



Community Services for Children

Provider Link Newsletter ~ ELRC Region 16

February 2025

Serving Bucks County

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Region 16 Updates

Please note that the ELRC offices will be closed on Monday, February 17th in observance of Presidents' Day. All offices will reopen on Tuesday, February 18th.

congratulations

Keystone STAR Movements

The following programs have demonstrated their commitment to quality by moving to a higher STAR level from July through December 2024.

Congratulations to the providers who have moved to a STAR 2:

- Yia Yias Daycare
- Celebree School of Warrington
- Vamonos - Doylestown
- Vamonos - Warminster

- Just Children Development Center

Congratulations to the providers who moved to a STAR 3:

- Best Friends Forever
- Wee Care Too Daycare and Early Learning Center
- New Horizon Learning Academy Center - Yardley
- New Horizon Learning Center - Morrisville

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

- Kiddie Academy of Quakertown
- Lifespan at Neidig Elementary
- Vamonos - Warrington
- Children of America - New Britain
- Just Children - Bridgetown Pike
- New Horizon Early Learning Center - Fairless Hills
- New Horizon Learning Center - Levittown
- Katie's Place Home Daycare, LLC

Open Provider Manager Position

ELRC 16 is seeking qualified candidates for our Provider Manager position. This position would report to both the Quakertown and Fairless Hills offices. Candidates must have a 4 year early childhood education, social services or related degree, 5 years of management/supervisory experience and a strong working knowledge of Keystone STARS and/or Child Care Works. Visit [Careers - Community Services for Children](#) to learn more.



Salary Increase Survey

Charles Stough, the owner of the Kid's Care School Age Organizations, would like to send out a survey to Bucks County providers to collect information on staff salary increases given by child care programs in 2024. If you are interested in participating in this survey and receiving the results, please contact Charles at Kidscare77@gmail.com.

The CDA® Renewal Amnesty Program is BACK for a Limited Time!

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the CDA®. As part of the celebration, the Council is offering a limited-time CDA® Renewal Amnesty Program. This program provides an opportunity for anyone with a CDA expiration date as far back as January 1, 2020, to complete the renewal process and make their credential active again.

<https://www.cdacouncil.org/en/cda-renewal-amnesty-program/#eligibility>

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 served 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 Quality Coach.

Region 16 Provider Supports



Director's Network

Directors, don't miss out! Each month the Quality Coaches host the Bucks County Directors' Network meeting. These sessions are an excellent opportunity to network with other ECE professionals by sharing strategies asking questions and learning from one another. A wide variety of service agencies from across the county participate regularly to provide information, updates and opportunities that support your children, families, and program goals. Partners include staff from early intervention, advocates, professional development, certification and more.

Please join us this month on Wednesday, February 19, 1:00-3:00, for an **in-person** gathering at Bucks Community College Bristol Campus. Our Community of Practice topic will be **Transitions**. Registration is required for this meeting. Please go to the Quality Coach Calendar to sign up.

- [Communities of Practice flyer - Directors](#)

Community of Practice

The ELRC offers ongoing supports to program leadership and classroom teachers through Communities of Practice. Aimed at helping to strengthen classroom and programmatic practices, these short interactive learning opportunities are offered virtually during evening and daytime hours.

Come check out one of these sessions to see what they are all about. See the Virtual Early Educators Connections Flyer for more information, and follow the link to register. The same topic is offered several times throughout the month, so you can register for the day and time that is most convenient for you.

- [Communities of Practice flyer - Staff](#)

Quality Coach Monthly Calendar

Quality Coaches are here for you! In addition to the Directors Network Meetings, there are many different ways to connect with your coach for support and information. Coaches offer in-person site visits for planning, support, and pre-designations. But if you'd like to take a short break away from the hustle and bustle of your program, take advantage of a community day at Starbucks, or maybe check in to virtual office hours. Find details like these, as well as other learning and community events, on our Quality Coach Calendar and click on the

event to register.

- [Region 16 Coaches' Calendar - February 2025](#)

Rapid Response Team - Tip of the Month Children with IEPs



Childcare providers should actively request a copy of a child's Individualized Education Program (IEP) at enrollment as it serves as a crucial roadmap for understanding the child's unique needs and strengths. It is important to read through the IEP and share the goals with the classroom teacher. By utilizing the IEP and the individual child goals, directors and staff can develop personalized strategies and interventions to support the child's growth and development. Programs should request to have representation at all IEP review meetings to discuss the child's progress and understand new goals as they are set.

This intentional approach reflects a provider's commitment to quality care and enhances the overall early learning experience. By engaging in this collaborative process with families, providers can build a strong partnership that is centered around the child's best interests and build trusting relationships with parents and caregivers.

ELRC Updates

CCW Reminders

Communications with your ELRC Provider Specialist are critical to 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

Remember to always check your attendance invoice for accuracy and report any discrepancies to your provider specialist.

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 1st - 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.

Winter Weather Closures

This is the time of year when winter weather can prompt program closures. Providers who use Provider Self Service (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. If you are not currently using PSS, reach out to your provider specialist for assistance.

The subsidy program will pay for a maximum of 15 closed days per year from July 1st through June 30th if the provider also charges private-pay families for the closed days.

STARS Continuous Quality Improvement Awards Final Expense Reports



All providers who received a Continuous Quality Improvement Award are required to submit a Final Expense Report no later than March 28, 2025. 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, 2024 - February 28, 2025.

Click [here](#) to access a copy of the Final Expense Report. Providers should follow the instructions attached to the Final Expense Report and return the completed form to their **Quality Coach**. Quality Coaches have office hours available to assist you in completing the expense report if needed.

For eligible expenses, please see the [Announcement ELRC 24 #02, 2024-25 Keystone STARS Continuous Quality Improvement Awards](#).

NAFCC Accreditation

Are you a Family Child Care provider considering accreditation? First Up is holding an online series to help family providers learn about the accreditation process and what is needed to earn this quality distinction. Sessions begin February 1st. Please click on the link below for more information.

- [NAFCC Accreditation](#)

Supports for Spanish Speaking Providers



ECE Latinos Roundtable: Meetings will always be on the third Thursday of the month at 1pm. This space is an open-format meeting where the participants in the discussion introduce the topic of conversation. Participants will also hear about additional resources available through First Up. The next meeting will be on **February 20, 2025**. Click [here](#) to register.

FUP and LEJ Capitol Caravan: **May 5th, 2025**, multiple groups will be heading to Harrisburg for an ECE takeover! There will be a press conference about the importance of funding for childcare and PreK, private meetings with legislators, and more!

Advocacy Toolkits: Click on the link to access tool kits for programs and families to engage in advocacy.

- [Advocacy Toolkit - Spanish](#)
- [Advocacy Toolkit - English](#)

FREE Professional Development Opportunity Becoming Trauma-Informed Early Childhood Education Leaders

Becoming Trauma-Informed Early Childhood Education Leaders begins in March (cohort 1) and June (cohort 2). This no-cost training will equip early

childhood education (ECE) leaders with foundational knowledge about the prevalence and impact of trauma. It will also cover what it means to be "trauma-informed" and how leaders can apply and integrate this knowledge into their organizational structures. Please see the flyer below for more information and registration details.

- [Becoming Trauma-Informed Early Childhood Education Leaders](#)
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FREE School-Age Lesson Plans

The Learning Lamp has released additional, free lesson plans for School-age providers. Best Day Ever is a collection of free, learning standard aligned lesson plans that are easy to access and use affordable materials. They will also save time and money as staff are freed up from planning!



In exchange for free access to Best Day Ever!, The Learning Lamp invites participating organizations to provide feedback and recommendations through a survey for each lesson they use. When a survey is completed, the user will be automatically entered into a drawing to win one of two \$100 Amazon gift cards at the end of season.

See this flyer for additional information.

- [Best Day Ever flyer](#)
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Certification Updates

Updated Health & Safety Pre-service Training

OCDEL has released [Announcement C-24-03 Updated Health and Safety Training Part 1 and Part 2](#). This Announcement provides a new two-part Health and Safety Training that all child care providers hired on or after January 1, 2025, who have not previously completed an acceptable Health and Safety training, must complete.

The Health and Safety Training Part 1 and Part 2 will be available in Spanish.

Maintain Compliance with Child Protective Service Law (CPSL)

OCDEL has released [Announcement C-25-01, Maintaining Compliance with the Child Protective Services Law \(CPSL\) for Department of Human Services \(DHS\) certified child care facilities](#). This announcement informs certified child care providers of the CPSL requirements for certified child care facilities in Pennsylvania and clarifies Provisional Hiring Requirements for employees hired on or after February 1, 2025. There is no change to what clearances are required for employment and volunteering.

Also outlined in this announcement are the timeframes required for updating the required clearances as well as the requirements for Mandated Reporter training and when a renewal of this training is required.

Preparing for Kindergarten Transition and Registration

It's hard to believe, but kindergarten registration will soon occur in Pennsylvania schools. Now is



the time to request no-cost transition to kindergarten and early learning materials for families with young children. The Pennsylvania Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL) has available several materials to share with families to help during this time. Click [here](#) to look at the available materials and place your

order today!

Pennsylvania 211: Get Connected. Get Help

If you need to connect with resources in your community, but don't know where to look, PA 211 is a great place to start. Dial 211 or text your zip code to 898-211 to talk with a resource specialist for free. Visit the [website](#) for more information.



ELRC Family Specialists can also perform needs assessments and provide resources and referrals to families. Reach out to your Quality Coach if you are seeking provider-related resources.

PA Farm to School Network



The Pennsylvania Farm to School Network (PFSN) is promoting the webinar *Nurturing Diversity in School Gardens* which will be held on February 19th at 11:00 am.

Explore the transformative impact of inclusivity and representation in educational gardening programs and learn practical strategies, like multilingual labels, cultural sharing sessions, and planting global gardens, to create welcoming spaces that honor diverse student identities. This webinar is part of the Growing School Garden Summit Webinar Series, hosted by the Sprouts Healthy Communities Foundation in collaboration with Life Lab and SGSO Network.

Learn more and register [here!](#)
For more information about PFSN, visit their website: <https://pafarmtoschool.org/>

Health & Safety

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.

Virtual Office Hours

You can now connect with ECELS staff during office hours. ECELS staff can discuss any questions and concerns you may have, pertaining to healthy child care practices. Please register for an appointment for their office hours by following this [link](#). After you register, you will receive an email confirmation with your appointment information.

Schedule of Vaccinations

Please see the updated 2025 recommended immunization schedule for children birth through 6 years old from the CDC and American Academy of Pediatrics. Please post and share with the caregivers in your program.

- [2025 Recommended Immunizations](#)

Brush, Book, Bed: A Nighttime Routine
Please share this oral health information with families in your program.



1. **Brush** - Each night, help your child brush their teeth. Young children need help with brushing to do it well. Have your child spit out any extra toothpaste. Do not rinse with water; the little bit of toothpaste left behind is good for teeth.
2. **Book** - After brushing, find a comfortable spot and read a book with your child. Reading aloud will help with your child's language development and social-emotional skills. You can also make up stories, sing songs, or use silly voices while you enjoy spending time with your child.
3. **Bed** - Sleep is very important. Keeping a regular bedtime and having a predictable bedtime routine can help your child wind down at the end of the day.

For more information, visit: <https://www.healthychildren.org/English/healthy-living/oral-health/Pages/Brush-Book-Bed.aspx> .

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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