

## Community Services for Children

### Provider Link Newsletter ~ ELRC Region 12 February 2023

Serving Susquehanna, Wayne, Lackawanna, Pike, Monroe & Carbon counties

## Region 12 Updates

### Keystone STARS Movements

The following programs demonstrated their commitment to quality by moving to a higher STAR level since October 2022:

Congratulations to LVCC at Palmerton Borough who moved to STAR 3.

Congratulations to the providers who moved to a STAR 4

- Treasure House Child Development Center
- LVCC At Towamensing Elementary School
- LVCC At S.S. Palmer Elementary School

**RAISE YOUR STAR** ★★★★★

### Professional Development Opportunity Behavior Management

NEIU 19 will be hosting a professional development event, Teaching Preschool Children with Challenging Behaviors! This two-hour PQAS approved training will focus on social emotional supports, positive behavior interventions, and is open to all staff. There will be two opportunities to attend this event in February and March. The content will be the same for both dates, so please choose one that best fits your schedule.

Please [click here](#) for more information and to register now. Please contact Amanda Jacobino at [amjacobino@iu19.org](mailto:amjacobino@iu19.org) or (570) 876-9390 with any questions.

PROFESSIONAL  
DEVELOPMENT



## Director's Network

January's Director's Network explored strategies for engaging staff and creating an environment where your team members feel supported and respected. Participants engaged in role play activities and collaborative discussion. Thank you to all who joined and contributed to the conversation!

February's Director's Network will be held on Wednesday, 2/15/23 at 1:00 PM. During this meeting we will be joined by Amy Ellsworth, OCDEL Early Learning Program Supervisor, for a Q&A session regarding certification regulations. Please pre-submit any questions you may have for Amy to your Quality Coach no later than Monday, 2/6/23. We hope to see you there!

- [Director's Network Registration Flyer](#)

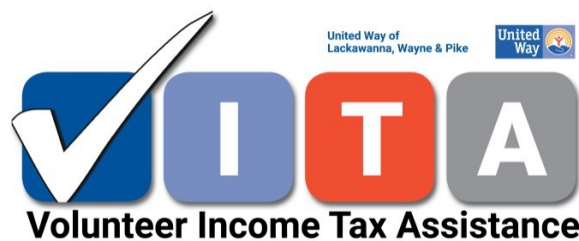
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## Free Tax Preparation Services

The United Way of Lackawanna and Wayne counties is once again offering the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Program to prepare local, state and federal income tax returns for FREE! To qualify for this service, households must have had an income under \$60,000 in 2022.

Appointments can be made online by visiting [www.uwlc.net](http://www.uwlc.net) or calling 2-1-1.

Click [here](#) to see upcoming dates and locations.



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## Region 12 Provider Supports

### Technology Tuesday

Our next Technology Tuesday will be on 2/14/23 at 10:30 AM - 11:30 AM. This month we will be focusing on navigating Keystone STARS Designation applications in the PD Registry.

We will be sharing our screen to walk you through every step. Click [here](#) to register now. Should you have any questions or if you would like assistance with a specific topic, please contact Lynda Castro at [lycastro@cscinc.org](mailto:lycastro@cscinc.org)



### STAR 2 Movement Cohort

Are you interested in moving to STAR 2 and don't know where to start? Please join our STAR 2 cohort! This cohort is a series of meetings for those interested in moving to STAR 2. You will work together with a group of providers to navigate the Keystone STARS Performance Standards and gather evidence for the designation. To join this cohort, please contact Aubryn Wojtkielewicz at [aubrynw@cscinc.org](mailto:aubrynw@cscinc.org) or (484) 560-4166.

## Director's Boot Camp Returns!

Join Quality Coach, Deb Swartout, for the next Director's Boot Camp on Wednesday, February 15, 2023, at 5:30 PM! This Director's Boot Camp will explore team-building and ensure your staff have the tools they need to be successful. To accommodate your busy daytime schedules, this will be an evening session. Please register in advance for the session by clicking [here](#). Contact Deb Swartout with any questions at [dswartout@cscinc.org](mailto:dswartout@cscinc.org) or (610) 763-6263.

## Quality Coach Office Days

Quality Coaches conduct weekly office days. Should you need assistance with technology or individualized support to achieve your Keystone STARS goals, please call or email your coach to schedule an appointment! Click [here](#) to see our Office Day schedule for February.

# ELRC Updates

## CCW updates

### Registration Fees

Effective **January 1, 2023**, Early Learning Resource Centers will begin paying a registration fee to DHS certified child care providers for all CCW children at the time of their initial enrollment. Registration fees for newly enrolled children will automatically be added to the provider invoice for the service period in which the enrollment was effective. No further action will be required. **Effective January 1, 2023, providers cannot charge CCW families registration fees or the difference between what the ELRC pays for a registration fee and what the provider charges private pay families for a registration fee.** (\$75 for centers, \$50 for group/family providers).

### Annual Registration Fees

If you charge an annual re-registration fee, the ELRC will pay this fee for your CCW enrolled children. This fee must be requested using the following form:

- [Annual Registration Fee Form](#)

Prior to authorizing these annual fees, the ELRC must receive a one-time verification of these charges. This may include a copy of your family handbook or family contract that states all families are charged an annual fee every year.

Please note that the ELRC will not pay any other type of fee such as waitlist fees, field trip fees, etc. If you have any questions, you can click [here](#) to read the full announcement or reach out to your Provider Specialist.

## Work Force Support Grants

### *Work Force Support 1.0*

Providers received the payment for the first Work Force Support Grant (WSG 1.0) between July - September 2022. It is now time to complete your reporting form!

To ensure accuracy in your reporting, please watch this video for step-by-step



instructions:

- [WSG 1.0 Reporting Instructions](#)

If you discover that you have unspent funds, please return your reporting form with the payment to:

Community Services for Children  
Attn: Jori Farley  
1520 Hanover Ave  
Allentown, PA 18109

### ***Work Force Support 2.0***

Payments for the Work Force Support Grant 2.0 were sent out to providers on January 31, 2023. If you did not receive your payment or think there is an error, please reach out to [elrc-ksgrants@cscinc.org](mailto:elrc-ksgrants@cscinc.org).

All staff retention funds must be paid out to the staff within 45 days of receipt. These funds must be paid out in one lump amount and must be paid through payroll.

Staff recruitment funds may be used on expenses between 7/1/22-6/30/23. Please see your grant application for a list of eligible expenses.

Reporting forms for WSG 2.0 will be sent in March 2023.

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## **Contacting the PD Registry**

Did you know there is a dedicated phone line to contact the PD Registry team at the Pennsylvania Key? For questions or support related to the PD Registry and the QRIS system, please call **1-800-284-6031**.

If you have any other questions or need support in other areas and would like to speak with a Pennsylvania Key team member about CDA Vouchers, Rising Tuition Assistance, Director Credentials, PA Pre-K Counts, or other Departments, you can call the main Pennsylvania Key number at **1-844-569-7253**.

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## **Professional Development Opportunities**

### **Strengthening Business Practices**

This training series is running through Spring 2023. Training is available at no cost and attendees will be awarded PQAS hours. Modules include budgeting, retaining staff, marketing and other business practices.

See the flyer for registration information.

- [Strengthening Business Practices](#)

### **Virtual Curriculum Fair - April 19<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 pm**

Save the date for this exciting event! Are you considering purchasing an OCDEL approved curriculum or looking to change from what you are currently using? Join this virtual curriculum fair and gather information from 6 different OCDEL approved, curriculum vendors to assist you in selecting a curriculum that meets your program philosophy, age groups and budget.

More details will be shared in the March Provider Link Newsletter.



## pennsylvania

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

### Do You Know About the Early Learning Dashboard?

Did you know the [Early Learning Dashboards](#) on the Department of Human Services website offer a variety of data and information? Anyone can use the dashboards to learn more about the different Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL) programs.

- [Certification and Licensing](#)
- [Early Intervention](#)
- [Family Engagement](#)
- [Integrated Programs Children Eligible vs. Children Served](#)
- [Location Density](#)
- [Pre K-Counts and Head Start Supplemental Assistance Program \(HSSAP\)](#)
- [Subsidized Child Care](#)

## Health & Safety



### Winter Weather

It is officially winter, but harsh weather conditions should not stop us from exploring and learning outside. Refer to the [Child Care Weather Watch](#) as a resource to determine the safe length of play. [Active Outdoor Play](#) is a good resource from the California Childcare Program -University of California. Children ages 0-6 should engage in both indoor and outdoor play multiple times throughout their day.

Participation in outdoor activities in cold weather is possible and enjoyable when children/staff dress appropriately. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ([CDC](#)) offer the following recommendations.

#### Adults and children should wear:

1. Hat
2. Scarf
3. Sleeves that are snug at the wrist
4. Mittens
5. Water -resistant coat and boots
6. Several layers of loose-fitting clothing

#### Layer Up:

- **Inner Layer:** Wear fabrics that will hold more body heat and do not absorb moisture. Wool, silk polypropylene will hold more body heat than cotton.
- **Insulation Layer:** An insulation layer will help you retain heat by trapping

air close to your body. Natural fibers, like wool, goose down, or a fleece work best.

- **Outer Layer:** The outermost layer helps protect you from wind, rain, and snow. It should be tightly woven, and preferably water and wind resistant, to reduce loss of body heat.

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## COVID vaccines

Safe, effective, and free [COVID-19 vaccines](#) are now recommended for children ages 6 months and older.

Click [here](#) to download, print, and display these posters to remind everyone of basic COVID-19 prevention strategies, including vaccination and masking. This collection includes updated posters promoting vaccination of children 6 months of age and older.

COVID-19 vaccines are an important way to protect ourselves and our families, friends, neighbors, and communities. Check out these activities and resources from Elmo and friends to help children understand the basics.

[COVID-19 Vaccine Resources from Sesame Street in Communities](#)

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## Mandated Reporter Training in Spanish

[iLookOut's](#) interactive, online training is now available in Spanish for all mandated reporters in Pennsylvania. This evidence-based training meets Pennsylvania's requirements, can be completed over multiple sessions, and is free of charge.

iLookOut uses a story-based approach for preparing mandated reporters to identify and help protect children who may be experiencing abuse, and was developed under the aegis of Penn State's Center for the Protection of Children. To access it in Spanish, toggle the language from English to Español once on the website.



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## Oral Health Challenges for Children with Disabilities

A disability can affect a child's activities and ability to learn. Some children with disabilities need extra health services and support services. Children with disabilities are at higher risk for tooth decay and other oral health problems than children without disabilities.

- **Children with physical disabilities**, such as cerebral palsy, may not have the motor skills they need to use a toothbrush safely or to sit still in a dental chair during dental visits.
- **Children with communication disorders**, such as delayed speech and language development, may not be able to tell their parents that they have a toothache.
- **Children who get frequent medical care**, such as having many medical visits or hospital stays, may be afraid of the dental office and may not cooperate during visits.



- **Children who take medicines with added sugars or that cause dry mouth** are at high risk for tooth decay.
- **Children on special diets** may be at high risk for tooth decay. Foods that are soft or high in starch (e.g., potatoes, corn) stick to children's teeth and give bacteria in the mouth more time to cause tooth decay.

## Strategies to Help Improve the Oral Health of Children with Disabilities

Click [here](#) to learn more about taking care of teeth, selecting the right toothbrush, adapting toothbrushes, addressing challenges, providing good nutrition, encouraging safety, and going to the dentist.

- **Give children with disabilities extra support.** Make sure children eat food and drink beverages low in sugar and that children's teeth are brushed with fluoridated toothpaste after meals. Children with intellectual disabilities may need extra time for brushing.
- **Share this information with families**

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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.

Visit ELRC Region 12

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