

DuPage County Health Department hosts DuPage AOK Early Childhood Collaborative Summit to launch The Basics DuPage

The DuPage County Health Department (DCHD) recently announced the successful kickoff of The Basics initiative in DuPage County following the recently held DuPage All Our Kids (AOK) Early Childhood Collaborative (DAECC) Summit.

Science shows that 80 percent of brain growth happens by the age of three. Beginning from birth, young brains develop like little muscles, getting bigger and stronger the more you and your family interact with your child. The Basics Principles are five fun, simple, and powerful ways to help all our children aged 0-3 grow to be happy and smart.

The recent DAECC Summit served as a platform to introduce and implement The Basics initiative in DuPage County.

The event featured keynote speaker Dr. Ron Ferguson, faculty director of the Achievement Gap Initiative at Harvard University. Ferguson, a distinguished MIT-trained economist, helped develop the Basics Learning Network, emphasizing the significance of early childhood development in shaping the future of our communities.

The Basics Principles are as follows:

- Maximize love, manage stress
- Talk, sing, and point
- Count, group and compare



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From left to right: Dayanira Cabrera, Basics DuPage Coordinator, DuPage County Health Department; Dr. Ron Ferguson, faculty director of the Achievement Gap Initiative at Harvard University; and Andrea Gargani, director of Public Health Operations, DuPage County Health Department.

- Explore through movement and play
- Read and discuss stories

"The DuPage County Health Department is committed to promoting the well-being of our community's

youngest members," said Andrea Gargani, director of Public Health Operations, DuPage County Health Department. "We are thrilled to partner with The Basics initiative to ensure that every child in DuPage County has the opportunity to thrive."

Partnerships are integral to the success of The Basics initiative, with involvement from various stakeholders including hospitals, health centers, schools, community centers, childcare providers, churches, family members and others.

For more information about The Basics initiative and how to get involved, visit basicsillinois.org.

The DuPage Early Childhood Collaboration (DECC) was established in 2014 as a regional early childhood collaboration to support county-level system development and alignment for young children and their families, to build awareness, and to facilitate access to high-quality early childhood services and education.

In 2022, the DCHD was named the backbone agency for the DECC.

In the same year, the Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development awarded DCHD the All Our Kids (AOK) grant. To best support early childhood initiatives in DuPage County, DECC and AOK merged to form DAECC in 2023.

Organ and tissue donor registration campaign under way

Marking the beginning of National Donate Life Month, Illinois Secretary of State Alexi Giannoulias unveiled the state's annual organ and tissue donor ad campaign, which encourages Illinoisians to sign up for the donor registry.

"More than 4,000 Illinois residents are currently waiting for a transplant, including many whose lives depend on the availability of a suitable organ," Giannoulias said. "The month of April presents an opportunity to highlight how some-

one's decision to take a moment to sign up will tangibly save lives and why it's so important to encourage more people to register as donors."

The campaign features a public service announcement (PSA) that urges Illinoisians to enroll in the Secretary of State's Organ and Tissue Donor Registry by showcasing Tonisha Daniel of south suburban Dolton, who received a lifesaving liver transplant after waiting over a year.

Television and social media ads will run statewide throughout the month. The PSA features the song "The Scientist" by Coldplay.

Currently, 6.5 million Illinoisians are registered with the state's donor registry. Approximately 4,000

people are on the transplant waiting list. Of those individuals, about 300 die waiting for a transplant every year. A single donor can save or improve the lives of up to 25 people.

To become a donor, Illinoisians can register with the Secretary of State's Organ and Tissue Donor Registry by visiting www.LifeGoesOn.com, calling 800-210-2106 or signing up at a DMV facility. The entire process takes less than five minutes.

Donate Life Illinois partners include Gift of Hope Organ & Tissue Donor Network, Eversight, Mid-America Transplant Services and the National Kidney Foundation of Illinois.



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Willowbrook teacher receives special honor

Willowbrook world language teacher Jennifer Corona (center) received the school's Outstanding Teacher award last week. Willowbrook freshmen Meziyah Martir (left) and Emily Sahn (right) presented the award to Corona at the April 25 breakfast to honor the recipients of Willowbrook's Outstanding Student and Outstanding Teacher awards for the fourth quarter. To earn the Outstanding Teacher award, a staff member must treat teaching as a passion, create a positive learning environment, use a variety of strategies to engage students, be willing to offer extra support, provide prompt and effective feedback to students, and relate to and understand students' viewpoints and perspectives.

Village of Villa Park seeks input on naming new recreation center

Online survey is open through May 12

The Village of Villa Park is asking residents for their input in choosing a name for the village's new recreation center, which is currently under construction and scheduled to be completed by the end of the year.

"Our goal is to find a name that captures the spirit and essence of our community," noted a statement released by the village last week. "Your input is crucial in determining the identity of the recreation center, so please take a moment to share your suggestions and thoughts on what the recreation center should be named. Let's shape the future together!"

The online survey to seek input on naming the new recreation center will be open until the end of the day on Sunday, May 12. To participate in the survey, visit <https://www.survey-monkey.com/vr/VPRName>.

The survey asks residents to select one name for the recreation center. There are six choices—Villa Park Recreation Center, Lions Park Recreation Center, Villa Park Recreation Center at Lions Park, The Greenway Recreational Center at Lions Park, Garden Village Family Fitness Center at Lions Park and Norma Berger Taylor Recreation Center. Residents can also specify another name.

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Hitting for the cycle

The Willowbrook softball team improved its West Suburban Gold Conference record to 3-1 with last week's 14-2 victory at Hinsdale South. The Warriors scored nine runs in the top of the sixth inning of the April 24 conference contest. Willowbrook closed out its win by holding the Hornets scoreless in the bottom of the sixth inning. Sophomore Marli Smrz led the Warriors to the win by hitting for the cycle. Smrz went 4-for-4. She drove in five runs and scored three runs. Smrz delivered a run-scoring triple in the top of the first inning. She singled in the top of the third inning. Smrz doubled to drive in a run in the top of the fifth inning. Needing a home run to hit for the cycle, Smrz drilled a three-run homer in the top of the sixth inning. Her home run gave the Warriors a 10-2 lead. Senior Karman Rowe went 2-for-5 and drove in two runs for Willowbrook in last week's conference triumph at Hinsdale South. Senior Isabella Dugo and junior Isabel Bates provided two hits each in the win. Rowe pitched a complete game for the Warriors. She piled up 10 strikeouts during six innings in the circle. Rowe allowed one earned run, six hits and three walks in the victory. One day after beating Hinsdale South, the Warriors suffered a 12-9 non-conference loss to Batavia in Villa Park. Smrz (No. 6) is pictured during the April 25 battle against the Bulldogs. She went 3-for-4 and drove in two runs in the game. Rowe went 3-for-5 and drove in one run. Senior Lindsey Rugg went 3-for-4 with two RBIs. The Warriors' overall season record fell to 11-8 after they lost both games of Saturday's doubleheader at Downers Grove North. Willowbrook's schedule this week includes conference games against Downers Grove South and Leyden, along with today's non-conference home game against York.



CHRIS FOX PHOTOS Rock Valley Publishing

Rams pick up a pair of wins

Glenbard East's boys volleyball team earned a pair of victories last week to raise its overall season record to 14-9. The Rams defeated Naperville Central 25-19, 25-18 in Lombard on April 24. One day later, Glenbard East posted a 25-22, 25-14 win at St. Charles North. Senior Aidan Weltin (No. 11 - above left) bashed 14 kills and served four aces for the Rams in last week's home win over Naperville Central. Senior Jack Junior (No. 2 - above right) handed out 13 assists in Glenbard East's victory over the Redhawks, while junior Max McDermott (No. 9 - right) added 15 digs for the Rams. Weltin provided 14 kills and three aces in Glenbard East's win at St. Charles North. McDermott contributed 10 assists in the April 25 road win, while Junior distributed nine assists. The Rams' schedule this week includes Upstate Eight matches against Streamwood and Elgin. Glenbard East will also compete at the Glenbrook North Invitational, which takes place this Friday and Saturday.



Rams defeat Tomcats

Glenbard East's softball team raised its Upstate Eight Conference record to 7-3 with last week's 16-0 home win over East Aurora. The Rams scored 12 runs in the bottom of the first inning of the April 25 contest, which wound up lasting four innings. Freshman Ally Amrhein of Glenbard East launched a two-run home run during the first-inning onslaught. Amrhein (No. 12) is pictured as she rounds third base and approaches Glenbard East coach Dawn Chantos after that homer. Junior Melissa Saldana (No. 7) went 2-for-2 and drove in three runs for the Rams during last week's win over the Tomcats. Freshman Lilly Carver went 1-for-2 with two runs batted in for Glenbard East. Amrhein went 1-for-1 with three RBIs. Senior Raya Schwebel went 1-for-1 with two RBIs. Junior Marley Szeluga and freshman Althea Fitzgerald shared the Rams' pitching duties in the shutout victory over East Aurora. Szeluga struck out two batters in one inning. Fitzgerald recorded four strikeouts in three innings. Glenbard East played a pair of games at Saturday's tournament at Rolling Meadows High School. The Rams opened the event with a 7-3 win over Glenbrook South. Glenbard East lost its second game of the day, dropping a 4-2 decision to Palatine. The Rams' overall season record stood at 12-6 at the end of the tournament in Rolling Meadows. Saldana went 3-for-3 and drove in two runs in Saturday's win over Glenbrook South. Freshman Claire Bolda pitched a complete game for the Rams in the victory. Bolda allowed two earned runs, six hits and four walks in seven innings. She struck out four Glenbrook South batters. Glenbard East's schedule this week includes conference games against Streamwood, South Elgin and Glenbard South.



CHRIS FOX PHOTO Rock Valley Publishing



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Warriors beat the Trojans

Willowbrook's baseball team defeated Downers Grove North 4-2 in Saturday's non-conference battle in Villa Park. Senior Ryan Knebel pitched the first three innings of the contest for the Warriors. He allowed two runs, three hits and five walks while striking out three batters. Willowbrook led the visiting Trojans 3-2 at the end of the third inning. Junior Ryan Adamczyk (No. 32 - above) then pitched four shutout innings for the Warriors. Adamczyk allowed one hit and three walks in his four innings on the mound. He recorded six strikeouts. Junior Ryan Bannon (No. 20 below) went 2-for-3 and drove in one run for Willowbrook during Saturday's win. Sophomore Jory Crocker went 2-for-4 with one RBI for the Warriors. Willowbrook junior Charlie Siegler went 2-for-2 with an RBI, while junior Vinny Ippolito went 1-for-2 with an RBI. The Warriors improved their overall season record to 13-8-2 with Saturday's win. Willowbrook raised its West Suburban Gold Conference record to 6-6 by sweeping last week's three-game series against Proviso East. The Warriors posted top-sided shutouts in all three of their wins over the Pirates. Willowbrook's schedule this week includes a three-game conference series against Morton, along with a non-conference contest at Lyons Township.

