

Community Services for Children Provider Link Newsletter ~ ELRC Region 16 August 2026

Serving Bucks County

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Region 16 Updates

Keystone STAR Movements

The following programs have demonstrated their commitment to quality by moving to a higher STAR level from April through June 2026.

- The Learning Experience Doylestown - STAR 2
- Smarties Academy - STAR 4



Region 16 Provider Supports

Director's Network

The Bucks County Directors' Network is a valuable opportunity to stay informed and connected with the early childhood education community. During these meetings, Quality Coaches share updates on STARS, OCDEL initiatives, grants, professional development opportunities, and other important resources. County and state partners also provide announcements, program updates, and information designed to support children, families, and staff. Beyond the updates, The Bucks County Directors' Network meetings offer a chance to build relationships, exchange ideas, and engage in meaningful conversations with peers who understand the unique opportunities and challenges of leading an early childhood program.



If you have not yet attended a Bucks County Directors' Network meeting, we encourage you to join us. Meetings are held monthly and alternate between in-person and virtual formats, making it easy to stay connected and engaged.

August (Virtual): Fact or Fiction? Let's Answer Your Certification & STARS Questions

Are you confident you're interpreting licensing regulations and STARS indicators correctly? Join us for the August virtual Director's Network meeting as we separate fact from fiction, address common misconceptions, and answer frequently asked questions. Leave with practical guidance and greater confidence in applying requirements to your program.

- [ELRC Director Network Invitation](#)

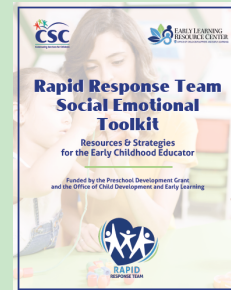
Provider Team Monthly Calendar

Need support? Your Quality Coaches are here to help. Join a Community Day to ask questions, gain new ideas, and connect with peers, or contact your coach directly to schedule a one-on-one meeting for personalized support. Check the Coaches' Calendar for Community Day details and/or coach contact information.

- [Coaches Calendar](#)

Rapid Response Team Toolkit Free Professional Development

All Region 16 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 Summer & Fall 2026. Registration required on the PD Registry.

Tuesday, August 18, 2026, 1:00-3:00 pm
Pennridge Christian Academy
720 Blooming Glen Rd
Blooming Glen, PA 18911
Event ID 403207

Friday, August 28, 2026, 9:00-11:00 A.M.
Sunny Tree House
1100 Second Street Pike
Richboro, PA 18954
Event ID 403257

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.

Community of Practice

Monthly Communities of Practice are available to all program leadership and staff. These 30-minute sessions are held via Microsoft Teams and focus on helping program staff effectively utilize resources to strengthen the social and emotional climate of their classrooms using the Rapid Response Team Social Emotional Toolkit.

Join us this month to discuss how intentional planning can reduce children's challenging behaviors. CoP will be held on August 20th at 1:00 pm or 6:00 pm.

Click [here](#) and scroll down to the Community of Practice chart for the link as well as upcoming sessions!

Partner to Increase Childhood Immunization Rates

Providers are invited to help expand access to childhood immunizations by partnering with BCHIP and Springfield Pharmacy's school-based Vaccines for Children (VFC) clinics. These clinics offer all Pennsylvania-required school vaccines and serve uninsured, underinsured, and insured students, helping remove barriers to vaccination while supporting healthier schools and communities. Contact Rebecca Connor at rconnor@bchip.org or 267-291-7876 to learn how you can get involved.

- [B Chip Vaccine Clinics](#)

ELRC Updates

CCW Reminders

The ELRC financial books have been closed for the fiscal year July 1, 2025 - June 30, 2026. Payments cannot be made on invoices for care prior to July 1.



School Age Flip - Back to School

The ELRC is preparing for the change in schedules for school-age children. The school age flip from full-time to part-time for all eligible school age enrollments, will take place on **Tuesday, September 1st**. This will affect your attendance reporting and payments. Watch for correspondence from the ELRC regarding your School Age Fall enrollments.

The ELRC appreciates your support in communicating changes in schedules for your CCW enrolled families as well. Please remind them to contact their Family

Specialist with any changes to schedules. In addition, please check the August & September invoices and make any necessary corrections to schedules.

Payment Schedule 2026-2027

The CCW Payment schedule for 2026-2027 has been released. Please download a copy and take note of invoice due dates and payment dates.

[2026-2027 Payment Schedule](#)



CCSRR Grant - Final Expense Reports PAST DUE!

All Final Expense Reports must have been returned to your Quality Coach by 7/31. If you have not completed your report, your program is now in non-compliance.

Please reach out to your Quality Coach immediately to avoid noncompliance reporting to OCDEL.

Rapid Response Team Tip of the Month

Making the Most of Waiting Tim

Waiting can be challenging for young children, especially during transitions, mealtimes, or while waiting for a turn. Instead of simply asking children to "wait," keep them engaged with simple activities that make the time enjoyable and purposeful.



Try:

- Finger plays or songs
- "I Spy" games
- Counting objects in the room
- Stretching or movement activities
- Quiet conversation prompts
- Simple breathing exercises
- Rhyme or guessing games

For example, while waiting to wash hands before lunch, children can sing a favorite song, count the friends in line, or look for objects of a certain color. During transitions, try simple conversation starters or guessing games to keep children engaged. These small activities can reduce frustration, support language and social development, and help transitions run more smoothly.



Updating COMPASS

Providers are encouraged to regularly review and update their program details in **Provider Self-Service (PSS)**. Keeping information current, such as contact details, hours of operation, ages served, and program features, ensures families can easily find and connect with a program when searching online.

Why it matters:

- Increase visibility: Accurate listings make it easier for families to discover programs.

- Build trust: Up-to-date information helps families feel confident in reaching out.
- Support informed choices: Families rely on the COMPASS search tool to compare options and find the best fit for their needs.

What providers should check:

- Phone numbers and email addresses
- Operating hours and enrollment availability
- Services offered and ages served
- Program descriptions and special features

Taking a few minutes to review and update information in PSS can make a big difference in connecting with families seeking quality child care. Update information today and help families find an early learning program!

PD Registry App

The new PD Registry App is now available for Apple and Android devices, making it easier than ever for early learning professionals to manage their professional development on the go.



With the app, users can:

- Upload documents directly from their phone camera or files
- Access and manage their PD Registry anytime

The app is free to download in the App Store and Google Play. Designed with Pennsylvania early childhood educators in mind, this new tool helps save time so they can stay focused on what matters most—supporting children and families.

Outdoor Interaction Pilot Program

The Program Quality Assessment team is excited to launch an innovative pilot program exploring the rich educator-child interactions that occur in outdoor learning environments. Early childhood programs are invited to participate, regardless of whether they currently use the CLASS assessment tool. During a scheduled visit, participating programs will receive an additional observation focused on capturing meaningful interactions that naturally occur outdoors.



This pilot is not a new assessment tool and is not intended to evaluate programs or impact CLASS scores or Keystone STARS ratings. Instead, it is an opportunity to gather valuable insights into how curiosity, problem-solving, language development, and child-led discovery unfold beyond the classroom walls. Together, we hope to inspire new conversations about the role of outdoor learning and recognize the powerful teaching and learning that happens every day in the outdoor environment.

Interested programs, please contact Leah Zabari at leazab@pakeys.org.

Announcement ELRC #26-02: Program Using an OCDEL-Approved Alternate Pathways



The Pennsylvania Office of Child Development and Early Learning, Bureau of Policy and Professional Development, has released [**ELRC Announcement #26-02, Requirements for Program Using an OCDEL-Approved Keystone STARS-Alternate Pathways**](#). This Announcement provides information on the Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL) Approved Alternate Pathways in Keystone STARS, including requirements for such programs.

If you are STAR 3 or 4 program who uses one of these alternative pathway methods for designation, please reach out to your Quality Coach to discuss next steps.

Early Bird Registration Now Open: 2026 Early Childhood Education Summit

Early Bird Registration is now open for the 2026 Early Childhood Education Summit, offering attendees a chance to save a spot at Pennsylvania's premier event for early learning professionals.

From October 18-21, 2026, hundreds of educators, program leaders, family child care providers, advocates, and policymakers will gather at The Penn Stater Hotel & Conference Center in State College to learn, connect, and be inspired.

This year's theme, *Building Bright Futures*, recognizes the incredible work done every day to shape children's lives and strengthen communities across Pennsylvania.

Register at www.earlychildhoodsummit.org.

DID YOU KNOW?

Children who receive early childhood education are 25% more likely to graduate high school and four times more likely to complete a college education.

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](#).

Annual Child Care Immunization Survey

The PA Department of Health (DOH) is sending out the **Annual Child Care Immunization Reporting Survey** to all licensed child care providers to meet the immunization reporting requirements outlined in **28 Pa. Code § 27.77 (a)(4) Immunization requirements for children in child care group settings**.

The DOH is asking that all licensed child care providers complete and submit the survey [Annual Child Care Immunization Survey 2026](#) by **August 31, 2026**.

The following resource materials have been provided to help with reviewing immunization records and completing the **survey**:

- Links to childhood immunization schedules from nationally recognized medical associations: **American Academy of Pediatrics, American Academy of Family Physicians, or American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists**

All schedules include the same recommendations regarding childhood vaccinations:

- **Vaccine Identification document**

Immunization Tracking Worksheets

- **PA Child Care Reporting Worksheet Printable (PDF)**
- **DOH Child Care Tracking Worksheet (Excel)**

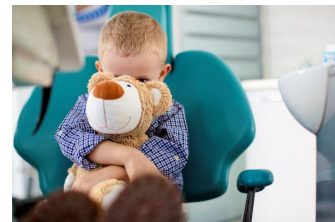
The tracking worksheets do not need to be submitted – they are only a tool to help you organize the information needed to complete the survey.

Please send any questions you may have to RA-DHImmunize@pa.gov.

Oral Health Tip

First Aid for a Child's Oral Injuries

Injuries to the head, face, and mouth are common in young children. Even when adults do their best to keep children safe, oral injuries can happen. Most oral injuries happen when young children are learning to walk. The top front teeth are injured most often. Check out this [flyer](#) and the tips below for more information.



Tips to help you know what to do for common oral injuries:

- Tongue or lip injured. Clean the injured area. Press a clean washcloth on it to stop bleeding. Keep the child's head up and facing forward to prevent choking. Put ice, wrapped in a clean washcloth, on the area to reduce swelling. If bleeding doesn't stop after 30 minutes, the child should be taken to see a dentist or doctor right away. If the dentist or doctor is not available, the child should be taken to the nearest urgent care center.
- Tooth chipped or cracked. Clean the injured area. The child's dentist or an urgent care center should be contacted right away. Have the child rinse with

- water, if possible. If there is bleeding, press a clean washcloth on the gum around the tooth to stop it.
- Tooth knocked out. The child's dentist should be contacted right away. Do not try to put a baby tooth back into the mouth. Clean the injured area. If there is bleeding, have the child bite on the area with a clean washcloth for 15 to 30 minutes to stop it.
 - Tooth knocked loose, moved, or pushed into gum. If a child's tooth has been knocked loose, moved forward or backward, or pushed into the gum, the child's dentist or an urgent care center should be contacted right away. Have the child rinse with water, if possible. Press a clean washcloth on the gum around the tooth to stop bleeding.
 - Toothache. If a child has a toothache, it is likely that the tooth has a cavity. The child needs a dental appointment as soon as possible to find out what the problem is and get treatment.

Article Credit: HeadStart.gov ([Oral Health](#) | [HeadStart.gov](#))

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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