



## FAMILY ENGAGEMENT NEWSLETTER

May, 2024

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### Truancy Considerations as it Relates to Students with IEPs by Wendy Overturf

In the past few years our Help Desk at WI FACETS has received an increase in the number of calls from parents who say that their school district intends to file for truancy because their child with an IEP has reached a number of absences that rises to the level of being a truant according to their local truancy policy. As these parents explain, it is not that they don't want to send their child to school. Rather, it is that their child's mental health challenges are causing their child to refuse to go to school or continually call home to be picked up from school.

In March 2023, the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) released an updated guidance document [\*When Mental Health Challenges Contribute to Truancy, Frequently Asked Questions and Answers \(FAQs\)\*](#). This document answers many questions related to truancy, a few related to students who have IEPs are highlighted below.

#### **What additional considerations are needed to address truancy when a student has an IEP?**

The IDEA requires a student's IEP to address any lack of expected progress toward the annual goals described in the IEP and in the general education curriculum, if appropriate. When absences are interfering with progress, the IEP team should take steps to address the lack of progress. To do otherwise may result in a denial of a free appropriate public education (FAPE).

If a student with a disability is not attending school regularly or IEP services documented in the IEP are not being implemented as written due to the absences, the IEP team should meet more frequently and make any appropriate changes to the IEP that address the concerns. The IEP team should work with the student and their caregivers to investigate root causes for the lack of attendance. Teams could consider conducting a root cause analysis to identify new or different disability-related needs, and should consider additional supports and the implementation of evidence-based interventions designed to improve the student's attendance.

## UPCOMING WI FACETS EVENTS

All webinars are scheduled from 12 pm to 1 pm CST, unless otherwise noted.  
(If you missed a training date, you can still get a recording of the webinar by registering.)

### [Your Voice Counts](#)

**Presenter:** Danielle Tolzmann, Family Voices

**Date:** May 1, 2024

### [Extended School Year \(ESY\) vs. Summer School: What's the Difference](#)

**Presenter:** Sara Totten, WI DPI

**Date:** May 8, 2024

### [Actividades de lectura en el verano](#)

**Presenter:** Alejandra Loeza, WI FACETS

**Date:** May 9, 2024, (12pm-12:45 pm)

### [The Transition IEP Checklist](#)

**Presenter:** Ann Zielke, WI FACETS

**Date:** May 21, 2024

### [Other Health Impairment: An Overview](#)

**Presenter:** Eva Kubinski, WI DPI

**Date:** May 22, 2024

### [Let's Talk Sensory System](#)

**Presenter:** Maxine Hengen, Special Educator

**Date:** May 29, 2024

### [Entendiendo los beneficios del SSI](#)

**Presenter:** Elida Elizondo- Es la especialista en asuntos públicos de la administración del seguro social.

**Date:** May 30, 2024

## HOME LEARNING



### [Children's Activity Calendar: May 2024](#)

Summer is almost here! Enjoy the end of the school year with engaging activities, craft projects, and book suggestions.



## Audubon for Kids

Audubon's mission is to protect birds and the places they need, today and tomorrow.

Activities on the [Audubon Society website](#) are designed to help kids explore and understand birds and their habitats. They can be done at home or in a yard or park, sometimes with the help of a computer. The goal isn't to teach a child how to name and identify bird species, but rather to give them space to explore and feel connected to the natural world. A few of these activities are listed below.

- [How to Make a DIY Bird Feeder from Recycled Materials](#)
- [Game: Follow a Bird's Migration Story](#)
- [Who Lives Where?](#)



May 12, 2024-Mother's Day

Celebrate moms and special people with your kids! Let their imaginations soar with [fun Mother's Day crafts, cards, and recipe ideas](#).



### Grocery Store Learning Activities

Turning a trip to the grocery store into a learning activity can be a fun and educational way to engage children. Here are some reading activities you can incorporate during a grocery store visit:

**Shopping List Scavenger Hunt:** Create a simple shopping list together before heading to the store. Include items with both words and pictures. As you shop, have your child read the list and find the corresponding items on the shelves.

**Price Tag Reading:** Encourage your child to practice reading numbers and words by looking at price tags. Discuss the cost of different items and compare prices.

**Label Reading:** Choose a few items from your shopping cart and ask your child to read the labels. Discuss nutritional information, ingredients, and other details on the packaging.



May 27, 2024-Memorial Day

Memorial Day is often a time for parades and family get-togethers. Help your child learn the history of this national holiday by checking out the read aloud [Memorial Day](#).



### Give your child plenty of opportunities to count!

Tips to support kindergarten math learning at home.

- Play number games during everyday activities, such as counting the number of trucks you see while driving, or counting the number of items going into the laundry.
- Read the calendar and determine the number of days until an upcoming event.
- Young children can count the number of items that you bought at the store. If you buy multiples of 1 item (such as 10 cans of cat food), practice counting by 2's, 3's, or higher numbers.
- Have your child count the change needed to pay for an item.
- Watch your child play to understand their



mathematical knowledge. When your child counts, do they touch each object once?

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## UPCOMING STATE EVENTS

### [Circles of Life Conference](#)

Circles of Life is Wisconsin's annual conference for families who have children with disabilities and professionals who support them. **Registration Deadline is May 3<sup>rd</sup>.**

**Dates:** May 16-17, 2024

**Location:** Holiday Inn, Stevens Point, WI

### [10<sup>th</sup> Annual 2024 Employment First Conference](#)

All stakeholders are encouraged to attend, including people with disabilities and their family members, service professionals, school staff, and others who support people with disabilities to achieve employment, make connections, and contribute to the community. The link for the conference agenda can be found [here](#).

**Date:** May 21, 2024

**Location:** Kalahari, Wisconsin Dells, WI

### [WI FACETS Endless Possibilities Conference: Engaging Every Family for Student Success](#)

The conference will provide resources and tools to build effective teams to support our students with disabilities to succeed in school as well as in life! Learn from families who have built positive partnerships with their children's schools and communities as well as from experts in the areas of equity and inclusion, mental health, and neurodiversity. Educators and families are encouraged to attend the conference together.

**Date:** Friday, August 2, 2024

**Location:** Waukesha County Technical College, Pewaukee Campus.

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## FOR YOUR INFORMATION

### Section 504: New Guidance

The Office for Civil Rights (OCR) at the U.S. Department of Education issued new guidance documents on Section 504 (Sec. 504) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Sec. 504 prohibits discrimination against students with disabilities by public schools and other institutions receiving federal funds. The four new guidance documents provide assistance on Sec. 504 rights of students with specific conditions.

The four guidance documents are:

- [Sec. 504 protections for students with asthma.](#)
- [Sec. 504 protections for students with diabetes.](#)
- [Sec. 504 protections for students with food allergies](#)
- [Sec. 504 protections for students with GER/GERD.](#) (GER is gastroesophageal reflux and GERD is gastroesophageal reflux disease.)

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## ONLINE RESOURCES: Mental Health

### [Center for Parent Information and Resources \(CPIR\)](#)

The website has links to organizations that can assist in a crisis. It also has quick fact sheets, and information about Medicaid benefits for mental health disorders. The website also has links to organizations that support specific disorders.

### [Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction \(DPI\)-School Mental Health](#)

This website has a multitude of links to resources related to improving mental health among students.

### [Wisconsin School Mental Health Framework: Building and Sustaining a Comprehensive System](#)

In this framework, districts and schools partner with students, families, and the community to build a comprehensive school mental health system (CSMHS). A CSMHS provides a continuum of services and supports to promote student and staff mental health and wellbeing. A CSMHS is not limited to treating mental illness or substance use disorders. Rather, it includes services and supports that promote social and emotional wellbeing, foster positive mental health and school culture, and eliminate systemic barriers to wellbeing and success for all students.

### [Wisconsin Safe and Healthy Schools Center](#)

The Wisconsin Safe and Healthy Schools Training and Technical Assistance Center builds the capacity of Wisconsin public school districts to implement programs in prevention and intervention of alcohol, tobacco, and other drug abuse, mental health, and school safety. All of these programs are intended to reduce barriers to learning.

### [Mental Health America of Wisconsin](#)

MHA of Wisconsin is dedicated to improving the mental health of all individuals through advocacy, education, and service. Additionally, MHA of Wisconsin has developed [resource directories](#) that are searchable by county.

### [National Alliance on Mental Illness](#)

NAMI, the National Alliance on Mental Illness, is the nation's largest grassroots mental health organization dedicated to building better lives for the millions of Americans affected by mental illness.

### [NAMI Wisconsin](#)

The mission of NAMI Wisconsin is to improve the quality of life of those affected by mental illness and to promote recovery. The website has many resources related to mental health as well as links to educational programs and support groups.

### [Wisconsin Family Ties](#)

Wisconsin Family Ties provides support, education, training, and advocacy regarding children experiencing social, emotional, behavioral, and mental health problems. They have staff who are located regionally throughout the state. Their [Facebook page](#) has many links to articles related to mental health needs.

### [Youth Suicide Prevention](#)

This web page on the DPI website provides information and resources for youth suicide prevention to school staff, administrators, school boards, parents, and other members of the school community. It also has links to crisis hotlines.

### [Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration](#)

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) is the agency within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services that leads public health efforts to advance the behavioral health of the nation. SAMHSA's mission is to reduce the impact of substance abuse and mental illness on America's communities. The website has an abundance of resources related to mental health issues.

### [National Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health \(NFFCMH\)](#)

NFFCMH is a national family-run organization linking more than 120 state and local affiliates and national partners. It focuses on the issues of children and youth with emotional, behavioral, or mental health needs and substance use challenges and their families. The website has links to many [resources](#) related to mental health.

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## POSITIVE BEHAVIORAL INTERVENTIONS & SUPPORTS



Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports ([PBIS](#)) is a strategy schools use to teach children expected behavior. Check this [article](#) for more detailed information on PBIS.

Applying PBIS principles at home to teeth brushing can create a positive and reinforcing environment for good oral hygiene habits. Here are some ideas for implementing PBIS for teeth brushing:

**Create a Visual Schedule:**

- \* Develop a visual schedule or chart outlining the daily teeth brushing routine.
- \* Use images to show each step, making it easy for children to follow.

**Use Positive Reinforcement:**

- \* Use a reward system for consistent teeth brushing. This could include stickers, a sticker chart, or a small reward after a certain number of successful brushings.
- \* Praise and acknowledge the child's efforts.

**Use Timers or Songs:**

- \* Set a timer for two minutes or play a short song to make teeth brushing more enjoyable.
- \* Consider using a musical toothbrush or an app with a brushing timer.

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## RESEARCH

### Teacher Practices, Time for Physical Activity, and the School Day: A Preliminary Analysis

Brown, M., Burriss, K. G., Snead, D., & Burriss, L. L. (2020). Teacher practices, time for physical activity, and the school day: A preliminary analysis. *International Journal of the Whole Child*, 5(1), 39–52. <https://libjournals.mtsu.edu/index.php/ijwc/article/view/1710>

[Read Full Article](#)

Existing data describe the positive relationships across children's play/physical activity, mental wellness, physical health, and intellectual success. This current mixed-method study identifies ways in which classroom teachers describe implementing physical activity and play opportunities during a typical school day. Classroom teachers, pre-k through sixth grades, completed surveys identifying the types of play and physical activities (recess, games, movement) they implemented during the day, the time allowed for each type of experience, use of software to support the movement, and training associated with physical activity and play. Data describe teachers' pervasive use of [GoNoodle](#) as an activity break during the school day. These findings support previous research demonstrating a concern for children's outdoor recess time. Implications describe how teachers' lack of adequate training may undermine children's developmentally appropriate physical activities and play experiences

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## CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE NEWSLETTER

**Upcoming newsletter topics:**

**June: ADD/ADHD**

**July: Speech and Language**

**August: Other Health Impairment**

To submit contributions of articles, events, or resources you may use the [Word document](#). Send submissions to [Wendy Overturf](#). If you are unable to access the form, you may send the information in an email.

Material appropriate for the monthly newsletter include web links to family involvement/parent leadership resources,

advertisements for statewide trainings for parents, youth or parent/educator audiences, information about statewide parent agencies, recent research pertaining to family engagement, and family engagement success articles.

This monthly update is provided by Wisconsin Family Assistance Center for Education, Training & Support (WI FACETS) to share statewide information regarding parent leadership and family involvement. If you would like to receive this monthly update or if you would like to have your name removed from the distribution list, please email [WI FACETS](mailto:WI.FACETS).

The WI FACETS Family Engagement E-Newsletter can be found online: [www.servingongroups.org/newsletter](http://www.servingongroups.org/newsletter)



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