

MARYLAND STATE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

State Early Childhood Advisory Council

Division of Early Childhood

December 20, 2023

PRESENTED BY

Dr. Shayna Cook, Assistant State Superintendent

Welcome and Housekeeping Notes

- All participants will be muted upon joining the webinar.
- Please enter your name, organization or school system in the chat box.
- Participants will be able to ask questions by typing their question(s) in the Q&A box and placing their general comments in the chat box.
- Presenters will stop after their presentations to review and answer questions in the Q&A box.
- All meeting materials will be sent out after the meeting along with the recording of the full webinar.

Meeting Norms

- We will respect everyone's time by starting on time and ending on time.
- Only one conversation at a time. Please refrain from side conversations during the workgroups.
- We will agree to capture off topic items and agree to discuss them later.
- We will agree to focus on positivity and being solution-oriented.
- Ask questions for clarification to help avoid any assumptions.
- We will come empowered to effectively improve outcomes for children and families.



Presentation Outline

1. Welcome, Announcement, and Introduction
2. Systems Migration and Child Care Portals
3. Maryland Head Start Association
4. Maryland Rebuilds Recipient: Tip Top Tots
5. Break
6. Maryland Rebuilds Recipient: Critchlow Adkins Children's Center
7. Revisiting State ECAC Committees, Goals, and Closing



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Welcome, Announcement, and Introduction

Dr. Shayna Cook, Assistant State Superintendent, shares DEC staffing and MSDE organizational updates.

DEC Leadership

- Tara Phillips, Executive Director
- Dr. Nakeisha Savage, Director of Early Learning and Instruction



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Systems Migration and Child Care Portals

Teresa Lewis, Project and System Support Manager and John Lamb, Child Care System Manager, share child care system updates.

Child Care Administrative Tracking System (CCATS)

The migration and enhancement of the licensing and scholarships business processes in the system will allow the agency to implement new initiatives more quickly, increase efficiency for our staff and improve program integrity.

Child Care Scholarship Family Portal

“Expanding access to high-quality, affordable child care in Maryland will provide our children and our families with more opportunities to thrive.” –Governor Wes Moore



**CHILD CARE SCHOLARSHIP
FAMILY PORTAL**

Home

Welcome to the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) Child Care Scholarship Family Portal

Thank you for your interest in applying for a Child Care Scholarship. Early education and care is a critically important support for children, particularly during their younger years.

To get started, please review the Eligibility and Application Requirements below. Select 'Sign In' below to enter your email address and password, or you can register for a new account. Once you are signed in, you will be able to access your existing Child Care Scholarship Application(s), if submitted on the portal and/or submit a new one. If you need support with registering, view our [Learn How to Register](#) guidance.

Sign In

[Register for a New Account](#)

Child Care Scholarship Family Portal Benefits

Procedural Benefits

- One-stop digital platform significantly reduces emailing, faxing or mailing improper documents
- 24-hour access to program benefits
- Improved communication and customer service with automatic notifications of next steps

Parent Benefits

- Efficient system that allows families to apply, submit an interim change or redetermination online
- Easily check eligibility or application status
- Personalized system support available Monday-Friday 8a-5p by CCS Central 2

Provider Benefits

- Simplify payments and invoice history to initiate timely payment
- Enable electronic processing of scholarships
- Improving communication and customer service with automatic notifications of next steps

Child Care Scholarship: Family Portal Data

Family Portal Data
(4/28/2023 – Present)

Applications Submitted and Processed	20,205
Interim Changes Submitted and Processed	4,100
Redeterminations Submitted and Processed	4,437
Portal Accounts Created	50,152

Fast Track Application

On July 7, 2023, The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) announced significant changes to the Child Care Scholarship program to expedite the application process for eligible families with the addition of the Fast Track Application process and the Family Portal.



GET MONEY
for CHILD CARE

New fast track Child Care Scholarship Application process!

Do you live in Maryland? Are you currently working or enrolled in a school or training program?

If so, you may qualify for a Child Care Scholarship!*

 money4childcare.com

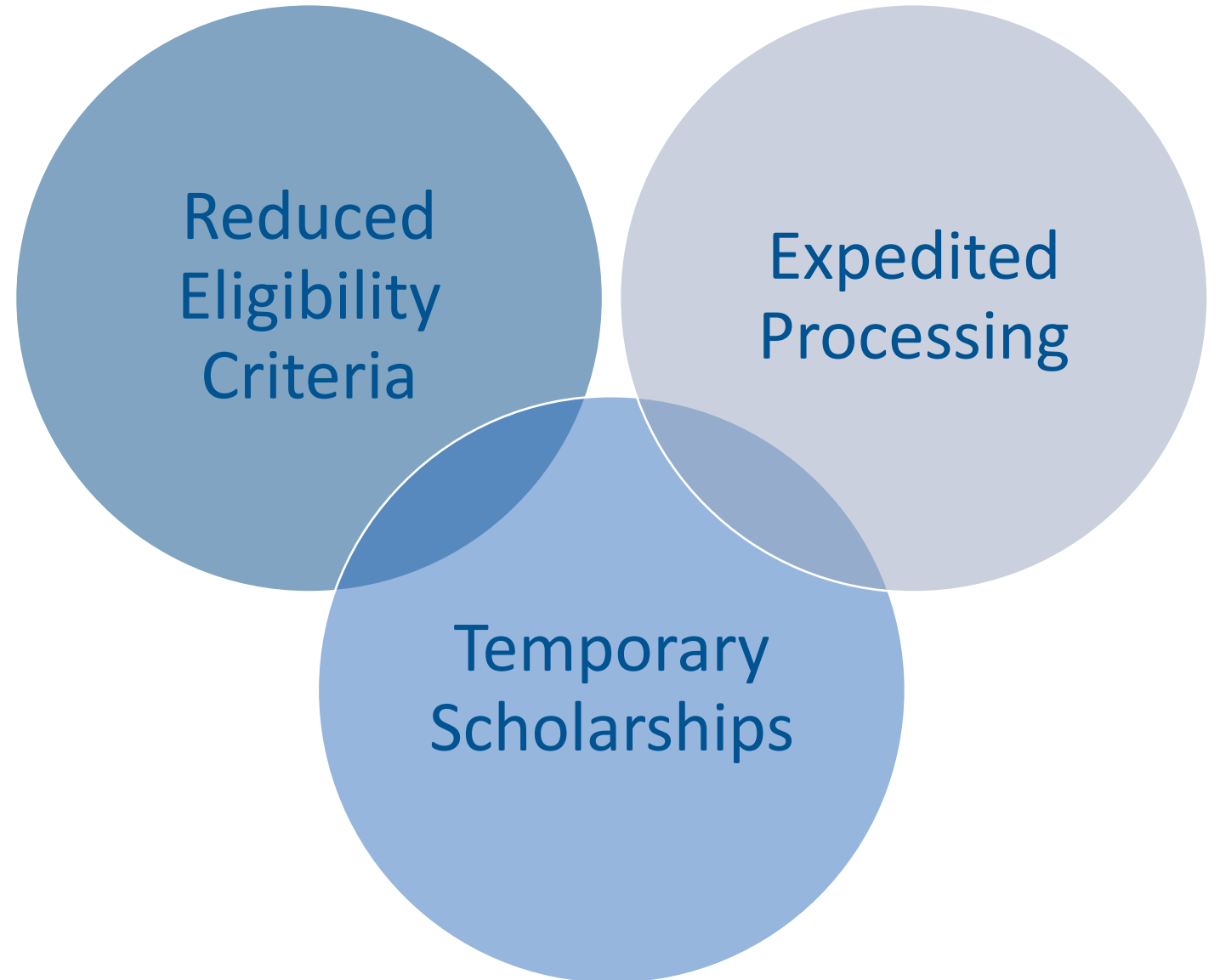
SCAN ME

Now available statewide
*Income requirements apply

MARYLAND STATE DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION
EQUITY AND EXCELLENCE

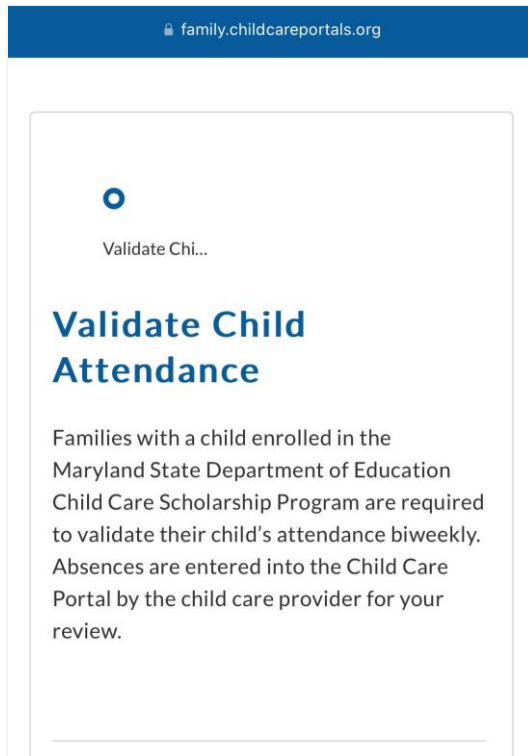
Child Care Scholarship: Fast Track Application

**14,462 Fast Track
processed since its
launch**



Attendance Verification Process

All formal child care providers who are paid with Child Care Development Funds for children using a child care scholarship may be selected to provide Attendance Verification for any service period.



family.childcareportals.org

Validate Chi...

Validate Child Attendance

Families with a child enrolled in the Maryland State Department of Education Child Care Scholarship Program are required to validate their child's attendance biweekly. Absences are entered into the Child Care Portal by the child care provider for your review.

Child Care Scholarship: Attendance Verification

Attendance Verification
ensures program integrity
and accurate payment.


Attendance Verification Process


1. Provider submits the invoice indicating the child(ren)'s attendance
2. Portal notifies the parent that they must validate the attendance
3. Parent may approve or dispute the attendance
4. A dispute initiates notification to the provider to import the signed in/out attendance sheets

Provider Portal Data

“The early childhood years are the most critical period for brain development and set the foundation for lifelong learning and achievement. We must continue to provide early education opportunities that are equitable and accessible for every child.” – State Board President, Clarence C. Crawford

A Maryland State Department of Education Resource

marylandpublicschools.org EN 



CHILD CARE PROVIDER PORTAL

Welcome to the Maryland State Department of Education Child Care Provider Portal

Our goal is to ensure the health, safety and well-being of all children enrolled in licensed, registered, and informal care across Maryland

The Child Care Provider Portal allows providers to renew child care licensure, view invoices and payment history, manage attendance, view scholarship requests, and more. Learn more about the [Maryland State Licensing Branch](#). If you have questions regarding your child care license, contact your [Regional Licensing Office](#). To sign in, click the [Sign In](#) button below. You will need to enter your user ID and password. If you do not have an account, select [Register](#) to create one.

Sign In

[Register for a New Account](#)

Child Care Scholarship: Provider Portal Data

Utilization
(11/20/2023 – Present)

Provider Portal Utilization	3,748
Scholarships Issued	3,424
Scholarships Enrolled	2,102

Invoice
(11/20/2023 – Present)

Invoices Submitted	9,866
Attendance Validated	42,534
Parent Disputes	4,027



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Maryland Head Start Association

Simeon Russell, Executive Officer of MHSA

HEAD START & EARLY HEAD START PROFILE FOR MARYLAND

9,299

FUNDED SLOTS

Head Start Slots	7,329
Early Head Start Slots	1,970

\$121,176,389

FY 22 Federal Funding

\$3,000,000

**FY 22 State Supplemental
Funding**

21

**HEAD START
PROGRAMS**

35

**EARLY HEAD START
PROGRAMS**

2,246

**Head Start &
Early Head Start
Staff Members**

**426 staff members
were current or
former parents.**

2,834

**Head Start & Early
Head Start
Volunteers**

**1,868 volunteers
were current or
former parents.**

581

**Head Start and
Early Head Start
Classrooms**



The Maryland Head Start Association (MHSA) Overview

MHSA seeks to assist Head Start programs through education and training opportunities; advocating on behalf of Head Start children and families across the state of Maryland; and educating the community on the developmental needs of children and families.

Vision

To Strengthen the Maryland Head Start Community by providing advocacy, leadership, and training.

Mission

To create an environment where the Head Start community can continually improve all aspects of school readiness, social-emotional, and economic development. We positively empower, impact, and inspire children, families, and staff to succeed.



MHSA LEADERSHIP

Board of Directors

Board Officers

President

Thomas Dolan

Secretary

Gabrielle Martinez

Vice President

Janelle McGhee

Treasurer

Angel Fields

Board Members

Vernon Wallace

Tresa Hanna

Brandi Greene

Pamela Funderburke

Abbie Buckley

Pam Simperts

Carrie Hahn

Shawan Burke

Executive Officer – Simeon Russell
Operations Manager – Yvonne Bellamy



Three areas of Focus for PY 23-24

- Health and Safety
- Blueprint Implementation
- Workforce Development



Annual Professional Development

- Program Governance & Leadership
- Better Together Institute
- Winter Health Institute
- Family Engagement Conference
- Directors Retreat



Ad Hoc and other Training

- Family Development Credential
- Developing a Parent Leadership Training
- Training during monthly Director Meetings
- Training as needed with MSDE, OHS, and other Partners



Advocacy

- Visits on the Hill with National Head Start Association
- Evening in Annapolis (Feb. 12, 2024)
- Head Start Day in Annapolis (March 2024)
- Testimony to support or oppose legislation
- Work with other stakeholders to support the Early Childhood Community in Maryland



Contact MHSA

Simeon Russell – execdir@md-hsa.org

Yvonne Bellamy – operation_mhsa@md-hsa.org

WWW.MD-HSA.ORG





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Maryland Rebuilds Recipient: Tip Top Tots (T.T.T.)

Khadijah Robaina, Director

About Us



T.T.T. began its in-house apprenticeship program in 2021 to maintain staff in its child care centers. We wanted to address the lack of qualified applicants and high teacher turnover rates in the child care field. Therefore, we decided to create this program to get our staff trained and highly-qualified and reward them for their commitment to the organization. Because of this, we have been able to reduce teacher turnover in our centers and increase staff qualifications. Our teachers who started as aides have become lead teachers in our program because of the opportunities the program created. They have also been able to earn higher pay, contributing to the boost in employee morale.

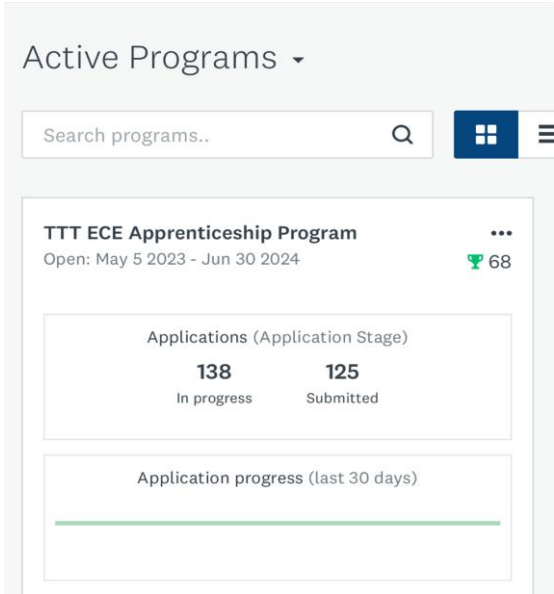
Our Program

Our program is designed to help aspiring and current early childhood educators become trained and certified lead teachers and administrators in early childhood centers. We enroll participants in our cohort program and match them with a mentor. Participants will have the option to complete a child development associate specializing in infant/toddler, preschool, or family child care or enroll in an Early Childhood Associate degree program. While in the program, participants will receive a computer, Wi-Fi hotspot, and a monthly stipend.



Participants

Applicants



Accepted

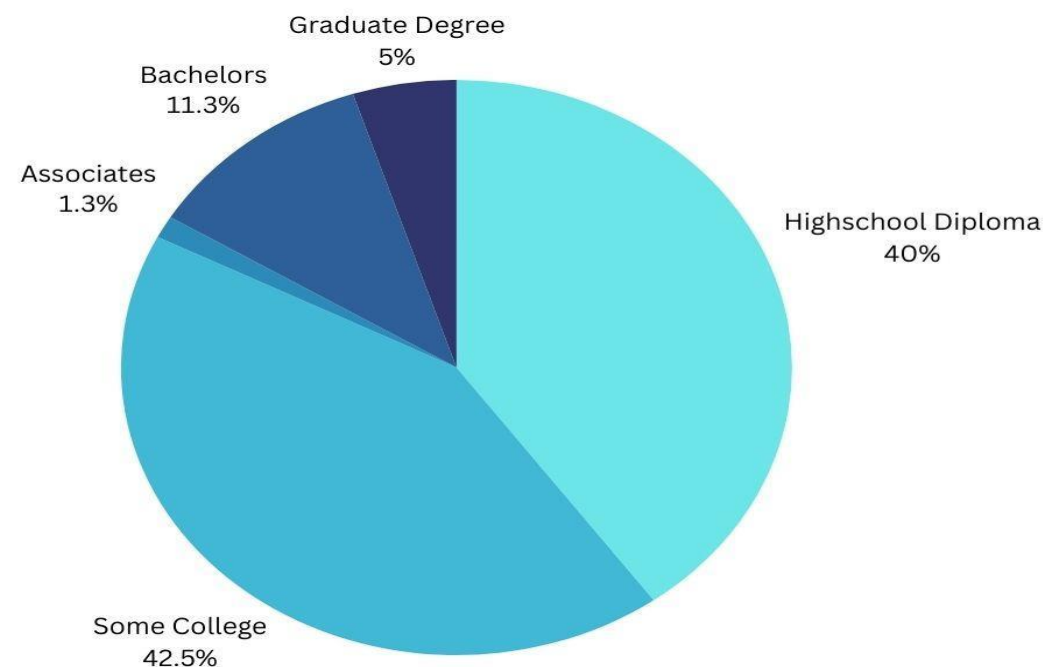
Mentors: 7
Associate's: 20
June CDA cohort: 35
August CDA cohort: 15
September CDA cohort: 11

Where are they located?

- Anne Arundel
- Baltimore
- Baltimore City
- Caroline
- Charles
- Frederick
- Harford
- Howard
- Kent
- Montgomery
- Prince George's
- Queen Anne's
- Worcester

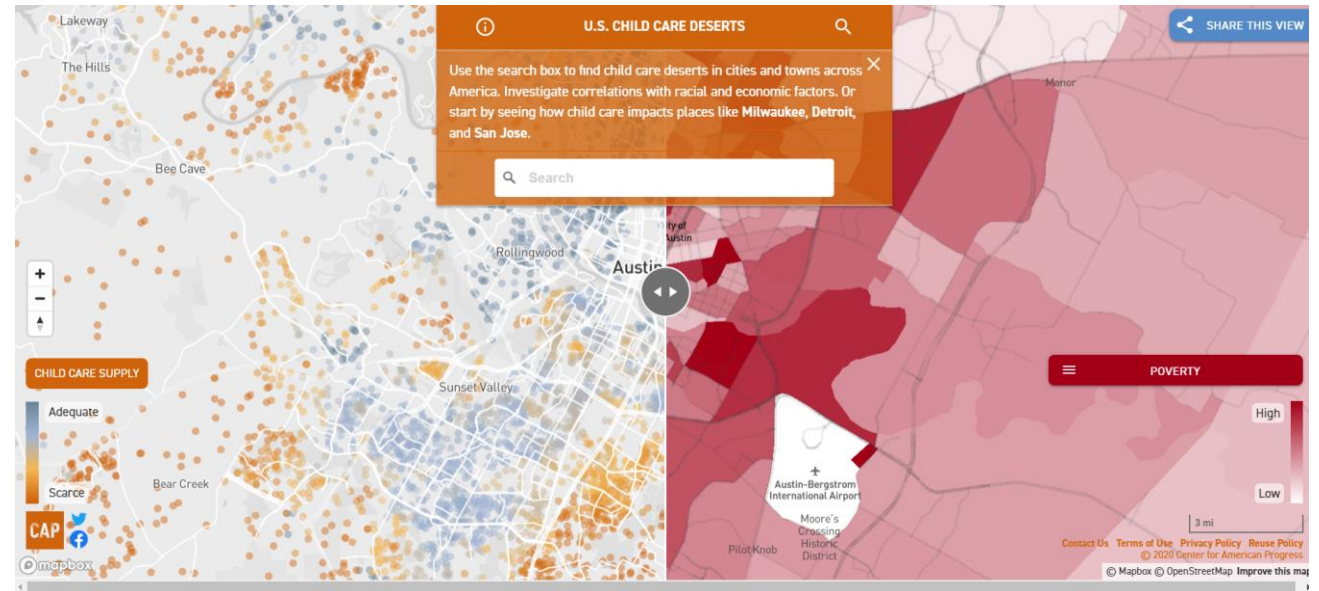
Education Level of participants

Many of our participants had prior experience working in early childhood. However, majority have not been specifically in early childhood education. There were three participants who had degrees in elementary or early childhood education.



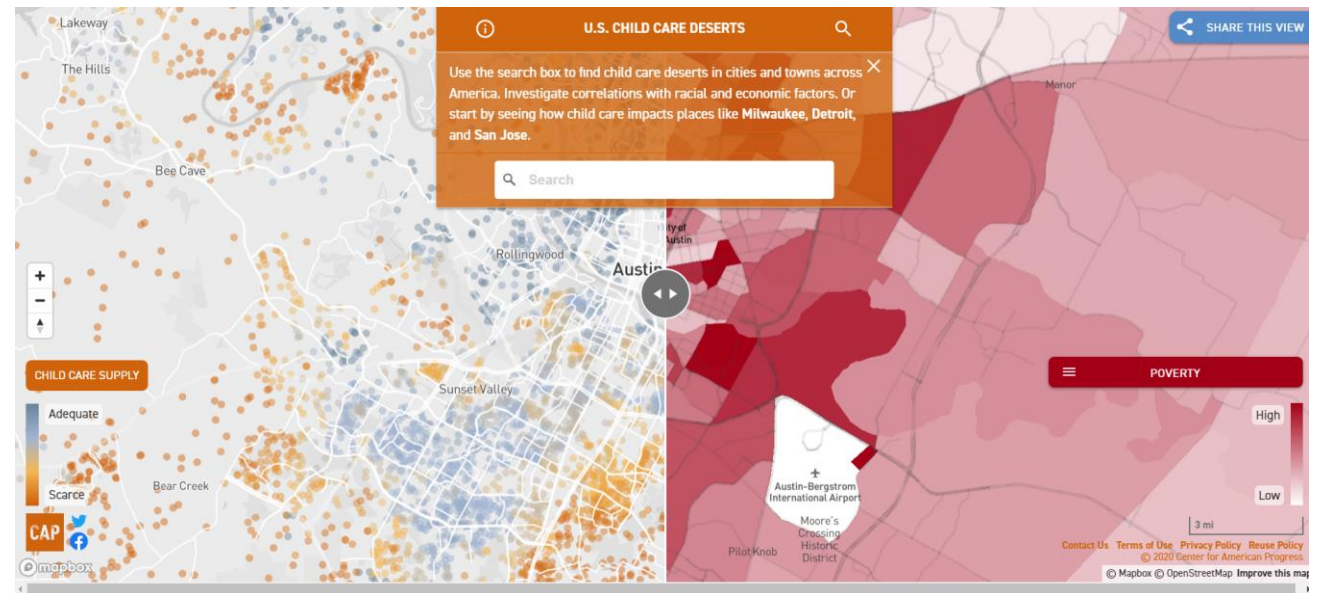
What makes us stand out? “Monthly Stipends!”

- Participants receive \$1,000 or \$500 monthly stipends based on the area of the child care center the mentee’s work.
- We used [Childcaredeserts.org](https://childcaredeserts.org) alongside google maps to determine if the mentee worked in an underserved area.
- Those who did work in those areas received the \$1,000 stipend.
- All Others received the \$500 stipend.
- Mentees are required to remain in contact with their assigned mentors and meet deadlines in order to continue receiving stipends.



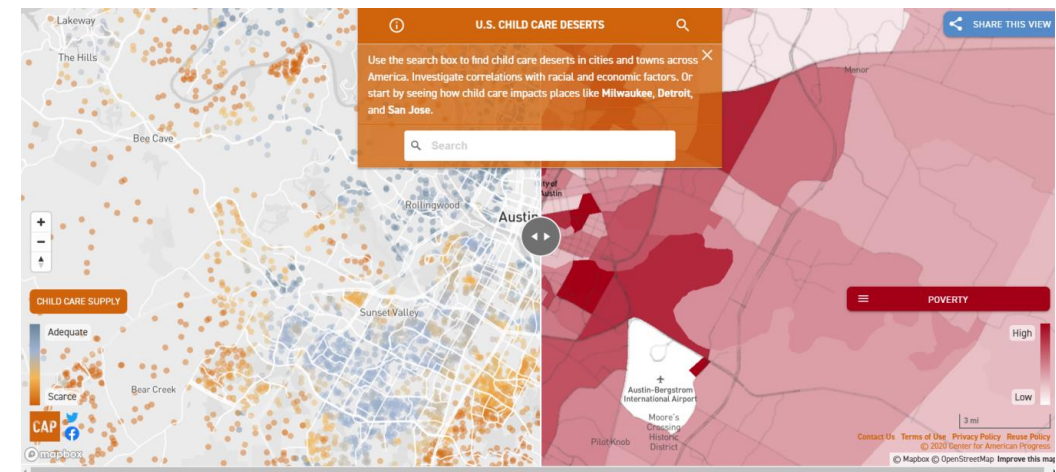
How were stipend amounts determined? (1 of 2)

- While going through the zip codes it became difficult to judge stipend amounts using the poverty level side because there are quite a few areas in Maryland that showed high poverty areas, but there was still adequate child care in the area.
- We also saw that there were plenty where the poverty level was not high, but there also was not adequate child care.



How were stipend amounts determined? (2 of 2)

The child care supply side is ultimately how we made the decision. The \$1,000 stipends went to those whose areas were mostly orange meaning that there is not enough child care for that area. The \$500 stipends went to those whose area were mostly grey or blank. We went through all of the provided zip codes. Those that were hard to tell, such as the different Baltimore zip codes, we used the Satellite/3d street view of Google Maps and compared both maps down to the street level of the address provided. This allowed us to be as accurate as possible to determine the location of their child care center. The websites were great tools and provided us an unbiased way to measure who got which amount in the program.



Program Glows

Program success!

- Participation
- Marketing
- First class of graduates
- Effective mentor program (consistent monthly meetings)
- Ability to track coursework progress
- Mentor accountability

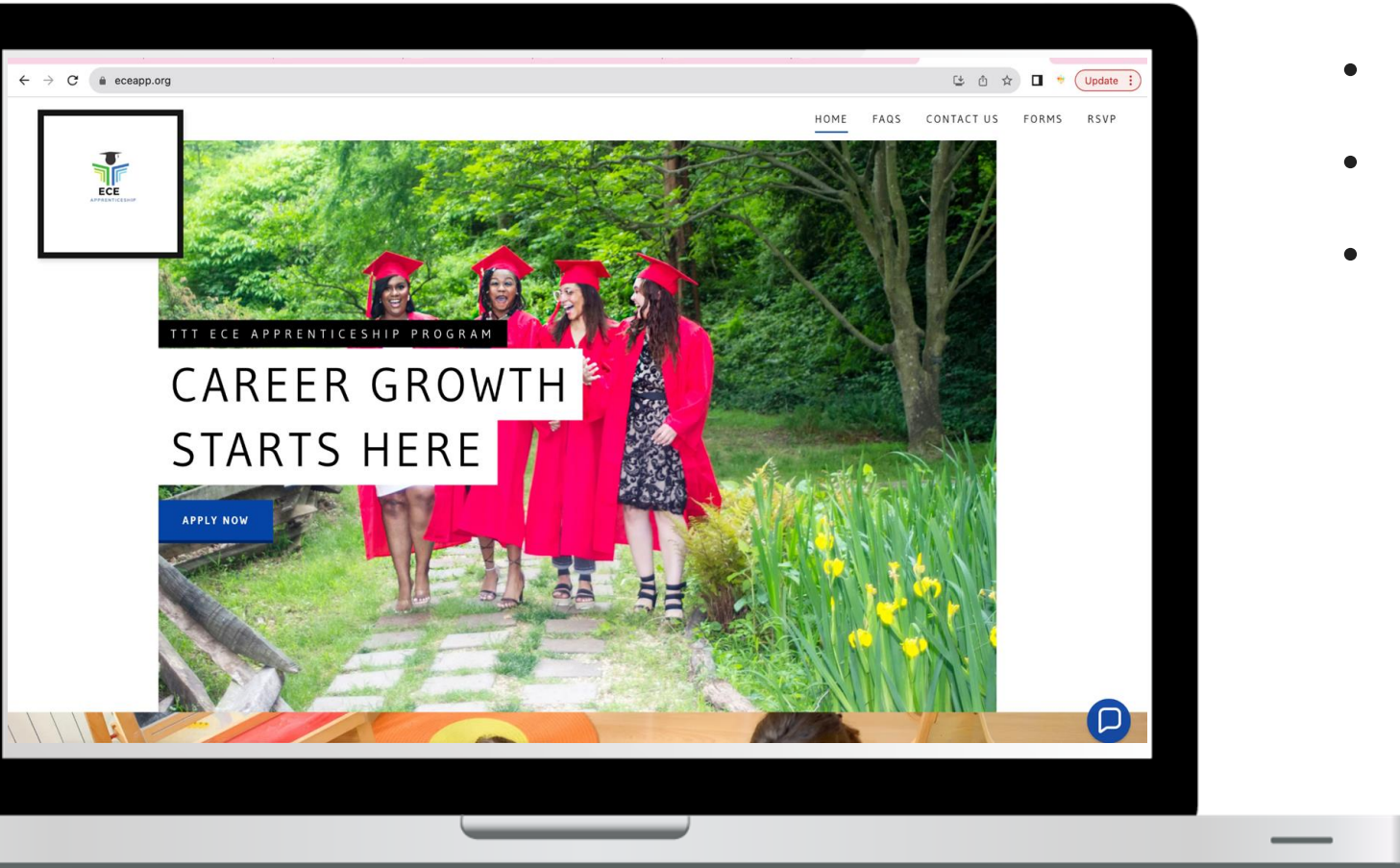


Program Grows

- Change stipends to be earned for completing program milestones
- First-time grant awardees
- Funding challenges
- Additional administration for the workload

Upcoming events

- Virtual vision board party
- Spring in-person work session
- Graduation 6/29/2024 (Location TBD)



Contact Us

Khadijah Robaina, Program Director

krobaina@eceapp.org

Orlando Robaina, Finance Officer

orobaina@eceapp.org



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BREAK



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Maryland Rebuilds Recipient: Critchlow Adkins Children's Center

Cristy Morrell, Executive Director

Critchlow Adkins Children's Centers Overview

- Established in 1970 (originally called Easton Day Care)
- Five Sites in Talbot County, serving families from across the Mid-Shore
- All Sites are Accredited and EXCELS Level 5
- 47% of families receive tuition assistance
- Focus on educational enrichment: STEAM, Literacy



“Children Study Their World” Curriculum

Critchlow Adkins Children's Centers' Preschool Site in Easton was chosen to pilot the “Children Study Their World” Curriculum. This semester, several other Critchlow preschool programs began implementing the curriculum.

Three CSW Projects Completed This Semester

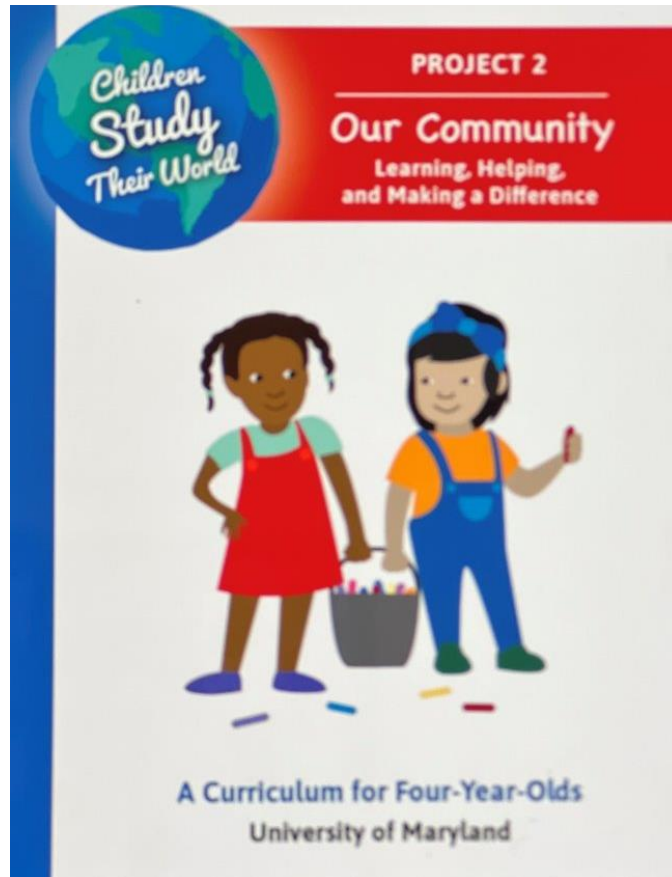


Project One: Busy Bodies

Discovering our bodies, learning about organs

Among other activities, students created drawings of themselves depicting where their organs are located.

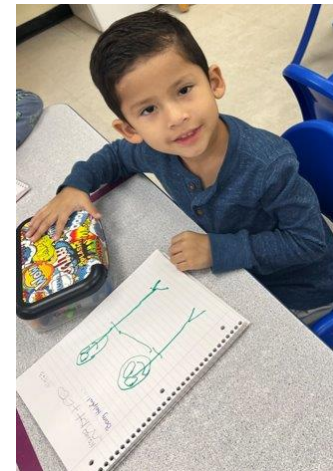
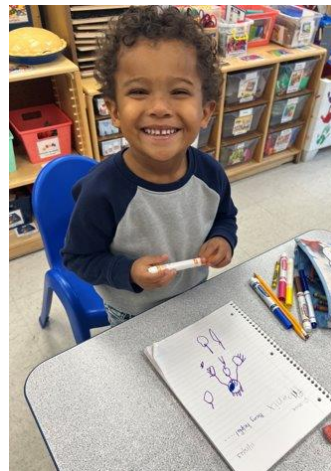


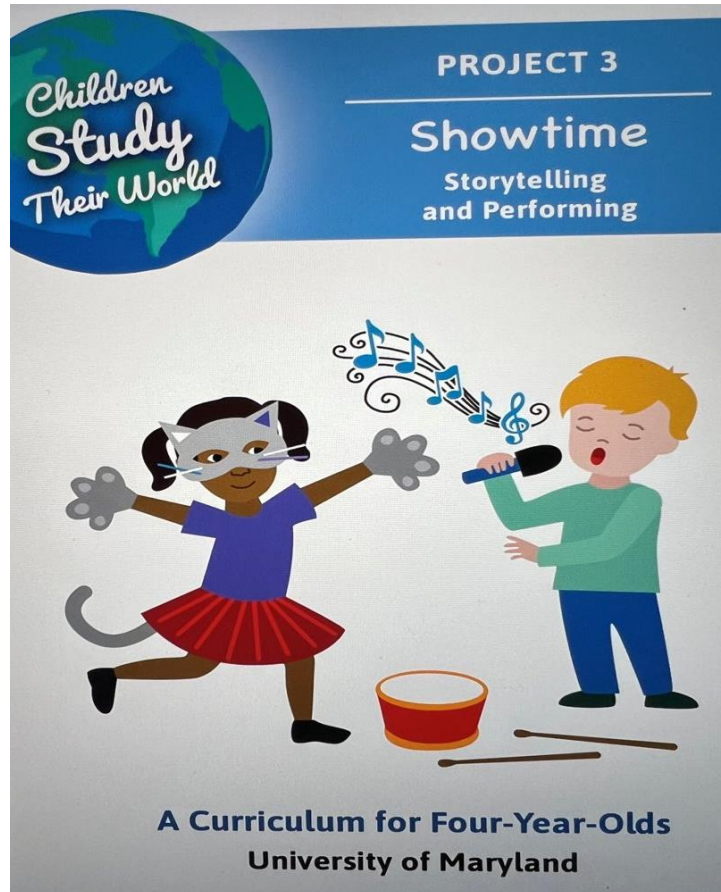


Project Two: Our Community

Learning about community helpers, how to be a good citizen

Students brainstormed ways to help their community and participated in a project to clean up their playground.

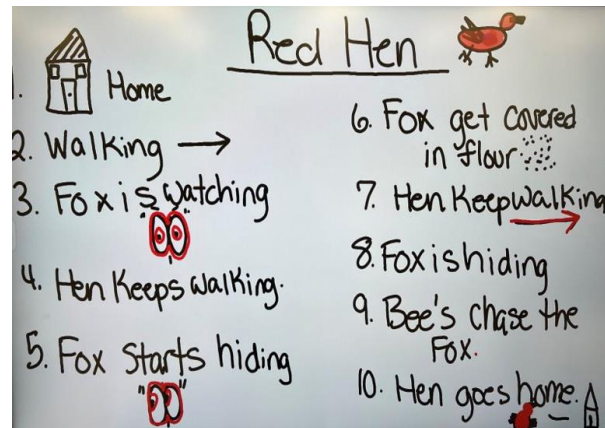




Project Three: Showtime

Learning about storytelling and performing

Students created and performed the story of the
“Little Red Hen”



Enrichment Programming

All children at Critchlow Adkins Children's Centers participated in hands-on learning through fun, innovative, and educational enrichment activities. In addition, preschoolers participate in programming that encourages early childhood literacy success.

- STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, Math)
- Literacy Development

STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, Math)



Community Partnerships

Critchlow Adkins Children's Centers leverages dozens of community partnerships to provide additional learning experiences and services for the children in our programs.

Community Partnerships (1 of 3)



**BAY HUNDRED YOUTH
TASK FORCE**



**CAREPACKS OF
TALBOT COUNTY**



**Eastern Shore
Speech Therapy**
speech and language therapist

**ENVIRONMENTAL
CONCERN**



Community Partnerships (2 of 3)



**JUDY AMDUR
MUSIC**



**ORAL HEALTH
DEPARTMENT**

**PICKERING CREEK
AUDUBON CENTER**

**POLICE
DEPARTMENTS**



**TALBOT COUNTY
HEALTH DEPARTMENT**

**TALBOT CO. INFANTS
& TODDLERS**



Community Partnerships (3 of 3)



**TALBOT CO.
CHILDCARE**



UNIVERSITY OF
MARYLAND
EXTENSION



Discovery Opportunities for Other Child Care Centers

As part of our Maryland Rebuilds Grant, our Easton Preschool Site was named a Center of Excellence by the Maryland State Department of Education. We are inviting other regional child care centers to join us for discovery sessions where they can learn about the EXCELS and Accreditation processes, see Critchlow teachers in action, explore our classrooms, and take actionable ideas back to implement at their centers.

Center of Excellence



Critchlow Adkins Children's Centers' Easton Preschool Site has been named a Maryland State Department of Education

Center Of
EXCELLENCE

Critchlow is hosting an informational session at the Preschool where you can discover helpful hints to take back to *your* center!

**JOIN US ON THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 16TH FROM 6:00 TO 7:00 PM FOR
DINNER & DISCOVERY**

- ✓ Enjoy Dinner from Olive Garden
- ✓ Take a Tour of the Site
- ✓ Learn About EXCELS & Accreditation
- ✓ Giveaways For Your Center
- ✓ Discuss the Importance of Forming Community Partnerships

Sessions will take place at 11 Magnolia Street in Easton, MD

RSVP to Liz Connelly

📞 410-822-8061

✉ lconnelly@cacckids.org



Our Preschool Site in Easton has been named a **Center of Excellence**

- We are opening the Site to other local and regional child care providers
- Lunch and Learn or Dine and Discovery opportunities
- Tour and explanation of how our classrooms are set up
- Overview of the Children Study Their World curriculum
- Early literacy opportunities: Raising a Reader, Imagination Library, Dialogic Readers, VIOLETS
- Free Giveaways

Importance of EXCELS/Accreditation/Partnerships



Many of our partners present or provide information for our discovery session attendees

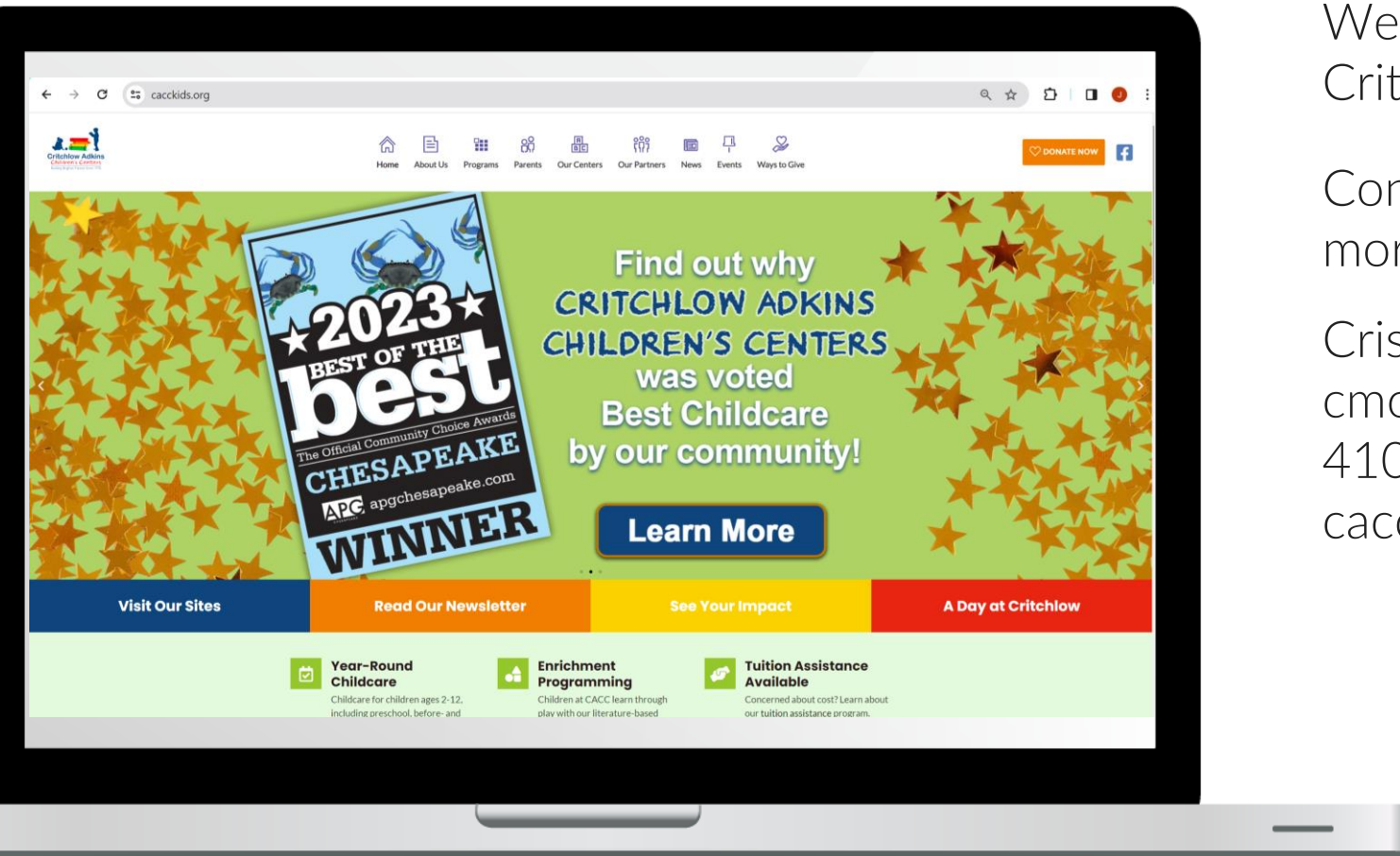
- Judy Center – help with challenging children, assistance purchasing materials for accreditation
- Public School System – Raising a Reader, VIOLETS, KRA tracking, general support, training & resources
- Eastern Shore Higher Education Center – Early Childhood Coach
- EXCELS – Tips to improve program each year, available for help and guidance
- Accreditation – Ultimate goal

Learn More About Critchlow Adkins Children's Centers

We invite you to learn more about Critchlow Adkins by visiting cacckids.org.

Contact us to set up a tour of one or more of our facilities:

Cristy Morrell, Executive Director
cmorrell@cacckids.org
410-822-8061
cacckids.org





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Revisiting State ECAC Committees, Goals, and Closing

Dr. Shayna Cook, Assistant State Superintendent

State Early Childhood Advisory Council Priorities 2019

Communication / Public Awareness (Priority 1)

Objectives for this priority are:

- To update and develop communication policies and procedures to ensure effective communication with local jurisdictions as well as effective interdepartmental communication. This will include a plan for the use of social media and SMS services.
- To develop a public awareness campaign to educate the community and reinforce the importance of early childhood education. This public awareness campaign will serve as an “umbrella campaign” that will support the efforts of the local councils and link the community to effective and reliable resources.

https://earlychildhood.marylandpublicschools.org/system/files/filedepot/23/state_early_childhood_advisory_council_priorities_2019.pdf

State Early Childhood Advisory Council Priorities 2019

Workforce Development (Priority 2)

Objectives for this priority are:

- Increase capacity for behavioral health consultation to child care, home visiting, pre-kindergarten, Early Head Start and other early childhood programs, including kindergarten, and Head Start.
- Increase capacity for behavioral health consultation to pediatric providers through Baltimore Health Integration in primary Pediatric Care. (Lead – Health Department)
- Establish behavioral health consultation to maternal health providers with focus on pregnant and postpartum women. (Lead – Health Department) ☐ Convene collaborative State and Local implementation teams to establish and sustain systemic change to improve outcomes for infants, toddlers, children, and youth with disabilities and their families. (Lead - Special Education/Early Intervention)

https://earlychildhood.marylandpublicschools.org/system/files/filedepot/23/state_early_childhood_advisory_council_priorities_2019.pdf

State Early Childhood Advisory Council Priorities 2019

To support these initiatives, the state will need to review its training component and ensure that it has the capacity to support all early education and care providers.

Objectives for this work are: To develop effective strategies that addresses the use of technology in the classroom and in early education and care programs as well as family engagement and challenging behaviors. To successfully address the latter, strategies should consider training or coaching models that are also inclusive of communication skills, relationship building, cultural competencies, and trauma informed care.

Birth-8 (Priority 3): We will be asking our State Early Childhood Advisory Council members for input and feedback as we begin our work this fall. Education Counsel, a non-profit educational consulting firm, has invited Maryland to participate with Connecticut, Delaware, and Mississippi in a multi-state workgroup as our states begin to implement the Birth to 8 opportunities that are in our new ESSA plan. They will be supporting us with evidenced based ideas in order to expand opportunities and improve outcomes for all students from birth through age 21.

https://earlychildhood.marylandpublicschools.org/system/files/filedepot/23/state_early_childhood_advisory_council_priorities_2019.pdf

2024 State ECAC Meetings

- In January 2024, MSDE will share the upcoming State ECAC Meeting dates for the calendar year.
- In our first meeting in the 2024, the State ECAC will plan standing meeting for the working committees.