



Community Services for Children Provider Link Newsletter ~ ELRC Region 14 January 2024

Serving Lehigh & Northampton counties

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Region 14 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.

- TeddyKids Bilingual Home Daycare LLC - Whitehall location
- KR Early Learning Center
- Mi Escuelita Daycare LLC
- Casoji Family Childcare Inc
- Little Cubs Early Learning LLC
- Canela Family Daycare
- Early Dreamers Childcare Corp
- Tomoya Macon Family Day Care
- Burgos Child Care
- Firm Foundations Early Learning Center
- Stephanie J Reyes Family Daycare
- Susan Family Kids Care
- J and S Family Daycare
- Freemansburg Childcare Academy and Learning Center

ELRC Region 14 Invoicing Update



Starting November 2023, Providers submitting invoices after the 5th of the month will not receive payment until the end of the month following services. As stated in Appendix A, Section D of your Provider Agreement, “The invoice is due to the ELRC by the fifth calendar day of the month following the month child care is provided.” Due to the large volume of invoices and the limited time the ELRC has to process these invoices, the ELRC 14 staff can no longer guarantee payment by the 15th of the month for any invoices received after the 5th of each month. Thank you for your understanding.

ELRC Region 14 Provider Specialist Update

Starting immediately Providers should start directing all inquiries regarding copay delinquencies, enrollment questions, schedule questions, etc. to your Provider Specialist. The Provider Specialists will work with the Family Specialist for the client to get your questions answered. You can contact your Provider Specialist at:

- Abigail Araujo - aaaraujo@cscinc.org or at 484-898-8113 (Relative Providers)
- Damaris Nieves - dnieves@cscinc.org or at 484-602-4285 (Family and Group Providers)
- Susan Ritter - susanr@cscinc.org or at 484-274-3852 (Centers)

Region 14 Provider Supports

Directors Network

Join us on January 9th at 1:00 pm for our next Director’s Network Meeting. This month we will share the intent and implementation of Professional Development Self-Assessments and Professional Development Plans. Along with this we will be discussing the importance of having staff reflect on their knowledge and using those reflections to connect to Professional Development Plan goals and staff evaluations. Come with any questions you might have around the Standards. Also, share what is going well in your programs.



- [Director Network January Flyer](#)

Quality Coach Office Days

Are you thinking about moving up in STARS and need some extra assistance or do you need assistance with your Keystone STARS Renewal or Designation? Your Quality Coach is here to help! Quality Coaches are available to answer questions throughout the week and are in the office weekly to meet one on one to support you through your STARS journey. Click on the flyer below for dates and times.

- [QC Office Days](#)

Get to Know Keystone STARS!

Are you a STAR 1 Program? If so, please join the ELRC 14 for an informational webinar to learn about the basics of Keystone STARS. Keystone STARS has evolved over the years so come and learn what Keystone STARS is today. We will share information on the STARS structure, benefits and incentives, STARS Performance Standards, the designation process, and how your Quality Coach can help you. If you missed the first two sessions, don't worry! There are still several dates and times available.

- [Get to Know STARS Webinar 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.

Please contact your Provider Specialist with any questions.



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](#)

Kindergarten Registration

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](#)



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.



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 14](#)

Community Services for Children | elrc14@cscinc.org | www.cscinc.org

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