

OCTOBER 2022

REACH

a newsletter for Delaware's Early Childhood Professionals

Dear early childhood educators,

Fall is here! Now that we're all settling into our new routines, let's spend some time thinking through how we are supporting the needs of each and every child and family served. We're going to focus this month on ensuring access in children's learning environments – making sure that we're providing a wide range of learning opportunities to support each child in the program. We'll be sharing resources on social media throughout the month of October.

We also have some exciting updates in this month's issue, including further details about our upcoming podcast and some new opportunities for Delaware's family child care educators. Additionally, you can read a summary from the Department of Education Early Childhood Support team about the next steps for early childhood in Delaware.

Last but not least, make sure to sign up to participate with us during Children's Book Week! We'd love to spend a morning or afternoon at your program reading with your children and sharing books and resources.

With kind regards,

Kristy Sheffler
Deputy Director, DIEEC

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Podcast News

DIEEC LAUNCHES PODCAST SERIES

In last month's REACH, we hinted at something new coming your way this fall. Drumroll.....DIEEC is launching a podcast series to feature conversations with early childhood education professionals.

Called "X, Why, Z: Reflections from Early Childhood Education Professionals," the series will help remind us of "why" we work in early childhood, including the joyful moments that bubble up from caring for and educating young children. We will also be discussing topics that are currently impacting the early childhood community.

The podcast is hosted by our DIEEC staff - Irene Ashe, professional development coordinator and Meg Keating, communications specialist - and includes conversations with various ECE professionals from Delaware and across the country in different roles.

This fall, the series will include guests:

Chrishana Lloyd

Research Scholar, New Jersey

Yvette Sanchez Fuentes

Vice President of National Policy for Start Early

Rhondalin Cannon-Tingle

Family Child Care Educator at Rhonda's Little Angels Daycare and Preschool

Colleen Millman

Early Child Care Educator at Delaware Technical Community College Child Development Center - Georgetown

Sarah Reyes

Early Childhood Administrator at Seeds of Jesus Daycare

Erika Vidal

Family Child Care Educator

The first podcast will drop in late October and will be housed on the DIEEC website. Stay tuned for more details.

October's Focus

ACCESS IN CLASSROOMS

This month, we are highlighting the importance of providing a range of activities and environments for every child. As you know, children learn differently and vary widely in their skills, knowledge, backgrounds, and abilities. There are many ways of providing access to learning experiences based on a child's strengths, preferences, and needs.

We will provide resources and ideas throughout the month in various topic areas, highlighting multiple ways to promote learning and development.

To kick start the month, we've included a video about what one town did to help a young neighbor and her needs. The video also connects nicely to our September theme of belonging.

Be sure to check it out. It will make you smile.



YouTube Video: "Community learns sign language to engage with 2-year-old girl"

Video link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kSCjdyFqq28>

What's New

DIEEC MEETING UPDATE

At September's Delaware Early Childhood Council (DECC) meeting, Caitlin Gleason and John Fisher-Klein from the Delaware Department of Education Early Childhood Support team shared some exciting information about next steps for Delaware.

To achieve the state's vision for early childhood, Delaware will be focusing on the "people" interacting with Delaware's young children. Over the next two years, the state will be using data to guide decisions and planning, putting stakeholders' ideas into place and engaging in continuous improvement cycles, working toward the goal of a simplified early childhood system. Priorities will include simplifying the licensing and quality improvement system, elevating the early care and education profession, and coordinating care and resources for families.

As the first priority, the revision of the early childhood quality improvement system will be resuming this fall. The state revision team will be leading the work, operating on a six-month timeframe. Consistent with legislated requirements, the state will be adopting a single set of quality indicators for licensed early childhood programs in Delaware. The team will review and adjust the key practices and pathways to support each quality indicator and will develop the framework for program profiles and monetary grants for quality improvement.

DIEEC NEWS

Do you want to learn more about DIEEC or have questions about what we do? Check out our new flyer here that overviews our work. Additionally, don't hesitate to contact us at ecinstitute@udel.edu with your questions and ideas.

We are also excited to share new colleagues have joined our DIEEC team. We encourage you to check out the DIEEC website to meet all of our team members. <https://www.dieec.udel.edu/>

CHILDREN'S BOOK WEEK

November 7 through 11

One of our favorite outreach activities is back - Children's Book Week. Don't miss out on this opportunity for one of our volunteers to read to children in your program, and we'll donate the book afterwards. We'll also provide a resource card with fun activities to complement the book. Sign up here ow.ly/1ht350KSRvM to have a reader visit your program.

Family Child Care News

Delaware values family child care! Family child care is a culturally responsive way to provide early care and education for young children, and we are here to support you. Check out the opportunities below.

FAMILY CHILD CARE NETWORKS

DIEEC held two information sessions in New Castle County for those interested in participating in the networks - one in the city of Wilmington and one at our site in Newark. It's not too late to get involved. Networks provide a way for family child care educators and DIEEC staff to work together to enhance a program's quality and help those interested in participating in publicly sponsored programs such as ECAP and Early Head Start. Want to learn more? Contact us at delawarefccnetworks@udel.edu.



From left to right: Tina Thomas, Shaun Mullan-Wright, Doreen Wells, Clarise Brooks and Lynne Portlock



From left to right: Kimalee Brown, Gale Dutton, Marcia Wright-Dorsey, Rebecca Womack, Stephanie Jackson, Macheke Carter (front) and Tina Thomas.

SAVE THE DATE - 1ST STATE FAMILY CHILD CARE CONFERENCE Saturday, November 12, 2022

We're excited to share that DIEEC is hosting the inaugural 1st State Family Child Care Conference this fall. The conference will include professional learning experiences, an opening speaker, vendors, and opportunities to network with your FCC peers.

Registration details are coming soon.

NEW MESSAGE SERVICE AVAILABLE - "WHAT'S UP WEDNESDAY"

Now you can get concise and quick updates to help you stay in the know from DIEEC and other organizations with "What's Up Wednesday," a weekly messaging service we recently started.

FCC educators can receive these messages by email, call, and/or text. If you are not already receiving these updates, sign up by visiting this link and following the prompts:

www.tinyurl.com/DIEECwednesdayupdate

COMMUNITY AND CONVERSATION

Let's have fun together! We want to provide you with an informal opportunity for family child care educators to connect, share ideas, and learn from each other, so we are launching "Community and Conversation."

Each month we will host a themed event in a different county and include a make-and-take activity.

Interested educators can reach out to Meghan Pallante at 302-530-9766 or email at mjulia@udel.edu.