



Community Services for Children Provider Link Newsletter ~ ELRC Region 13 February 2023

Serving Berks & Schuylkill Counties

Region 13 Updates

Keystone STARS Movements

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

Congratulations to St Albans Learning Center who moved to STAR 2.

Congratulations to GPY Hereford Elementary who moved to STAR 3.

RAISE YOUR STAR ★★☆☆

How do you feel about the resources and services available to you in Berks County? We want your feedback!



Please consider participating in the Berks County Head Start and Pre-K Counts 2023 Community Needs Assessment. This assessment aims to identify the strengths and resources available in Berks County, along with the areas that need further attention.

Let your voice be heard! Your input can make a difference in informing future initiatives and offerings in your local community. Visit:

<https://tinyurl.com/e2paz6a2> to complete the 5-question survey. The survey deadline is 2/20/23.

Region 13 Provider Supports

Director's Network Group

Don't miss February's Director Network Meeting! The agenda includes a mindful moment, a quick activity for leadership building, and discussion on shared service opportunities. Please register for the event using the zoom link on the flyer below:

- [Director's Network Group Invite Flyer](#)



Learning Community (Formerly known as Work-it Wednesday)

Take a deeper dive and gain an increased understanding of completing self-assessments and creating professional development plans on the PA PD Registry. This event will be a two-part session. Part 1 is a face-to-face opportunity for 2 FREE PQAS professional development hours offered at the Reading and Schuylkill office. Part 2 will be a virtual reflection of practice. Choose the PD session that works best for you. For more details, check out the flyer below.

- [Learning Community Flyer Feb 2023](#)

Regional Calendar

Check out our February calendar for a quick reference of all regional support activities and professional development opportunities.

- [Region 13 Calendar - February 2023](#)
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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.



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.

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**.

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 19th 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.

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](#)

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.



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

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 13](#)

Community Services for Children | elrc13@cscinc.org | www.cscinc.org

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Community Services for Children | 1520 Hanover Ave, Allentown, PA 18109

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