



ECASB & Erie County

Collaborating For Stronger Public Schools in Erie County

September 2024



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Deputy County Executive

To all teachers, faculty, staff and students, welcome back to school! As a former educator, I know just how exciting this time of year is for our school districts. At the start of a school year, we all look forward to the possibilities and the potential for our students to learn and grow. September is National Preparedness Month, and in this newsletter you will find important resources we hope you share with families. In addition, we share health and wellness tips for school-aged children, including information on this year's COVID and flu vaccines. I hope you have enjoyed your summer, and wish everyone the best for the 2024-25 school year!

Resources:

Live Well Erie: <https://www.erie.gov/livewellerie>

Erie County Department of Social Services: <https://www.erie.gov/socialservices>

Erie County Department of Health: <https://www.erie.gov/health>

Erie County Office of Health Equity: <https://www.erie.gov/health-equity>

News from Erie County:

New Back to School Preparedness

When you have children in your household, you can involve them in making sure you are ready to handle the most common types of emergencies that you might experience. Talk through scenarios, like what to do if there is a fire inside the home, an extreme weather event that happens when kids are at school, or another emergency that could disrupt your family's life.

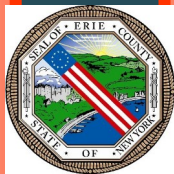
Emergencies can happen at any time, and can affect your home, your neighborhood or your entire region. Ready.gov has an extensive set of resources to help create a plan that works for any family.

<https://www.ready.gov/kids/make-a-plan>

Important things to consider include:

- **Who to contact:** all family members should memorize the phone number of a friend or family member who lives out of town, and plan to check in with them in a disaster.
- **Where to meet:** From ready.gov, "decide on safe, familiar, accessible places where your family can go for protection or to reunite. If





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you have pets or service animals, think about animal-friendly locations.” At home, that might be a tree in the backyard or a neighbor’s front lawn. If your home is damaged or inaccessible, that could be place in your neighborhood, like a local library, or a location out of town. Be prepared for any situation, and have everyone on board with the plan.

Practice and review plans regularly. As children grow up, they can handle more complicated information. Encourage them to participate in your emergency planning activities.

Some skills that all kids should know include:

- Their home address and parent and caregiver phone numbers
- How and when to call 9-1-1
- What to do if they hear a smoke or carbon monoxide alarm
- Their health status: serious allergies to foods or medication; acute or chronic medical conditions
- Basic first aid; tell an adult about any injuries; keep cuts and scrapes dry and clean

Preparing on a Budget

The Buffalo and Erie County Food Policy Council (FPC) has published a guide on how to *Prepare on a Budget*. It contains easy-to-follow and affordable recommendations to build up a household pantry that with food to last through an emergency. It also offers considerations for diet, shelf life, cooking and food preparation, equipment (don’t forget a can opener!), and food safety.

(www.erie.gov/fpc - click “Prepare your Pantry.”)

ReadyErie

The *ReadyErie* preparedness app is available for Erie County residents to make and share emergency plans, as well as receive information from Erie County during emergencies. It is available for Android and iPhone – once you download it, make sure to enable notifications. This way you will see updates and weather alerts. (www.erie.gov/readyerie)

School Safety

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security has a web site focused on school safety: schoolsafety.gov. Educators, administrators and school volunteers can find resources related to bullying and cyberbullying, cybersecurity, emergency planning, public health and mental health, and targeted violence. Putting the information from this web site into practice can help support a safer, healthier school environment.

Supporting Children’s Mental Health with EriePath

Last fall, Erie County launched EriePath, a resource to help families address the increasing mental and behavioral health challenges facing children. EriePath is an app that will help parents and caregivers understand the challenges that children and adolescents face, such as feelings of anxiety and depression, alcohol and drug use, and symptoms or behaviors that indicate a mental health condition. Also, and most importantly, the app will include links to local support services. For more information, and download instructions go to: erie.gov/eriepath

COVID and Flu vaccines



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2024-2025 COVID-19 vaccines are now available. Major retail pharmacies, such as CVS and Walgreens, are now taking appointments and some locations may accept walk-ins. Some physicians and pediatricians are also offering COVID-19 vaccine in their offices. As respiratory viruses circulate, consider COVID-19 vaccine and flu vaccine for anyone ages six months and older.

Important Dates:

9/10 National Suicide Prevention Day

9/14 & 9/21 Free Rabies Vaccine Clinics – erie.gov/rabiesvaccine

9/17 Constitution Day

9/22 First Day of Fall