We connect to people in many different ways, but we find that we long for the connection to others – especially in these strange times. Children are no different; they thrive on the connection they receive from their caregivers. You see that even in the youngest of infants, when someone talks to them they smile and turn towards that person. They long for connection with another.

During this time of year, we all seem to be drawn to that connection that is part of us. We long to connect with family, loved ones and friends. We get excited to get a card from a relative we haven’t seen in a while. Why is it that we find no issue with adults who say I need to connect with my family or get together with good friends? Sometimes when children act out we do not understand their pull for this some type of connection? Even worse we often punish the teenager for wanting and spending too much time with their peers and not their family. At this tender age, friends are of utmost importance to them.

Connection is in a way attachment and vice versa. From the very start an infant needs a caregiver; to feed them, change them and that is way that they connect and attach by having their needs met in a loving caring ways. So, from the very being when we need someone else to fulfill our needs, as we get older we still have that need for connection.

With children the need for connection is a learning process. It is the building of trust and security with others. Sometimes they say with or without words that they do not want to connect with that person or they do not feel safe and we need to pay attention to those cues and words, to ensure they are safe and cared for. All too often the reason for the lack of connection, with children, is there is a misstep in the routine or in the discipline that a child does not understand. This should be explained and empathized with the child. This should be done in simple and child focused language.

Connections do not have to be elaborate they can be simple and here are some:

- **Read to them:** Nothing better than snuggling together and enjoying a book.
- **Do art with them:** Talk about the picture; have them explain theirs to you.
- **Ask them about their day:** All too often they do not open up to you have to begin the conversation. Maybe think about an activity or project they liked at school or daycare and begin asking them about that.
- **Play with them:** Let them tell you what and how to play, even if it makes no sense. I have never seen people go to Walmart as they are evacuating for the hurricane that is happening in their bathroom at home, but it’s their play.

This is a magical and a wondrous time of the year, so make the magic and memories with the kiddos. They may not remember the gifts they received, but they will remember the time you spent with them. Times spent with loved ones is a priceless connection – one good for a lifetime.

**Cheryl’s Corner of Caring**

The most powerful and effective way to connect with another person is to **LISTEN!**

Just listen. Perhaps the most important thing we ever give each other is attention. A loving silence often has far more power to heal and connect than the most well-intentional words.

(Rachel Naomi Remen)
MEET CENTENNIAL’S EARLY CHILDHOOD CONSULTATION TEAM

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Covers the following counties:
Logan, Morgan

For additional support during the COVID-19 Pandemic you can call Centennial’s Community Support Line

You can do this by calling your nearest Centennial office:
- Akron - 970.345.2254
- Burlington - 719.346.8183
- Cheyenne Wells - 719.346.8183
- Elizabeth - 303.646.4519
- Fort Morgan - 970.867.4924
- Holyoke - 970.954.2114
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- Limon - 719.775.2313
- Sterling - 970.522.4392
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Contact your local Centennial Mental Health Center for assistance with any Early Childhood need.

[www.centennialmhc.org](http://www.centennialmhc.org)

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Launching Zoom Secure Telehealth Services!

Our ECMH team is excited to announce that consultation services are now available using Zoom Secure Telehealth Services. These services are available to client families, schools, childcare centers and community partners with group and individual meetings available. All services will be provided using this private, secure video platform, and can be accessed using most electronic devices. For more information or to set up a consultation appointment, please contact our ECMH team or your local Centennial Mental Health Center office.