



September 2025

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## Helping Young Children Succeed at Circle Time

Circle time can be a special part of the day—building friendships, sharing stories, and learning as a group. But for some children, especially those with developmental delays or disabilities, sitting still and staying focused can feel overwhelming. The good news is that with a few small changes, circle time can be more comfortable and successful for everyone.

### Why Circle Time Can Be Hard

Some kids struggle with sitting still, paying attention, or waiting their turn. Others may feel overwhelmed by noise, lights, or being too close to others. These challenges don't mean they aren't trying—it just means they need extra support to feel calm and safe.

### Simple Supports That Work

- **Adaptive Seating:** Floor cushions, wiggle seats, or marked spots can help children feel grounded and know where to sit.
- **Sensory Tools:** Fidgets, weighted lap pads, or dimmed lights can reduce stress and help kids focus.
- **Visual Supports:** Picture cards, “first-then” boards, and timers give clear expectations and help children understand

what's happening.

- Movement Breaks: Quick stretches, songs with motions, or even letting a child stand at the edge of the circle can help them stay engaged.
- Keep It Short: Circle time works best in short bursts—mix listening, moving, and talking, and end on a positive note.

## Why This Matters

Circle time isn't about sitting perfectly—it's about connecting and learning together. When teachers adapt their approach, children feel included, supported, and excited to participate. This creates a stronger classroom community where all children can succeed.

—Shared by the Adapt to Impact Team



## Creede Repertory Theatre-Tiny Tour

We're excited to welcome Creede Repertory Theatre's Tiny Tour to our office on Friday, September 19, 2025, with performances at 9:00 AM and 1:00 PM.

Each show runs about 25 minutes and brings big storytelling in a small package. Perfect ages 5 and under.

# CAMPSITE 12

Ray is ready for a relaxing, solo camping trip in the great outdoors. When an unexpected guest arrives, Ray's trip starts to look a little different. Can our two unlikely friends work together to set up camp? This 25 minute show is designed for our youngest learners (2nd grade and younger) and is filled with audience interaction, camping chaos, and problem-solving!

The Tiny Tour will be joining our Young Audience Outreach Tour in Fall 2025. Book both performances and reach more students! The show is in alignment with Core Curriculum concepts for Early Childhood development, and National Core Arts Standards.



## UPK Preschool Spots Available!

Looking for preschool for your child?

Universal Preschool (UPK) slots are still open in Rio Grande (Sargent), Alamosa County, Mineral County, and Saguache!

Give your little one a great start with high-quality early learning!

Many Spots available still—enroll today!

Apply now at [upk.colorado.gov](http://upk.colorado.gov)

Contact Lindsey at [719-214-6202](tel:719-214-6202) for application help

## Coaching

## Play vs. Academics: Finding the Balance

Many teachers feel torn—should they focus on play, or should they focus on academics?

In their book *Complementary Curriculum Approach: Transform Your Practice Through Intentional Teaching*, Iris Chin Ponte and Lisa Porter Kuh talk about this challenge. They explain how play helps children explore, create, and grow, but teachers are also asked to teach academic skills that can be measured by tests. Their answer is the idea of a “settled classroom.” This is a space where children can choose activities that excite them, spend time exploring, and learn together as a community. Teachers play an important role too, guiding children’s interests and helping them dig deeper into learning.

—Shared by Dimensions Educational Research Foundation

### Why This Matters

Understanding how to balance play and academics is important because it helps children grow in all areas—not just test scores. Play builds creativity, problem-solving, and social skills, while academics build knowledge and confidence. When teachers create classrooms that include both, children are more engaged, less stressed, and better prepared for future learning.

Creativity is intelligence having fun.

— *Albert Einstein*

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**Now Enrolling: Quality Family Child Care Homes**

**Serving Rio Grande, Alamosa & Conejos Counties.**



## **Are you in need of trusted, high-quality childcare?**

Our licensed Family Child Care Home Providers are now accepting new enrollments!

- Small group settings
- Individualized attention
- Safe, nurturing environments
- Flexible availability

We currently have multiple openings in:

- Rio Grande County
- Alamosa County
- Conejos County

Let us connect you with a provider who fits your family's needs!

Contact Amanda Atencio at [ecresource@ecclsv.org](mailto:ecresource@ecclsv.org)

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## **FREE CHILD CARE SERVICES IMMEDIATE OPENINGS!!**

Early Head Start has free childcare spots open now in several locations for qualifying families.

Contact Ramona or Erica at [719-937-4010](tel:719-937-4010) for more information.

Spots are limited—apply today:

Click [Here](#) to complete the interest form.

# Early Head Start

Free Quality Child Care Services!  
Birth to 3

Expectant Families and Teen Parents

- Child Care 28+ hours per week
  - Year-Round Program
  - Family Services
  - Education Services
    - Health Services
    - Nutrition Services
    - Disabilities Services
    - Community Resources

Families with children with special needs are encouraged to apply  
Military families encouraged to apply  
We do not provide daily transportation to & from the center. However, we may be able to provide transportation in certain circumstances in conjunction with other community agencies.

[Begin Application Here](#)

Contact us Today!  
(719) 937-4010  
401 Santa Fe Ave  
Alamosa, CO 81101

Service Areas:  
Saguache  
Costilla  
Alamosa  
Rio Grande



## Quality Improvement

### Colorado Shines Quality Improvement Funds

Colorado Shines Quality Improvement funds are now available for licensed childcare programs that are rated at a Colorado Shines Level 1 or higher. Quality Improvement funds are allocated based on program type (center or home-based), the number of classrooms, coaching observations, and Colorado Shines quality rating level.

If you need additional information, please contact Monique Bosch at [eccoach@eccslv.org](mailto:eccoach@eccslv.org)

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**Do you have something you would like to share in our newsletter?**

If individuals and organizations in the community want to share relevant information through this email list, ECCSLV will do their best to include the information in the next available e-newsletter.

ECCSLV considers requests based on relevance, capacity, and timeliness. We do not guarantee that all information will be shared.

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Early Childhood Council | 401 Santa Fe Avenue | Alamosa, CO 81101 US

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