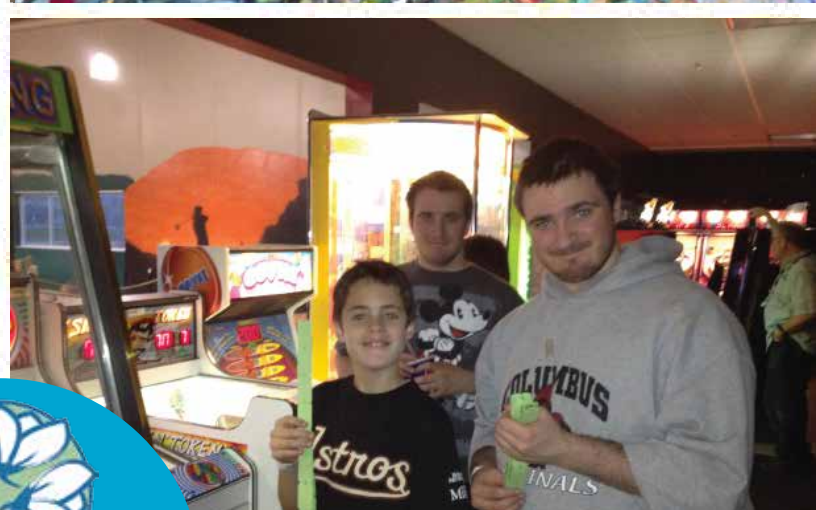


# Spring 2017

March 12 - May 20



Excelsior Location:  
355 2nd St.  
Excelsior, MN 55331  
(952) 474-0227

**WEST METRO**  
**LEARNING CONNECTIONS, INC**  
*Helping Kids Fit In And Shine!*  
[www.wmlc.biz](http://www.wmlc.biz)    [info@wmlc.biz](mailto:info@wmlc.biz)

Edina Location:  
5215 Edina Industrial Blvd.  
Suite 400  
Edina, MN 55439  
(952) 322-7922

# The West Metro Way

West Metro Learning Connections' curricula teach about the "hidden social agenda" but do you know the "hidden" potential of participation in WMLC's social skills groups? Read on to learn about all of the benefits included with enrollment at WMLC:



## Preparing for Class

- At an **Intake Conference** parents will meet with our Director of Admissions to discuss and share information to precisely place their child in a social skills class based on age, strengths and needs.
- Parents and caregivers may attend a **Parent Orientation Meeting** to learn what social skills classes are like for their child and how they can provide continuity at home as well as opportunity to learn about accessing all of WMLC's other supports.
- We create a **Client Summary Sheet** which includes personal goals for staff to know about a child while at WMLC. We do this based on reviewing enrollment forms, IEP's, school and medical evaluations, and any other documents provided by the family.
- With consent, WMLC's Director of Admissions will schedule a **School Visit** to address areas of need when participating in a social skills group.
- Upon request a WMLC staff member will attend a client's annual **IEP Meeting**.



## During Class

- Prior to the first day of class you will be provided with a beginning of term **Welcome Packet** which includes a **Social Agenda** to pre-teach and reduce anxiety.
- Social Skills Programs for middle and high school incorporate **Therapeutic Recreation Outings** carefully planned by our Therapeutic Recreation Coordinator. Preschool and Elementary level classes include Guided Play and Choice Time. These provide clients the opportunity to generalize social skills across settings.
- Quintessential, **Highly Skilled Staff** provide **Direct Instruction** for social understanding in classes at all levels.
- We achieve an exceptional **Client to Staff Ratio of 3:1**
- As a part of the West Metro Way, teaching staff prepare client-specific **Feedback Sheets** given to parents after each class. At WMLC this includes a lesson summary, lesson objectives, and **Skills to Practice** at home. They also provide information about your child's daily participation. Teachers are available after class to discuss daily feedback.



## Once Class is Over

- We know the importance of **Continuing Education** for staff and deliver on-going staff education.
- Parents and caregivers may attend and gain knowledge from our **Strategy Central** trainings. These are offered year round and are tailored to current ASD-related topics.
- Upon completion of each term, your child's teacher will prepare a **Progress Review** specific to your child.
- Lead Staff meet with parents for **Conferences** at the completion of each term where we go over the Progress Review and discuss your child's strengths, needs and growth.
- As follow-up, we always provide **Recommendations** for the upcoming WMLC term.

# Preschool

## Developing Friendships Through Play I

Excelsior | Mon. | 10 a.m.-11:30 a.m. | \$850

Through the use of symbolic and pretend play, demonstration, modeling, and practice, participants' positive social communication and interactions increase, transfer, and generalize, resulting in academic and social success.

## Building Friendships Through Play I

Edina | Tue. | 5 p.m.-6:30 p.m. | \$850

Excelsior | Sat. | 9 a.m.-10:30 a.m. | \$850

This course teaches friendship development skills of greeting, sharing, joining in, asking someone to play, and cooperating, while guiding the client from functional play to pretend play.

## Facilitated Play Group

Excelsior | Fri. | 4:30 p.m. - 6 p.m. | \$850

Participants will learn a play or social skill of the day that is tailored to participants, as well as enjoy Circle Time, Guided Play Time, and have fun!



# Elementary School

## Moving on with Friendship I

Excelsior | Sat. | 11:45 a.m.-1:45 p.m. | \$1,090

For those with a basic use of friendship skills in less structured settings, this course teaches more advanced problem-solving, empathy, perspective-taking skills, dealing with bullies, non-verbal communication, hidden and unwritten rules of friendship, and more.

## Moving on with Friendship II

Edina | Mon. | 5 p.m. - 7 p.m. | \$1,090

“Moving on with Friendship II” reinforces and builds upon the West Metro course “Moving on with Friendship I.” This course places more focus on learning strategies for perspective-taking, non-verbal social communication skills, and “hidden” or “unwritten” rules of friendship especially in less structured social contexts like recess, choice time, and lunch time.

## Moving on with Friendship III

Edina | Sat. | 9 a.m. - 11 a.m. | \$1,090

This course builds upon strategies for social problem solving, empathy, perspective-taking, bullies, non-verbal social communication skills, and “hidden” or “unwritten” rules of friendship especially in less structured social contexts like recess, choice time, and lunch time.

## Slick Self-Control I

Excelsior | Thur. | 5 p.m.-7 p.m. | \$1,090

Participants increase their emotional/behavioral skills and motivation for exercising self-control so they can enjoy the long-term benefits of self-management in relationships and self-esteem. Focus will be on challenging the desire to have their own way, have everything be predictable and the need to be right in a structured environment.

## Getting Along with Friendship I

Edina | Sat. | 11:45 a.m. - 1:45 p.m. | \$1,090

Excelsior | Tue. | 5 p.m.-7 p.m. | \$1,090

This course teaches children to frame relationships through thoughts and behaviors. Meeting, making, and keeping new friends are at the core of this popular course.

# Elementary School Continued

## Social Understanding and Self-Management I

Edina | Sat. | 9 a.m. - 11 a.m. | \$1,090

This course addresses social cognition development, skills of perspective-taking, social appropriateness, and social boundaries. Participants will work with the idiom “Put yourself in someone else’s shoes” and learn how to do so in a variety of situations. Participants will also use the 5-Point Scale to examine the social appropriateness of their behaviors.

## Catching on to Getting Along I

Edina | Sat. | 11:15 a.m.-1:15 p.m. | \$1,090

Excelsior | Mon. | 5 p.m.-7 p.m. | \$1,090

Excelsior | Tue. | 5 p.m.-7 p.m. | \$1,090

Excelsior | Sat. | 9 a.m. - 11 a.m. | \$1,090

This is WMLC’s flagship course that both parents and teachers laud as the catalyst for children’s ongoing social success. Social understanding is the core of the class with concepts like introductions, play, offering help, compliments and apologies being taught and practiced weekly.

## Fitting In At School II

Edina | Tue. | 5 p.m.-7 p.m. | \$1,090

Participants are challenged to gain essential skills, like accepting criticism and accepting help. Participants will also focus on diminishing traits like bossiness and being a tattletale. Conversation skills are covered in some depth, including such skills as starting a conversation, ending a conversation, taking turns speaking, and speaking with proper voice tone and volume.

## Social Understanding and Self-Management II

Excelsior | Sat. | 11:45 a.m. - 1:45 p.m. | \$1,090

This course focuses on social understanding as it relates to one’s own feelings and behaviors. Participants will use the 5 Point Scale to rate various problems, reactions, and behaviors. This course will also help participants to develop ways to calm themselves and to use social cues to infer what others are thinking and feeling.



## Mindful Manners I

Edina | Thu. | 5 p.m.-7 p.m. | \$1,090

Excelsior | Sat. | 9 a.m.-11 a.m. | \$1,090

Mindful Manners I is an introductory course focused on teaching good manners in a variety of settings. Participants will use video clips, stories and assorted activities to identify how, when and why to use good manners.



## Catching on to Conversations I

Edina | Tue. | 5 p.m.-7 p.m. | \$1,090

This course introduces the anatomy of conversation, types of conversations, and the purposes for engaging in conversations. Using verbal and nonverbal components, participants increase their basic conversation skills, conversational manners and active listening skills. Participants learn that perspective-taking and social understanding drive effective communication critical to personal, relational and social success.

# Elementary School Continued

## Managing Anxiety and Stress I

Edina | Sat. | 11:45 a.m.-1:45 p.m. | \$1,090

Participants expand their insight and ability to recognize and manage anxiety and stress through awareness of their personal signs and triggers. This course will explore a wide variety of cognitive and behavioral strategies, and relaxation tools that work to develop their confidence and ability to enter situations with self-assurance.

## Managing Anxiety and Stress II

Edina | Sat. | 9 a.m. - 11 a.m. | \$1,090

This course focuses on helping participants understand one's own triggers and anxiety. Participants learn a variety of self-management techniques and are encouraged to practice whichever system of relaxation best suits them. Skills for positive self-talk are developed in addition to their understanding of power over negativity. Participants will create an individualized emotional toolbox based on their needs to be used in times of anxiety.

## Friends and Feelings II

Excelsior | Sat. | 11:15 a.m.-1:15 p.m. | \$1,090

Participants take understanding of feelings and emotions in oneself and begin to apply it to understanding emotions in others. Participants learn about demonstrating a pro-social approach depending on how a friend feels, whole body listening with a focused mind and body, problem solving at recess, and thinking of others.



# Kids Chat N' Chill (Middle School)

## KCNC: Cool Tools for Social Success I

Edina | Fri. | 5 p.m.-8 p.m. | \$1,640

Participants will begin to build "Cool Tools" toolboxes filled with self-management strategies for coping with stress and anger, frustrating work and harder classes, asking for help, developing self-advocacy, and knowing when to "Let Go." Participants discuss the importance of compromise and learning respect in different roles of working in a group.

## KCNC: Formulas for Social Success II

Excelsior | Sat. | 12 p.m.-3 p.m. | \$1,640

In this course we discuss trust, flexibility and the power of making choices along with being mature enough to accept the responsibilities of our actions. Students will learn to visualize topics before beginning to speak, maintaining conversations and the importance of a graceful ending in a conversation.

## KCNC: Tweens/Teens Tame Technology I

Edina | Mon. | 5 p.m.-8 p.m. | \$1,640

In this course participants focus on building skills and awareness needed for the tech-savvy world we live in. Participants will develop an understanding of the positive and negative aspects of using technology, social networks, smart phones, internet, etc.



# Kids Chat N' Chill (Middle School)

## KCNC: Notable Needs I

Edina | Tue. | 5 p.m.-8 p.m. | \$1,640

This is an introductory course in which participants will begin to gain understanding of their own and others' needs. This begins with basic instruction in physical needs and builds from there. Participants will learn about social needs in both a family and non-family setting. The skill of communicating needs effectively and appropriately will be addressed.

## KCNC: Self-Advocacy & Self-Management I

Edina | Sat. | 12 p.m.-3 p.m. | \$1,640

Excelsior | Thu. | 5 p.m.-8 p.m. | \$1,640

Using the 5-Point Scale to define and analyze socially appropriate behavior, participants will learn about advocacy by honing listening skills and learning about conversation repair strategies, reputation and being assertive. Participants develop an understanding and motivation for demonstrating mature behaviors related to responsibility, self-management, and assertion to promote social success.

## KCNC: Peer Relationships I

Excelsior | Mon. | 5 p.m.-8 p.m. | \$1,640

In this course participants focus on the skills that teenagers need to make and keep friends. Participants will work on age appropriate friendship-making skills of introductions, conversations, levels of friendship, and demonstrating interest in others. They will also increase their understanding of how to keep friends through learning skills such as asking for and offering help, giving appropriate advice and responding to peer pressure.



# Transition (Age 14 +)

## Job Skills 101

Edina | Th. | 5 p.m. - 9 p.m. | \$2,100

This transition course provides real and diverse opportunities to engage in meaningful work, enhance self-esteem and confidence, and enjoy a sense of accomplishment, productivity, and independence. Participants will receive 1 hour of instruction focusing on basic job expectations, etiquette, work ethic, learning and fulfilling a role, accepting instruction and feedback, and many other skills necessary to gaining and maintaining successful employment. For the remaining 3 hours of the group participants will volunteer with different organizations to receive a variety of on-the-job experiences.



# Teens Talk/Teens Rock (High School)

## TTTR: Social Boundaries & Self-Management I

Edina | Thu. | 5 p.m.-9 p.m. | \$2,080

Adapted from Kari Dunn Buron's "A 5 is Against the Law" and including Michelle Garcia Winner's Work, this dynamic course facilitates dramatic changes in social and behavioral success by providing a framework that guides social thinking, self-management, perspective taking, and vital unwritten social expectations and rules.

## TTTR: Social Boundaries & Self-Management II

Excelsior | Fri. | 4:30 p.m.-9:30 p.m. | \$2,360

This term in "Social Boundaries and Self-Management II," participants will discuss anxiety: what it is, what causes it, what triggers it in each of us, and what we can do to avoid, reduce, and manage it when it does occur. Participants will also learn to identify problems as situational, self, and others' and how to respond to them with an "urgency" that matches the level of the problem.

## TTTR: Cracking Current Communication Codes I

Excelsior | Sat. | 12 p.m. - 5 p.m. | \$2,360

This is a course designed around the concept of non-verbal language. For those on the spectrum, learning body language, tone, volume, proximity, non-verbal cues, facial expressions and more is vital to social success.



## TTTR: Straight Forward Strategies I

Edina | Sat. | 12 p.m. - 5 p.m. | \$2,360

This term in "Social Boundaries and Self-Management II," participants will discuss the importance of making a good impression, reading signals from the opposite sex, and giving and accepting compliments. Participants will also increase their conversation skills by developing rapport through small talk, maintaining a conversation, and how to end a conversation gracefully, while demonstrating friendliness.

# Young Adults

## Young Adults Group (YAG)

Edina | Sat. | 12 p.m. - 4 p.m. | \$2,080

"Young Adults Group" provides a venue for older teens and young adults to address personal and social-related issues through a guided discussion format. Group members work together to develop topic and community outing ideas. The dynamic operation of this group facilitates the self-reflection and goal-setting necessary for independent living and also helps develop the flexibility and compromise skills required for getting along with others and developing and maintaining relationships with friends.

## Meet & Mingle

Excelsior | Fri. | 6 p.m. - 10 p.m. | \$960

This is a group for high school graduates up to the age of 30, it is completely driven by participants' ideas and plans and requires a WMLC staff recommendation to join. This group offers a great opportunity for skill growth in a mature and collaborative environment.



## Spring Social Skills Term

March 13th - May 20th  
(Term Break March 27th - April 8th )

## Spring Sleepovers

| Event        | Date      | Time             | Location  | Price |
|--------------|-----------|------------------|-----------|-------|
| Green Mill   | Mar. 18th | 5p.m.-<br>10a.m. | Excelsior | \$175 |
| Omni Theater | Apr. 22nd | 5p.m.-<br>10a.m. | Edina     | \$175 |
| Grand Slam   | May 13th  | 5p.m.-<br>10a.m. | Excelsior | \$175 |

## Registration Contact:

Mary Wyatt  
(952) 474-0227, ext. 204



**WEST METRO**  
LEARNING CONNECTIONS. INC.

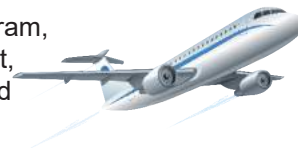
355 2nd Street  
Excelsior, MN 55331

ADDRESS SERVICE  
REQUESTED

## WMLC's Spring Break Travel Tips

Traveling can be a stressful experience, even if the travel destination is a tropical one. For a child with autism the unknowns of travel, particularly airplane travel and the process which accompanies it, can be especially troublesome. To help ease the anxiety of children with autism and their families, the Metropolitan Airports Commission (MAC) along with Fraser and the Autism Society of Minnesota (AuSM) have teamed up to provide a program to help prepare these families for travel. The "Navigating

Autism" events are held monthly, typically on the first Saturday of the month. In the two hour program, families will practice entering the airport, get a security pass, go through a TSA security checkpoint, and walk through the airport to a boarding gate. The participants will then board an aircraft and find their seats (the plane stays on the ground throughout the event).



These events are designed to be fun, safe experiences to learn and practice airport expectations and to find out what does or does not work for individual families. Because these events are so popular, it is recommended that interested families sign up early.

Richard Kargel, a pilot with Delta Airlines, and father to a child with autism, recommends that families prepare for air travel with the following tips on things to pack:

- Whatever keeps them occupied at home, bring it on vacation if at all possible! Tablets, laptops loaded with games and movies, personal game systems, paper and colored pencils, comfort/security items such as teddy bears or blankets can help ease anxiety and help to occupy the child during the flight (but remember to bring headphones or ear buds if using an electronic device, as a courtesy to other passengers)
- Bring familiar snacks from home - just remember that the snacks may not be liquid or paste consistency! Liquids (and many other snack options) are also available for purchase in the terminal and aboard many flights.
- If your child has sensitivity to loud sounds, a pair of noise-cancelling headphones or soft ear plugs may minimize the noise

*Safe Travels to All of You from Debra Schipper and All of Your Friends at West Metro Learning Connections*