



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

Serving Bucks county

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Region 16 Updates

Please note that the ELRC offices will be closed on Monday, November 11th for a staff professional development day. Offices will also be closed on Thursday, November 28th & Friday, November 29th for the Thanksgiving holiday.



Rapid Response Team

The Rapid Response Team provides prompt support in the event a child is at risk of suspension or expulsion. It is a short-term, collaborative approach, designed to connect families and providers with existing tools and resources. Supports are customized to fit a child's or teacher's needs.



Requests can be made using this [RRT Referral form](#). Referrals are processed on a first come, first serve basis and we ask that providers prioritize one child referral at a time. One of the goals of the RRT is that strategies and supports will be used across classrooms at the provider so that all children and staff will benefit from these supports.

Before submitting a referral, please discuss with the parent as parental consent is required. Child observations, screenings and parent conferences should also have been completed so that you can provide the referral coordinator with detailed information regarding the case.

If you have any questions regarding the RRT supports, please reach out to your

Health & Wellness Education

In today's world, where safety and well-being are paramount, teaching our children about health and wellness has never been more crucial. Health and wellness classes for preschoolers and elementary school age children is an excellent way to lay this foundation, fostering confidence and awareness from an early age.



Doylestown Hospital is offering a series of health and wellness educational classes specifically designed for preschool and elementary school age children. These classes, which will cover a range of topics from nutrition to hygiene, aim to empower young minds and promote healthier lifestyles from an early age.

Contact Lisa Borine at lborine@dh.org for more information.

Please review flyers for available topics.

- [Educational Programs-Elementary](#)
- [Educational Programs-Preschool](#)

Professional Development Organization - 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.

Region 16 Provider Supports

Director's Network

Each month the Quality Coaches host the Bucks County Directors' Network meeting. These sessions are an excellent opportunity to network, learn, and engage with representatives from a wide variety of service agencies in the county. On a regular basis, providers can hear updates from early intervention staff, advocates, the Professional Development Organization, certification and more.



Please join us this month on Wednesday, November 13, 1:00-3:00, for an *in-person* gathering at Children's Village on the Doylestown Hospital Campus. Please be aware that there is additional parking in the hospital-parking garage. Attendance is strongly recommended. Hear updates from a variety of early childhood partners who can help support your children, families, and program goals. Our Community of Practice topic will be suspension and expulsion. Registration is required for this meeting. Please review the Quality Coach Calendar to sign up.

Please review the attached In-Person Director's Network Schedule. You may register on this flyer for future meetings.

- [Community of Practice Flyer - Director](#)

Community of Practice

The ELRC will offer meetings for Leadership and Teachers to participate in virtually during evening and daytime hours.

Please review the Virtual Early Educators Connections Flyer and follow the link to register for the day and time you would like to attend.

- [Early Educators Connections Flyer](#)

Coaches Calendar

Take a look at the Region 16 Coaches Calendar full of program support opportunities. Reach out to your Quality Coach with any questions!

- [Region 16 Coaches Calendar](#)

ELRC Updates

CCW Reminders

- As we approach the holiday season, please take a moment to review the closures you submitted to ensure they are still correct. If there are any changes or updates, please contact your Provider Specialist.
- Any changes to a child's care schedule should be reported to your Provider Specialist prior to the submission of your invoice.

Co-payment Delinquencies

- It is important to report delinquent co-payments timely to the ELRC. Per Appendix A of the ELRC Certified Provider Agreement, providers must report a delinquent co-payment to the ELRC on the business day following the day the co-payment becomes delinquent. For example, if a co-pay is not paid by Friday for that service week, the delinquency must be reported on your next business day, which is typically Monday.
- Please note, delinquencies can only be reported for co-payments. Delinquencies regarding additional fees your program charges must be handled privately with the family. If you are aware that a family is currently under adverse action, please urge them to resolve this as soon as possible in order to maintain their eligibility and prevent any disruptions in care.
- When delinquent co-pays are resolved, please notify us so we can satisfy the client's adverse action. When families are seeking to transfer enrollments, an ELRC Family Specialist will contact you to verify if that family is current with their co-payment before authorizing the transfer.

STARS Continuous Quality Improvement Awards Payments Sent!

Provider payments are being sent out to those who submitted their acceptance letters by 10/20/2024.

Payments will be made in the same manner in which you receive your CCW payment (paper check or direct deposit). If your letter was submitted after October 20, payments will be made again in early December.



Keystone STARS Continuous Quality Improvement Award acceptance letters were

sent to eligible STAR 2, 3 & 4 providers in mid-September. The intent of the Awards is to improve, support, and recognize the quality of Pennsylvania's early learning and school-age programs that are invested in the Keystone STARS Program.

Providers in ELRC Regions 11, 12, 13, 14 & 16 were emailed their acceptance letter. If you were expecting a letter but did not receive it, please reach out to your Quality Coach.

Providers should complete their acceptance letter and email back to elrc-ksgrants@cscinc.org. All acceptance letters must be received by December 13, 2024.

For full details, please see the [Announcement ELRC 24 #02, 2024-25 Keystone STARS Continuous Quality Improvement Awards](#). This Announcement contains important information regarding general provider eligibility requirements, a policy eligibility exception for STAR 1 programs, special consideration for STAR 2 and 3 programs, award amounts, allowable expenses, ineligible expenses, processes and a timeline.

Workshop Topics for Standard FC 3.4.5

The Technical Assistance Center on Social Emotional Intervention for Young Children (TACSEI) created *The Backpack Connection Series* to provide a way for teachers and parents/caregivers to work together to help young children develop social emotional skills and reduce challenging behavior. The handouts are available in English, Spanish and Chinese.

The series includes categories that parents and teachers find helpful: Addressing Behavior, Emotions, Routines and Schedules, and Social Skills. Programs can use these handouts as a foundation for a workshop and base conversations and activities around the topic.

In addition, teachers may choose to send a handout home in each child's backpack when a new strategy or skill is introduced to the class. Each Backpack Connection handout provides information that helps parents stay informed about what their child is learning at school and specific ideas on how to use the strategy or skill at home.

Here is an example:

- [How to Help your Child Manage Time and Understand Expectations](#)

You can find about 30 different workshops and many parent resources here:

- <https://cainclusion.org/teachingpyramid/materials/family/>

Directors Credential Coursework

Northampton Community College is running EARL 231: Administration of Early Childhood Program. Coursework begin in January and funding may be provided through Rising STAR Tuition Assistance.

For more information, click [here](#).

PROFESSIONAL
DEVELOPMENT



Rapid Response Team - Tip of the Month

Leadership supports/observation



Program leadership need to observe staff in their work with children and families so they can determine areas they may need support. Through observations, directors are able to provide specific feedback related to aspects of the staff's teaching practices.

Teachers rely on leadership to support them when they struggle with a child displaying challenging behaviors. Directors who visit classrooms can:

- Model quality classroom practices such as positive teacher/child interactions, redirection strategies, and parent interactions.
- Get a feel for the classroom climate. Is the classroom warm and inviting or does it feel chaotic and overwhelming?
- Observe teacher practices and provide strategies like transition ideas or developmentally appropriate practices.
- Review classroom files and take a look at child screenings and assessment tools for areas of concern.

Most importantly, leadership presence makes staff feel valued and supported.

Observations should take place often both formally and informally. At a minimum, directors should be checking in on each class once a day.

Take a look at this PBIS Classroom checklist that you can use as you visit each classroom.

- [PBIS Classroom Checklist](#)

Outside Service Providers

Providers often have outside agencies or consultants visiting children during the day. This may include early intervention services, special music teachers, speech therapists, sports instructors or even guest readers. These services can add valuable experiences for the children and bring enrichment to your program! However, there should be some thought to the amount of access that you allow to these guests.

- Therapists (Early Intervention, Intermediate Units, speech therapists, PT/OT, etc) who are supporting a child's IEP, IFSP must be allowed access to work with the child. Therapists are employed by outside agencies and have met clearance requirements through their employment. Providers may request, but cannot require, copies of these clearances.
- Schedule short intake meetings with the therapists, and families, if possible, at the onset of services to set expectations around communication, scheduling, and goals for the child. Therapists are there to support an assigned child and should not be a distraction for the rest of the children in the class.
- It is encouraged that children remain in the classroom for services. However, if it is not possible for the therapist to deliver services in the classroom effectively, providers should reach out to their regional certification rep. for direction on how to proceed.
- Other visitors not associated with partner agencies, such a guest readers, may not have the required clearances and should never be left alone with children or counted in teacher:child ratio.

Remember, partners and other visitors should never be counted in

PA Farm to School



October was National Farm to School Month, a time for schools, early care and education sites, farms, communities, agencies, and organizations to celebrate food education, school gardens and lunch trays filled with healthy, local ingredients! Check out issues of the Monthly Harvest Newsletter [here](#). We encourage you to sign up to receive future issues!

Infant Mental Health Foundations Online Course

The Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL) is pleased to offer an opportunity for Pennsylvania licensed Child Care providers to participate in the University of Pittsburgh's Infant Mental Health professional development certificate at **no cost** through a pilot program offering scholarships to professionals serving children and families in prenatal, infant, toddler and preschool programs.

OCDEL recognizes the challenges faced by providers in supporting the mental health and well-being of children and families in their early years, the critical role of the Early Learning professionals in a family's supportive community has only been amplified in recent years.

Interested professionals are invited to apply for sponsorship through The Pennsylvania Key, on behalf of the Bureau of Early Learning Policy and Professional Development, OCDEL. Application for 2025 Infant Mental Health (IMH) Certificate & Learning Circle - Scholarship opens October 16, 2024, and closes on November 15, 2024.

Click [here](#) to learning more including applicant criteria, registration information, course structure, and FAQs and additional information.

CACFP

COMMUNITY CONVERSATION

An open forum for childcare providers and sponsors to come learn, ask questions, and gather resources and support related to maximizing and participating in CACFP.

Hosted by the Philadelphia
Department of Public Health's
Division of Chronic Disease and
Injury Prevention and Pennsylvania
Department of Education



FRIDAYS



2-3 PM

- SEPT 20, 2024
- DEC 20, 2024
- MAR 21, 2025
- JUN 20, 2025



FOR QUESTIONS OR ACCESS LINK
TO JOIN, EMAIL:

SHANNON.DRYDEN@PHILA.GOV

Health & Safety

Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction

The Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL) recognizes the systemic stress associated with working in the early childhood profession and is offering a no-cost 8-week Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) course (a \$723 value) to Pennsylvania early childhood educators. Earn your course certificate of completion and digital Mindful Leader badge! 28 PQAS hours are available upon completion of the 8-week course.

Mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR) is a scientifically researched program that can help people reduce stress, anxiety, and depression. It's a secular program that's based on proven medical and psychological research. MBSR is based on the idea that cultivating present-moment attention in an open, nonjudgmental way can help people take charge of their lives and respond to their own stress and pain.

MBSR involves 8-weekly group live, online classes (2.5 hours), daily mindfulness exercises and gentle movement. Classes begin January 2025. Additionally, there is an online 1-day silent retreat. Space is limited!

Learn more during the online Information Session, Tuesday, November 26, 2024, from 12:30-1:30 pm. Attendance at the Information Session is not required to participate in the MBSR course, and the session will be recorded. [Click here to register for the Info Session!](#)

ECELS Health & Safety Newsletter

Early Childhood Education Linkage System (ECELS) publishes a monthly newsletter full of valuable health & safety tips and resources for staff, children and families.



Click [here](#) to download the most recent newsletter.



November is Family Engagement Month

Child Care Aware of America has created a document that highlights the importance of partnering with families for emergency preparedness in child care settings. It offers practical guidance on how providers can engage families in emergency planning, ensuring everyone is prepared for potential crises.

The resource includes strategies for communication, family involvement in drills, and sharing critical emergency information. It's designed to support collaboration between child care providers and families to enhance safety and preparedness.

Click [here](#) for a copy of the guidance.

Oral Health Tip for Families

Before visiting a dentist, it is very helpful if a child's parent or guardian completes this form: [Getting to Know Me: Information for Your Child's Dental Office](#). The form gathers information about the child's ability to cooperate during dental visits. It also includes suggestions about approaches that might work best for the child. This information will help the dental office staff understand and meet the child's needs.



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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