

March 2026



**Project Community Connect
Tuesday, April 21
1 – 4 PM**

**Mayo Clinic Health System Event Center
1 Civic Center Plaza, Mankato**

Free Community Resource Event!
Access resources. Learn about services.
Connect to get help.

- Visit 70+ service providers
- Free bag lunch
- Resources include children, youth, disability, haircuts, housing, medical, dental & more
- City of Mankato will provide free transit rides

Visit www.MankatoUnitedWay.org/PCC.

Learning Body Parts Through Play

Young children are curious and learn new words every day. Help your child learn body parts through play. Read books, sing songs, and move together. Try “Head, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes” and encourage your child to join in. During bath time, name each body part as you wash it. With toddlers and preschoolers, ask fun questions like, “Can you touch your nose?” or “Can you lift your leg?” Keep it simple and playful. Follow your child’s lead and enjoy learning together. Children learn a lot by watching and listening to you every day.

Simple Ways to Support Early Literacy

Create a home environment that supports your child’s early literacy skills. Make books easy for your child to reach and explore on their own. Include a variety of books such as ABC books, storybooks, informational books, and nursery rhymes. Having many types of books helps children learn new words and ideas.

Offer writing materials that match your child’s age. Infants and toddlers may scribble or make a mess while they “write,” but this is an important part of learning. These early attempts help build small muscles in their hands and prepare them for writing later on.

Set aside time each day to read together. Even a few minutes can make a big difference. Choose books your child enjoys and read them again and again. Repetition helps children learn new words and understand stories better. While reading, ask simple questions and encourage your child to talk about what they see and hear.

Singing songs and nursery rhymes is another fun way to build literacy skills. These activities help children hear the sounds in words and remember language patterns.

Talk with your child throughout the day and listen to what they say. Simple conversations help build vocabulary and confidence. Most importantly, let your child see you reading and writing. When children watch you, they learn that these skills are important and useful every day.

*- Articles provided by Early Learning Department:
Mankato Area Public Schools*

COMMUNITY EVENTS



Romp and Rhyme Story Time: From puppets to pumping music, from bubble machines to banging bands, these are not your average story time. The library uses movement, STEAM activities, curiosity, imaginative play, and active learning to keep kids engaged. Free and open to the public.

- Mondays, 10-11 AM at **Le Sueur Public Library**
- Baby Lapsit Mondays, 10:30-11:30 AM at **Waseca Public Library**
- Mondays, 5:30-6:30 PM at **Waseca Public Library**
- Wednesdays, 10-11 AM at **Montgomery Public Library**
- Baby Lapsit Thursdays, 2:30-3:30 PM at **Waldorf Public Library**

Community Story Time: Wednesdays in April, 10:30–11 AM at **Blue Earth County Historical Society, Mankato**. Join your local librarians for Community Story Time, an interactive early literacy program for young children and their caregivers. We'll read stories, sing songs, and practice early literacy skills that support learning to read—all in a welcoming community space.

Community Story Time: Thursdays in April, 10:30–11 AM at **River Hills Mall, Mankato. Between Barnes and Noble and Scheel's**. Join your local librarians for Community Story Time, an interactive early literacy program for young children and their caregivers. We'll read stories, sing songs, and practice early literacy skills that support learning to read—all in a welcoming community space.

Read & Play: Mondays and Tuesdays in April, 10 AM at **North Mankato Taylor Library**. Children ages 1-5 and their parents/guardians are welcome for educational play, games, stories, crafts, and more! No registration required.

Newborn Discovery: Wednesdays, 9–10:30 AM at **Center for Learning, Mankato**. An inclusive and informative class designed specifically for newborns aged 0-12 weeks and their parents or caregivers. Sibling care available. FREE! Please call ahead for sibling care (507-625-4620).

4/11 - Saturday Shenanigans: Saturday, April 11, 9-11 AM at **North Mankato Taylor Library**. Kids ages 1-5 are invited to join us for various Sesame Street themed activities and games at this month's Saturday Shenanigans! No registration required for this come-and-go event.

4/11 - Family Story Time Saturday, April 11, 10-11 AM. **Lake Crystal Public Library**. Visit the Lake Crystal Public Library for our themed storytime: "How Does Your Garden Grow?" Join in on the fun as we dig, plant, and read together!

4/14 & 4/28 - Family Story Time: Tuesdays, 10:30-11 AM. **Lake Crystal Public Library**. Snacks Join us for some stories and songs with Ann at the Lake Crystal Public Library!

5/16 - Bike Rodeo: Saturday May 16, 10 AM-12 PM. **River's Edge Hospital, Saint Peter**. Free helmet for youth 0-17 (while supplies last), community vendors, food trucks, yard games, bike safety course and Mega BMX Show!

6/8 - Summer Kickoff: Monday, June 8, 5:30-7:30 PM. **Minnesota Square Park, Saint Peter**. Sign up for the Saint Peter Public Library Summer Reading Program, tour emergency vehicles, bounce houses, playground, food trucks, and community vendors.

Have a free/affordable event for children or families in Blue Earth, Le Sueur, Nicollet or Waseca counties? Send to MankatoUW@mankatounitedway.org

United Way Books for Kids Sponsor:

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