



Community Services for Children Provider Link Newsletter ~ ELRC Region 16 December 2023

Serving Bucks County

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Region 16 Updates



ELRC Offices Closed

Please note that the ELRC offices will be closed on Monday, December 25th and Monday, January 1st. We wish you all a safe and healthy holiday season!

Keystone STAR Movements

The following programs demonstrated their commitment to quality by moving to a higher STAR level since July 2023.

Congratulations to Kids Nations, Inc who moved to a STAR 2!

Congratulations to Sunny Tree House & Kids Castle Hill who moved to a STAR 4!



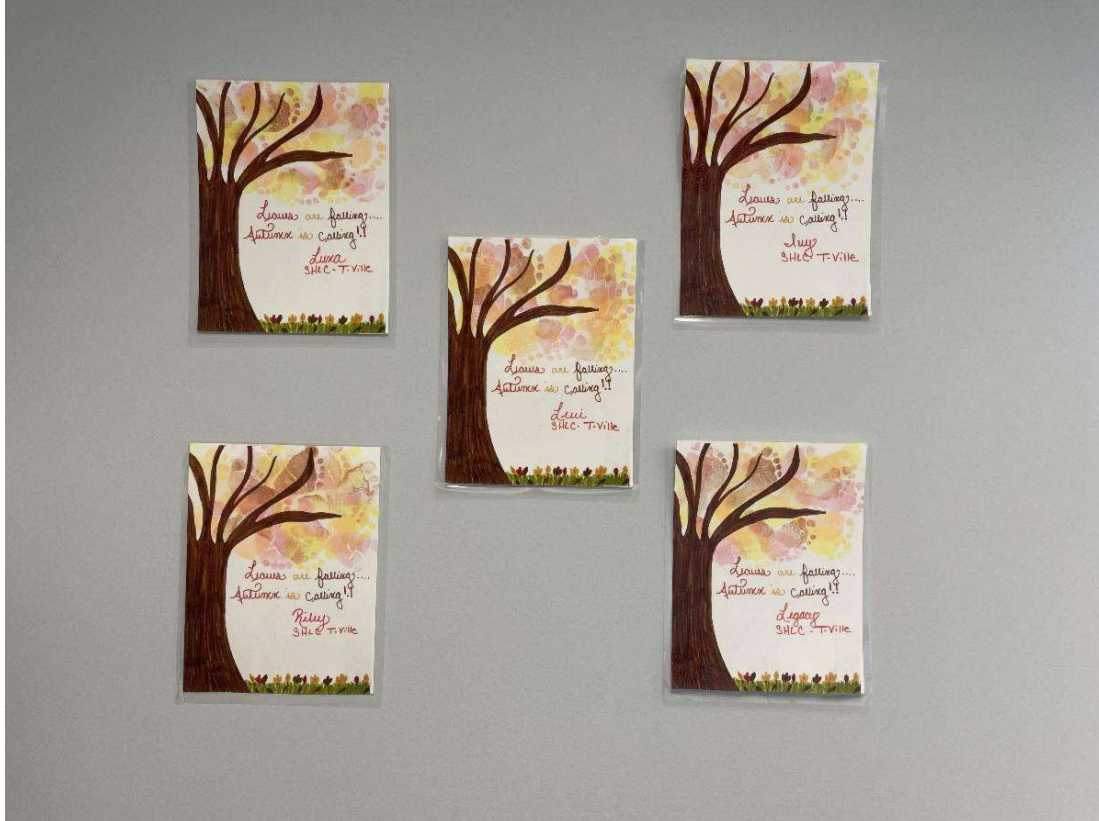
Fresh Connect Bucks County

ELRC staff, along with other county partners, participate at the Fresh Connect of Bucks County's food distribution program. Fresh Connect is a free farmers market which brings much needed fresh healthy food to more than 50,000 residents in our community and has locations in Quakertown, Bristol and Warminster.

Please consider sharing this information with families or staff at your program who may benefit from this resource. For more information and locations please click [here](#).

Art Displays

The ELRC would like to thank Schoolhouse Learning Center of Trumbauersville for donating fall artwork to our offices. Our staff and visitors enjoy viewing all of the students' creations! Please contact your Quality Coach to have artwork displayed in our offices.



Region 16 Provider Supports

Bucks County Directors Alliance

Join us for our monthly Bucks County Director Alliance meeting! Attendance is strongly recommended as there are important updates for all child care providers! This month we will be discussing tools providers can use to partner with families.

- [BCDA December Flyer](#)



Coaches Calendar

Quality Coaches are here for you! There are many ways to connect with your Quality Coach for support and information. Please view our Quality Coach Calendar for the month.

- [Quality Coach Calendar - December 2023](#)

Quality Coach Community Days

Take some time away from the hustle and bustle of your program and meet up with your coach! Our Keystone STARS Quality Coaches will be available for individual meetings. Coaches are able to address questions, concerns, provide supports or chat about any need you have! Please see the flyer for availability.

- [Community Days](#)

Career Advising

The ECE PDO at PHMC team supports your Career Pathway goals. To gather information about opportunities and Career Pathway level advancement, reach out to the ECE PDO at PHMC to request Career Advising services. Partners are now accepting applications for Spring 2024 courses. Please see attached flyer for more information.

ELRC Updates

Child Care Works Reminders

Winter Weather Closures

This is the time of year when winter weather can prompt program closures. Providers who use PSS will have until the 5th of the following month to report closures. Providers who do not use PSS must contact their provider specialist within three days of reopening the facility in order to receive a paid closure.



The subsidy program will pay for a maximum of 15 closed days per year from July 1 through June 30th for which the provider also charges private-pay families.



Directors Credential - Enrolling Now!

Have you considered enrolling in a Directors Credential program? Lehigh Carbon Community College has credit bearing coursework beginning in the Spring 2024. 95% of the cost of the coursework can be covered by Rising STAR Tuition Assistance so this is a wonderful opportunity to get started! You do not have to reside in Lehigh or Carbon County to enroll!

Click [here](#) to view the flyer and registration information.

ECE Data Management Software

Are you interested in finding out more information about data management software to help you track attendance, child illnesses, invoicing, communications, staff schedules and more?



ELRC Region 13 will be hosting a virtual Data Management Systems fair on February 21, 2024 from 1:00-3:00 pm. Five vendors will be available to explain their program and answer any questions you may have.

Click on the flyer below for more information. Pre-registration is required for this FREE event.

- [Data Management Systems flyer](#)

LIHEAP Assistance Available!

The Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) is now accepting applications. LIHEAP is



a federally-funded program administered by the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services (DHS) that provides assistance for home heating bills so those Pennsylvanians meeting eligibility and income guidelines can stay warm and safe during the winter months. Assistance is available for renters and homeowners.

The LIHEAP application period for both cash and crisis grants opened on November 1, 2023, and will remain open until April 5, 2024.

Pennsylvanians can apply for LIHEAP and other public assistance programs online at www.compass.state.pa.us or by phone at 1-866-550-4355. Please share this information with staff and families as needed.

Creative Child Care Solutions

OCDEL has launched a new initiative, Creative Child Care Solutions, to educate businesses how the impact of child care access and high cost of care can negatively affect Pennsylvania's economy and workforce.

Part of this work is to identify businesses that are open to exploring partnerships with local child care providers. Karen Grimm-Thomas will provide supports including gathering and compiling data and talking points to engage with businesses directly.

Please click [here](#) to read more about this program and reach out to Karen at kargri@pakeys.org with any questions or potential business contact.

OCDEL & Start Strong Want to Hear from You!

Join OCDEL Deputy Secretary Shante' Brown and Start Strong PA partners at one of the virtual child care provider listening sessions this fall!



The listening session events are designed to:

- Share the results from the September 2023 child care provider survey (focused on successes and challenges with the Pennsylvania child care system);
- Gather additional feedback on the Pennsylvania child care system from those working in the field;
- Offer opportunities for your questions to be answered by Deputy Secretary Brown; and
- Present current and future opportunities to engage with OCDEL and Start Strong PA.

Bucks, Chester, Delaware & Montgomery Counties:

Monday, December 18

1:00-3:00 pm

Register via [Zoom](#)

Family Child Care (Statewide)

Monday, December 4

OCDEL Early Childhood Conference - March 25-26, 2024

Stable and Secure: Supporting Children Through Trauma Sensitive Approaches

Mark your calendars for this voluntary training opportunity, focused on high-quality resources to support the social emotional development of young children, with an emphasis on trauma-informed care. Conference sessions also address self-care.

Audience: Directors and teachers of Pennsylvanian licensed child care centers, group child care, family child care homes, and after school care.

Location: Hershey, Pennsylvania. Additional details on registration and logistics will be provided soon.

Financial support for overnight room accommodations will be available for participants. There is no registration fee for this conference. Additional details coming soon!

Parent Project Podcast

Community Services for Children has been hosting the Parent Project Podcast to engage families in areas of common concern for parents. Experts provide perspectives on topics of health & safety, mental health, child transition and other important subjects.

Please consider sharing these podcasts with the families in your program!

This month, we are joined by Beth Thomlinson, Director of Community Resilience at the United Way of the Lehigh Valley. Beth discusses family resilience and how to bounce back from those tough times that all families experience. Click [here](#) to listen.

PARENT PROJECT PODCAST



Health & Safety

School Age Child Care Mental Health Consultation



The PA Key is now offering SACC Mental Health Consultation appointments. This service utilizes a consultant who problem-solves and collaborates to develop goals for social-emotional concerns, behavioral or developmental concerns, emotional well-being of staff and partners with the family.

For more information regarding the program and scheduling an appointment, please see the flyer below:

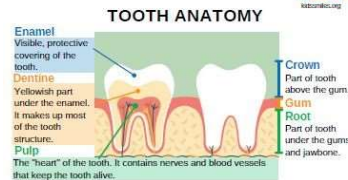
- [SACC Mental Health Consultation flyer](#)

Discover Your Teeth

Here is some information about teeth for you to share with children and families.

Click [here](#) to view or print a larger copy.

Discover Your Teeth



FOUR TYPES OF TEETH



FUN FACTS

- Teeth are the hardest part of your body
- Teeth are as unique to you as your fingerprint
- Tooth decay is preventable - brush 2x a day for 2 minutes!

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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. Requests will be added to next month's distribution.

Visit ELRC Region 16

Community Services for Children | elrc16@cscinc.org | www.cscinc.org

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