

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

Serving Bucks County

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### Region 16 Updates

*Please note that the ELRC offices will be closed on Thursday, June 19th for the Juneteenth federal holiday. Known to some as the country's "[second Independence Day](#)," Juneteenth celebrates the freedom of enslaved people in the United States at the end of the Civil War. For more than 150 years, African American communities across the country have observed this holiday.*



### Welcome New Providers

The Early Learning Resource Center would like to welcome the following new programs to our region! We look forward to working with you. ELRC staff are here to assist with your participation in Child Care Works, Keystone STARS, and to provide you with local resources and referrals.

- Smarties Academy
- Saint Joseph and Saint Robert School
- SMG Clubhouse

### Region 16 Provider Supports

#### Director's Network

Directors and other early childhood educators come together monthly to discuss common issues and share solutions. Come out and network with other ECE professionals to be inspired



with new ideas.

You will also hear updates about Keystone STARS and OCDEL news. Often, certification reps and early intervention staff will join as well.

We encourage new faces and new ideas at the meetings. If you bring someone that has not been to a meeting in six months, you will both be entered in a raffle. Come on out and join the fun, learning, and networking!

Our next meeting will be held via TEAMS, Wednesday, June 18th at 1:00 PM, when we will be diving into “Staff Training, Onboarding and the Interview Process.” Please see the Communities of Practice flyer to register.

Starting this month, we will be alternating our meetings between virtual and in-person. Hope to see you all soon!

- [Communities of Practice -Director](#)

### **Teacher’s Community of Practice**

All Quality Coaches offer short virtual learning sessions for classroom staff. These 30-minute meetings can help staff build their knowledge and confidence in the classroom. This time can be helpful to explore new or effective techniques.

Each month explores a different topic. We will be meeting on June 5th to discuss classroom interactions.

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

### **Quality Coach Community Days and Virtual Office Hours**

Your Quality Coaches are here for you! Community Days are scheduled to assist directors who may have questions, need encouragement, or are looking for new ideas. Coaches will meet you in a friendly and nurturing environment to encourage progress towards your unique goals. Schedule a time to meet with your Keystone STARS Quality Coach 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.

- [Coach Calendar](#)

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## **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.

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## Providers Celebrate Teacher Appreciation Week

During the month of May, many of our childcare programs made it a priority to celebrate and recognize their staff - the many people who provide loving care, learning experiences and joy to the children in their programs. We want to take this opportunity to celebrate with you! We have highlighted some of the very special events that occurred throughout the county in recognition of early childhood professionals. Many thanks go out to the programs that shared their celebrations through pictures and stories. Check out these amazing recognition events!



Alphabet Garden



The Goddard School-  
Farm Lane



Solebury United  
Methodist Children's  
Learning Center

## Rapid Response Team - Tip of the Month

Helping Children Regulate Emotions

Little children can have big emotions. We can help them by teaching them how to name their emotions and how to express themselves. Emotional regulation is a developmental skill where children learn to control their feelings.



[This article](#) names several strategies to help children grow in controlling their emotions including:

1. Labeling their feelings
2. Utilizing visual charts to help identify their feelings.
3. Breathing exercises
4. Mindfulness games
5. Reading books on feelings
6. Using children's artwork
7. Providing a "calm down corner"

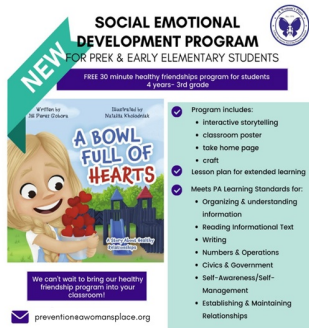
Literacy can play a part in helping children regulate their emotions too. Reading encourages creative thinking and imagination. When reading with a child, it strengthens the bond between the child and the reader and enhances social and emotional development.

Try these tips:

- Read to children as young as infants
- Choose a quiet and distraction-free place to read
- Use rhythmic or rhyming books

- Point out pictures as you are reading
- Talk with toddlers and older children about what is happening in the story and the pictures
- With preschoolers, discuss feeling that come up during the story for the children to become familiar with all feelings

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



## Social Emotional Development Program

The Prevention Education department at A Woman’s Place would like to partner with you by delivering FREE social emotional learning presentations to your organization!

“A Bowl Full of Hearts” is designed to provide children with information and skills for recognizing, building, and maintaining healthy friendships.

We are looking forward to facilitating our interactive 30-minute story time with you! See the [flyer](#) for more information.

## Summer Camp Lesson Plans



The Learning Lamp is offering summer camp lesson plans free until September 4, 2025. There are 12 pre-planned lessons that include schedules, list of required materials, and activities.

They are standards-aligned that make summer camp fun and educational for children. At the same time, it reduces stress for program directors and classroom staff. For more information on the program click on this [flyer](#).

## ELRC Updates

### Children Experiencing Homelessness

As the school year comes to a close, some children may be experiencing housing insecurity. Here are some strategies to help families over the summer months adjust to the changes in routine:



#### Plan for Summer Gaps

- Survey parents to ask about needs or concerns - food, clothing, diapers, formula, shelter/housing, etc.
- Reach out to community partners to determine where to refer families over the summer.

#### Prioritize Enrollment for Families Experiencing Homelessness

- Connect with the local educational agency for referrals of young children experiencing homelessness.
- Ensure that homeless families are prioritized for services per federal guidance.

### Make Your Program Accessible

- Update enrollment forms and housing questionnaires to ask about living situations that may qualify as homeless.
- Translate information about homelessness into languages commonly spoken in your community.

### Support Smooth Transitions to K-12

- Provide warm handoffs to school district homeless education liaisons.
- Share information to help school districts identify children and plan services.

## 2025 ELRC Spring Conference

Thank you to the providers who were able to join us for the Spring ELRC Conference in May. We had over 180 attendees between the 2 conferences at Mohegan Sun and Lehigh University. It was a great day that offered valuable strategies for teachers working with children who display challenging behaviors and holding difficult conversations with staff and caregivers. You can see some photos from the event on our [Facebook Page](#).



Save the date for our Fall ELRC Conference to be held on Indigenous People's Day (October 13, 2025). We encourage you to register staff for this meaningful event. Details coming soon!

## Supports for Spanish Speaking Providers

- Harrisburg Capitol Caravan: Advocates from Early Learning PA and ECE educators are visiting the state capitol weekly and need more educators to join them. You can sign up [here](#). Next dates are June 3, 9 and 26 with First Up. For your time and effort, your ECE program will receive a \$200 Visa gift card through the Early Learning PA Leadership in Action program. If you bring a parent from your program to meet with their legislator, the amount increases to \$250 for the program and for the parent.
- ECE Latinos Roundtable: **June 19, 2025**. (in Spanish) Join the conversation with fellows Hispanic ECE providers by registering [here](#).
- Want to earn incentives for your program? Are you interested in inviting legislators to your program? Contact Rosanna Matos. [Rosanna.matos@firstup.org](mailto:Rosanna.matos@firstup.org)



## Keystone STARS Tip of the Month Planning Visits



Planning Visits with the Quality Coach are an important part of the STARS designation and renewal process. How much do you know about these visits?

### True or False?

Planning visits ensure the program is ready to either maintain their Star

Designation or advance to the next STAR level.

- **TRUE**

The program can wait until a month or two before their designation before having their planning visit.

- **FALSE** - Every facility that is a STAR 2, 3, or 4 will receive an email from their Quality Coach to schedule a planning visit **at least 6 months** prior to your STARS expiration date.

Delays or STARS expiration can occur if the planning process isn't started in a timely manner.

- **TRUE** - It takes time to gather the required evidence and to ensure everything is in place before the STARS expiration date.

My Quality Coach will help my program with the process and assist with questions that arise.

- **TRUE** - It is important to maintain communication with your coach to meet important deadlines.

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## Provider Support Line

Childcare providers with ELRC agreements can now reach out to the Provider Support line. This is a safe space to share any questions, concerns, or gratitude regarding an ELRC experience.



Before reaching out regarding issues, first contact the ELRC to attempt to resolve your concerns. OCDEL supports providers with matters that cannot be resolved directly with the ELRC.

Calls to this direct line to OCDEL are welcomed Monday through Friday, 9:00 A.M. to 3:30 P.M. at 717-346-0042 or 1-844-675-6349.



## PA Farm to School Network

**OPEN HOUSE: PA Farm to School Network September Virtual Open House**

Thursday, June 12, 2025 | 3:00-4:30 P.M.

The PA Farm to School Network (PFSN) is hosting a virtual open house for educators, farmers/growers, school food service directors, early childhood education (ECE) providers, parents and community partners to learn about youth leadership within farm to school. Join in to hear from students and staff of Lankenau Environmental Science Magnet High School as they share their experiences and stories. Learn more and register for the Open House [here](#).

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## 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

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](mailto: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.

### Summer Safety Tips

As the weather heats up, we can ensure a safe and fun summer with these practical tips:



## Sunscreen

- Sunscreen must be provided by the parent and labelled with the child's name. Check for expiration dates too! It should be a broad-spectrum sunscreen of SPF 30 or higher to prevent sunburn.
- Apply at least 15-30 minutes before going outside.

## Outdoor Safety

- Avoid outdoors between the peak hours of 10:00 AM - 4:00 PM. If you do go outside, seek a shady area or invest in shade structures for your playground.
- Use the [Child Care Weather Watch](#) to help decide if it is safe for children to be outside.

## Hydration and Heat Exhaustion Prevention

- Provide frequent water breaks when outside during hot weather
- Make sure water is accessible at all times
- Encourage parents to send their children in light colored clothing

## Free Lead Testing for Drinking Water

The Department of Environmental Protection contracted with Terraphase Engineering to spearhead its [Lead Testing Program](#) for schools and childcare centers across Pennsylvania. This free, voluntary program not only provides lead testing for schools and childcare facilities, but it also includes grant-funded remediations including:

- Up to \$3,000 per hydration station
- Up to \$30,000 per building
- Up to \$100,000 per applicant

Learn more about the initiative [here](#).

The poster features the title "Free LEAD TESTING for DRINKING WATER" in large, bold letters. Below the title is a sub-headline: "Help eliminate lead in drinking water and reduce childhood lead exposure!". The central graphic consists of three circular images: a close-up of a faucet, a young girl drinking from a water bottle, and a boy drinking from a water bottle. Below the images, the text reads: "Testing for Lead in Drinking Water, a federally funded program is NOW providing voluntary drinking water testing and remediation to childcare facilities and schools in PA." It then lists "Eligible lead reduction activities may include:" followed by three bullet points: "Purchase/install hydration stations", "Point-of-use (POU) devices designed to remove lead", and "Or replacement of faucets". To the right, it states: "Recipients may be eligible for reimbursement of up to:" followed by three bullet points: "\$3,000 per hydration station", "\$30,000 per building", and "\$100,000 per applicant." At the bottom, it says "Free Testing & Expert Advice: Our team will train enrolled personnel at qualifying facilities to test drinking water." and "ENROLL TODAY! padeadtestingprogram.org". Logos for Terraphase Engineering and the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection are at the bottom.

## Brush Those Teeth!

Brushing is one of the main ways to keep a child's teeth healthy. [Sesame Workshop](#) is a website with resources, games, and songs to help children learn how to brush their teeth along with their Sesame Street friends.

You can visit the website [here](#).



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 16

Community Services for Children | [elrc16@cscinc.org](mailto:elrc16@cscinc.org) | [www.cscinc.org](http://www.cscinc.org)

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