

Community Services for Children Provider Link Newsletter ~ ELRC Region 16 February 2024

Serving Bucks county

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

Region 16 Updates

ELRC Offices Closed

ELRC offices will be closed on Monday, February 19th, in observance of Presidents' Day. All offices will reopen on Tuesday, February 20th.



Keystone STARS Movements

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

Congratulations to Happy Days Learning Center for moving to a STAR 3.

Congratulations to the following providers who moved to a STAR 4:

- Piece of Our Puzzle LLC
- Kids Castle Hill
- Kid Time Cares
- Kindercare Fairless Hills



pennsylvania

KEYSTONE STARS

OFFICE OF CHILD DEVELOPMENT AND EARLY LEARNING

Bucks County President's Day Conference

Monday February 19th
8:00am-3:30pm



There are a few spaces left for the ELRC Region 16 Presidents' Day Conference. Please click the flyer below for all the details. Spaces are first come, first served and registration will close on February 12, 2024. Register now!

[Bucks County Presidents' Day Conference](#)

Professional Development Opportunities

Advance your Career Pathway with the ECE PDO at PHMC

The ECE Professional Development Organization (ECE PDO) at PHMC coordinates funded degree and credential pathways for the ECE workforce. The ECE PDO will match you with higher education partners and necessary supports to help you advance on the Career Pathway and achieve your goals. Visit the [ECE PDO at PHMC](#) webpage to complete an inquiry form and begin working towards earning your degree or credential today!

- [ECE PDO Newsletter](#)

BCCC ECE Workshop

Bucks County Community College is providing a 2-hour workshop about Professionalism and Collaborative practice, free of charge, through a grant from the Public Health Management Corporation (PHMC). Please see the flyer below for more information.

- [BCCC Workshop](#)

Update to the ELRC Region 16 Directors' Network

Directors from across the county have expressed a need to have a forum available where they can routinely connect with social service partners who work with children and families. We have heard you and have changed the format of the Bucks County Directors' Network to fill this need. Each month, partner agencies from across the area will be included on the agenda to share information, events, and ideas, hear feedback, and answer questions. These partners include Early Intervention, Mental Health, Pre-K Counts, Head Start, Advocates, and more. After partner sharing, we will continue to address topics of interest that have been suggested by all of you. Participants are welcome to stay for the full two hours, or to join for the portion of the meeting that interests you most.

At our January Directors' Network, we discussed emergency planning. Nina Orr from Shir Ami Learning Center shared her first-hand experience during a recent evacuation. This led to a robust and engaged discussion among our directors.

Our Directors' Network Group is held the 3rd Wednesday of the month from 1:00-3:00 via zoom. However, for February, our meeting will be replaced with a special presentation open to all CSC Regions. On Wednesday, February 21, 2024, at 1:00, join us via zoom for a Virtual ECE Management System Fair. During this event you will have the opportunity to hear from each vendor regarding their products and services. Register for the virtual event using the link on the coaches' calendar. Our regular meeting will resume in March.

[ECE Management Systems Fair](#)

Region 16 Provider Supports

Our Quality Coaches offer a variety of supports around the region every month. The Coach Calendar provides you with a snapshot of all of these supports including links for events that require your pre-registration. Click on the link below and reach out to your QC with any questions!



[ELRC Region 16 - February 2024 Coach Calendar](#)

New Director/Refresher Cohort

Please join us for an in-person learning opportunity designed for new child care directors and any director that would like a refresher on Keystone STARS, Child Care Works and other ELRC supports. Join us February 2, 2024, from 1-3pm at Children's Village, Doylestown Hospital. Please register on the Quality Coach Calendar.

Quality Coach Community Days:

Take a break from the hustle and bustle of your daily routine and meet up with your Quality Coach! Our Keystone STAR Quality Coaches are available for individual meetings at locations throughout Upper Bucks and Lower Bucks County. Please click on the event and register on the Quality Coach Calendar.

ELRC Updates

Child Care Works Reminders

Communications with your ELRC Provider Specialist are critical in keeping your payments accurate and timely. Remember to report:

- When a child stops attending
- If a location is closing
- If children transfer to a different location within your legal entity

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 exceeding the 40 day limit, thus making those days ineligible for payment to the provider.

2024 Equity in Early Childhood Champion Awards



The Office of Child Development and Early Learning is now accepting applications for the Third Annual Pennsylvania Equity in Early Childhood Education Champion Awards. The award recognizes the work of the early childhood education programs and professionals on behalf of Pennsylvania children and their families through embracing diversity and full inclusion as strengths, upholding fundamental principles of fairness and justice, and working to eliminate structural inequities that limit equitable learning opportunities

Applications must be completed by February 23, 2024. Click [here](#) for the application. Any questions can be directed to Mary Hall at marhal@pakeys.org.



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.

Keystone STARS Reminders

OCDEL Approved Curricula & Assessment Tools

STAR 3 and 4 providers use an OCDEL-approved curricula and child assessment in order to earn points in EC 3.4.1 and EC 3.4.2. Only current OCDEL-approved curricula and developmental assessment tools will be accepted in meeting these standards.

To verify that your selected curriculum and child assessment tool is still approved, you can reference the Department of Education listing [here](#).

Alternative Pathway Providers

Programs who hold accreditation through an OCDEL-approved Alternate Pathway accrediting body can apply for a Keystone STARS designation. See the tip sheets below to assist you in applying for this designation in the PD Registry:

- [Submit Accreditation for Keystone STARS Alternative Pathways Designation](#)
 - [Apply for Keystone STARS Designation Through an Alternative Pathway](#)
-

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](#)
-

Play Development Study

Teachers are invited to take part in a Play Development study by the McNichol Early Childhood Education Lab at Drexel University. Teachers will have opportunity to practice identifying play skills, support and enhance a child's play development and take part in validating an education assessment tool for future implementation. At the end of the study, there will be incentives provided.

Teachers can complete the interest survey [here](#).

NEW Asynchronous Program Observation Instrument PD Available



The Program Quality Assessment (PQA) Team has announced the addition of three asynchronous professional development sessions to the PD Registry. The sessions are:

- Online Self-Paced Foundations of the Environment Rating Scale, event ID# 361128,
- Online Self-Paced School-Age Care Environment Rating Scale - Updated (SACERS-U), event ID# 361129
- Online Self-Paced Pennsylvania Foundations of the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS), event ID# 361130.

Register for these online self-paced PD sessions by visiting the [PD Registry](#). These sessions will also be translated into Spanish in the future.



OCDEL Early Childhood Conference -

March 25-26, 2024

Stable and Secure: Supporting Children Through Trauma Sensitive Approaches

Registration is now open for the Pennsylvania Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL) Early Childhood Education Conference. This two-day conference is scheduled for March 25-26, 2024, at the Hershey Lodge in Hershey, PA and is free for attendees. This conference is for directors and teachers of PA licensed child care centers, group child care, family child care homes, and after school care. Registration is limited to two staff per program.

[Click to see more information and how to register](#)

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 sleep habits in young children. Click [here](#) to listen.



Health & Safety

STAYING HEALTHY DURING THE WINTER SEASON

for Early Learning Professionals



Share information about new and/or updated health policies and practices with colleagues and families. ([Better Kid Care](#))



Support outdoor play at your early learning program during the colder months. ([Penn State Extension](#))

Support staff in taking steps to maintain their mental health, like getting outside and exercising, keeping up healthy eating and sleep habits, having a support system and staying connected, and practicing mindfulness and meditating. ([Lifespan](#))
All Pennsylvania early childhood professionals have [free access](#) to the Healthy Minds app, Healthy Minds@Work.




Practice recommendations to keep staff and children healthy. ([CDC](#))

- Remind families and staff about policies for ill children and staff.
- Stay home when sick.
- Ensure proper ventilation.
- Practice hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette.
- Clean surfaces at least once a day to reduce the risk of germs spreading by touching surfaces. Establish a Routine Schedule for Cleaning, Sanitizing and Disinfecting, Appendix K from Caring for Our Children, updated July 2022. ([nrckids.org](#))

Check the expiration date and batteries of smoke and carbon monoxide detectors, and expiration dates of fire extinguishers in your facility. Replace as necessary. ([National Fire Protection Association](#))
Certified child care in Pennsylvania can get two free carbon monoxide detectors for their facility. ([The Pennsylvania Key](#))



 **pennsylvania**
OFFICE OF CHILD DEVELOPMENT
AND EARLY LEARNING

National Children's Dental Health Month: February 2024

February is National Children's Dental Health Month. This month-long national health observance brings together thousands of dedicated professionals, healthcare providers, and educators to promote the benefits of good oral health to children, their caregivers, teachers, and many others. The 2024 theme is "Healthy Habits for Healthy Smiles." The American Dental Association has free downloadable posters, postcards, and flyers available on their website. You can also order physical copies of these materials to be shipped. [Click here for more information.](#)

Oral Health - Choosing Healthy Drinks for Young Children

Providers should be mindful about what drinks are served to children while in care. Limit drinks with natural or added sugar. Even 100% fruit juice is full of sugar that can lead to tooth decay.



Tips for Choosing Healthy Drinks:

- Give children plain water with fluoride. Water from the tap (faucet) is safe and cheap.
- Give children milk at scheduled meal and snack times.
- Do not lay a child down for nap with a bottle or sippy cup. If you do, the bottle or sippy cup should contain only water, nothing else.
- Give children cut-up or whole fruit instead of fruit juice.

Click [here](#) for additional resources that can be shared 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. Requests will be added to next month's distribution.

[Visit ELRC Region 16](#)

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

Connect with us



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

Unsubscribe_pcho@cscinc.org

[Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)

Sent by estair@cscinc.org powered by



Try email marketing for free today!