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WMLC Perspectives Highlights - September 2014

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**WEST METRO**  
**LEARNING CONNECTIONS, INC.**

*Developing Social Understanding & Skills Since 2001  
 Centers in Edina & Excelsior*

## The Meaning Behind Our Logos

By Nicole Ringgenberg, B.S., Director of Programming

We have had many questions lately regarding our logos. The chameleon has long been the logo of WMLC's social skills groups and therapeutic recreation. Most people believe a chameleon is a small lizard with the ability to change the color of their skin to be better able to camouflage and hide. However, they actually change color as a response to mood, temperature, health, communication and light. Many types of chameleons can only turn, green, brown, or gray. Others have the ability to change to a variety of different colors like pink, blue, red, orange, green, black, brown, blue, yellow, turquoise and purple. When cold, some become a darker shade and lay in the sun, or change to a lighter shade when too warm and seek a little shade. However, most color changes are due to mood changes or for communication purposes. When it feels threatened or when it's protecting its territory, a chameleon will also change colors. Chameleons have the ability to identify their needs, quickly adapt to their environment, and communicate their feelings.

The chameleon logos fits so perfectly with our mission and vision for the clients we serve every day. We help our friends develop their social understanding and social skills, so that they are better able to use their many different gifts (or shine their many different colors) while also being happy, successful, confident individuals, that can "fit in and shine" where they go.

In addition to our chameleon you will also see a lotus flower, the lotus flower starts as a small flower down at the bottom of a pond in the mud and muck. It slowly grows up towards the water's surface continually moving towards the light. Once it comes to the surface of the water the lotus flower begins to blossom and turn into a beautiful flower.

As the lotus flower grows up from the mud into a object of great beauty people also grow and change into something more beautiful (hopefully!).

The lotus flower has a unique characteristic in that it blooms and sheds its seeds at the same time. In the context of Buddhism, the theory of karma says that, just like the lotus flower, our life is made up of cause and effect. Every cause -- be it action, word or thought -- will imprint an effect that can be seen in this lifetime or in future lives.

The lotus produces a beautiful flower even with its roots in the dirtiest water. The lotus is a symbol of transformation.

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**SOCIAL SKILLS THERAPY**  
HELPING KIDS FIT IN & SHINE

## Register Today for Fall Term

**Term will begin on September 15th and will run through November 15th**  
**We hope you will join us for a Fall full of FUN!**

### Preschool & Elementary Registration

Click for  
More Information

### Middle School, High School & Post High School Registration

Click for  
More Information

September 2014						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
	★	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

October 2014						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

November 2014						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	★	28	29
30						

Fall Term

2014-2015 WMLC Calendar

Fall Term Catalog

Contact Mary Wyatt for information regarding registration at [mwyatt@wmlc.biz](mailto:mwyatt@wmlc.biz) or 952-474-0227 x204

## Exciting Changes at WMLC

### WMLC Additions

Nancy Olson, formerly a special education case manager at Beacon Academy, has accepted the position of School Services Coordinator and Lead Autism Specialist at WMLC. With more than 10 years of experience, she developed a strong understanding of due process and acquired the necessary skills to partner with school staff and families to determine appropriate individualized programming for students with unique learning styles. She is licensed in elementary education, specific learning disabilities, and autism spectrum disorders.



Joy Fehring, formerly a special education teacher with St. Paul Public Schools, has accepted the position of Autism Specialist. She brings more than 7 years of experience teaching students with autism in various settings. She is licensed in elementary education, emotional behavior disorders, and autism spectrum disorders. Joy has a passion for finding positive solutions to help all students with ASD reach their full potential through collaboration with families and school staff.

### WMLC Promotions

Tomasina Uttecht has been promoted to the position of Executive Director. Tomasina joined WMLC 8 years ago as Office Manager and has held the positions of Director of Office and Personnel Administration and Director of Marketing and Business Development. She is thrilled to continue the momentum that WMLC's founder and CEO Debra Schipper, began in 2001, and to work with the new Director of Programming, Nicole Ringgenberg, to keep WMLC's mission and values strong while continuing to progress with new cutting edge, innovative programming.



Nicole Ringgenberg, promoted to Director of Programming joined WMLC 4 years ago as an ASD Support Specialist. She has held the positions of Edina Center Director and Social Skills Coordinator. She will continue as the Social Skills Coordinator in addition to her promotion. In this new role, she will support and drive the "big picture" of WMLC's programming by maintaining solid communication and continuity between departments to ensure WMLC provides exemplary services and support to the families and friends with ASD that we serve.



# Cam's Connections

Check out our Fall programming for preschool aged children!

## Educational Components

Listening and Understanding (Receptive Language Skills)  
Communicating and Speaking (Expressive Language Skills)  
Emergent Reading Skills  
Writing Skills  
Self-Awareness and Emotional Awareness  
Self-Management  
Social Understanding and Relationships

## Cam's Connections will include:

Sensory Integration  
Facilitated Play  
Fine & Gross Motor Skill Development  
MN State Academic Curriculum  
Music and Movement

[View the Flyer](#)



## Sensory Strategy

This month's sensory strategy involves our sense of smell. If you are looking for a calming scent you may want to invest in lavender oil or rosemary oil. Researchers have found that vanilla, lavender, and rose scented items have a calming effect on the body. If you are looking for the opposite effect, very strong scents, the smell of citrus such as lemon or mint often have an alerting response on the body.



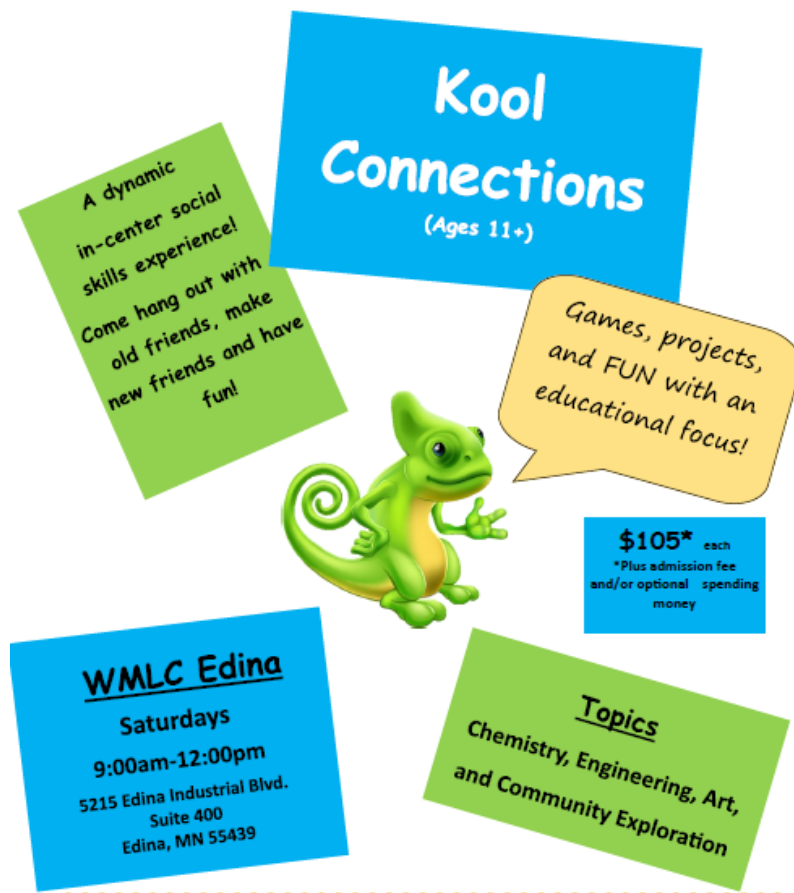


## App of the Month

This month's app is called, "Social Skill Builder" it is a great app for individuals of all ages. There are two versions of the app, the full version and the lite version. The full version offers 19 different modules with real life video interactions and multiple choice questions. This app helps users practice friendship skills, life skills, understanding emotions, problem solving, critical thinking and perspective taking. It is definitely worth checking out!

[Click for  
More Information](#)

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**Kool Connections**  
(Ages 11+)

A dynamic in-center social skills experience!  
Come hang out with old friends, make new friends and have fun!

Games, projects, and FUN with an educational focus!

**\$105\*** each  
\*Plus admission fee and/or optional spending money

**WMLC Edina**  
Saturdays  
9:00am-12:00pm  
5215 Edina Industrial Blvd.  
Suite 400  
Edina, MN 55439

**Topics**  
Chemistry, Engineering, Art, and Community Exploration

Register online at [www.wmlc.biz](http://www.wmlc.biz) or call the WMLC Office

[Click Here to Register](#)

## Friday Excellent Adventure

September 12<sup>th</sup> 2014



Nickelodeon Universe

5:00pm to 9:00pm @ Excelsior

Open to ages 8 and up

All of our Excellent Adventures have been carefully researched and planned so clients not only have a great time, but also learn and practice social interaction and communication skills in a supported, but natural setting. Minimum enrollment is three participants. All are welcome, but advance registration is

required.

**Cost:** \$120 + cost of activity/admission fees

[View the Flyer](#)

[Click Here to Register](#)

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## Sleepover September 20<sup>th</sup> 2014



*Pizza & Games @ WMLC Edina*

*Drop-off @ Edina: Saturday, September 20th at 5:00pm*

*Pickup @ Edina: Sunday, September 21st at 10:00am*

*Open to ages 8 and up*

Sleepovers are a great opportunity to enjoy some free time, build new relationships, and work on friendship skills in a natural, yet supported, environment.

**Outing Goals:** Cooperative play skills and sportsmanlike conduct, verbal support to peers, reciprocal conversations relevant to activities, independence and responsibility.

**Sleepover Cost:** \$175 (includes meals at WMLC)

**Items to Bring:** Sleeping Bag, pillow, medication and any other necessities you may need

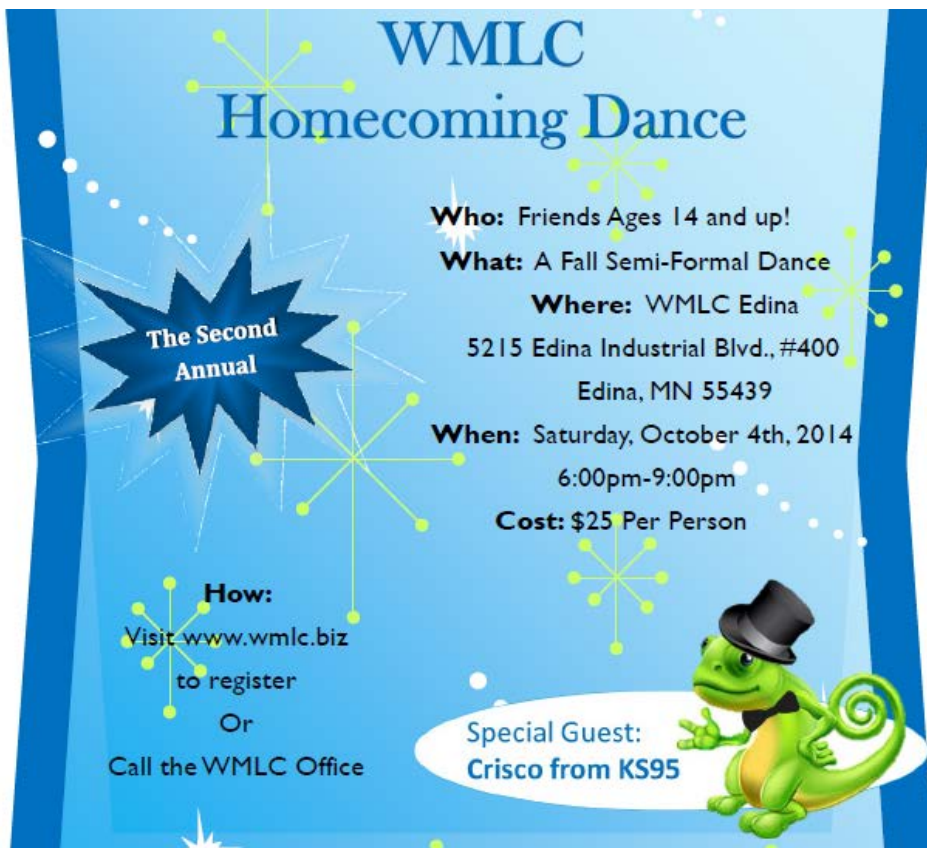
**Optional Items to Bring:** Games (electronic games are okay)

[View the Flyer](#)

[Click Here to Register](#)

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**WMLC**  
**Homecoming Dance**

**Who:** Friends Ages 14 and up!  
**What:** A Fall Semi-Formal Dance  
**Where:** WMLC Edina  
5215 Edina Industrial Blvd., #400  
Edina, MN 55439  
**When:** Saturday, October 4th, 2014  
6:00pm-9:00pm  
**Cost:** \$25 Per Person

**The Second Annual**

**How:**  
Visit [www.wmlc.biz](http://www.wmlc.biz)  
to register  
Or  
Call the WMLC Office

**Special Guest:**  
**Crisco from KS95**



[View the Flyer](#)

[Click Here to Register](#)

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## Taste of the Lakes 2014

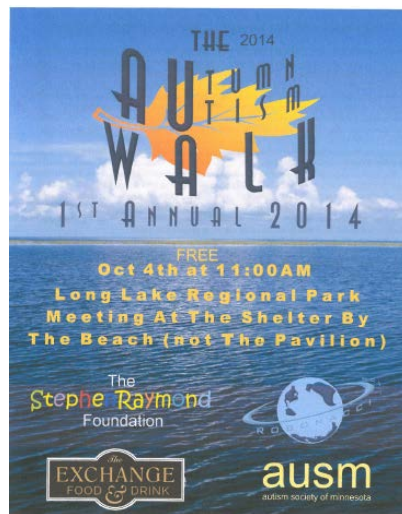
Thursday, September 25, 2014  
6:00pm – 10:00pm  
BayView Event Center, Excelsior

\$35 per person in advance  
\$40 per person at the door



**METRO FRIENDSHIP FOUNDATION**  
PROVIDING SCHOLARSHIPS *for* CHILDREN WITH AUTISM

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More Information](#)



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## Parenting as a Team When Living with Autism

Whether you're married, living together, or not, parenting as a team is essential when living with autism. But that's not always easy. Join Autism Speaks and Center for Engaging Autism for a night out where Dr. Leann Smith will discuss the unique stress autism places on families across the lifespan. It is through education that parents can best support their child, and learning how to work together is the first step to reducing stress and creating a harmonious family life – regardless of your family's composition.

[Click for More Information](#)



[Facebook](#) [Website](#)

**Our mailing address is:**

[info@wmlc.biz](mailto:info@wmlc.biz) [www.wmlc.biz](http://www.wmlc.biz)

**Edina Location:**

5215 Edina Industrial Blvd., Suite 400  
Edina, MN 55439  
952-322-7922

**Excelsior Location:**

355 Second Street  
Excelsior, MN 55331  
952-474-0227



BBB  
Rating: A+

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