



EARLY CHILDHOOD MENTAL HEALTH CONNECTION

MOVING LIVES FORWARD

ADVOCATE FOR YOUR CHILD

One of the most important jobs parents have is to advocate for your children.

There are many ways that we can advocate for our children; maybe one of the more important places is in their academic world. Sometimes parents feel powerless when it comes to school issues, e.g. if your child has a learning problem. Of course, it is necessary to remember that children behave differently at home and school. So, here's a few tips for the latter:

- 1) Make the teacher your ally and know your rights.
- 2) When you meet with a teacher, ask about your child's strengths – not just issues.
- 3) On a regular basis, communicate with your child. A good icebreaker is, "What do you like best about school?" Then follow up with, "What was easy for you to do today?" (Many studies show that kids make better choices and have higher self-esteem when they have positive communication with their parents/caregivers.)
- 4) Remember that you do not have to wait for P/T conference to request or inquire a "comprehensive evaluation" for special education services. There is a federal law requiring schools to provide an education to children in the "least restrictive environment" which means that a child with symptoms of a learning or psychiatric disorder must have EVERY opportunity to be educated alongside his/her typical peers. Schools are required to ensure that children receive the services they need to fulfill their potential.

5) If the above is needed, you must request IN WRITING that they be evaluated for appropriate services. This service is free and your teacher or administrator can assist you in this process. Ask for assistance if you need help in obtaining report cards, progress reports, behavior assessments and/or testing data. These reports are helpful and only used in evaluations for learning disabilities or psychiatric disorders.

6) After this process (which often takes time) ask to meet with the people who did evaluation and get a written summary of the results. After this meeting, if you disagree with the results of the evaluation you can request an independent one.

7) After this process is complete, an "IEP" (Individual Education Plan) is developed to help advocate for your child. You must become familiar and involved in your child's IEP in order to continue advocating for his/her best interest. This plan should outline a "modified" curriculum with reasonable goals for academic success.

8) PARENTS, teachers, special education experts and any one you invite to be part of your child's team need to continue monitoring your child's progress on the IEP. The reason this is so necessary is so that ALL people who are connected to your child continue to assess whether his/her educational goals are being met. If not, ask for help in coordinating more support.

Quote of the week

"One hundred years from now...it will not matter what kind of car I drove, what kind of house I lived in, nor how much money I had in my bank account, but the world may be better because I was important in the life of a child."

MEET CENTENNIAL'S EARLY CHILDHOOD CONSULTATION TEAM



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Ages 0-5

Covers the following
counties:
Logan, Morgan

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.



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Ages 0-8

Covers the following
counties:
Morgan, Washington
& Yuma

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 - 970.854.2114

Julesburg - 970.474.3769

Limon - 719.775.2313

Sterling - 970.522.4392

Wray - 970.332.3133

Yuma - 970.848.5412



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Logan, Phillips, Sedgwick



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Ages 0-8

Covers the following counties:
Cheyenne, Elbert, Kit Carson,
Lincoln & Yuma

Contact your local Centennial Mental Health Center for assistance with any Early Childhood need.

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