

Community Services for Children Provider Link Newsletter ~ ELRC Region 11 May 2026

Serving Bradford, Sullivan, Wyoming, Columbia, Luzerne & Montour Counties

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Region 11 Updates



The ELRC offices will be closed on Thursday, May 14th for staff professional development. The offices will also be closed on Monday, May 25th in observance 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 2026.

Congratulations to the provider who has moved to a STAR 2:

- Hazleton YMCA Early Learning

Congratulations to the providers who moved to a STAR 4:

- Berwick Area YMCA
- Little Stars Child Care

congratulations

Region 11 Provider Supports

Director's Network

The Region 11 Director's Network meets monthly to share ideas and resources and to build partnerships in the childcare community. Each meeting will include a Community of Practice for leadership. Topics will focus on strategies for



reducing suspension and expulsion, classroom management, and behavior management through the lens of the director.

We hope you will join us for our next meeting, Thursday, May 28St at 10:00 am for "Making Staff Meetings Meaningful". Click [here](#) for details and to join the discussion.

Quality Coach Monthly Calendar

Print out a copy of the Region 11 Quality Coach Monthly Calendar for a quick reference to all regional support activities. Remember, your Quality Coach has office hours scheduled on the calendar and is available to meet with you and provide any support needed. Click [here](#) to view this month's calendar.

Community Resource Spotlight

SUN Bucks: PA's Summer EBT Program

SUN Bucks is a summer food program that helps families buy groceries for their children when school is out. During the school year, many students receive free or reduced-price meals at school. In the summer, those meals are not available, so SUN Bucks helps fill that gap.

Eligible families receive \$120 for each child on an EBT card that can be used to buy food at grocery stores, farmers markets, and other places that accept EBT. The program is for school-aged children who qualify for free or reduced-price school meals or who receive certain public benefits.

Many families will get SUN Bucks automatically, but some may need to apply. Families can check their eligibility and learn more through Pennsylvania's benefits website. SUN Bucks helps make sure kids have access to healthy food all summer long so they can stay strong, active, and ready for the next school year.

Click on [SUN Bucks](#) for eligibility guidelines, application and other information.

RRT Toolkit Training

ELRC Region 11 Quality Coaches have been leading RRT Toolkit Trainings across the region. Everyone enjoyed the opportunity to network and share experiences. All participating childcare programs received a resource book and USB drive containing social emotional resources for their programs. If you have not already attended one of the trainings, check out the upcoming dates below.



Attendees have shared this feedback:

"Grateful we attended the RRT ToolKit Training — it's always beneficial to be in a room with other providers, talking through practical strategies and realistic situations. It is especially nice to be able to walk away with a tool we can implement immediately. Our staff are already pulling documents from the toolkit to use in their classrooms to help to prevent challenging behaviors."

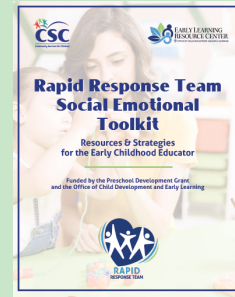
"Thank you for your time and the great resource book. This is definitely going to be the next few staff meetings at all of our locations and the videos will also be part of staff training. Our focus this year is getting back to that INTENTIONAL TEACHER!!"

and this training really will help pull that all together"

"I wanted to drop an email about the RRT- social emotional toolkit. This is AMAZING!!! The information you all put together in this resource is outstanding! My 2 Pre-K teachers that were there yesterday couldn't wait to tell me all about it."

Rapid Response Team Toolkit Free Professional Development

All Region 11 providers are invited to attend the FREE, 2-hour PD, "Rapid Response Team Social Emotional Toolkit." This training will support providers to identify social-emotional skill gaps, and how to apply proactive, relationship-based strategies to prevent challenging behaviors.



Attendees will be given a RRT Toolkit (one per facility) full of resources to use with classroom staff.

These trainings will be offered throughout the Spring 2026. Registration required on the PD Registry.

Thursday, May 7, 2026, 10:30 am - 12:30 pm
Hazleton Integration Project
225 East 4th Street
Hazleton, PA
Event ID 395052

Tuesday, May 12, 2026, 10:30 am - 12:30 pm
ELRC Region11 Office
41 South Main Street
Wilkes-Barre, PA
Event ID 395053

Wednesday, June 10, 2026, 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm
The HUB at Mulberry Mill, Conference Room
160 West 6th Street
Bloomsburg, PA
Event ID 398716

Tuesday, June 23, 2026, 10:30 am - 12:30 pm
ELRC Region11 Office
41 South Main Street
Wilkes-Barre, PA
Event ID 398650

Tuesday, July 28, 2026, 10:30 am - 12:30 pm
ELRC Region11 Office
41 South Main Street
Wilkes-Barre, PA
Event ID 398651

Once a program has attended this training, they along with their program staff, will be invited to attend a monthly Community of Practice. Look for more information to come on these supportive sessions.

Rapid Response Team

****Update for the 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.

ELRC Updates

SAVE THE DATE

ELRC Child Care Provider Conference



Date

October 12, 2026



Time

8:15-4:00



Place



Hilton Scranton

More information coming soon!



Reserva la fecha

Conferencia de Proveedores de ELRC (Español)

 Fecha October 12, 2026	 Hora 8:00-12:30	 Lugar CSC
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Más información próximamente!



CCW Reminders



Closed Days

The subsidy program will pay up to 15 closed days per year from July 1, 2026, to June 30, 2027, if the provider also charges private-pay clients for the closed days listed. The ELRC will not pay a provider for more than 15 closed days for any reason during a fiscal year. PSS users must update their closed days on PSS. Providers who do not use PSS, please complete the [Appendix B](#) indicating any closed days for **July 1, 2026 to June 30, 2027**. Return this form to your provider specialist by Monday, May 11, 2025 at elrc11@cscinc.org.

For further detail, [please read this announcement](#) sent on Thursday, April 24th.

Consider using one of your Closed Days for Staff Professional Development. ELRC's will be holding conference days on Indigenous Peoples' Day, October 12, 2026.

New Enrollments

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 from you. Failure to confirm enrollment and start date will delay payments.

School Age Flip

Watch for the school-age summer enrollment request with instructions to come to you via email soon.

Child Care Staff Retention & Recruitment Grant - FER



All CCSRR grant requests have been paid out to providers.

Policy Reminders:

- Providers must pay retention awards to staff within 45 days of receipt of payment from the ELRC.
- Awards must be paid through payroll with appropriate

taxes withheld.

- Recruitment awards must be spent or returned to the ELRC by June 30th.
- Final Expense Reports will be due by July 31st.

Staff Employment Changes:

- Staff who have given notice when the program receives their payment, must be paid their award.
- Staff who have left employment prior to the receipt of award from the ELRC, provider may move those funds into the recruitment award to pay a sign on bonus for the staff replacement (cannot exceed number of recruitment slots).

Grant Closures:

- Once you have paid all retention and recruitment funds, please complete the Final Expense Report which you can download [here](#). Please complete ALL sections highlighted in yellow. Return the completed expense report to your Quality Coach.
- If you have to return funds because staff have left employment and/or you haven't been able to use the recruitment funds, complete the [Final Expense Report](#) and return the document with your payment to:

*Community Services for Children, Inc
Attn: Elizabeth Stair
1520 Hanover Avenue
Allentown, PA 18109*

National Provider Appreciation Day - May 8th

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](#).



Supports for Spanish Speaking Providers



Thursday, May 21 – 1-2pm: ECE Latinos Roundtable. [Meeting Registration - Zoom](#)

Join an informal conversation with other caregivers and ELRC representatives.
**This meeting is delivered in Spanish.

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. See our Community of Practice listing [here](#).



Certification Podcast

Putting our Eyes on Supervision: It's Essential

In this episode, Ruby Martin, Director of the Bureau of Certification Services, will dive deep into the topic of supervision; sharing scenarios and strategies directly from the field to allow providers to think strategically about preventing serious supervision issues.

[Episode #10: Putting our eyes on Supervision: It's Essential](#)



PENNSYLVANIA
FARM TO SCHOOL
NETWORK

VIRTUAL
OPEN HOUSE!

You're invited to:

- Hear from farm to school practitioners
- Learn about resources & opportunities
- Network and connect with members



Thursday, June 4th, 2026

3-4:30 p.m. ET

Virtually on Zoom >

Register today:

pafarmtoschool.org



Early Childhood Workforce Day June 23, 2026



Join PACCA and Start Strong PA as they visit the capitol to urge lawmakers to recognize the critical need for an early childhood workforce.

See this [flyer](#) for more information.

DID YOU KNOW?

A bedtime routine
without screens
helps kids sleep
better.



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 view their newsletter and download the most recent edition.

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 childcare 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.

For a full list of topics visit their [webpage](#).

ECELS has compiled a master list of emergency preparedness resources for ECE programs. This collection includes practical, evidence-based tools such as

webinars, training modules, printable guides, articles, videos, fillable PDFs, and developmentally appropriate activities for young children, along with resources to share with families. Covering national and regional content, it helps Pennsylvania ECE programs plan, prepare for, and respond effectively to emergencies while supporting the safety of children and staff.

Find All ECELS Resources [here](#).

Dangers of Co-Sleeping

Co-sleeping, particularly bed-sharing, is dangerous because it significantly increases the risk of infant death from accidental suffocation, strangulation, entrapment, or Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS). Adult mattresses, pillows, and bedding can easily suffocate a baby, and sleeping adults may accidentally roll onto or trap an infant.



Why Co-Sleeping (Bed-Sharing) Is Dangerous:

- **Accidental Suffocation & Overlying:** An adult or older child can accidentally roll onto a baby, blocking their airway. Soft mattresses, waterbeds, couches, or heavy blankets can also cause suffocation, as babies cannot move away from these dangers.
- **Positional Asphyxiation:** Babies can become trapped between the mattress and a wall, headboard, or bed frame, or get into a "chin-to-chest" position that compromises their breathing.
- **Overheating:** Sharing a bed with an adult can lead to overheating, which is a known risk factor for SIDS.
- **SIDS Risk:** Studies strongly link bed-sharing with an increased risk of SIDS, particularly for infants under 4 months or those born preterm.

Safe Alternatives:

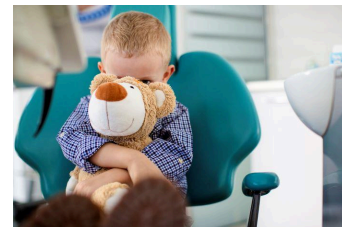
The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends room-sharing without bed-sharing. Having the baby sleep in their own crib or bassinet within the parents' room reduces the risk of SIDS by up to 50%.

Please share this article with your families to encourage room sharing, not bed-sharing.

Source: Cleveland Clinic [How to Safely Co-Sleep \(Not Bed-Share\) With Your Baby](#)

Oral Health for Children with Disabilities

A disability can affect a child's activities and ability to learn. Some children with disabilities need extra health services and support services. Children with disabilities are at higher risk for tooth decay and other oral health problems than children without disabilities.



Oral Health Challenges for Children with Disabilities

- Children with physical disabilities, such as cerebral palsy, may not have the motor skills they need to use a toothbrush safely or to sit still in a dental chair during dental visits.
- Children with communication disorders, such as delayed speech and language development, may not be able to tell their parents that they have a toothache.

- Children who get frequent medical care, such as having many medical visits or hospital stays, may be afraid of the dental office and may not cooperate during visits.
- Children who take medicines with added sugars or that cause dry mouth are at high risk for tooth decay.
- Children on special diets may be at high risk for tooth decay. Foods that are soft or high in starch (e.g., potatoes, corn) stick to children's teeth and give bacteria in the mouth more time to cause tooth decay.

Strategies to Help Improve the Oral Health of Children with Disabilities

- Click [here](#) to learn more about taking care of teeth, selecting the right toothbrush, adapting toothbrushes, addressing challenges, providing good nutrition, encouraging safety, and going to the dentist.
- Give children with disabilities extra support. Make sure children eat food and drink beverages low in sugar and that children's teeth are brushed with fluoridated toothpaste after meals. Children with intellectual disabilities may need extra time for brushing.
- Share this Information with Families

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 11](#)

Community Services for Children | elrc11@cscinc.org | www.cscinc.org

Connect with us



Community Services for Children | 1520 Hanover Ave | Allentown, PA 18109 US

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