

## Community Services for Children Provider Link Newsletter ~ ELRC Region 12 May 2024

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

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### Region 12 Updates

#### 2024 Equity in Early Childhood Education Champion Award Recipients

The Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL) is honored to recognize the work of the early childhood education programs and professionals with the 2024 Equity in Early Childhood Education Champion Award.

The Pennsylvania Equity in Early Childhood Education Champion Award highlights the vital impact around equity for staff, children and families within early childhood education settings.

[Learn more about this award and about ECE equity in Pennsylvania .](#)



The 2024 Awardee from Region 12

**Gold Level**

United Neighborhood Centers of NEPA, Scranton

**Bronze Level**

## Keystone STAR Movements

# RAISE YOUR STAR ★★☆☆

The following programs have demonstrated their commitment to quality by moving to a higher STAR level from January through March 2024

Congratulations to the provider who has moved to STAR 2:

- Ages & Stages Child Care Center, LLC

Congratulations to the provider who has moved to STAR 3:

- Big Leaps Learning Center

Congratulations to the providers who have moved to STAR 4 :

- Wee Wons Daycare & Preschool
- LHH Learn & Play Childcare Center, Inc
- Inch by Inch Childcare, LLC



We are pleased to welcome two new employees to the ELRC- Region 12, Delia Lynch and Emma Bryson. Delia joined our team in January 2024 as a Family Specialist and serves families in Monroe and Carbon counties. Emma Bryson joined our team in September 2023 and is our Administrative Specialist, who assists walk-in clients and provides telephone support. She is also Spanish speaking!

We are also happy to announce that Paulette Kraeutler returned to the ELRC in February 2024, as a Family Specialist. She serves families in Monroe County along with a few other families that receive support through the County Assistance Office in Monroe & Wayne counties. We are thankful to have her back.



## Region 12 Community Resource Spotlight



Dress for Success is a global not-for-profit organization that empowers women to achieve economic independence by providing a network of support, professional attire and the development tools to help women thrive in work and in life.

They offer 3 programs: Suiting- they help you choose an interview outfit and provide guidance for your interview, Job Training and Career Center- women meet regularly to support and encourage each other through building confidence, networking and discussing workplace-related topics.

### Luzerne County

38 West Market Street  
Wilkes-Barre, PA 18702  
570-270-4949

Click [here](#) for more information.

### Lackawanna County

The Marketplace at Steamtown  
300 Lackawanna Avenue #204  
Scranton, PA 18503  
570-941-0339

Click [here](#) for more information

## Northampton Community College Virtual CDA Cohort

Through a partnership with the Early Childhood Education Professional Development Organization at PASSHE (ECEPDO), Northampton Community College (NCC) is offering college credit-bearing coursework to qualifying early childhood professionals who want to advance their career pathways! The nine credits you will earn toward your Child Development Associate (CDA) credential are also transferrable to an Associate's degree! There are regularly scheduled assignments in addition to a synchronous, weekly Zoom lecture. Click [here](#) to learn more. An introductory session will be held on May 8, 2024. There is still time to register!

## Healthy Kids Day!

The ELRC will be participating in YMCA Healthy Kids Day



events on May 4<sup>th</sup> & 11<sup>th</sup> 2024. Healthy Kids Day is a national initiative to encourage children and parents to commit to keeping the body and mind active. Please feel free to share this information with your staff and families. We hope to see you there!

- [Healthy Kid Day - Carbondale YMCA \(May 4th\)](#)
- [Healthy Kid Day - Greater Scranton YMCA \(May 11th\)](#)

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## Region 12 Provider Supports

### Director Network

Our next Director's Network will be held on Friday 5/24/24. This month we will be discussing the resource and referral process. We will be exploring what resources you have available for the families you serve, and how you distribute them. We will also be creating a shared regional resource list, so please come prepared to collaborate and share information. We hope to see you there! Click [here](#) to register now



### Office Hours

Quality Coaches conduct office hours in our regional offices each week, and are ready to meet with you! Should you need assistance with grants, technology, or one on one support to achieve your Keystone STARS goals, please call or email your coach to schedule an appointment for an upcoming office day! Click [here](#) to see our schedule for May.

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## ELRC Updates

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Teacher Appreciation Week  
**May 6-10**





Eligible STAR 2, 3 and 4 providers who applied for the Continuous Quality Improvement Grant, received their payment in March.

It is required that you account for the spending of these award dollars. Keep all receipts for eligible expenses, including payroll records to verify staff bonuses have been paid through payroll and taxes deducted appropriately. All expenses must have occurred from July 1, 2023 - May 8, 2024

Please read through the [ELRC Policy Communication](#) and [FAQ document](#) for full grant details and schedule a meeting with your Quality Coach to complete your Final Expense Report. Final Expense Reports are due to the ELRC no later than **May 15, 2024**. Any unspent funds must be returned by **May 31, 2024**.

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## CCW Reminders

- Watch for the enrollment summaries with any copay changes for families effective 5/6/24.
- Watch for the school-age summer enrollment request to come to your email the first week of May.
- Reminder to reach out to the ELRC before enrolling children with CCW funding to confirm all information.

## Reporting Inability to Meet Child Care Needs



Please remember, you must notify your Provider Specialist if you are unable to provide care, for any reason, for a child(ren) enrolled through CCW. If you are unable to meet a child(ren)'s authorized enrollment schedule due to staffing, behavior issues or any other reason, you must report it immediately to your Provider Specialist so, the child(ren) do not accrue absences and you are paid correctly. If you find it necessary to close your facility due to staffing or other emergency, you must report this immediately or within three days of reopening. If eligible, you may be able to request a paid closure(s). Your Provider Specialist is available to answer your questions.

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## Provider Closed Days

Providers received a request on April 18th to submit the Appendix B, Closed Days, for the 2024-2025 fiscal year. The subsidy program will pay up to 15 closed days per year from July 1, 2024, to June 30, 2025, if the provider also charges private-pay clients for the closed days listed.

Please click [here](#) to read the full instructions.

Providers who are not using PSS must click [here](#) and complete the attached Provider Agreement Appendix B and return to their provider specialist no later than **May 13, 2024**.

To view a video with instructions for completing this form, check out Community

## Finding & Retaining Staff Meeting - Recording Available!

ELRC Region 16 held a "Finding & Retaining Staff" support meeting on April 17th. Sessions included:

1. Finding the Right Fit: Learn effective strategies and tools to identify and attract the right staff.
2. Onboarding New Hires: Get a plan for the first 90 days to ensure a successful transition.
3. Staff Retention Tactics: Explore innovative approaches to foster a positive workplace.
4. Representatives from Southeast & Northeast Professional Development Organization (higher education enrollment and tuition assistance)

If you were unable to attend this meeting, it has been recorded. You can click [here](#) to view the recording and reach out to your Quality Coach with any questions.

## Free Summer Lesson Plans!

Nearly 600 child care providers downloaded 5,202 free lesson plans last summer, saving already short-staffed teachers hundreds of hours in lesson planning and ensuring high-quality learning for 39,971 children statewide. Child care and youth-serving organizations can access **Best Day Ever!** at no cost again this summer with 11 weeks of all-new lesson plans for preschool and school-aged children.



The Learning Lamp developed Best Day Ever! to reduce the burden of staffing shortages and rising costs for child care programs. Lessons are easy to access, use readily available, affordable materials, and come aligned with PA Academic and Early Learning standards. The plans are offered in week-long themed units: 11 preschool and 11 school-age lesson plans are available now to summer programs in Pennsylvania at no cost. The lessons were written and tested by The Learning Lamp's own teachers. A leading provider of out-of-school time learning in south-central Pennsylvania, The Learning Lamp will share all Best Day Ever! units for FREE through August 2024

For more information about The Learning Lamp and its Best Day Ever! 2024 Free Summer Trial, call Kerri at 814-262-0732 ext. 245.

## FREE Mandated Reporter Training

PA Family Support Alliance is providing free virtual Mandated Reporter training in May. This is a three-hour, live training approved by DHS and meets all requirements for training on recognizing and reporting child abuse. Click on each link to preregister.



Note: Each person must log in through a separate device using the unique access

link emailed after registration to receive credit. Shared email addresses may not be used in the same session.

Click [here](#) to view dates and register.

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

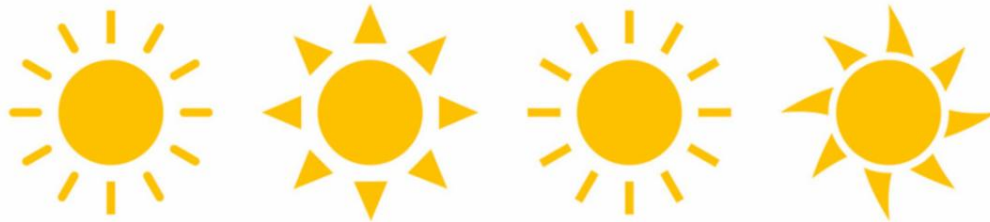


### Free On Demand Courses from Better Kid Care

Ready to rejuvenate your teaching toolkit? Better Kid Care is offering TWO amazing courses free of charge in honor of Month of the Young Child and Professionals Appreciation Week.

- ["Fostering Community Through Restorative Practices"](#)
- ["Nature Sketching Builds Strong Observation Skills"](#)

Don't miss out on this incredible opportunity to sharpen your observation skills and learn about foundational restorative practice strategies. Earn a certificate of completion at no charge if you finish each course by May 31, 2024.



### It's Time to Revisit Your Supervision Policy for Summer!

Summer will be here before we know it and you are probably busy working on your summer programming schedule. You may be hiring additional staff, planning field trips or tweaking your playground schedule. The most important aspect of your summer planning is to ensure that all of your staff understand and implement your supervision policy. As per Certification's regulation, **"Each staff person shall be assigned the responsibility of specific children. The staff person shall know the names and whereabouts of a child in his/her assigned group. Children on the facility premises or facility excursions shall be supervised by a staff person at all times."**

As part of your summer planning, revisit your supervision policy with all of your staff. As you observe each classroom, ensure that your staff are counting children before and after using the playground, taking walks or going on field trips. Ensure every staff knows which children they are responsible for and that they know the children's names. In addition, ensure that all staff are in ratio with their age group.

Summer programming is challenging and requires daily adjustments to cover staff's vacations, increased enrollments and special events or excursions. If you are hiring new staff or floaters for summer, ensure they know which children they are responsible for and that they know each child's name, especially if they are covering multiple classrooms or age groups throughout the day.

It is up to you to ensure your staff understands and implements your supervision policy. Provide your staff with attendance charts, clipboards or software tool they need to track the children they are responsible for each day. Create a safe and healthy summer program by planning and working together to keep all children safe!

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## 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 Krystal Perez from the Allentown School District. She is the assistant director of health services and she shares information on childhood obesity. Click [here](#) to listen.



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## Health & Safety

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### Oral Health - The Importance of Fluoride

There are several important ways to make teeth strong and prevent tooth decay. These include drinking tap (faucet) water with fluoride, brushing with fluoride toothpaste, and having a professional apply fluoride varnish. Fluoride is safe. It is found in nature in plants, soil, and





water.

See this [Cavity Fighter flyer](#) and [Getting Fluoride flyer](#) for more information, and please post this information and/or share with families.

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Want to add staff or other members of your team to this newsletter? Email [estair@cscinc.org](mailto: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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