



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

Serving Lehigh & Northampton counties

*We express our greatest appreciation and gratitude to Early Childhood Educators for the relentless support and courageous service through the pandemic to the young children and their families.*

### Region 14 Updates

#### Family Connection Newsletter

Community Services for Children has begun to send a monthly ELRC Family Connection Newsletter. This newsletter is distributed to all families enrolled in Child Care Works and includes information regarding local events & resources, child development topics, health & safety news and much more. The newsletter is available in both English and Spanish and can be found on CSC's website under [Family Communication](#).

Beginning in April 2022, we will add all child care providers to our distribution list of this family newsletter. Would you consider forwarding the email to your enrolled families or printing a copy and posting it in your parent information area? We appreciate your partnership in reaching more families with this important information.



#### Please Welcome

Please welcome Tim Shaw and Keisha Moran Muriel to the ELRC 14 Team.



Tim Shaw is our new Family Service Manager overseeing our Family Specialist team at our Bethlehem office. Tim graduated from Bloomsburg University and comes with years of experience in the social service field working with children and families at Children and Youth Services.



Keisha Moran Muriel joins our Family Specialist team at our Bethlehem office. Keisha's caseload will consist of Northampton County families with the last name starting with W, X, Y and Z and Lehigh County families with the last name starting with C. Keisha received her Bachelor's degree in Puerto Rico.

**We are excited to have Tim and Keisha as part of our team! Please join us in giving them a warm Lehigh Valley welcome!**

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## Summer Staffing Support

Employers in the Lehigh Valley have the opportunity to partner with the Career Link as part of the Summer Jobs Program. This program connects area youth with prospective employers for an 8 week, summer session. Career Link will pay 100% of the employees' wages up to 30 hours a week. This program gives candidates experience in an ECE position while giving you the benefit of additional staff and maybe even a match to a new employee! See the [Summer Jobs Program](#) flyer for more details and contact information.

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## Attendance Reminder

When changes to a child's schedule occurs (example: additional days, changing Full Time to Part Time) in addition to marking the changes on your attendance, please reach out to the Family Specialist to follow up and confirm the ELRC has received verification of the change. Click [here](#) for an updated ELRC Region 14 Staff Contact List.

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## Region 14 Provider Supports

### Quality Coach Office Days

Do you need assistance with your Keystone STARS Renewal or Designation? Are you thinking about moving up in STARS and need some extra assistance? Your Quality Coach is here to help! Quality Coaches are in the office weekly and are available to meet with you. Click the link below for a schedule of office days.

- [Quality Coach Office Days - April 2022](#)



### ELRC 14 Director's Network

Please join us for the next Director's Network Zoom Meeting on April 12, 2022 at 1:00 pm. We will have a guest presenter from Northampton Community College,

Megan Strella, who will share what ECE course opportunities are available for you and your staff. Come prepared to share how you celebrated the Week of the Young Child. See flyer for registration details.

- [Director's Network Group - April 2022](#)

PQA - Let's Talk Quality monthly webinar series

- [April Topic: Sparking Interactions](#)

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## ELRC Updates

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### STAR Movement Tip of the Month - Family Workshops

Conducting an educational workshop at your facility builds parental knowledge, strengthens the family unit and builds engagement in the program. Topics may include curriculum, positive interactions, health and safety or other child development topics.

To meet the indicator FC3.4.5, the program must do more than just provide educational resources. **A Workshop is defined as a meeting in which a group of people engage in intensive discussion and activity.**

For example, you may invite your local librarian to present on the importance of early literacy and then facilitate a discussion on how to read a story to elicit vocabulary building, encourage creative imagination and a love of reading. Or perhaps, a local pediatrician teaches families about healthy eating habits and ways to include children in grocery shopping, meal preparation and making healthy food choices.

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### Improving Business Practices for Family Child Care Providers

Tom Copeland, business advocate for family providers, will be holding three upcoming webinars on improving business practice for family child care.

#### 1. FCC Marketing

April 6, 2022, from 8:00 to 9:30 p.m.

Click [here](#) for session details and to preregister

#### 2. Legal and Insurance Issues

April 20, 2022, from 8:00 to 9:30 p.m.

Click [here](#) for session details and to preregister

#### 3. Money Management/Retirement

May 4, 2022, from 8:00 to 9:30 p.m.

Click [here](#) for session details and to preregister

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### PD in PA

A commitment to Professional Development of staff is an important part of any quality child care program. Pennsylvania has a variety of options to meet the

staff needs, interests and goals.

1. Needs-based PD - When a topic is identified that would improve a practitioner's understanding of ECE practices, they can find a module to meet this need. These are non-credit earning and generally run from 1-3 hours. There is usually a small fee to pay for these trainings and can be found on the PD Registry, Better Kid Care or other independent trainers. Modules can be completed online or face to face but must be PQAS approved or issue CEUs.
2. Specialty topics - Fire Safety, First Aid/CPR, and Water Safety are some example of these specialty topics. Providers seek out local trainers who are certified to instruct on this content.
3. Credit Bearing Course Work - Staff who wish to pursue CDA, Associates or Bachelor's degree or other credential can enroll through the PDO (Professional Development Organization). There are opportunities for this coursework to be funded as well. Visit the PDO information page on the [PA Keys website](#).



## Healthy Minds

Directors and staff are invited to attend a Community of Practice called Healthy Minds at Work. This time for guided meditation will be held every Monday at 1:00 pm beginning on April 4<sup>th</sup>.

At the ELRC, we are invested in providing support for your well-being. Even if you've never tried meditation, we believe everyone can gain something through taking time to learn how to slow down, focus and improve connections across our teams.

See the [Healthy Minds flyer](#) for the registration link.

## American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Update

Providers who qualified and applied for the ARPA funding are currently receiving their installment payments. Each provider will receive 6 equal monthly installments and some providers received their last payment in March.

Providers are using these funds for both sustainability (rent, utilities, salaries) as well as program quality improvements (curriculum, classroom materials, air purifiers). Some programs have shared ways they are using this funding to make lasting impacts on their program:

- Workforce supports - bonuses for staff retention, sign on bonuses, investment in staff training
- Technology upgrades - updating computers, software and purchasing tablets for teacher and child use
- Mental Health Supports - Paying for counseling services for staff or families, hiring a yoga instructor for after work yoga sessions.
- Playground updates - investing in high quality playground surfacing or new, embedded equipment

## Next Steps

After a provider receives their 6th monthly installment, they will receive an email asking them to report on how the grant funds were used. All reporting will be completed on the PD Registry. Providers can begin to prepare for this reporting by tracking expenses, logging on spreadsheets and keeping copies of receipts organized.



## School Age Staff Professional Development

Are you looking for professional development designed especially for school age staff? Or are you planning your summer programming for your school age children? Check out this series of PD opportunities that will provide your school age staff new ideas for your summer program. Register now for these PQAS approved, online, evening workshops! Click [here](#) for more details.

## Health & Safety

### Safe Sleep Resources

Deaths related to unsafe sleeping environments are the third leading cause of infant mortality and *the* leading cause in the post-neonatal period (months 2-12). Programs can bring awareness to families by reminding them to put babies to sleep on their backs, the dangers of co-sleeping, and importance of keeping pillows and blankets out of cribs. Visit this [Safe Sleep website](#) for free printable materials, posters and other resources to share.



### April is Child Abuse Prevention Month

National Child Abuse Prevention Month recognizes the importance of families and communities working together to strengthen families to prevent child abuse and neglect. Through this collaboration, prevention services and supports help protect children and produce thriving families.

1 in 7 children have experienced child abuse and/or neglect in the past year, and this is likely an underestimate! Please see the flyer on [Preventing Child Abuse and Neglect](#) and consider posting in your center or send home a copy with your families.

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

Connect with us



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