery Time
- ☐ \$28 for All Ages – payment is only needed for children not enrolled in Discovery Time
- ☐ Grandparents Day                      Food shelf item or \$2.00 per child or \$5.00 per family
- ☐ Open Gym                      ☐ January 27    ☐ February 24    ☐ March 9    Food shelf item or \$2.00 per child or \$5.00 per family
- ☐ Daddy & Me: Night with Dad                      Food shelf item or \$2.00 per child or \$5.00 per family
- ☐ Father/Daughter Snow Ball                      \$10 per couple, \$5 per additional daughter
- ☐ Mother/Son Sweetheart Soirée                      \$10 per couple, \$5 per additional son
- ☐ End of the Year Vehicle Fair                      Free Will Donation

*You will be notified if your class or event is cancelled due to low enrollment.*

Total enclosed \_\_\_\_\_

- ☐ I request a scholarship for parent/child classes this term.
- ☐ I will be using my South Country Health Alliance discount; my ID # is: \_\_\_\_\_

Future newsletter sign up: (Please check which you prefer)

\_\_\_\_\_ by email \_\_\_\_\_ (please list email address)

\_\_\_\_\_ by checking our website at [www.sleepyeyeschools.com](http://www.sleepyeyeschools.com) >ECFE

\_\_\_\_\_ continue to receive by mail

**Phone registrations accepted but mailed are preferred**

Call 507-794-7873 to register or send check and form to:

ECFE  
400 4<sup>th</sup> Ave SW  
Sleepy Eye, MN 56085

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