

CHILD CARE CONNECTIONS



A publication of Family Guidance Center of Alabama



January, February and March 2026

It's that time! Sensational Saturday!! SHAWN BROWN



Saturday, February 7, 2026
9:00 am - 1:30 pm
Pike County Cattleman Park
4100 US-231
Troy, AL 36081



*Scheduled time allows for a 30 minute break.
Certificates will be issued for 4 hours credit.



Registration begins, December 15, 2025

To register:

Licensed facilities - www.alabamapathways.org (search Sensational Saturday)
Email - Elizabeth.smith@dhr.alabama.gov (name, email and phone # are needed)
Call - 334-712-7777

Visit <https://www.youtube.com/@thesuperfunshow> for Shawn's songs!

Get ready for a day of SUPER FUN, learning, door prizes and surprises !



Funding provided by Alabama Department of Human Resources



RESOURCE LIBRARY



We invite you to visit our resource libraries in Dothan and Montgomery for lots of great ideas and materials to enhance your learning environment.

Each library offers a selection of books, learning materials, puppets, kits and a wide assortment of die cuts. Best of all, it is a free resource for you. We provide basic colors of construction paper for die cuts and lamination. For check out procedures and die cut orders, please contact the resource librarian in your area. Be sure to sign up for the library newsletters emailed each month.



Remember, we have die cuts for winter and upcoming special days!

CONTACT INFORMATION

Dothan

Library hours: 8:30 am to 4:00 pm
Monday - Friday (evening appointments available)
Resource Specialist:
Michelle Woodham (334) 712-7777 ext. 1713
Email: michelle.woodham1@dhr.alabama.gov

Montgomery

Library hours: 8:30 am - 4:00 pm
Monday - Friday (evening appointments available)
Resource Specialist:
Lisa Kirkland (334) 270-4100 ext. 1102
Email: lisa.kirkland@dhr.alabama.gov

Contact information for the mental health consultant for each region:

Dothan: 1-866-419-6868 ; new consultant coming soon
(Butler, Crenshaw, Pike, Covington, Barbour, Coffee, Dale, Henry, Geneva, and Houston.)

Montgomery: Debbie Bailey, dbailey@familyguidancecenter.org, 334-746-1005
(Montgomery, Autauga, Elmore, Bullock, Macon, Lee and Russell)

For more information about the program visit: <https://www.first5alabama.org/>



First 5 Alabama®
Alabama Association for Infant and
Early Childhood Mental Health

MEET OUR INFANT/TODDLER SPECIALISTS

Looking for opportunities to increase the quality of care for your infants and toddlers?
Please contact the specialist in your area:

DOTHAN: Barbara Culver, 334-712-7777 or barbara.culver@dhr.alabama.gov

MONTGOMERY: Adrienne Royster, 334-270-4100 or adrienne.royster@dhr.alabama.gov



ALABAMA PUBLIC TELEVISION'S EARLY CHILDHOOD ONLINE WINTER TRAINING COURSES

Registration for fall facilitated classes opens Monday, December 8, 2025

- Alabama Early Learning Guidelines (AELG) Online January 5 - February 22, 2026
- ACEs: Understanding and Preventing Adverse Childhood Experiences January 5 - January 26, 2026
- New! Introduction to the CDA Credential: Updated Edition January 5 - January 26, 2026
- Healthy Habits for a Healthy Start: CCDF 1, 8, & 13 February 2 - February 23, 2026
- Essentials of High Quality Early Care and Education February 2 - February 23, 2026



aptv.org/education/facilitated

APT's On-Demand Course Catalog

APT's On-Demand Trainings - APT's on-demand 2-hour trainings are always available.
Scan the QR code or visit aptv.org/on-demand to access APT's on-demand self-enrollment.



For more APT training opportunities see the Dothan and Montgomery training calendars.

February is Dental Health Month

Dental Health Month is a great time to focus on good oral hygiene like brushing and flossing, scheduling dental check-ups, and educating children about good oral hygiene through fun activities.



Hands-on and Creative Activities:

- Playdough Dental Care: Use playdough to create teeth and practice flossing with yarn or string.
- Brush the Plaque Away: Laminate pictures of teeth and use a dry-erase marker to draw “plaque.” Let children use a real toothbrush to scrub the plaque off, practicing good technique, and associating it with a clean tooth.
- Toothbrush Painting: Provide paper and paint along with old toothbrushes to practice different brushing strokes, like up-and-down or circular motions, as a fun way to mimic cleaning teeth.

Science and Learning:

- Egg Enamel Experiment: Place an egg in vinegar to represent a tooth. The small bubbles show how acid can affect teeth over time, demonstrating the importance of avoiding acidic foods.
- Healthy vs. Unhealthy Food Sort: Cut out pictures of different foods and have children sort them into two categories: those that are good for their teeth and those that are not.
- Story Time: Read children’s books about teeth, dentists, and healthy habits. Afterward, have children look at their own teeth in mirrors.

Gross and Fine Motor Skills:

- Floss Dance: Learn and perform a “floss dance” together as a fun way to practice a key dental hygiene movement.
- Letter/Number Practice: Use a shallow tray with salt or sand for a writing center. Children can use toothbrushes to form letters or numbers, use mini erasers or pom-poms to “fill-in” or “trace” lines as a fine motor exercise.
- Dentist Tray Relay: Set up a relay race where children must find and “remove” items from a pretend dentist tray based on clues.

As we leave winter weather behind and march towards spring weather, we as early childhood educators should focus on core concepts such as hygiene (handwashing, covering coughs), nutrition (healthy foods like whole grains and vegetables), and physical activity (gross motor skills like hopping and balancing). These topics can be integrated into daily routines and themes.



January: Winter Health

Staying Warm: Talk about wearing hats, gloves, and scarves.

Winter Weather Safety: Talk about staying safe when it’s cold and being careful on icy patches.

Germ Prevention: Talk about good hygiene like handwashing, covering coughs and sneezes, and not sharing cups or utensils.



February: Heart Health and Healthy Habits

Healthy Food: Talk about fruits, vegetables, and whole grains. Talk about drinking plenty of water.

Heart Health: Talk about how being active, like running and jumping, makes our hearts strong.

Emotional Health: Talk about emotions (happy, sad, angry) and healthy ways to express them.

Talk about kindness and friendship.

March: Spring into Health

Physical Fitness: Talk about the weather getting warmer. Encourage gross motor skills like running and dancing.

Springtime Germs: Talk about how spring can bring new germs, so it’s important to practice good hygiene.

Seasonal Activities: Talk about nature, like the weather, plants, and animals, and how to respect them.



Interested in obtaining your Child Development Associate Credential (CDA)?

For information, visit the Council for Professional Recognition
at <https://www.cdacouncil.org/en/>





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www.familyguidancecenter.org



REMEMBER



CALENDARS

RED - Montgomery office IN PERSON classes
BLUE - Dothan office IN PERSON classes

GREEN - ZOOM classes

***Register with the HOST office

Please see the calendar insert for the following:

- ♦ Registration procedures
- ♦ Classes specifically for directors/administration
- ♦ Trainings in person and via ZOOM



Our office will be closed
the following dates:

12/25/25	1/1/2026
12/26/25	1/19/26
	2/16/26



SCHOLARSHIP INFORMATION

T.E.A.C.H. ALABAMA EARLY CHILDHOOD SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

A project of Alabama Partnership for Children, helps early learning professionals increase their level of education and effectiveness in the classroom by making the educational process more attainable and affordable. For more information, contact Alabama Partnership for Children at 334-271-0304. or visit <https://alabamapartnershipforchildren.org/our-work/t-e-a-c-h/>

LEADERSHIP IN CHILD CARE SCHOLARSHIP

The scholarships are funded by the Department of Human Resources. For additional information, contact Virginia Frazer, Leadership in Child Care Scholarship program assistant, at (334) 293-4552 or by email at virginia.frazer@accs.edu.
<https://www.accs.edu/community-college/leadership-in-childcare/>

