



Community Services for Children Provider Link Newsletter ~ ELRC Region 14 February 2022

Serving Lehigh & Northampton counties

Community Services for Children continues to serve families and the childcare community. We are scheduling meetings and visits remotely when possible. If you do need to visit our offices, please wear a mask regardless of your vaccination status, limit visitors to only those who must be in attendance and stay home if you are feeling unwell.

Region 14 Updates

Directors Network

Karen Grim-Thomas from OCDEL was the guest presenter at January's Director Network Meeting. She provided an update on the ARPA grant process and responded to questions from directors regarding COVID-19 guidelines and Department of Health and the CDC. The Directors also shared their challenges regarding hiring qualified staff and meeting the 10 day quarantining recommendations.

Join us next month Feb 8, 2022 at 1:00. Register in advance for this meeting by clicking [here](#).

Raise Your STAR!

The following programs demonstrated their commitment to quality by moving to a higher STAR level since July 1, 2021.

Congratulations to the following providers for moving to a **STAR 2**:

- Miles of Smiles
- Bethlehem Christian School
- Bethlehem Early Learners



- Angela Caraballo
- Maria Liriano
- Bright Futures
- Bright Creations

Congratulations also to the following programs moved to a **STAR 4**:

- Petite Scholars
- Elevation Community Center
- Endless Innovation
- My First Daycare Home
- Little Archies
- Y2Kidz Child Care Center
- Learn & Play
- Lehigh Children's Academy
- Lehigh Valley Children's Center - Avona

Q&A session with Tom Copeland

After hearing from many of our own providers about their concerns related to ARPA funds, the ELRC invited Tom Copeland, a leading expert in the business of family childcare, to join us for a Q & A session related to the ARPA grant. Over 100 providers from Regions 11, 12, 13, 14 & 16 joined the call to ask questions regarding tax implications and spending of the ARPA funds. This was an informative session that addressed many provider concerns and helped administrators plan for the receipt and spending of these funds. If you were unable to attend you can view the recording [here](#).

Region 14 Provider Supports

Support the ECE community by connecting with one or more of these advocacy agencies!

- [ECE Advocacy Agencies](#)

PQA - Let's Talk Quality Monthly webinar series

- [February topic: Observation & Reflection](#)



ELRC Updates

American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)

ARPA Grant applications were due to the ELRC by January 31, 2022. The applications received in January continue to be processed.

Grant monitoring will take place in the summer of 2022 so it is important to keep receipts organized.

Begin to track expenses into these categories:

- Personnel costs
- Rent/Mortgage & Utilities
- Facilities Maintenance & Insurance
- PPE, Cleaning & Health & Safety Practices

Providers will receive 6 installments for the ARPA grant. Your last payment will be 6 months from the date of your first payment.

Payments are scheduled to be released via direct deposit or paper check on the following dates:

- 2/22/22

- Equipment & Supplies
- Goods & Services
- Mental Health Supports for Staff & Children

- 3/22/22
- 4/22/22
- 5/20/22
- 6/22/22



CCW Updates

- **Non-traditional Add-on** - Effective 1/1/22, a 25% add-on rate will be paid for a child who receives at least 2 hours of care during non-traditional hours on a weekday or any care received on the weekend. Please check your invoices to be sure schedules are correct
- **Co-pay decreases** - Effective 1/17/22, most families enrolled through CCW have been issued a co-pay decrease. Providers should have received an updated enrollment summary for all affected families. Email elrc14@cscinc.org with any questions or concerns.

CCW Payments - Virtual Learning

If a school district moves to virtual learning due to COVID and a child will now be in care full-time, providers will be paid full-time as long as they have accepted the blended rate.

- Please mark these children as FT on your invoice.
- Please note this does not include closures due to weather, school holidays, etc. These days are already covered by your blended rate.

STARS Movement Tip of the Month - Family Resource List

Keystone STAR indicator FC3.4.7 requires providers to have a current community resource handbook. This resource list should be reviewed annually and updated with the most current information. Agencies you may include could be CHIP, local food banks, Intermediate Units, Early Intervention, school districts and local health care providers. Review your list to ensure that it now includes the ELRC (not CCIS!).



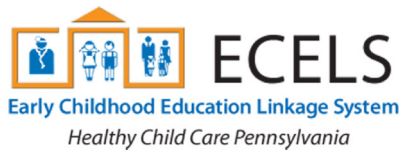
For support in developing or enhancing your resource list, visit [ELRC Region 14's](#) webpage of family resources.

Child Health Advocate Course

Enrollment is now open for the Spring 2022 **online** Child Care Health Advocate course (EARL 160-01) offered by Northampton Community College. This unique 3 credit college course is taught remotely over 10 weeks (February 24 - May 11, 2022). The course addresses 15 different health and safety modules as a resource

for child care directors, teachers, assistant teachers, and child care practitioners. OCDEL will cover all tuition-related fees (valued at over \$1000); books and materials are the responsibility of the student.

Please contact Cathe Kuker, NCC ECE Student Support, to start the enrollment process for an OCDEL-supported slot: ckuker@northampton.edu.



Pennsylvania's Equity in Early Childhood Education Champion Awards

Applications are now being accepted for the **Pennsylvania's Equity in Early Childhood Education Champion Awards**. The awards bring awareness to and highlight the equity work being done within Pennsylvania's early childhood education and afterschool settings, child care, evidence-based home visiting and early intervention professionals.

Pennsylvania invites nominations of individuals or programs that have demonstrated support to children and their families through embracing diversity and full inclusion as strengths, upholding fundamental principles of fairness and justice, and/or working to eliminate structural inequities that limit equitable learning opportunities.

Visit the [PA Key](#) website for the full description of eligibility, application and nomination process. All applications must be submitted by 5:00 pm on 2/7/22.

Health & Safety

COVID Guidance Webinar

As we continue in these unprecedented times, providers are struggling to keep up with the latest guidance and recommendations around COVID-19. CSC's ELRC Region 12 Directors Network is inviting all regions to attend their February meeting where they will be joined by Senior Health Manager from the PA Key, Amy Requa, MSN SRNP. Amy is an amazing resource of information and will be able to answer questions and explain the guidance from the CDC related to quarantine and COVID exposures. Join us on

Friday February 18
1:00-3:00 pm

Pre-registration is required. Please click [here](#) to access the registration. Questions may be submitted prior to the meeting to aubrynw@cscinc.org.

COVID Guidance

[Return to Work or Care](#)

A PA specific requirement is that to return to work or care, the individual must provide a written note OR a negative test result signed and verified by a physician or nurse practitioner clearing them to return to the child care facility.

Also acceptable, is a negative test result signed by a pharmacist testing site operating with CLIA Certificate of Waiver or Certificates of CLIA Compliance, such as a CVS or Minute Clinic, if they are unable to have their pediatrician provide a written note or a signed negative test result.

COVID Exposures & Quarantine

COVID guidance has been confusing and causing difficulties for providers to follow proper quarantine and return guidance. OCDEL refers programs to follow [CDC Guidance for Childcare](#) for the most up to date recommendations.

Mental Health Tips

Taking time for your own mental health can be a challenge and prioritizing time for staff to take care of themselves can feel almost impossible!

We have gathered a few websites with some excellent resources for you to use and share.

- [10 Ways Educators Can Support Mental Health](#)
- [Mental Health Resources for Teachers and Staff](#)

Apps can make it easy for staff to access whenever time allows

- [Calm School Initiative](#)
- [Headspace](#)

Infant-Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation

The PA Key Infant-Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation Team is excited to share Virtual Office Hours! Through Virtual Office Hours, early learning professionals can speak directly with IECMH Consultants via telephone or Zoom video conference. Virtual Office Hours is a short-term, collaborative, problem-solving conversation to help ECE professionals find next steps for:

- Child Social-Emotional Concerns
- Child Behavioral or Developmental Concerns
- Emotional Well-being of Teachers and Caregivers
- Partnering with Families.

Virtual Office Hours are available by appointment on the **first and third Friday of every month.**

Click [here](#) to register

Want to add staff or other members of your team to this newsletter? Email estair@cscinc.org and specify which Regional Newsletter you would like and requests will be added to next month's distribution.

Visit ELRC Region 14

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