

Community Services for Children Provider Link Newsletter ~ ELRC Region 16 May 2025

Serving Bucks County

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Region 16 Updates

Please note that the ELRC offices will be closed on Thursday, May 15th for a staff professional development day. Offices will also be closed on Monday, May 26 in recognition of Memorial Day.

Keystone STAR Movements

The following programs have demonstrated their commitment to quality by moving to a higher STAR level from January through March 2025.



Congratulations to the provider who moved to a STAR 2:

- Vonnies Lil Rascals, LLC

Congratulations to the provider who moved to a STAR 3:

- Alphabet Childcare

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

- Kidsberry Academy
 - Alphabet Garden
 - Pennedel Early Learning Center
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Region 16 Provider Supports

Bucks County Directors' Network

Directors, don't miss out! Did you know that every month,

providers come together to hear updates on STARS, get OCDEL news, meet certification reps and early intervention staff, and learn about other agencies that support the ECE field and young children? In addition, participants get to spend time with other directors, sharing ideas, solving common problems, and learning from one another.



We always have had a good turnout for these meetings, but we would really like to see new faces and hear new ideas. To encourage increased and new participation, we now have a raffle at each meeting with great gifts going to the winners. Anyone who attends, who has not been to a meeting in the last 6 months, will be entered to win. Also, if you bring someone that has not been to a meeting in six months, you will both be entered to win. Come on out and join the fun, learning, and networking!

We would like to send our thanks and appreciation to Neshaminy Kids Club and The Doylestown Hospital Children's Village for hosting our Bucks County Director's Meetings this past year! By providing meeting spaces you allowed us to have opportunities to gather in person and network with one another. Our next meeting will be held in-person at Children's Village on Wednesday, May 21st at 1:00 PM, when we will be diving into "Community Referrals and Partnerships." Please see the Communities of Practice flyer to register. Then, starting in June, we will be alternating our meetings between virtual and in-person. Our first virtual meeting will be held via TEAMS on Wednesday, June 18th. Hope to see you all soon!

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

Communities of Practices for Classroom Staff

Quality Coaches offer short virtual learning sessions for classroom staff. These convenient, 30-minute opportunities are aimed at exploring new skills, and strategies to enhance the learning experience for children.

Each month a different topic is the focus of discussion and idea sharing.

We will be putting our Communities of Practice for Early Educators on hold for the summer. But we still have two great topics to explore before then! In May we will be discussing "Visual Schedules." And in June our focus will be on "Interactions."

See flyer for more details.

- [Communities of Practice Flyer - Early Educators with Links](#)

Quality Coach Community Days and Virtual Office Hours

Do you have questions for your Quality Coach? Do you need help with a Designation or need new ideas and strategies to achieve your goals? Take some time away from the hustle and bustle of your program and meet up with your Coach! Keystone STARS Quality Coaches are available at convenient locations across the county, or if you prefer, check out Virtual Office Hours. Please see the Coaches' Calendar for locations, dates and times.

- [Coaches Calendar](#)

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.

Free Community Event

Check out the Family Service Community Festival! This is a FREE family event being held on May 7th from 5:00-7:30 PM, at the Bristol Township Municipal Park. Families can enjoy free food, ice cream, moon bounce, games, music and connect with community resource agencies as well. Please share the flyer below with your families.

- [Bristol Township Community Event](#)

Rapid Response Team - Tip of the Month FAQ



Will the Rapid Response Team get a child services with Early Intervention faster?

- No. RRT will not be able to move a child up a waitlist or make an evaluation occur faster. The RRT can assist in connecting families and providers with local supports and bridge the gap between the classroom and possible referrals to other services.

What types of referrals can be offered?

- Both the contracted observer and the Quality Coach are able to connect families and providers to local resources, as applicable, including Early Intervention, Intermediate Units, Behavioral Health Specialists, Developmental Pediatricians, IECMH and more!

Can the Rapid Response Team provide one-on-one supports to a child?

- The RRT is a short-term intervention designed to connect families and providers with existing community resources.

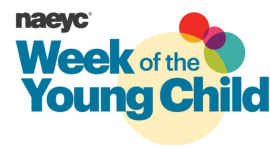
Does the Rapid Response Team work with my classroom staff?

- Yes! Your Quality Coach will complete an observation in the classroom and provide teachers with direct feedback and strategies to support the whole classroom.

Are there professional development opportunities for my staff?

- Yes! A community of practice meets monthly to give staff an opportunity to discuss challenges they are having, connect with other teachers, and get resources that they can use immediately in their classrooms.
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Week of the Young Child - Highlights



April 5-11, 2025

April's annual Week of the Young Child celebrates the importance of meaningful experiences in the lives of young children. It's a time to celebrate high quality child care programs and the talented staff who dedicate themselves to providing opportunities for children to explore, create, learn, and grow. Click [here](#) to check out a few of the events that happened during this year's WOYC.

Provider Spotlight - Lil Bucks Partners in Learning

The ELRC wishes to congratulate eight high school seniors from the early childhood program at Middle Bucks Institute of Technology. These students have officially earned their Child Development Associate (CDA) certification. By passing the exam and gaining critical hands-on experience in the school's onsite child care facility, Lil Bucks Partners in Learning, these students have shown a commitment to providing exceptional care and education to young children. This nationally recognized credential is a huge step toward their future success in the field of early childhood education. "Congratulations and Thank You" for your commitment!



ELRC Updates

CCW Reminders

The ELRC may pay for up to 15 closed days in which the provider charges private-pay families. The ELRC will not pay a provider for more than 15 closed days for any reason during a fiscal year. Please complete the [Appendix B](#) indicating any closed days for **July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2026**. Return this form to your provider specialist by May 12, 2025 at elrc16@cscinc.org.



Consider using one of your Closed Days for Staff Professional Development. ELRC's will be holding conference days on Indigenous Peoples' Day, October 13, 2025.

Please remember to contact your Family Specialist when you have a new CCW child enroll in your program. The ELRC will not be able to enroll a child in your facility until confirmation has been received. Failure to confirm enrollment and start date will delay payments.

Watch for the school-age summer enrollment request with instructions to come to you in the mail this week!

National Provider Appreciation Day - May 9th

National Provider Appreciation Day, also known as National Child Care Provider Day, is annually celebrated on the Friday before Mother's Day. This special day recognizes child care providers, teachers and other educators of young children everywhere.

Child care providers deserve a big “Thank you” for their dedication, commitment, and compassion. Since the child care provider is a partner in raising children, parents carefully choose with whom they trust their children. Parents put their trust in their childcare providers as they share child-rearing responsibilities with them.

For ways to celebrate with your staff, visit [here](#).



- Harrisburg Capitol Caravan: May 5th
Hispanic Providers will take over Harrisburg in the biggest ECE Action day of the year! There are still some spots left on the bus leaving Philly area. Sign up to join us here: <https://forms.gle/RVRG5SCaqY8TWkkN9> Registration will close this week!
- ECE Latinos Roundtable May 15th: (in Spanish) Join the conversation with fellow Hispanic ECE providers by registering here: https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZcuc-uoqjMsGdY5aU6lbG1jZhv72z_vr2pl
- Want to earn incentives for your program? Are you interested in inviting legislators to your program? Contact Rosanna Matos. Rosanna.matos@firstup.org

Updated PD Registry Home Page

The PD Registry is updating its home page. When you login after May 1, you will notice a change. It is the same system; just a new look!

You can read more details about this change on the [PA Key website](#).



TEACH Early Childhood Scholarship Program

TEACH offers scholarships and support systems that improve the education, compensation, and retention of early childhood staff. These scholarships provide ECE professionals with access to a debt-free college education AND allow sponsoring employers to recruit and retain more qualified staff. By investing in staff through TEACH, early childhood programs can incentivize degree attainment, stabilize staffing, and ultimately advance their Keystone STARS level.



Employer Session:

Thursday, May 8th from 10-11 AM

<https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/1SV5hOxSRVebNqakuw550Q>

Teaching Staff Sessions:

Tuesday, May 13th from 6:30-7:30 PM

https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/z55WTAEGQjysZbVL-sQ_8A

Thursday, May 15th from 1:30-2:30 PM

<https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/h0SdlM44QMqT7zJenotr0g>



A Virtual Conference for Birth-Three Professionals June 23-27, 2025

Are you working with families parenting infants and toddlers? Do you guide families through the earliest and most critical years of development? This conference is for you.

Roots of Resilience is a five-day virtual event designed exclusively for professionals who work with families of children ages birth to three. Whether you're a teacher, family engagement worker, staff therapist, specialist, professional or administrator, this is your chance to refuel, reconnect, and find tools for your daily work.

What to Expect:

- A Full Week of Learning: Sessions run June 23-27, but don't worry—you'll have one month of access to the recordings so you can revisit or catch up anytime.
- Tailored Pathways: Dive into sessions on Family Engagement, Dual Language Learners, Mental Health, Staff Wellness, and Essential Responsibilities like safety, health, and screenings.
- Innovation Spotlights: Hear from real programs implementing powerful practices.
- Intentional Networking: Connect with peers across Pennsylvania—and beyond

Click [here](#) to register now. Any questions, reach out to Brandie@paheadstart.org

Program Observation Instruments - Training Available

Online self-paced training is available for many Program Observation Instruments. POI tools can support providers in improving classroom quality by intentionally looking at classroom space, teacher/child interactions, health and safety and many other program areas. Program leadership and staff can take these courses as a refresher on a current tool or try out a new one!

- [POI Self-Paced Courses](#)

Updated Edition PA Learning Standards for Early Childhood

OCDEL will soon release an updated edition of the

Pennsylvania Learning Standards for Early Childhood. The update includes changes to the Science Standards to ensure alignment to the newly adopted STEELS Standards.

Starting in September 2025, providers will be required to adopt The Pennsylvania Family Engagement Birth through College, Career, Community Ready Framework.

All licensed child care facilities will receive one complimentary copy of the following:

- 2024 Infant, Toddler Learning Standards for Early Childhood
- 2024 Pre-Kindergarten Learning Standards for Early Childhood
- 2024 Early Learning Standards Continuum

Eligible providers should expect their complimentary copies to be delivered by mail between April and May 2025.

Pennsylvania Learning Standards for Early Childhood are available for viewing, download, and printing at <https://www.pakeys.org/early-learning-standards/>. Additional standards may be purchased by visiting <https://shoppaheritage.com/collections/education>.

An asynchronous training on the transition to the new 2024 Pennsylvania Learning Standards for Early Childhood will be accessible on the PD Registry titled "2024 Pennsylvania Learning Standards for Early Childhood Revisions Overview."

Please direct all questions regarding the new 2024 Learning Standards for Early Childhood to ra-pwpaels@pa.gov.



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.



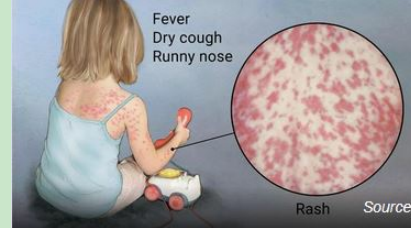
Click [here](#) to download the most recent newsletter.

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.

Measles Guidance

Due to a recent uptick in positive measles cases, OCDEL is issuing the following information for providers, including guidance from the Pennsylvania Department of Health.



Do I have to report a suspected or confirmed case of Measles to the Department of Health?

- Yes. 55 Pa. Code § 3270.136(d), § 3280.136(d), and § 3290.136(d) state, A facility person who knows of a communicable disease for which 28 Pa. Code Chapter 27 (relating to communicable and noncommunicable diseases) requires reporting, or who knows of a group expression of an illness which may be of public concern, whether or not it is known to be of a communicable nature, shall report it promptly to the appropriate division of the Department of Health, as specified in 28 Pa. Code Chapter 27, or to a local department of health.

What procedures do I follow for children enrolled in CCW?

- As indicated in your CCW Provider Agreement, the ELRC will pay providers for a maximum of five consecutive days of absence. On the sixth consecutive day of absence, you must report the absences to the ELRC. The ELRC will notify the parent/caretaker that the enrollment for subsidized child care will be suspended until the child returns to care. The provider must report to the ELRC when the child returns to care after a CCW suspension period.
- If a child in your care is enrolled in CCW and needs to be excluded as outlined above, please contact your ELRC immediately so they can promptly suspend CCW to prevent enrolled families from accruing absences related to their medical exclusion.
- Once a CCW case is in a 'suspended' status, payment is not remitted to the provider.
- As a reminder, the ELRC will pay for a maximum of 40 days of absence during the State's fiscal year (July 1 - June 30) for each child.
- This is a cumulative number per child, regardless of provider transfers during the fiscal year. If a child's absences exceed 40 days, the parent/caretaker is responsible to pay the provider for all additional absences. The parent/caretaker is responsible to pay the provider's verified published daily rate for each day of absence starting with the 41st absence. Suspended days and provider closed days are not considered days of absence.
- Children funded through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) are not subject to the 40 days absence limit.

For additional information, please see [the Measles Guidance for Schools and Child Care](#) from the Pennsylvania Department of Health.

How Sugar Contributes to Tooth Decay

Children who frequently consume foods and drinks containing natural and/or added sugars during the day are more likely to develop tooth decay than those who consume them less often. You may not know that many of the foods and drinks you give children contain sugar.

Sugar plays a key role in tooth decay. Many foods, like milk and milk products, fruit, vegetables, grains, and processed and prepared foods, contain sugar.

Bacteria that cause tooth decay break down foods and drinks that contain sugar to form acid. Each time a person consumes foods or drinks containing sugar, acid is in the mouth for 20 to 40 minutes. Children who are fed meals and snacks at scheduled times are at lower risk for developing tooth decay than children who are fed often during the day.

Sugar in foods can be listed by many different names. The best place to check for sugar is the ingredients list on the food label. Look for words like:

- Beet sugar
- Brown sugar
- Cane sugar
- Corn sweeteners
- Corn syrup
- Cane juice
- High fructose corn syrup
- Honey
- Malt syrup
- Maple syrup
- Molasses
- Raw sugar
- White sugar

To prevent tooth decay, it is best to have a schedule for serving meals and snacks to children instead of allowing them to graze throughout the day.

Ingredients: Whole Grain Oats (includes the oat bran), Sugar, Modified Corn Starch, Honey, Brown Sugar Syrup, Salt, Tripotassium Phosphate, Canola and/or Rice Bran Oil, Natural Almond Flavor. Vitamin E (mixed tocopherols) Added to Preserve Freshness.

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.

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

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