



Community Services for Children

Provider Link Newsletter ~ ELRC Region 12

January 2024

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

To distribute this newsletter to others, copy and share this link:

Region 12 Updates

ELRC Offices Closed

ELRC offices will be closed on Monday, January 15, 2024, in observance of Martin Luther King Jr. Day. All offices will reopen on Tuesday, January 16th.



Welcome New Providers

The Early Learning Resource Center would like to welcome the following new programs to our region and we look forward to working with you. ELRC staff are here to assist with your participation in Child Care Works, Keystone STARS, and to provide you with local resources and referrals.

Training Hosts Needed



We are currently looking for providers who would be interested in hosting in-person professional development events at their facility. Registration would need to be open to providers across ELRC 12 and PD would be conducted by our Quality Coach team. We are seeking locations that can comfortably accommodate 25-30 attendees. Locations must be equipped with Wi-Fi, parking, and adult tables and chairs. Please contact Melanie Gaughan at mgaughan@cscinc.org if you are interested in becoming a host site!



Carbon County Toy Giveaway

On 12/18/23, we collaborated with St. John's Lutheran Church and Pathstone of Carbon County to distribute toys, books, and clothes to families. We would like to thank St. John's Lutheran Church for their generous donations, as well as, Pathstone for hosting us! We were able to distribute over 200 items to families, as well as, share information about the services provided by the ELRC. Should you be interested in partnering with us for a future outreach event, please contact Siyheda Harris at sharris@cscinc.org.

New Family Services Manager

We are pleased to announce Krystal Cruz has been promoted to the role of ELRC Region 12 Family Services Manager. Krystal joined our team in September of 2022 as a Family Specialist. She will begin in her new role on Tuesday 1/2/24. Congratulations, Krystal!



Family Resource - Finding Your Way in PA

Finding Your Way in PA is a Pennsylvania based mobile and desktop app designed to share services, resources, and information with families, particularly those experiencing homelessness. While using the app, families can search for and request assistance with services and resources in their community. Information for a variety of services, such as, shelter, food, health, employment, and mental health are available. Please click [here](#) to learn more and share this resource with programs in your families as needed!

Region 12 Provider Supports

Directors Network

Please join us on Tuesday, January 2nd at 6:00 PM for an in-depth look at the 2023 Keystone STARS Performance Standards. Programs of all STAR levels are highly encouraged



to attend to learn about the enhancements and updates that have been made. Please come prepared with any questions you may have... we hope to see you there!

- [Director Network January Flyer](#)

Teacher Talks

Our next Teacher Talks cohort will be January 18 at 1:00 PM. This cohort is comprised of classroom staff who wish to share ideas, trouble shoot challenges, and grow as professionals. Please note, ELRC staff conduct all meetings, and there are ground rules in place to protect the confidentiality of your program. Please click on the flyer below to register and share with staff. Please contact Lynda Castro with any questions at lycastro@cscinc.org.

- [Teacher Talks Flyer](#)

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.

40 Day Absence Policy

Remember to report child absences accurately on your invoice each month. CCW enrolled children are allowed up to 40 absences from July 1 - June 30th. Failure to report absences timely may result in enrollees exceeded the 40 days limit, thus making those days ineligible for payment to the provider.

Annual Registration Fees for CCW Children

OCDEL has been paying for registration fees for all newly enrolled CCW children since January 2023. This registration fee is automatically added to the provider invoice for the service period in which the enrollment was effective, regardless of whether the provider charges a registration fee. If you charge all families an additional **annual registration fee**, you can request that this fee also be paid by the ELRC for all enrolled CCW children. Verification of this charge, through a family handbook policy or service agreement for example, must be sent along with the request form. Click [here](#) for the Annual Registration Fee request form.



Please note that 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. ELRC will not pay any other type of fee such as waitlist fees, field trip fees, etc.



Continuous Quality Improvement Grant

The Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL) has announced a new grant opportunity for STAR 2, 3 & 4 providers. This one-time award will allow programs to maintain and invest in quality activities and expenditures that will positively impact the children in their care.

Please read through the [ELRC Policy Communication](#) and [FAQ document](#) for full award eligibility and grant details. Let your Quality Coach know if you have any questions.

Eligible providers should have received their award letter. If you have not received it, please reach out to your Quality Coach who can forward the letter to you. This grant must be accepted or declined by **February 15, 2024**.

Once you have reviewed the award letter, please sign the acceptance and return to elrc-ksgrants@cscinc.org.

Free Books for Read Across America Day

The [Literacy Empowerment Foundation](#), invites your program to apply for FREE books for Read Across America Day. During the past year, LEF has distributed over 3,000,000 books to schools all across the country for Read Across America Day and other literacy projects.

Books are free but providers pay shipping and handling which comes out to \$0.88 cents per book. Orders must be received by February 11th, 2024.

Books can be ordered online at <https://www.lefbooks.org>. E-mail any questions to info@lefbooks.org.

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](#)
-

Many school districts will begin Kindergarten registration in January. While most children begin Kindergarten at five years old, each school district sets their own cut-off dates based on the child's birthday. Click [here](#) for a complete listing of cut-off dates by school district across the state.

There are also some newsletters to share with families to help children prepare for this transition time. Take a look and then [subscribe](#) to get the next release directly into your inbox.

- [Kindergarten Here I Come](#)
- [Kindergarten Here I Am](#)



Program Observation Instrument Professional Development

PROFESSIONAL
DEVELOPMENT



The Program Quality Assessment team is holding Professional Development opportunities for ITERS (Infant/Toddler Environmental Rating Scale), PAS (Program Administration Scale) and BAS (Business Administration Scale).

All trainings are live events held remotely and registration is required for the sessions. Participants can opt to order a free copy of the ITERS, PAS or BAS book. Trainings are \$7 and it is highly recommended for all leadership and lead teaching staff.

Click on the link below for registration links and more details.

- [Program Observation Instrument PD](#)



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 Pennsylvania 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 Dr. Brown from the Children's Clinic at LVHN. Dr. Brown discusses promoting healthy brain development in young children and the importance of social connection. Click [here](#) to listen.



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](#)

Oral Health - The Importance of Caring for Baby Teeth

Healthy mouths are important, especially for babies and young children.

- Poor oral health can cause children to have problems eating, speaking, and learning.
- Baby teeth are important because they hold space for adult teeth.

A healthy mouth is important for overall health.

- Cavities can be painful and lead to infections and other health problems.
- Cavities can be prevented with proper oral care.

Click [here](#) for a flyer to share with families about the importance of caring for baby teeth.

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 12](#)

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