



# PARTNERS

FALL 2017 / Maryland State Department of Education / Division of Early Childhood Development

## Flu Season: Guidance for Family Child Care Homes, Child Care Centers, and Schools



### MARYLAND Department of Health



The 2017-2018 influenza (flu) season is underway, and the Maryland Department of Health (MDH) urges child care centers, family child care homes and schools to take precautions to protect children from seasonal flu, as well as a type of flu called H3N2v variant.

In September, Maryland health officials identified the H3N2v variant flu virus in people who had close contact with pigs at several Maryland fairs. Additionally, the Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA) identified this same virus in pigs exhibited at the fairs.

Flu is an infection caused by the influenza virus which can affect people and other animals, including pigs and birds.

Flu viruses that normally circulate in pigs are called "variant" viruses when they infect humans. Symptoms of H3N2v variant flu are the same as seasonal flu and include fever and respiratory symptoms, such as sore throat and cough. The treatment recommendations for H3N2v variant flu are the same as for seasonal flu.

While the Maryland fair season has finished, there are still many situations where children could potentially be exposed to pigs, such as during field trips to farms, petting zoos, etc. It is important for school staff and child care providers to be aware of current health recommendations for interaction with pigs and other animals.

#### To help minimize the risk of children contracting variant flu, MDH recommends:

**Help prevent the spread of flu between pigs and people. Anyone who is at high risk of serious flu complications planning to attend a setting where pigs will be present should avoid pigs and swine barns. This includes:**

- Children younger than 5 years
- People 65 years and older
- Pregnant women
- People with certain long-term health conditions, like asthma and other lung disease, diabetes, heart disease, weakened immune systems, and neurological or neurodevelopmental conditions.

#### For those who are not at high risk of serious flu complications, recommendations include:

- Don't take toys, pacifiers, cups, baby bottles, strollers, or similar items into pig areas.
- Avoid close contact with pigs that look or act ill.

- Take protective measures if you must come in contact with pigs that are known or suspected to be sick. This includes minimizing contact and wearing personal protective equipment like protective clothing, gloves and masks that cover your mouth and nose when contact is required.
- To further reduce the risk of infection, minimize contact in the pig barn and arenas exposure.
- If pig exposure is inevitable, wash your hands often with soap and running water before and after exposure to pigs. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub.

**To learn about identifying suspected cases of H3N2v variant flu virus in children and how to help slow the spread of all flu viruses visit <https://phpa.health.maryland.gov/Pages/variant-influenza.aspx>**



#### Federal fingerprinting system is now live.

The long-awaited federal rap-back system is live and taking prints!

<http://earlychildhood.marylandpublicschools.org/fingerprinting>

# The Basics for Health & Safety Training in Maryland

## Childcare Training



Best practices and standards for health and safety are the foundation of quality child care. Meeting the basic health and safety needs of all children sets the stage for positive child outcomes. The Basic Health and Safety Training provides an overview of the basic health and safety requirements and best practices in nine of the topic areas outlined in the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) Reauthorization of 2015.

■ Completing the Basic Health and Safety Training is a federal requirement. Providers and those in child care environments in every state are required to take training.

■ The regulation goes into effect on July 1, 2018. All providers should have a valid certificate of completion for Basic Health and Safety Training by that date to be compliant with federal and state requirements.

■ The free online Basic Health and Safety Training hosted by MSDE runs in cohorts. There is only one course per month and registration is required.

■ To grant a valid certificate of completion for three (3) hours of training, it is expected that a participant spend at least 3.0 hours in the training environment. The total time to play the videos is equivalent to 3 hours. Those completing the training in less than

3 hours have not viewed each required video. The grades and score of participants completing the training in less than 3 hours will be cleared and will be required to complete the entire training again. Blackboard reports when and how long each participant is in the training environment, as well as how long was spent completing the Knowledge Check.

■ MSDE does not keep copies of participant certificates. To receive a new certificate, participants must complete the course again. We recommend printing multiple copies of a certificate.

Register for and get all the details on the Basic Health and Safety Training administered by MSDE at <http://earlychildhood.marylandpublicschools.org/basic-health-safety-training>.

## Subsidy **MSDE News** Subsidy *Something to Think About...*



**Did you know** that published Maryland EXCELS child care providers at a Level 3, 4, or 5 earn 10% to 44% higher in Subsidy reimbursement? If you already accept children whose parents are eligible to receive Child Care Subsidy, why not find out what it takes to get paid extra! Last year, one provider earned in excess of \$40,000 above her subsidy payment amounts. Like her, you too could work with your EXCELS **Quality Assurance Specialist** to complete the steps required to provide higher quality early learning and care experiences to children. **The extra payment may be closer than you think!**

If you have considered accepting Child Care Subsidy vouchers, but are uncertain, please consider the following:

Parents receiving Child Care Subsidy are just like other parents. They work, and attend school or training within our communities;

Children authorized to receive Child Care Subsidy, will arrive to the same classrooms as children from families not eligible for subsidy. Thus, you can play a vital role in making sure all children arrive at school equally ready to learn; and

Child care subsidy payments are made to you on a regular basis, and with your opportunity to earn the additional EXCELS payments, these funds can help with operational costs.

**Your EXCELS Quality Assurance Specialist is ready to help, call today! 410-549-6494.**

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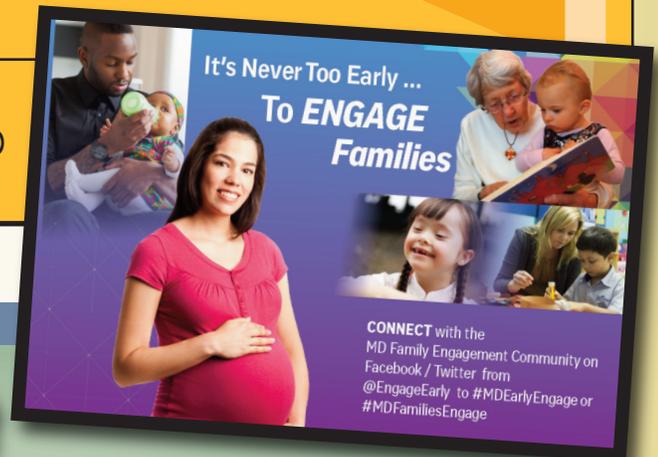
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# Child Care Subsidy has a New Email Address!

Effective July 31st, any email addressed to @xerox will no longer work.  
Please use the contact information and methods below:

	Invoices	Signed Vouchers	Credential Applications
<b>FAX</b>	<b>410.229.0010</b>	<b>410.229.0053</b>	<b>410.229.0145</b>

<b>E-mail</b>	<a href="mailto:mdccsppinvoices@conduent.com">mdccsppinvoices@conduent.com</a> <a href="mailto:ccscentral@conduent.com">ccscentral@conduent.com</a> <a href="mailto:ccccredential@conduent.com">ccccredential@conduent.com</a>		
<b>Mail</b>	PO Box 17543 Baltimore, MD 21297	PO Box 17015 Baltimore, MD 21297	PO Box 598 Baltimore, MD 21203



## Interested in the latest Family Engagement news?

**Get it delivered conveniently to your inbox!**

The newly launched Toolkit **"In Action"** E-Newsletter provides support for early childhood educators and providers as they use the Toolkit to implement the goals of the **Early Childhood Family Engagement Framework**: Maryland's Vision for Engaging Families with Young Children!

[Click here](#) to subscribe to The Toolkit **"In Action"** e-newsletter.

# Credentialing



# Branch Updates

Child Care Central  
PO Box 598, Baltimore, MD 21203  
Phone: 1.866.243.8796  
Fax: 410.229.0145

**Do not mail your credential program application packet to MSDE.**

Applications received at the Maryland State Department of Education for the Maryland Child Care Credentialing program will be returned.

We are still receiving credentialing applications at MSDE monthly. These applications are returned to sender immediately upon receipt.

**Mail or fax your Maryland Child Care Credentialing program application to Child Care Central.**

NEW

## Maryland Child Care Credentialing Program Application Is Available

We have a **revised application**. You will notice that the fax number is now on the upper left hand side of the application and the revised date is August 2017.

**Child Care Central will no longer accept the old version of the application as of January 1, 2018. Note: When you call IVR, please provide your personal phone number and not your center phone number.**

## Maryland Child Care Credentialing Program FAQs Answered

### When should I contact the Comptroller's Office?

Checks are issued through the Comptroller's Office. You may contact the Comptroller's Office at 410-260-7815 if you did not receive your achievement bonus check 4 – 6 weeks after receiving your award letter and certificate.

### How do I qualify for the alternative pathway to Administrator Level 4 if I am currently credentialed at Staff Level 6?

Providers must meet the requirement for Staff Level 6 option 1, including credit coursework in "Administration of Child Care Program" and completion of a 45 clock hour training in the area of "Mentoring and Coaching".

### What are the related Coursework for Administrator Credential 3 and 4?

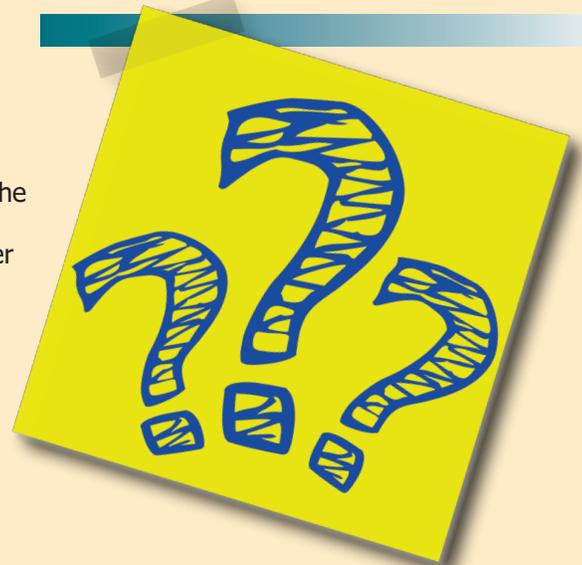
Related coursework may include but not be limited to the following:  
Accounting ■ Finance ■ Economics ■ Human Resources ■ Marketing

### What type of documents should I submit for a transition plan?

Submit a letter from your director with supporting documents.

### What do I need to submit to update/re-instate an expired Credential?

Submit the required number of training and professional activities for the most current level. Trainings and PAUs must be within 12 months of the applications date.





# Congrats Graduates

**The Office of Child Care - Credentialing Branch** congratulates our 2017 Graduates! 36 Providers graduated with an Associate's degree and 13 Providers with a Bachelor's degree. Tuition, books, and college fees were paid for by the Child Care Career and Professional Development Fund.

## FY17 Graduates from Community College

### Anne Arundel Community College

Tina Brown-Evans  
Heather Dubois  
Wendy Farley

### Carroll Community College

Julie Hild  
Melissa Evans  
Maria Powers

### Chesapeake College

Deborah Batson  
Kesha Batson  
Laurie Davis  
Heather Hutson

### College of Southern Maryland

Kelsie Phillips  
Lynsey Rye  
Katelyn Hawkins  
Paula Sorrells  
Shauntel Miller-Thompson

### Frederick Community College

Cath Huth  
Ada Morders  
Crystal Bowers

### Hagerstown Community College

Rebecca Smith  
Pamela Saum  
Kristina McCuster

### Harford Community College

Kathleen Weber

### Howard Community College

Victoria Herring  
Yvonne Jackson  
Toniee Parker  
Quianna Roberts

## FY17 Graduates from Universities

### The Community College of Baltimore County

Madonna Holmes  
Michelle Gross  
Sarah Simmons  
Lesha Joseph  
Kristin Kellner  
Charity Williams

### Prince George's Community College

Petra Jones  
Wanda Steele  
Tyrangle Young  
Vickie Sanders

### Notre Dame University

Madelyn Carr  
Maria Renaud  
Ginger Chavis  
Dawn Hollenczer

### University of Maryland Baltimore County

Marzinyeh Farschian  
Heather Low

### University of Maryland Eastern Shore

Leah Lewis  
Johanna Brown

### Towson University

Torie Malone

### Washington Adventist University

Deborah Chiles  
Tiffany Jones  
Tisia Walker  
Chenoa Myers

**NEW**

*Applicants must meet with the CCCPDF college coordinator before submitting an application. The CCCPDF college coordinator must sign the CCCPDF checklist to ascertain that the application is complete before submission.*

**Calling all Credentialed providers (Level 2 or higher) to submit an application!**

Deadline to submit Applications is March 1st, 2018 to be considered for the fund.

# FY 18 Child Care Career and Professional Development Fund Participants

The chart below depicts the number of providers by college and university who are currently participating in the Child Care Career and Professional Development Fund for the 2017/2018 academic year.

College/University	New Student	Continued Student	Total
Anne Arundel Community College	10	6	16
Baltimore City Community College	11	0	11
Carroll Community College	9	9	18
Community College of Baltimore County	19	13	32
Chesapeake Community College	12	12	24
Coppin State University	7	2	9
College of Southern Maryland	9	16	25
Frederick Community College	7	7	14
Hagerstown Community College	4	10	14
Harford Community College	8	3	11
Howard Community College	18	30	48
Montgomery College	30	8	38
Notre Dame University	6	11	17
Prince George's Community College	6	7	13
Salisbury University	2	6	8
Towson University	7	3	10
University of Maryland Eastern Shore	1	4	5
University of Maryland Baltimore County	6	2	8
Washington Adventist University	1	6	7
Wor-Wic Community College	16	8	24
<b>Total in the Program</b>	<b>189</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>352</b>

# Training Voucher / Reimbursement Program

Applications for Training Vouchers **must be** submitted at least 60 days prior to the Child Care Conference or Pre-Service training. Applications for reimbursement

must be submitted within six months of the completion date of the training. All supporting documents must be submitted.

## Welcome Back!

*LaTanya Taylor has returned to the Credentialing Branch.*

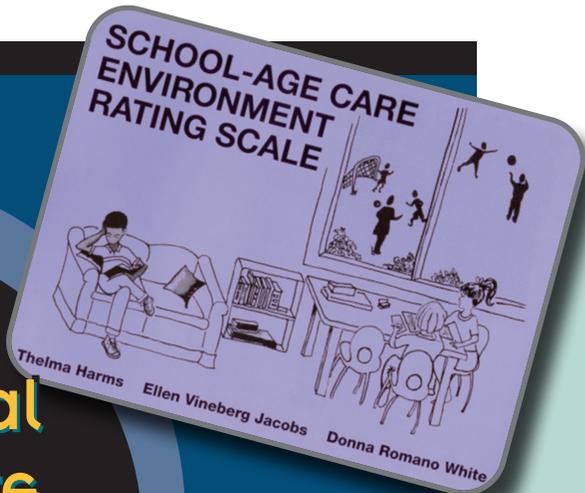
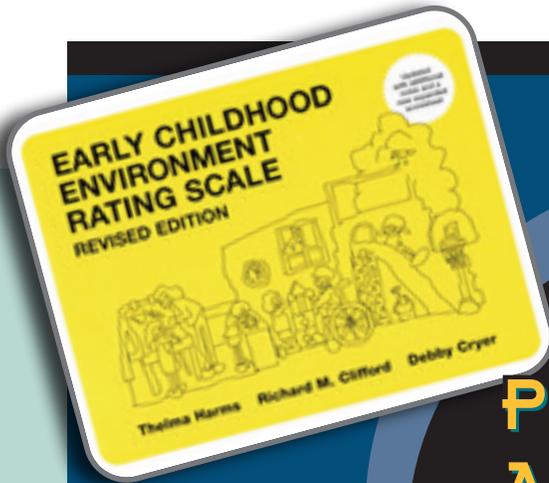
LaTanya coordinates the Training Voucher Reimbursement program and, tracks and monitors service commitments for providers who received funds through the Child Care Career and Professional Development Fund.

# MARYLAND EXCELS

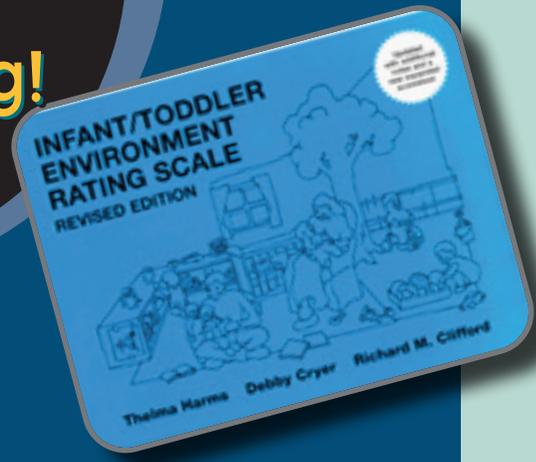
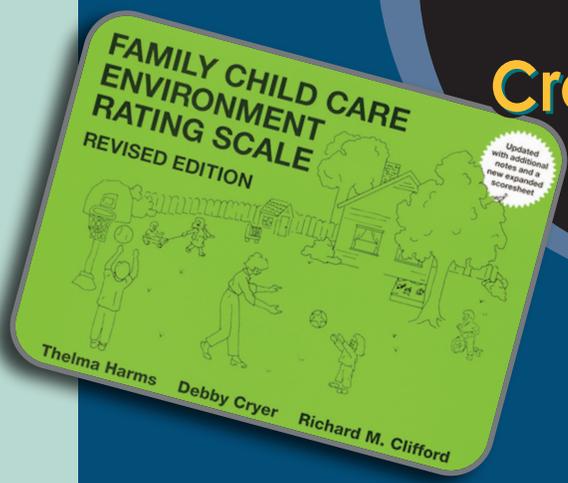
## Free Advertising to Families!

Would you like a **FREE** opportunity to reach more families so they know about the quality program you provide? Would you like to enjoy full enrollment in your program? Many child care providers are taking advantage of being a published Maryland EXCELS quality program. Check out these numbers!

- ▶ **72%** - percentage of all licensed Child Care Centers participating in Maryland EXCELS.
- ▶ **40%** - percentage of all Family Child Care Homes participating in Maryland EXCELS.
- ▶ **4,012** - number of programs with quality ratings on the <http://olms.ctejhu.org/olms2/4541/> find Maryland EXCELS website.
- ▶ **807** - number of programs eligible to receive EXCELS payments for Child Care Subsidy (10% to 44% higher reimbursement) by publishing at Level 3, 4, or 5.
- ▶ **\$40,000** - amount of annual EXCELS payments one center owner is expected to receive in addition to her regular subsidy reimbursement by publishing at Level 3.



# Earn Professional Activity Units for Credentialing!



**Maryland EXCELS is seeking programs and family child care providers to volunteer as training sites for new MSDE Environment Rating Scales Assessors.**

Two hours of Professional Activity Units (PAUs) are available for the Provider, and the Director and teacher(s) of assessed classrooms. The trainees will be at your program for three hours conducting their practice assessments. The results will not be shared with MSDE or anyone.

**We are especially in need of Family Child Care sites and programs with School-Age Classrooms.**

- Contact Andrea Zabel, Maryland EXCELS Quality Measurement Specialist if you are interested. **410-767-7863**
- Contact your **Quality Assurance Specialist** to request yours today!
- Access More Information on the Environment Scales [here](#).

# MARYLAND EXCELS

## TOOLKIT

### A New Resource for Child Care Programs

Maryland EXCELS offers a new resource to help child care providers enhance their program's quality. Launched in July, the Maryland EXCELS Toolkit is a collection of resources and tools to help child care professionals navigate the Maryland EXCELS standards, provide new ideas and activities for children, and enhance engagement with families.

While the Toolkit is designed with participants of Maryland EXCELS in mind, its resources can benefit anyone interested in quality child care and early learning.

Sonya Odum of Sonya's Family Daycare in Hanover, Maryland, is looking forward to enhancing her program with these resources. "I just started using the Creative Curriculum by Teaching Strategies," she said. "[I think] it'll marry well with [the Toolkit resources] to help me develop my program to where I really want to be."

The Toolkit contains an Urgent Prep section, intended to help providers when they are within 45 days of their Maryland EXCELS expiration date. Providers can select a scenario that matches their specific situation and find videos and guidance on immediate steps they can take to meet the deadline.

One of the most exciting elements of the Toolkit is the Quality Ratings Checklist. These user-friendly checklists not only help providers achieve their goals of meeting a specific quality rating, but they contain links to content that informs best practices.

communication with families and staff.

"The Policy or Statement Builder tools are designed to help providers create or revise their policies with a 'story-starter' approach that breaks down what the requirements are through a series of prompts and questions," said Christine Alexander, a member of the Maryland EXCELS Team at the Johns Hopkins University Center for Technology in Education. "It also serves as a tool to facilitate a dialogue between a provider and a Program Coordinator or Quality Assurance Specialist by giving the provider a starting point for a conversation," she said.

Bridgette Lawrence, a family child care provider in California, Maryland, attended several Maryland EXCELS support group meetings with her local Child Care Resource Center and held many email conversations with her Program Coordinator for help and advice. While she said these resources were helpful, she occasionally felt overwhelmed by exploring the criteria and the time she spent.

"The Toolkit is really targeted to advancing through the different levels much more so than when you just had the [Maryland] EXCELS [online system]," Lawrence said. She added that while there were always Program Coordinators who were happy to answer her questions, she loves the independence that the Toolkit offers. "It's nice to be able to go in and answer my own questions on the Toolkit," she said.

Odum also appreciates the clarity that the Toolkit provides. Although she said her Program Coordinator guided her through "a thousand" questions in her efforts to reach a Quality Rating 5, Odum still desired other ways of self-evaluating her materials.

"I believe the Toolkit will help me to enrich my program and I wish we could have gotten it sooner!" Odum said. "My friends are already finding it very helpful to help them get their initial paperwork put together."

A unique feature of the Toolkit is the Policy or Statement Builder that helps a program develop or revise policies, handbooks, and documentation to improve a program's quality rating and enhance their



# MARYLAND EXCELS TOOLKIT

The Maryland EXCELS Toolkit currently includes the standards and requirements for Child Care Centers, Family Child Care Homes, and School-Age programs, including Head Start, Montessori, and Military programs. Prekindergarten standards will be added in the coming months; in the meantime, these programs may find the Toolkit's resources and ideas helpful.

Lawrence is excited about the value of the Toolkit not only for herself, but also for programs new to Maryland EXCELS who need to learn all about the standards. "Having [what I need to advance to

the next level] all right there on one screen will save me time," she said. "And the language used to explain things is really great for everyone to understand."

***"It makes people feel like, 'I can do this. This is possible.'"***

The **Toolkit** is available here for anyone, even for those not yet participating in Maryland EXCELS. Feel free to submit your feedback about the Toolkit using the Contact form on the Toolkit website – ***we want to hear your comments and questions!***

## Looking for training on Maryland EXCELS?

Need support for meeting EXCELS standards? Come to a workgroup session with your peers and get individual help, or find a training in your area at <http://pdimprovingquality.org/marylandexcels>.



***Some Maryland EXCELS Quality Assurance Specialists***

## Partner Updates/News

### Ready At Five Introduces New Learning Party Curriculum: The Parent Leadership Learning Party!



This **Learning Party** developed in collaboration with experts at EPIC (*Every Person Influences Children*), provides parents and families with important leadership and advocacy skills to promote civic engagement in the familiar and comfortable Learning Party format. The Parent Leadership Learning Party is part of a larger effort to create and sustain local parent leadership efforts through the Early Childhood Advisory Councils, Judy Centers, and public school systems. The Parent Leadership Learning Party is designed to support parents/family members as they take an active role in their child's education and in schools, early learning programs, and local communities. Parent Leadership Learning Parties support growth and development in four areas:

- ▲ Trust and Conflict
- ▲ Communication
- ▲ Advocacy
- ▲ Idea Implementation

The Parent Leadership Learning Party has been designed to meet Goal 7 of the **Maryland Family Engagement Framework**:

*Family engagement initiatives should support the development of families as leaders and child advocates. When parents and families are empowered, they can be a strong force for positive change in their child's education and in many other areas of life. Therefore, Maryland initiatives and the family engagement practices of early care and education providers should support families to participate in leadership development, decision-making, program policy development, and community and state organizing activities to improve children's development and learning experiences.*

**We were thrilled to offer a Parent Leadership Learning Party Facilitator Training with over 30 participants!**

There are opportunities for every jurisdiction in Maryland to receive training in Parent Leadership Learning Parties - please contact Robin Hopkins at [robin@readyatfive.org](mailto:robin@readyatfive.org) if you are interested.

## MFN is Strengthening the Field of Early Care and Learning

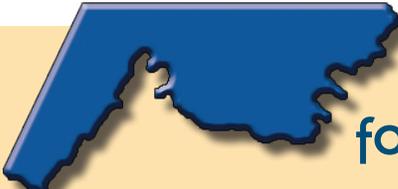


"There's nothing better than to know how their little brains work. That's the best gift you can give yourself." These are the words of Janet Butler, director of Mom-mom's House Day Care Center, who is featured in the new Maryland Family Network video series about the benefits of participating in the Child Development Associate (CDA) course. The videos can be viewed at <http://www.youtube.com/user/MDFamilyNetwork>

The Baltimore City Child Care Resource Center (BCCCRC), a program of Maryland Family Network, has received grants from the Transamerica Foundation, the Legg Mason Foundation, and MSDE to pilot the CDA Project. Beginning with a cohort of

14 family child care providers, the two year project is providing all the resources that each participant needs to successfully complete the 90-hour certificate course work and the requirements for the CDA. Each participant will leave the project with six college credits and a CDA Certificate. Participants work closely with mentors and take part in monthly peer group activities to build a community of practice. In partnership with Baltimore City Community College, BCCCRC will continue the project and is currently recruiting participants to join our second cohort in January 2018. For additional information contact Jennifer Lentz at [jlentz@marylandfamilynetwork.org](mailto:jlentz@marylandfamilynetwork.org)

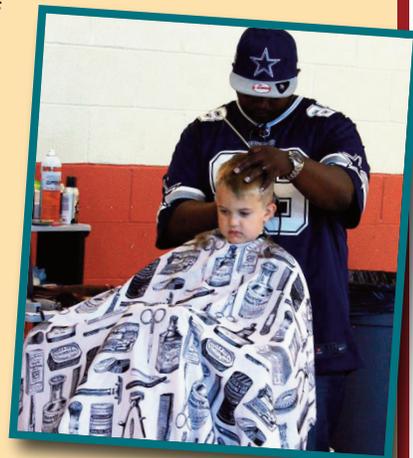
# Judy Center News



## Parent Conference Day is Picture Perfect for Allegany County Judy Center

On October 3, Parent Conference Day, the South Penn Judy Center made arrangements with local barbers and beauticians to come to the school to give free haircuts to men and children. This was done in advance of picture day at the school. Coordinator Deb Kolb sent messages to local hair stylists to see if anyone would be interested in assisting with this project. The response was overwhelming. Two people were so excited to help that they shut down their shops for the entire day and they even brought their barber chairs to the school to use. Kolb thought that people would donate their time in 2-hr. intervals, but almost everyone wanted to donate their time for the entire day. Approx. 30 professional hair stylists had to be turned away due to the overwhelming response.

In the picture, Lamont Cockrell cuts the hair of Zane Piper. The interesting part of this picture is that Zane would never let anyone except his mother touch his hair. However, when his mother took him to the gym to look at the barbers, he agreed to let Lamont cut his hair. After the haircut he told his mom that he wanted "Mr. Lamont" to cut his hair all the time. **The Judy Center will make this an annual event.**



## Arlington Parent becomes a Partner

The Judy Center at Arlington (Baltimore City) is very proud of Ms. Shaytarra Harrington who began working with the Judy Center full-time during school year 2017-2018.

Ms. Harrington began her relationship with the Judy Center as a parent. While her daughter was a student in the Judy Center from Head Start to Kindergarten, she participated in adult programming such as parent breakfasts and volunteer opportunities. Over the years, her relationship deepened with the Judy Center as her child's involvement in multiple activities, including after school and summer camp, increased.

Ms. Harrington grew to love the mission of the Judy Centers and desired to be a part of the team. The Judy Center at Arlington is thrilled to announce that although her daughter has transitioned to 1st grade, Ms. Harrington

is now a Literacy Lab Tutor with Arlington's literacy partner, The Literacy Lab. In her new role as a tutor, she provides repeated read-alouds with all children in the class each week. She also provides Tier I and Tier II interventions for seven children who require additional support to stay on target for reading throughout the year. Some of the interventions include picture naming, rhyming, and alliteration. Additionally, Ms. Harrington co-teaches the after-school program with another tutor and PreK paraeducator as well as supporting the cheerleading squad where her daughter is a member. The Judy Center at Arlington is so proud to have a Judy Center parent become a full-time staff member as we continue along the road to readiness!



# Judy Center News



## The New Diaper Distribution and Parent Education Program in Somerset County

The Somerset County Judy Center has been awarded the Community Needs grant from the Community Foundation of the Eastern Shore and has opened

Somerset County's first Diaper Distribution and Parent Education Program. Diapers have a lot more to do with school readiness than one might imagine and when families lack funds for diapers, they tend to try to stretch the use of diapers, meaning they may only use one or two in a day. This can lead to health issues in young children including some serious infections. The overall health and well-being of a child directly impacts a child's ability to learn. A child may also miss school or child care because a parent does not have diapers to send with them. Many families in Somerset County were in great need of diapers and no other program in the community provided assistance with this need. The Judy Center received funds to assist with the purchase of diapers, wipes, educational materials for parents of young children and even a small storage shed. Last spring, Princess Anne Elementary School held a casual day and raised additional funds for the diaper program and since that time the Judy Center has received other small grants

and donations in support of the program. The Judy Center staff designed this project not only to give diapers to families but to create a new way of connecting to families with babies and toddlers. The Diaper Distribution Program is open to any income eligible family residing in the Judy Center catchment area in Princess Anne and Crisfield and provides one pack of diapers a month for those who qualify.

In addition, families receive information about school readiness, parenting assistance, and books and materials for their children. Diaper distributions are held throughout the community at subsidized housing complexes and community centers. Parent trainings and home visiting are also provided thanks to this new program



## Playgroups Take Center Stage in Washington County

The Judy Center of Washington County has been working with Washington County Birth through Five, Washington County Public Schools – Early Learning, The Hub @ USMH, and the Washington County Public Library to provide playgroups for families.

The playgroups provide a chance for children and parents to socialize with one another. Each playgroup is individualized for the families that attend; the activities, the toys available, the crafts, the reading, and the song to best suit are modified for each child's needs. Within that framework, there are also individual goals for each family. One child began the group unable

to sit during story time.

He progressed to standing and intently listening to the story and after five weeks is able to sit with a toy or puppet in his hand.

Having multiple partners allows each partner to provide more seamless services to families. Partnerships mean the planning, set-up, and individualized goals and activities are divided among all. It also allows for playgroups to start small without a large personnel commitment from any one group and allows the playgroups to continue running when one organization has a professional development day.



# Judy Center News



## Wicomico County Judy Center Grows Learning Party Program with Positive Community Response

The Wicomico County Judy Center partners with the Ready at Five Organization to provide the Learning Party program to families in the Beaver Run, Chipman, Pemberton and WELC attendance areas. Learning Parties interactive curriculum is designed to work with the birth to five population and their caregivers focusing on the different learning domains. Participants are provided with a family-style meal. Then adults and children are split into two groups. Parents and caregivers learn strategies to support mathematics and literacy in the home while the children participate in active engaging learning connected to the information presented in the adult session. At the end of each party, adults are given an opportunity to demonstrate the skills learned with their children supported by trained certified teachers. Families are also given a variety of related learning materials and books at each party to use at home.

In the 2015-2016 school year, the Partnership began with a set of Mathematics Learning Parties hoping to reach fifteen families. Because the Learning Parties grew in popularity very quickly, the partnership offered both Mathematics and Literacy-based Learning Parties in the 2016-2017 school year. Families raved about the curriculum, staff, and the learning materials they received. One parent noted, "The different items given are great to prepare our children for what is to come in school and for preparing them for further education." Another parent stated, "Well organized. Great enthusiasm. I was able to observe the children's activities and the teachers were excellent and engaging." Due to the overwhelming positive response, the Wicomico Judy



Center increased the number of participants to thirty families in the 2016-2017 and fifty families in the 2017-2018 school year. Several of the parents who attended previous sessions were so impressed with the curriculum that they chose to return as volunteers to help new families with the Learning Parties program. Members of the Judy Center partnership also assist with the parties and present information on other available resources to families.

The Wicomico County Judy Center looks forward to continuing this wonderful partnership with Ready at Five to provide valuable educational information to families and young children, ages birth to five.



# PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

## Family Child Care Series: Online Courses



Child care providers play an important role in the education, development and care of young children. Whether you are just beginning your career as a child care provider or have many years of experience owning your own family child care business, it's important to have quality training. There is a convenient way to meet these requirements online with the flexibility to complete course work anywhere there is internet access.

The Family Child Care Course Series provides the foundational knowledge required to operate a licensed child care program in your home. Divided into six, self-paced courses, the series guides you through a deeper understanding of key topics in early education, including child development, curriculum planning, health and safety, children with special

needs, professionalism and community resources. Designed with busy lifestyles in mind, the flexible format allows you to take the courses one at a time, in any order, and at your own pace. Approved by the MSDE Office of Child Care, each course includes interactive activities, quizzes and online resources to provide an engaging learning experience and reinforce understanding of the topics. After successfully meeting course requirements, providers will earn four (4) Core of Knowledge Clock Hours per course. Completing all six courses satisfies the family child care pre-service training requirement for a total of 24 clock hours.

Visit <http://ecourses.thinkport.org> to learn more about these and other child care courses on Thinkport.org, Maryland Public Television's PreK-12 education website.

### Become a Member of MFN TODAY!



MARYLAND  
FAMILY  
NETWORK

**You did it.** You started your own child care business. Now become a part of the community who can help support you. As a member of Maryland Family Network you will receive a monthly eNewsletter packed with information to grow your business, reduced fees on **MFN**

training programs, and discounted eLearning workshops. Join us as we build strong families, quality early learning environments, and champions for the interests of all young children. Learn more at [marylandfamilynetwork.org](http://marylandfamilynetwork.org).

### Join the Maryland Head Start Association



Join the Maryland Head Start Association. The Maryland Head Start Association (MHSA) assists Head Start and other early childhood learning programs through education and training opportunities; advocating on behalf of children and families across the state of Maryland; and by educating the community at large on the developmental needs of low-income children and families.

As Association members, individuals and organiza-

tions have an opportunity to participate in children's advocacy on local, regional and national levels through workgroups, planning committees, and events. We ensure individuals are ready to advocate by providing resources, networking, and training. Learn more about MHSA by going to [www.md-hsa.org](http://www.md-hsa.org). For more information please contact Simeon Russell at: [execdir@md-hsa.org](mailto:execdir@md-hsa.org)

**Top 5 Reasons**

## to join the Maryland State Child Care Association (MSCCA)



### DID YOU KNOW?

MSCCA membership is the ONLY association providing a full staff, comprehensive center membership, not an individual membership! All staff members employed at the center will be considered MSCCA members when your center joins.

Many of the MSCCA Member Benefits are directly related to Maryland EXCELS and Credentialing! Pay one affordable center membership fee and gain Professional Activity Units (PAU) for your full staff! Members of a state association receive a PAU for becoming a member of a professional organization. (Also accumulate additional PAUs for attending our statewide conferences, facilitating classes at our conference, contributing to our semi-annual newsletters and attending our Advocacy Night in Annapolis.)

MSCCA members have a dedicated, registered state lobbyist along with an active MSCCA Board of Directors who monitor Senate and House bills each legislative session related to your professional interests and submit testimony on behalf of our members to advocate strongly for children, teachers and families.

MSCCA provides continuous, cutting edge communication emailed to members about relevant child care issues and topics.

There are discounts on quality training conferences and a new annual MSCCA/ Jennifer Nizer Grant/Scholarship opportunity offered to members only.

Visit: [www.mscca.org](http://www.mscca.org) to join MSCCA. For more info contact Christina Peusch, Executive Director at: [mscca1@comcast.net](mailto:mscca1@comcast.net) or call 410-820-9196



## ARE YOU

## Passionate About Children and Family Child Care?

If so, the Maryland State Family Child Care Association needs **YOU!**

- ▼ Support Professional and Best Practice.
- ▼ Support family child care as an essential component to the child care delivery system in Maryland.
- ▼ Support Advocating on all Legislative and Regulatory Issues concerning children and Family Child Care Providers.
- ▼ Support MSFCCA'S goal of providing communication, involvement and support to the early childhood community.
- ▼ Believe Providers are **STRONGER** with **ONE VOICE!**



[www.msfccca.org](http://www.msfccca.org) ■ 240.994.0292 ■ Jacqueline Grant, President, MSFCCA

# How can you get involved?

Email [contact@msfcc.org](mailto:contact@msfcc.org) and we can help you find the best place to volunteer and earn PAUs for the Maryland Child Care Credential. Many meetings are now held online! For some meetings face-to-face obliga-

tion is no longer necessary and you can work on your own. There are many areas where help is needed. Contact us soon to get started and help make MSFCCA the Family Child Care Voice of Choice.

## Get Involved!

### Maryland Association for the Education of Young Children

Membership has its privileges! Become a member of the MDAEYC to take advantage of professional opportunities available to MDAEYC members.

#### MDAEYC offers members:

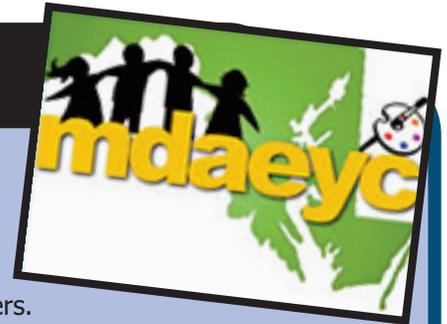
Professional development opportunities

- ◆ A chance to connect with other professionals in your community
- ◆ A voice in early care and education policy issues
- ◆ Accreditation support
- ◆ Professional Activity Units (PAUs) for membership in a professional association and PAUs for attending a national, state or local conference!

The mission of MDAEYC is to empower those who care for and educate young children. Their vision is to promote high quality early childhood education standards and to improve the status of the profession through education and compensation.

**Becoming a member is easy!** Visit: [www.naeyc.com](http://www.naeyc.com) or [www.mdaeyc.org](http://www.mdaeyc.org) and complete the online registration to become a member of NAEYC and MDAEYC simultaneously.

**For more info LIKE their Facebook page, email [marylandaeyc@gmail.com](mailto:marylandaeyc@gmail.com), or call 410-820-9196.**



## RESOURCES



Center on the Developing Child  
HARVARD UNIVERSITY

### Early Childhood Mental Health

"The science of child development shows that the foundation for sound mental health is built early in life, as early experiences—which include children's relationships with parents, caregivers, relatives, teachers, and peers—shape the architecture of the developing brain. Disruptions in this developmental process can impair a child's capacities for learning and relating to others, with lifelong implications. For society, many costly problems, ranging from the failure to complete high school to incarceration to homelessness, could be dramatically reduced if attention were paid to improving children's environments of relationships and experiences early in life."

This is from Center on the Developing Child (2013). Early Childhood Mental Health (In Brief). More information can be found at <https://developingchildharvard.edu>.

The Early Childhood Mental Health (ECMH) Consultation Project improves the ability of staff, programs and families to prevent, identify, treat and reduce the impact of social, emotional and other mental health problems among children birth through 5 years of age. For more information go to <http://earlychildhood.marylandpublicschools.org/early-childhood-mental-health>.



# CDC Launches Milestone Tracker App

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is pleased to announce the launch of CDC's Milestone Tracker – a free

app for tracking every child's development in a fun and easy way. This app adds to the popular suite of free, family-friendly materials available through CDC's **Learn the Signs. Act Early.** program.

help their child learn and grow, a way to track developmental milestones, recognize delays, and the ability to share this information with their healthcare provider."

Learn more and get information on downloading the app at **MilestoneTracker** website. The app is available in the **App Store** and on **Google Play**.

Although it is packed with parent-friendly features, this app isn't just for parents! Healthcare providers can use it to help with developmental surveillance as recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics, and early care and education providers can use it to better understand their students' skills and abilities and to engage families in monitoring developmental progress.

"Skills like taking a first step, saying those first words, and waving 'bye-bye' are developmental milestones all parents anticipate and celebrate," said CDC Director Brenda Fitzgerald, M.D. "This CDC Milestone Tracker app gives parents tips to

## The new app offers:

- ▼ Interactive milestone checklists for children ages 2 months through 5 years, illustrated with photos and videos
- ▼ Tips and activities to help children learn and grow
- ▼ Information on when to act early and talk with a doctor about developmental delays
- ▼ A personalized milestone summary that can be easily shared with the doctor and other care providers
- ▼ Reminders for appointments and developmental screening

## Free Activities and Resources from Ready At Five



Please check our website at <http://www.readyatfive.org> to find out about the programs Ready At Five offers and for their **Family Engagement Resources** and **Parents Matter** publication (available in English and Spanish). Sign up for our **newsletter** to keep updated on Ready At Five's activities and free resources. Find them on Social

Media: Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/ReadyAtFive> and Twitter <https://twitter.com/ReadyAtFive>. Please help Ready At Five improve the practice and quality of early learning in Maryland and join their **list serve**.



## Survey on Child Care for Children with Special Needs

Maryland Family Network's 2016 Survey on Child Care for Children with Special Needs tracks and analyzes the availability of child care for children with special needs. The goal is to document gaps in service and advocate expansions and enhancements where needed. This publication was produced as a

work for hire for the benefit of, and with funds from, the Maryland State Department of Education. Download the report at <http://www.marylandfamilynetwork.org/resources/2016+Survey+on+Child+Care+for+Children+with+Special+Needs>.

# PAST EVENT

## Statewide Licensing Meeting



The Licensing Branch held its annual statewide meeting for all Licensing Specialists, Supervisors and Regional

Managers on October 5th at Maritime Institute in Linthicum. **Check out some of the photos from the day.**

## CHILDREN'S ACTIVITY



### Roads & Rails Museum in Frederick

Founded by David Burroughs, Roads & Rails Museum celebrates miniature railroads. The museum houses one of the largest miniature world model train displays in the country and is designed to be a fun display of three dimensional art, combined with sound and movement. It is a miniature world complete with a zoo, circus, working volcano, walk-through mountains, subway, coal mine, castle and towns with moving trains, trolleys, cars and trucks. With a gift shop and much more! ***Roads and Rails Museum is a great family friendly experience that is fun for all ages.***



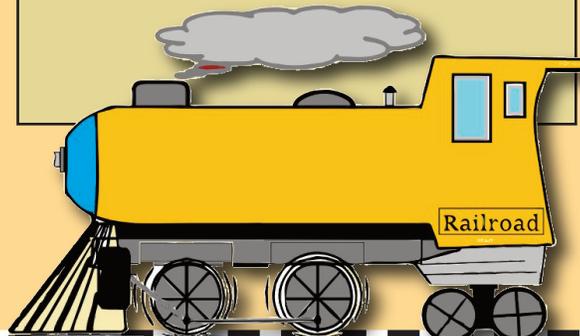
**Tickets are purchased at the counter**

- **\$10 for adults**
- **\$5 for children and *anyone under 3 is free.***
- Groups of 15 persons or more can get group rates; call **301-624-5524** for group rates.

**200 N East Street Frederick, MD**

- Hours: MONDAY 10AM-5PM
- CLOSED TUESDAY-THURSDAY
- FRIDAY 10AM-5PM
- SATURDAY 10AM-5PM
- SUNDAY 12 NOON-5PM

<http://www.roadsnrails.com/>





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## Upcoming Conferences

**WINTER 2018** **SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL COMPETENCY WEBINAR SERIES:** Social-Emotional Competencies to Support the Literacy Acquisition of Our Youngest Students

### Save the Date

**January 29, 2018**  
**4:00 - 9:00 p.m.**

#### An Evening for Children's Advocacy

The annual event for early childhood educators in Annapolis

#### Sponsored by:

Maryland Family Network, the Maryland AfterSchool Association, the Maryland Association for the Education of Young Children, the Maryland Head Start Association, the Maryland State Child Care Association, the Maryland State Family Child Care Association, and SEIU Local 500

### Save the Date

**May 4 - 6, 2018**

#### C.A.M.P. (Children Are My Passion)

The Maryland State Child Care Association (MSCCA) is hosting the annual Conference by the Sea 2018 at the Clarion Resort and Hotel in Ocean City, MD.

#### Special guest speaker:

Award Winning  
Pete the Cat Author,  
Eric Litwin

**REGISTRATION OPENS  
DECEMBER 2017**

## PARTNERS

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