

Back to school



The Next Renaissance

By Steven Hicks, Assistant State Superintendent, Division of Early Childhood

The future of Maryland early childhood education is in the midst of a perfect storm, one that does not come often. Together, increases in Federal and State funding, new proposals to expand services and programs, and the urgent need to update outmoded regulations all spell "opportunity." The time is now, and we must act.

In March, Congress passed a \$1.3 trillion spending bill, which nearly doubled the funding for the Child

Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG) program. This historic infusion of funding – the largest single-year increase in the program's history – is meant to spur states to fully implement the CCDBG Act as reauthorized in 2014, including increasing provider subsidy reimbursement rates for serving families using child care subsidy vouchers, implementing bold activities to improve the quality and safety of child care programs, and ensuring new requirements in the law are met. Maryland has received an additional \$28.7 million for FY18, which must be obligated by September 30, 2019. Advocates across the country are looking at this not as a one-time investment or anomaly, but instead as the new normal. And this windfall comes at a most serendipitous moment.

The Governor's FY 2018 budget nearly doubles the provider Child Care Subsidy reimbursement rates to 20% of the market rate in each region, meaning that qualifying low-income families will now theoretically access 1 in 5 available child care providers (up from 1 in 10). Legislation passed and signed into law this past Spring further accelerates the buying power for vulnerable families over the next three years to a minimum of 60% of the market rate by 2022. This could mean more quality choices for families as additional providers accepting subsidies enter the market and strive for quality through EXCELS, Maryland's quality rating and improvement system. But this increase in market rate value is not helpful if our struggling families cannot qualify to receive them.

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For years, the maximum income levels to qualify for a child care subsidy voucher in Maryland have been the lowest in the nation. Last year, for example, a family of three could not qualify for assistance if they made more than \$30,000 a year. Many families who struggle to find affordable child care, which in most jurisdictions is higher in cost than college tuition, were left out. As a result, many hard working parents resorted to low-quality arrangements, or worse, unlicensed, illegally-operating providers, where children's health and safety – and often their lives – were at risk. Fortunately, the Maryland State Board of Education and Superintendent Dr. Salmon recognize the critical need to expand child care access to more of our vulnerable families and have expanded income eligibility for the Child Care Subsidy Program from 32% of state median income to 65% beginning August 1st. With both the increase in provider rates and eligibility levels for families, we expect thousands of children, who otherwise would not have access to licensed child care and early education programs, to finally get the jump start to life they need.

Access is not enough, however, to ensure children enter kindergarten ready to succeed. Research shows it is high-quality programs that make the difference. Achieving that marker can't be done on the cheap. Our children deserve better. That's why we are reinstating bonuses for Maryland EXCELS for licensed child care providers from October 1, 2018 through September 30, 2019. Family child care providers and child care centers who publish a quality rating at any level for the first time, will receive a bonus. Programs who republish a Level 5 rating will receive an annual bonus during this period. Programs that publish at higher levels during this period will receive bonus payments for each quality rating increase. For

more information, see our website at marylandexcels.org.

For programs that publish a quality rating of 3, 4, or 5, we will also continue providing tiered reimbursement/EXCELS payments above the regular subsidy reimbursement rate for child care providers serving children from low-income families. These supplemental payments can help ensure the quality programs that children need. For example, a level 5 EXCELS family child care provider receives 28% more on top of the reimbursement rate for each preschool-age child served. A level 5 EXCELS child care center can receive 44% more on top of the provider reimbursement for each infant served.



In addition to the increase in provider reimbursements, new legislation signed into law increases state grants for Head Start and sustains the funding for the PreK Expansion Program in FY20, when Federal funding ends. These are the seeds to Maryland's mixed-delivery universal preschool program for all four year-olds and low-income three year-olds as envisioned by the Commission on Innovation and Excellence in Education (also known as the Kirwan Commission). The Commission recommends investments to help ensure more high-quality early childhood programs, increase the supply of

effective educators in community-based programs, assess the school readiness of all incoming kindergarteners, and expand family supports, such as the Judy Center early learning hubs and Family Support Centers.

Maryland has seen great enthusiasm for early learning over the years, and the state is known as a childhood education leader in the nation. The 2002 Bridge to Excellence in Public School Act created the Maryland Prekindergarten Program, requiring the state's 24 school systems to provide PreK for all 4-year olds from families with incomes at or below 185% of the federal poverty level. In 2012, Maryland received a Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge grant, which helped improve its system of early learning and development. In order to expand PreK to more children, Maryland enacted the Prekindergarten Expansion Act of 2014 and later received a Federal Preschool Development Grant. This year, we've streamlined our name to the "Division of Early Childhood" to reflect our broad focus on the whole child: child learning and development, health promotion, family engagement and supports, program quality improvement, professional learning, and other activities that ensure success for children from birth through age 8 and beyond.

The State of Maryland's next Renaissance builds on these past efforts. We stand on the shoulders of the numerous champions for children who have worked long and hard for decades. Many of these champions continue the struggle for equity for Maryland's families. We must all be fully present and participate in this new resurgence. There can be no spectators.

Join us!

The Division At-A-Glance

Understanding the roles and responsibilities of the Division of Early Childhood and its branches can make finding the assistance and answers you need much easier. Under the direction of Assistant State Superintendent Steven Hicks, the Division is responsible for early care and education in Maryland. The main mission of the Division is to improve early education in Maryland so that young children are well prepared for school.



The Division is composed of the:

- ◆ Office of Child Care,
- ◆ Early Learning Branch, and
- ◆ Collaboration and Program Improvement Branch.

Here's how the division is currently structured:

OFFICE OF CHILD CARE -

Jennifer Nizer, M. Ed., Director

The Office of Child Care is responsible for licensing and inspecting all child care centers and family child care providers in Maryland. The Office also administers Maryland's subsidized child care program for working families and the state's Child Care Credentialing System and Maryland EXCELS, the state's quality rating and improvement system.

Within the Office of Child Care, there are four branches:

- ◆ Licensing
- ◆ Credentialing
- ◆ Child Care Subsidy
- ◆ Maryland EXCELS

Licensing Branch -

Louis 'Lou' Valenti, Branch Chief

The Licensing Branch is specifically responsible for all child care licensing activities. These activities include:

- Licensure or re-licensure of new or existing child care facilities
- Monitoring program compliance with child care regulations
- Investigating complaints of improper or illegal child care
- Taking enforcement action against the license of programs found to be in serious violation of child care regulations
- Helping child care programs achieve and maintain regulatory compliance

Credentialing Branch -

Angeline Bishop-Oshoko, Branch Chief

The Credentialing Branch ensures that child care providers have access to quality training and assists providers in attaining higher levels of training and education. These opportunities include:

- Credential Program - a career ladder that directs individuals to build knowledge and skills in a cumulative manner from introductory training to advance level education.
- Training Vouchers/ Reimbursement - assist child care professionals participating in the Maryland Child Care Credential Program at Level Two or higher with the costs of training for professional development.

- Child Care Career and Professional Development Fund - a tuition assistance program for child care providers to obtain a college education at participating colleges/ universities in Maryland.
- Child Care Quality Incentive Grant Program - a grant program for child care providers to improve the professionalism and quality of child care programs.
- Family Child Care Provider Grant Program - a grant program to help registered family child care providers offset some of the costs of opening their child care programs.
- The Child Care Resource Network, overseen by grantee Maryland Family Network, provide leadership and services designed to help parents find quality child care that meets their family's needs; improve the skills of early childhood professionals and their programs; and help programs, communities and individuals develop or expand high quality programs for children. There are Resource Centers in each region.
- Special Needs Continuing Training / Technical Assistance for Caregivers - comprehensive statewide technical assistance and training for caregivers who are providing services to special needs children, birth through 3 years of age.
- Expansion of Child Care for Medically Fragile Children Birth to Five - provides medically-based child care and early education services to children with medical diagnoses and those who have development delays, physical disabilities, and behavioral issues requiring specialized care.

Child Care Subsidy Branch -
Rene Williams, Branch Chief

The Subsidy Branch provides financial assistance with child care costs to eligible working families through the Child Care Subsidy Program. The Program issues vouchers to eligible families in need of help with the cost of child care. Vouchers are processed by Child Care Subsidy Central (CCS Central) and to receive this assistance, families must meet certain requirements. In addition to helping with the cost of child care, families can receive assistance with locating a licensed child care provider.

Maryland EXCELS -
Lindi Budd, Branch Chief



The EXCELS Branch promotes quality by awarding ratings to:

- Child Care Centers,
- School-Age Child Care Programs,
- Family Child Care Homes, and
- Public Prekindergarten programs.

These ratings are available to families as a way to help them make informed choices in the care of their children. The branch also manages:

Accreditation Support Fund - assists licensed child care centers with the cost of required application fees for National Accreditation and instructional materials associated with pursuing Maryland Accreditation.

MD Accreditation - a voluntary process in which programs commit to continuous quality improvement, to benefit children, families and staff.

EARLY LEARNING BRANCH -
Judy Walker, Branch Chief

The Early Learning Branch is responsible for pre-k and kindergarten policy and programs. This Branch also oversees:

- Ready for Kindergarten Early Childhood Comprehensive Assessment System,
- Developmental Screening,
- Early Childhood Curriculum, and
- the Maryland Approved Alternative Program Preparation.

COLLABORATION AND PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT BRANCH -

Cynthia LaMarca Lessner, Branch Chief

The Collaboration and Program Improvement Branch manages early childhood initiatives and administers early care contracts and grants. Their initiatives and programs include:

- The Judith P. Hoyer Program (Judy Centers) provides a central location for early childhood education programs and comprehensive support services for children birth through kindergarten and their families who reside in specific Title I school districts across the state.
- The Head Start State Collaboration Project coordinates early learning and comprehensive services between local Head Start programs and local, state, federal government agencies that are informed by the current Head Start Assessment Report and Strategic Plan.
- The Early Childhood Mental Health (ECMH) Consultation Project assists early care and education programs in identifying and addressing child

behavioral issues in early learning environments.

- The Family Support Centers, overseen by grantee Maryland Family Network, provide free, comprehensive services, either on-site or through referral, to families, targeting parents and their children from birth through age three.
- State Advisory Council and Local Councils include the State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care and 24 Local Early Childhood Advisory Councils. Together, they build and support a comprehensive early childhood infrastructure to overcome local school readiness achievement gaps for children with high needs and maximize federal, state and local resources for early childhood through collaborations and consistent coordination.
- Family Engagement Initiatives include the implementation of a Maryland Framework for Family Engagement.

Contacting the Division Branches

Office of Child Care -
earlychildhood.msde@maryland.gov

Early Learning Branch -
early.learningbranchesmsde@maryland.gov

Collaboration and Program Improvement Branch -
collaboration.programimprovement@maryland.gov

Licensing -
licensingocc.msde@maryland.gov

Credentialing -
credentialocc.msde@maryland.gov
or 1-866-243-8796

Subsidy -
ccscentral@conduent.com or
1-866-243-8796

Maryland EXCELS -
info@marylandexcels.org

WE HAVE A NEW NAME...

The Division's name has changed from the Division of Early Childhood Development to the

Division of Early Childhood

The new identity captures the breadth of what we do to support the whole child:

- child learning and development,
 - health promotion,
- family engagement and supports,
 - program quality improvement,
 - professional learning, etc.

Be on the lookout for the name change to our website, documents and other materials.



WELCOME...

Jacqueline Woodruff to the Credentialing Branch as a Grants Specialist. She can be reached at jacqueline.woodruff@maryland.gov.

Nicole Johnson to the Maryland EXCELS Branch as the new Accreditation Specialist. She can be reached at Nicole.johnson1@maryland.gov.

Wendy Dantzler returns to the Collaboration and Program Improvement Branch as the Early Childhood Coordinator. She can be reached at

wendy.dantzler@maryland.gov.

Charlie Mitchell to the Early Learning Branch as the Education Program and Assessment Specialist. He can be reached at charlie.mitchell@maryland.gov.

Jasmine Blackwood to the Maryland EXCELS Branch as the Administrative Specialist. She can be reached at jasmine.blackwood@maryland.gov.

Debbie Langer to the Office of Child Care as the Training Approval Specialist. She can be reached at deborah.langer@maryland.gov.

Connect with us!

Be sure to friend and follow all of the Division's social media accounts to stay up-to-date on Early Childhood news in Maryland.

Division of Early Childhood

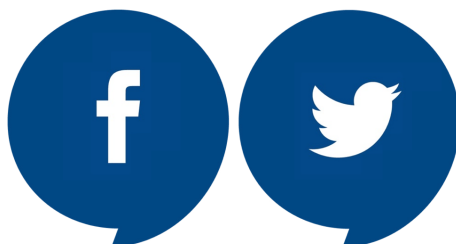
twitter.com/md_early_ed
facebook.com/msde.earlyed

Office of Child Care Director, Jenn Nizer

facebook.com/jenn.nizer.7

Assistant State Superintendent, Steven Hicks

twitter.com/stevenhicksmsde



Family Engagement

twitter.com/MDEngageEarly
facebook.com/MDEngageEarly

Maryland EXCELS

twitter.com/MarylandEXCELS
facebook.com/MDEXCELS



MARYLAND EXCELS



EXCELS 5th Birthday Celebration

July 1, 2018 marked Maryland EXCELS 5th birthday. Maryland

EXCELS is celebrating this milestone with a year-long birthday campaign. The campaign kickoff party (attended by 300 participating child care providers) was July 27, 2018 during an Orioles game at Camden Yards.

The celebration continues September 2018 through June 2019 with regional parties throughout Maryland. Get all the details at marylandexcels.org/birthday.

NEW! EXCELS 2.0

To continue to meet the needs of our growing community of high quality child care and early education providers and programs, Maryland EXCELS will be launching a new system in October 2018.

Visit marylandexcels.org/system/ for details and the latest information about 2.0.

Year of **BONUSES!**

“Getting Published Pays”

We are thrilled to announce that from October 1, 2018 through September 30, 2019, bonuses will be paid to Maryland EXCELS participating programs upon first-time publication of a quality rating 1 through 5, and for programs republishing a quality rating 5.



Learn more by visiting marylandexcels.org/bonus.

Maryland EXCELS New Discount Vendor

Maryland EXCELS is excited to partner with Constructive Playthings to offer participating providers a special discount on thousands of supplies and educational toys. Visit Benefits to Participants to take advantage of this and many other great opportunities to save on child care and early education supplies and resources.



As of July 2018, Maryland EXCELS has 4,508 child care and early education programs participating. Their commitment to providing quality for the families and children of Maryland is nothing short of inspiring. Be sure to check out the Provider Spotlight articles on MarylandEXCELS.org for vital examples of such incredible work.

In the Community

The Maryland EXCELS Team is busy in the community connecting with families to promote all of our hard working programs.

WTMD 89.7 Radio Masquerade Ball

On Saturday, May 5, WTMD radio station hosted the Saturday Morning Tunes Mini Masquerade Ball at Modell Performing Arts Center at The Lyric in Baltimore.



Children were dressed in their nicest attire for this fun, engaging event. Maryland EXCELS provided maracas for children to shake to popular













dance tunes. The Maryland EXCELS team also interacted with hundreds of families to help educate them about how to choose high-quality child care and early education programs!

Orioles Kids Call of the Game

Fourteen children from Maryland EXCELS programs participated in the 2018 Kids Call of the Game. Participating children recorded moments in history and fun facts from past Orioles games at the Entercom studios in Baltimore. The recordings were aired



on the Orioles Radio Network preceding Sunday games throughout the summer. Check out the list above for the programs that were represented during the 2018 Kids Call of the Game!

-  Sonya's Family Daycare
-  Huber Child Development Center
-  Watch Me Grow Child Development Center
-  Growing Seeds Childcare
-  ABC Care
-  Royal Kids Child Care
-  Kids N Motion
-  St. Agnes School After Care Program
-  Prime Time Youth Activity Center
-  Little Foot Enrichment Learning Center
-  Takoma Park Child Development
-  Freetown Elementary SACC

Blue Crab Season!



As a sponsor of this baseball game against the Lancaster Barnstormers, Maryland EXCELS gave

away 50 tickets to show our appreciation to child care programs. The EXCELS team attended the game to engage with families and promote programs participating in Maryland EXCELS. The evening wrapped up with a fireworks show sponsored by Maryland EXCELS!

For a full list of baseball events where Maryland EXCELS interacted with families and spread the word about the importance of choosing quality child care and early education, visit marylandexcels.org/baseball.

Would you like Maryland EXCELS to take part in a community event near you?

Email us at social@marylandexcels.org.

The First Maryland EXCELS Billboard



Maryland EXCELS first billboard went up May 4, 2018 in Cambridge on Rt. 50. The billboard will stay up through the end of October to publicize more than 4,500 programs throughout the state and help families choose high-quality child care and early education.

Maryland EXCELS wants to make sure that our message about finding and choosing quality child care is reaching families in the community! Last spring during our radio campaigns, we heard from providers all over the state that families found them after hearing about Maryland EXCELS on the radio. So we are back at it, teaming up with the best radio personalities in the area to help spread the word!



Tune in and listen for the latest Maryland EXCELS radio campaigns running on 92Q (92.3) and Mix 106.5.

92Q and Maryland EXCELS on Facebook Live



92Q Jams Baltimore DJ Persia Nicole interviewed Maryland EXCELS Quality Assurance Specialist Audrey Cupe-Green and Project Manager Sara Ott on

Facebook Live. This dynamic conversation highlighted the importance of helping families find high-quality child care and early education programs.

[facebook.com/92QJamsBaltimore/videos/2035335276481805/](https://www.facebook.com/92QJamsBaltimore/videos/2035335276481805/)

Over the past year, Persia has been a tremendous partner in helping spread Maryland EXCELS' message to the Baltimore community. She can personally attest to the benefit of Maryland EXCELS because she used our mobile app to find child care for her young son.

Saturday Morning Tunes

Maryland EXCELS sponsors Saturday Morning Tunes, a monthly WTMD (89.7 FM) live concert event featuring music geared toward families with young children at its Towson studio. Tickets to this kids concert series sell out well in advance of the show with 200 people in attendance.

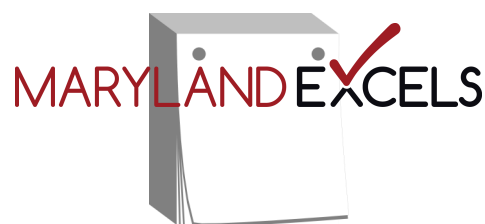


Members of Maryland EXCELS attend each concert to interact with families as they visit the vendor room for breaks and snacks. Get dates and details about each concert by visiting the WTMD website.

Are you a provider or program seeking to participate in Maryland EXCELS or increase your quality rating?

Our Quality Assurance Specialists (QAS) are here to help you throughout your quality improvement journey.

For questions about participating, contact a QAS in your area. For Maryland EXCELS training, visit our [work group and training calendar](#).

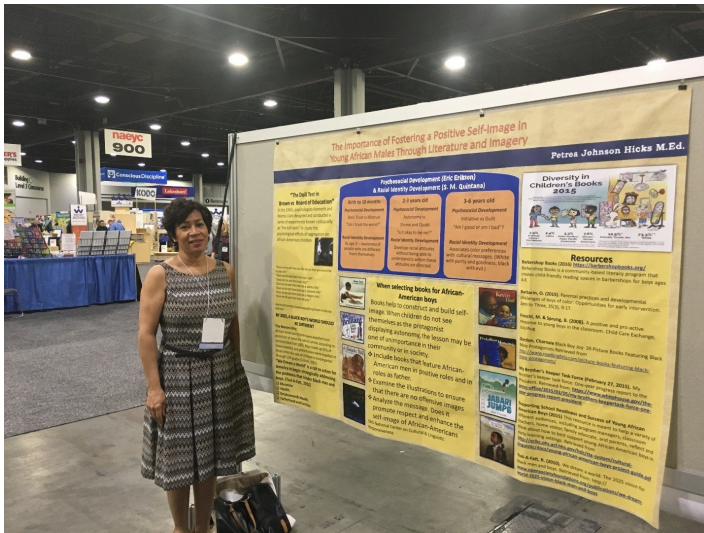


Sign up for Maryland EXCELS eNews

Keep up to date with the latest information impacting the quality improvement of Maryland's child care and early education programs. Visit [MarylandEXCELS.org](https://www.MarylandEXCELS.org) and enter your name and email address at the bottom of the homepage under the "Newsletter" header.

Important Tips from Quality Assurance Specialist Petrea Hicks

After learning of the low representation of books for children of color, I am on a mission to educate early childhood professionals, parents and anyone who advocates for children. I first conducted the training, "The Importance of Fostering a Positive Self-Image in Young African American Males through Literature and Imagery" at Maryland's



Abilities Network Conference and the Virginia Head Start Conference in 2016. I was further energized soon after attending the Ready at Five 2017 School Readiness Symposium "Building

"When you know better, you do better," said American poet and civil rights activist Maya Angelou.

As a child of the sixties, I have seen lots of changes. The Civil Rights movement, school integration and the first African American president of the United States of America. I wrote "The Importance of Fostering a Positive Self-Image in Young African American Males through Literature and Imagery" for Child Care Exchange Magazine to represent that timeline. I reflect on what has changed and, most importantly, what remains the same. All children need to see themselves as displaying autonomy. This builds a positive self-image—one of the foundations of school readiness. However, imagine not being consistently represented in the children's books that are part of your entire childhood experience.

Equity in Early Learning" featuring Dr. Gilliam, Ph. D., Director of the Yale Child Study Center. Dr. Gilliam addressed how African American males are expelled at disproportionately higher rates than any other group and ways this impacts the achievement gap. I shared a poster presentation with early childhood professionals who traveled to Atlanta, GA for the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) 2018 annual conference. Recently, I received approval to conduct this training with the D.C. Office of the State Superintendent of Education. In June, NAEYC accepted my proposal to conduct a 1.5 hour training at the NAEYC 2018 annual conference in Washington D.C. in November 14 - 17, 2018.



Here are my top tips for selecting literature featuring African American males:

- Intentionality is key.
- Provide multiple books with African American males as the main character. All children benefit from regularly seeing positive images in their day-to-day lives.
- Place books throughout multiple learning spaces that create consistent positive self-imagery opportunities.
- Share books that illustrate everyday occurrences. Respect and partnerships emerge when African American families also see themselves in the books children bring home.
- Make books available throughout the year, not just during Black History month or Dr. King's birthday.

In my position with the Maryland State Department of Education Office of Child Care and as a member of NAEYC's Black Interest Forum, I am working to not just do better but be better.

If you're interested in reading the entire article, visit Child Care Exchange Articles on Demand. Create an account to select any five articles of your choice for free. childcareexchange.com/catalog/articles/

Petrea Hicks was named Child Care Exchange Leadership Initiative Master Leader in 2015. She is a Quality Assurance Specialist with Maryland EXCELS, Maryland's Quality Rating and Improvement System where she offers technical assistance, monitoring and coaching to enhance the quality of child care programs. Hicks creates and conducts approved professional development training for early education agencies and Maryland State Department of Education. She is also CEO/ Early Education Trainer, XYZ the end result LLC.

How to Participate In Maryland EXCELS

Any licensed or registered center-based program, Head Start, family child care professional, public prekindergarten, or school-age program that is open and operating is eligible to participate in Maryland EXCELS. As a Maryland EXCELS participant, you commit to quality by engaging in an ongoing process of self-evaluation and improvement on behalf of your program.

For programs to receive Child Care Subsidy reimbursement, they must participate in the quality rating and improvement system, Maryland EXCELS.

Programs wishing to participate should complete a two-step process of registering and applying.

1
Register as a New User

2
Complete an application

Register and apply at marylandexcels.org

Starting the Maryland Accreditation Process



Are you a public or non-public early childhood or school-age program considering pursuing Maryland Accreditation? Maybe you aren't sure of what your next steps should be? Maryland Accreditation includes Standards in the areas of program administration, program operation, and home and community partnerships.

Learn more about how to get started with the accreditation process at

earlychildhood.marylandpublicschools.org/child-care-providers/maryland-excels/maryland-accreditation

Family Child Care providers interested in pursuing accreditation should visit the National Association for Family Child Care at nafcc.org/Getting-Started.

You're Invited to...

Connect with
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Quality child care and early education matter.



Visit, follow, share and interact with Maryland EXCELS on social media @ [marylandEXCELS](https://twitter.com/marylandEXCELS)

Subsidy 101

The Child Care Subsidy (CCS) Program provides financial assistance with child care costs to eligible working families in Maryland. The program is managed through a centralized vendor - Child Care Subsidy Central (CCS Central).



For programs to receive Child Care Subsidy reimbursement, they must participate in the quality rating and improvement system, Maryland EXCELS.

Need an application for a family to apply for a voucher?

Applications, forms and additional information are available at earlychildhood.marylandpublicschools.org/child-care-subsidy-program

Submit completed vouchers to:
 Child Care Subsidy
 PO Box 17015
 Baltimore Maryland 21297
 Fax: 410.229.0053

Need to contact CCS Central? Call 1-866-243-8796

How the Tuition Reimbursement Credit Should be Applied

The Office of Child Care hopes the Tuition Reimbursement(s) helped the entire child care community - children, families and providers! Child care providers receiving the funds on behalf of eligible families are to credit the account of any family whose voucher does not cover the full child care tuition. The credit is to be maintained and applied until a zero balance is reached. If the family is no longer in care or not longer attends the child care program, the child care program is to use the Tuition Reimbursement(s) to enhance the overall quality of care provided to all children served within the program. Here are few key things to remember:

- Child care providers should insert the name of their program at the top of the form.
- What is most important is for both the child care provider and the parent to review, sign and reach the same understanding about how the funds will be used.
- As programs are monitored through MSDE, child care providers may be asked to show how these funds were applied to the families accounts. This is to be sure that they were applied correctly to tuition.
- This will not affect a providers monitoring visit results, but if a program cannot show how these funds were applied to families accounts, it could effect future tuition reimbursements issued, such as these.

We thank each of you and child care providers for the difference you make in the lives of children and families.

Changes to Subsidy Eligibility

Effective August 1, 2018, Families in the following income categories may be eligible for a Child Care Subsidy:

Family Size	Maximum Annual Income
Family of 2	\$48,637
Family of 3	\$60,081
Family of 4	\$71,525
Family of 5	\$82,969
Family of 6	\$94,413
Family of 7	\$96,558
Family of 8	\$98,704
Family of 9	\$100,850
Family of 10	\$102,996

Note: CCS Applications submitted prior to August 1, 2018 and were denied for being over-income will need to submit a new application to CCS Central, if the current income falls within the effective income scale.

Credentialing Branch Updates

**Are you a credentialed provider?
Need to contact the Credential Program?
Have Questions?**

Mail or fax your Maryland Child Care Credential Program application to Child Care Central.

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



Do not mail your credential program application packet to MSDE Headquarters. Applications received at MSDE for the Maryland Child Care Credential program will be returned.

Applications, forms and additional information for the Maryland Child Care Credential Program are available at

earlychildhood.marylandpublicschools.org/credentialing

Training Voucher and Reimbursement Program



Did you know that you can submit your

application for Training Voucher or Reimbursement online?

To complete an online application, visit:

earlychildhood.marylandpublicschools.org

Training Voucher and 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 (6) months of the date of training completion.

All supporting documents must be submitted.

If awarded a training voucher, you must:

1. Sign, date and present voucher to the trainer/ training organization to complete registration.
2. Successfully complete the training, unless prevented by good cause as determined by the Office of Child Care.
3. Upon successful completion of the workshop, seminar, or other course for which a training voucher was issued and used, the participant shall provide to the Office a copy of the: (1) Transcript; (2) Grade slip; (3) Certificate; or (4) Documentation given by the instructor that indicates successful completion of the training. COMAR13A.14.09

Important: Voucher recipients who do not successfully complete the training will be required to repay the amount of the voucher to the Department and will no longer be eligible to receive a training voucher. For more information, please refer to the "Provider Terms and Acknowledgement" section of the voucher.

There are perks to being a member of a local, state, or national child care professional organization.

A certificate cover sheet is posted online under the Training Voucher and Reimbursement tab on the Division website!

Organizations often host conferences and offer discounted registration fees for members only. Discounted training = more money available for training vouchers/reimbursements!! In addition, credentialed providers are offered 1 Professional Activity Unit (PAU) for membership! That's a WIN-WIN!

Join Today!

Child Care Career and Professional Development Fund

The Office of Child Care congratulates 36 graduates who earned either an Associate or Bachelor's degree from the Child Care Career and Professional Development Fund. The State currently funds 21 colleges/universities with Cecil Community College being the newest participating college.

FY18 Graduates from Community Colleges

Anne Arundel Community College

Amber Sartwell-AAS

Carroll Community College

Jennifer Brine-AAT

Jessica Mielke-AAT

Chesapeake College

Brenda McNair-AAS

Tammy Washington-AAS

College of Southern Maryland

Robert Trott-AAT

Karen Hudgins-AAS

Fabayo Ogunsemowo-AAT

Frederick Community College

Ilavarasi Balamurugan-AAT

Hagerstown Community College

Jennifer Whittington-AAS

Kimberly Crigger-AAS

Nancy Benson-AAS

Ariel Eckstine-AAS

Lori Vieira-AAS

Jennifer Seilhamer-AAT

Taylor Swain-AAT

Harford Community College

No graduates



Howard Community College

Chalese Carthran-AAT

Virginia Dee-AAS

Tanajah Hairston-AAS

Samantha Schrickel- AAT

Shannon Staton - AAS

Breanna Terry- AAS

Renee Crute-AAS (2017)

Marissa Bishop-AAT (2017)

Latrona Jenkins-AAT (2017)

The Community College of Baltimore County

Emily Smith-AAS

Prince George's Community College

Tyra Jackson-AAS

Michele Upshaw-AAS

Montgomery College

Elizabeth Galeas-AAS

Christine Waltz-AAS

Wor-Wic Community College

Kelsey Martinson-AAS

Ranae Smith-AAT

FY18 Graduates from Universities

Notre Dame University

Sara Sotaski-BA

Salisbury University

No graduate

Towson University

Alexandra Proudfoot -BS

University of Maryland Baltimore County

No graduate

University of Maryland Eastern Shore

Babette Hupke -BS

Washington Adventist University

Sonika Wright -BA



“Student Testimonials”

“Howard Community College was going to be my last stop. I was



paying out of pocket on my own and the bills were just adding up. With the grant program I am now able

to attend Coppin State University where I will be getting my bachelor’s degree. With the help of having a staff member walk you through the program and always checking in on you definitely has made things easier. I am truly grateful. Thank you!”

-Tanajah

“I would not have gone to college and earned my degree without the help of the CCCPDF.



The cost alone was a big factor. ... Having a dedicated person here at HCC to

help guide me in class selections and to help with paperwork and cheer me on was a great benefit. My program and the care and teaching I have provided to the children and families has grown and developed to what I feel is first class since going to college. I already had my CDA and National Accreditation before I started school, but learning on a higher level increased my knowledge and gave me more confidence and respect from my clients.”

-Virginia

2019 Tuition Fund Deadline

Calling all Credentialed providers (Level 2 or higher)

- Applications are due by March 1st 2019 to be considered for the Fund.
- Applicants must meet with the participating college coordinator before submitting an application.
- It is required for the college coordinator to sign the CCCPDF checklist ensuring that the application is complete before submission.

Funding Opportunities for Centers and Providers

Funds for Centers and Providers

The Child Care Quality Incentive Grant Program awards child care centers and family child care



providers to enhance the quality of childcare provided to children in Maryland.

Centers and

providers are encouraged to purchase approved materials, equipment, and supplies that create or enhance stimulating learning environments that help children develop physically, socially, emotionally, and cognitively. Child Care Centers and Family Child Care Providers are eligible for an Incentive Grant award once every three (3) years.

Funds for Family Child Care Providers

Family Child Care Provider Direct Grant Fund Program provides reimbursements to registered family child care providers for expenses necessary to achieve or maintain compliance with the requirements of Child Care Licensing. Providers are encourage to acquire compliance-related expenses. Registered family child care providers are eligible for a one-time Provider Grant award. Provider Grant funds are income based and dispersed monthly.

IN REMEMBRANCE

Carroll Community College
CCCPDF student Angela
(Angie) Cawthon Hillman passed away unexpectedly earlier this year. She was an exceptional student, beloved preschool teacher and a devoted mother. Her infectious smile and positive outlook touched all those who had the good fortune to know her. Her deep love for her own children inspired her passion for the children in her care.
She will be greatly missed.

Introducing the New Family Engagement Website: marylandfamiliesengage.org

One-Stop Shop for Family Engagement AND Early Learning **POWERED BY YOU!**

The Maryland State Department of Education’s Division of Early Childhood is proud to announce the new Family Engagement Community Hub



The new website is home to high-quality, rich media and interactive resources. It boasts a clean design and consistent site-wide navigation system with improved menu functionality that will direct you to the information most relevant to you.

Marylandfamiliesengage.org is fully responsive with mobile devices- making it easy to navigate on a wide range of web browsers and portable devices.

marylandfamiliesengage.org is powered by a database of resources—links to child development, family engagement initiatives, research, and more. All of the resources can be sorted by topics and locations, and you can even share your search with providers, parents, families, friends, or colleagues. The best part is you can upload family engagement resources, articles or events to the site from the submit an “event” and “resource” forms on the homepage.

Just remember: It’s Never Too Early to ENGAGE, CONNECT AND LEARN! We have built this new website with early care and education providers, and parents and families, like you in mind!

Connect with us on Facebook/Twitter and subscribe to our e-newsletter *The Toolkit In Action* for more updates! Log on to marylandfamiliesengage.org.



Checking the Status of your Fingerprint Reimbursement Submission



It takes a minimum of 45-90 days for us to process a reimbursement request after we receive it and for payment to get issued by the Comptroller’s Office. For those packages we must return, the 45-90 day period starts over.

Once you have submitted a reimbursement request, you can now check the status of your submissions on the DECD website.

If you are wondering if we received your submission earlychildhood.marylandpublicschools.org/ fingerprinting and review the submission log.

Do NOT panic if you do not see your name/ organization listed. We are adding entries to the file every day and we will post updates every Friday.

What the columns mean:

- FMIS - we have checked to make sure you are in the financial management information system
- CCATS - we have looked you up in our internal provider tracking system to verify information
- A/P - we have submitted the paperwork to MSDE’s accounts payable (A/P). Once A/P completes their work they will forward the package to the Maryland Comptroller’s Office to issue the payment.
- The Comptroller’s Office is allowed up to 30 days to process all requests they receive.

Please be aware that we continue to have a backlog but that we are working our way through it. This may mean that even if you submitted your request several months ago, your package may still get returned for corrections. We ask for your continued patience and understanding. We know this is frustrating and we’re working hard to catch up.

Coming Soon:

MSDE Project-Based Inquiry Curriculum

The new curriculum Children Study Their World, which has been developed by the University of



Maryland, Center for Early Childhood Education and Intervention, for MSDE is nearing

completion. This Project-Based Inquiry curriculum for four year olds will be piloted across the state in several Preschool Development Grant PreK (PDG) classrooms in both child care and public schools in the fall of 2018.

Following this initial pilot the curriculum will be available to child care providers and public PreK classrooms for use in the fall of 2019. Curriculum coaches will be trained this summer to assist with the successful implementation of this curriculum. A companion curriculum for three year olds will follow in the near future.

What's New with the Early Learning Assessment?

Getting Credit

The Early Learning Assessment (ELA), a formative assessment for children 36 to 72 months of age, is for licensed child care programs, Head Start and public school systems.

Child care providers that have successfully completed the ELA 12-hour training are eligible to receive one professional activity unit by

meeting the following requirements:

- Assess at least 50% or 10 (ten) children 3-5 years of age, whichever number is lower, in your child care program using the ELA within the past 12 months
- Administer a minimum of 3 (three) skills, knowledge and behaviors (SKBs) of the ELA to the selected children (i.e., 50% or ten children 3-5 years of age) within the past 12 months
- Administer the 3 (three) SKBs to the selected children at least twice a year (i.e., to show children's performance during two different times of the year) within the past 12 months

The ELA has several new features. Teachers can include notes and child work samples, including video clips, as they observe children (e.g., during center time or small group activities). The ELA is flexible with teachers deciding which items they want to observe and how often. Child care programs also benefit by using the ELA since it is aligned with the Maryland College and Career Readiness Standards and the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment.

Benefits of the ELA:

- * Can be given using a desktop, laptop, tablet, or by paper/pencil.
- * Reports can be printed and shared with parents to note the progress of children.
- * The use of the ELA is free. (i.e., no licensing fee) Can be administered multiple times during the year.
- * All items on the ELA are observational.
- * Can be used as a formative assessment to help qualify for Level 5 in Maryland EXCELS and/or meet accreditation requirements.

- * Participants are eligible for 12 core of knowledge hours upon the successful completion of the training and assessments.

If you are interested in knowing more about the ELA, please view recent webinars that were recorded for child care programs.

ELA Child Care Interest Webinar:

http://bit.ly/ELAIinterest_1_9_18

ELA Child Care Q & A Webinar:

<https://frain.com/player/I38QP?layout=landscape>

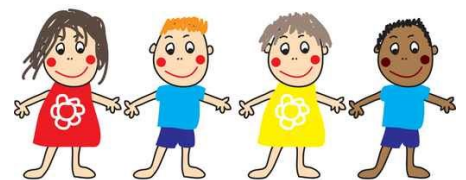
The current enrollment window for child care programs interested in receiving training ends September 15, 2018. Please sign up by completing the online Interest Survey by that date to be eligible for training beginning in October.

Click on the following link to complete the survey:

<http://bit.ly/elainterest>.

Participants will receive a list of trainers, approved by MSDE, about two weeks after the window closes. A free ELA kit will be given to participants upon their successful completion of the 12-hour training. Reimbursement for the training will be handled through the Office of Credentialing.

For questions about the ELA contact Robert Wagner at MSDE: robertwagner1@maryland.gov.



Federal Supports Helping Maryland Children and Families



The Administration for Children & Families (ACF), a division of the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services (HHS), promotes the economic and social well-being of families, children, individuals, and communities. Within the ACF division are the Office of Head Start and the Office of Child Care. They provide funding, strategic partnerships, guidance, training and technical assistance.

Federal Office of Child Care

The Federal Office of Child Care supports low-income working families by providing access to affordable, high-quality early care and afterschool programs. OCC administers the Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) and works with state, territory, and tribal governments to provide support for children and their families juggling work schedules and struggling to find child care programs that will fit their needs and prepare children to succeed in school.

CCDF also improves the quality of care to support children’s healthy development and learning by supporting child care licensing, quality improvements systems to help programs meet higher standards, and support for child care workers to attain more training and education.

To support CCDF services, OCC establishes and oversees the implementation of child care policies, and provides guidance and technical assistance to states, tribes and territories as they administer CCDF programs.

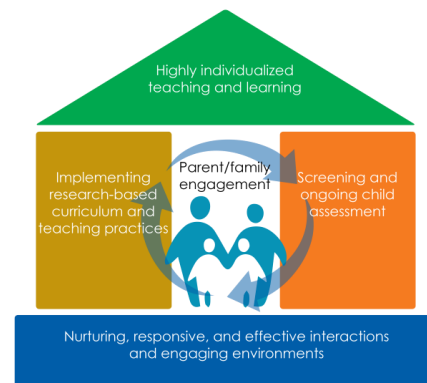
These two programs are supported by the Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center (ELKC). This website is filled with resources to support all child care providers. The Teaching Practices area features a Framework for Effective Practice. This framework from the National Center on Early Childhood Development, Teaching, and Learning uses a house to represent five integral elements of quality teaching and learning for children ages birth to five (5) in all program options.

Office of Head Start

Head Start programs prepare America’s most vulnerable young children to succeed in school and in life beyond school. To achieve this, Head Start programs deliver services to children and families in core areas of early learning, health, and family well-being while engaging parents as partners every step of the way.

Head Start encompasses Head Start preschool programs, which primarily serve 3- and 4-year-old children, and Early Head Start programs for infants, toddlers, and pregnant women. Head Start services are delivered nationwide through 1,600 agencies which tailor the federal program to the local needs of families in their service area. In Maryland 10,069 children attend Head Start Programs.

The five elements of the House Framework include:



Foundation: Providing nurturing, responsive, and effective interactions and engaging environments

First Pillar: Implementing research-based curriculum and teaching practices

Second Pillar: Using screening and ongoing assessment of children’s skills

Roof: Embedding highly individualized teaching and learning

Center: Engaging parents and families

When these elements are connected, they form a single structure that surrounds the family in the center. The family is at the heart of the house because each house element is implemented in partnership with parents and families in their cultural and community context. Staff may use this House Framework to foster children’s development and learning.

For more information go to <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/teachingpractices/article/framework-effective-practice>.

Their First Day: The Transition to Kindergarten

When a child transitions to the formal education system, the child and the family change setting, teacher, and learning culture. Transition means change. These transitions are challenging for parents and families, and especially young children, to navigate.



Preparing families is essential as children transition from early childhood programs to a formal school setting and throughout their school age years to support students' academic, social, emotional, and physical needs. As we already know, fostering a relationship between home and school helps to build relationships with families that support their well-being, sustain strong parent-child relationships, and provide opportunities for ongoing learning and development.

Children and families may experience the following when transitioning into kindergarten:

- Being the youngest students in a large elementary school
- Riding the bus or walking to school for the first time
- Meeting teachers and peers
- Being responsible for completing homework
- Adjusting to a longer day
- Eating in the cafeteria
- Remembering to bring multiple items to school



To

help alleviate the stress of the transition to kindergarten, teachers and providers can:

- Identify the elementary schools in your area for your parents
- Find out about any transition activities at the school or at the library and refer parents
- Bring school system representatives to your program to talk about the transition to kindergarten
- Ask children and families to share their questions and concerns about the transition to kindergarten
- Let children practice being a kindergartener by providing school materials in the dramatic play area
- Organize a field trip to the local school to let children see a kindergarten classroom and the cafeteria

When families are equal partners, students have better attendance, better academic performance, and a more successful pathway into a formal classroom setting. Early childhood programs must be intentional and culturally responsive in their efforts to engage all families, just as schools must be as equally intentional to reach out to early childhood programs to support families in this process.

Learn more about transitions in the Early Childhood Family Engagement Toolkit at marylandfamiliesengage.org.

Ready At Five has what you're looking for - School Readiness Publications!

Please click here for the order form or visit our website at readyatfive.org to find out about the programs we offer and for our Family Engagement Resources and our 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.

10 Most Cited Regulations

for Centers, Homes, Large Family Homes and Letters of Compliance programs between June 2016 and May 2018

Centers	Homes	Large Family Homes	Letters of Compliance
1 Child Records	1 Emergency Forms	1 Emergency Forms	1 Child Records
2 New Employee/ Notifications	2 Admission to Care	2 Child Records	2 New Employee/ Notifications
3 Potentially Hazardous Items	3 Training Requirements	3 Director Training	3 Emergency and Disaster Plan
4 Staffing Pattern	4 Emergency Safety	4 Staffing Pattern	4 Potentially Hazardous Items
5 Teacher Preschool Training	5 Program Records	5 Admission to Care	5 First Aid/ CPR
6 First Aid/ CPR	6 Rooms Used for Care	6 Emergency Safety	6 Admission to Care
7 Aide Training	7 Potentially Hazardous Items	7 First Aid/ CPR	7 Staff Records
8 Staff Records	8 Activities	8 Notification	8 Staff Health
9 Good Repair/ Building Safety	9 Cleanliness and Sanitation	9 Teacher Training	9 Medication Administration
10 Director Training	10 Outdoor Activity	10 Program Records	10 Good Repair/ Building Safety

Find out more about Licensing regulations at earlychildhood.marylandpublicschools.org/child-care-providers/licensing

Support for Dual Language Learners: Resources for Working with Children and Families



World-class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA), is one of the leaders in advancing academic language

development and academic achievement for children and youth who are culturally and linguistically diverse through high quality standards, assessments, research, and professional learning for educators. WIDA has released the Early English Language (E-ELD) and Early Spanish Language

(E-SLD) Development Standards for use by early childhood practitioners, including child care, Head Start, preschool/prekindergarten educators, and caregivers all over the world. This link, <https://www.wida.us/standards/EarlyYears.aspx> will provide you with several resources to guide you in working with children and families who are dual language learners. WIDA also has a downloadable library of other resources that can be used with families located in the upper right hand corner of the site.

WIDA's "Can Do" philosophy highlights the things children can do as dual language learners versus the things they cannot do. All child care providers know that any assistance, early detection and interventions for dual language learners can be detrimental to a child's future learning. Please take advantage of the FREE resources that come in many different languages.



EARLY YEARS



Safety for Immigrant Families in Early Childhood Programs

Given concerns expressed by families regarding recent immigration activity, the U.S. Departments of Education and Homeland Security released a joint policy providing general guidance on protections for schools and early childhood programs.

Many people are aware that immigration agents are not supposed to arrest and apprehend people at places like schools, hospitals, and churches. Early childhood programs—including known and licensed child care, Head Start, preschool, preK, and other early learning programs—fall under the definition of “schools.” Preschool and child care sites are “sensitive locations” in which immigration enforcement actions should not occur.

The policy defines schools as **known and licensed daycares, pre-schools and other early learning programs; primary schools; secondary schools; post-secondary schools up to and including colleges and universities; as well as scholastic or education-related activities or events.** It also provides protection to school bus stops that are marked and/or known to the officer, during periods when children are present at the stop.

Read the joint policy and learn more about sensitive locations and dealing with U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) agents at earlychildhood.marylandpublicschools.org

Provider Post: Safe Use of Social Media



In today's society, many people use some form of social media and as early childhood educators we must be mindful of what we send out into the cyber world. You can use social media as a positive tool to promote your program, share ideas with other providers, and learn how to improve the quality of your program. At the same time, over-use of this technology or not realizing that the comments you make over the Internet are permanent, can get you into trouble. We sometimes fail to consider the impact of what we post online. Some programs now have a policy about how employees use social media such as Facebook, but regardless of your center's policy, here are four things to remember when using social media.

1. Draw the line

Maintain appropriate boundaries with children, families and colleagues when interacting online. Blurring the lines between one's public and private lives has always been a key concern for professionals entrusted with caring for children. Be sure to maintain professional relationships when using social media. A safe relationship is threatened when the boundaries become blurred or unclear, particularly when dual

relationships are created. The relationship moves from the professional into the personal realm.

2. Respect their privacy

Ensure that everyone's privacy and confidentiality is maintained. Many parents are not comfortable with photos of their children posted on social media. If sharing photos of kids is something you want to do make sure that you have a signed form with written permission to take and use photos. Be aware that if you share photos of child care children, it may upset clients or turn off perspective clients. Do not post about or discuss children, negative/sensitive situations, and confidential and/or identifying information about children, parents, or colleagues.

3. Understand the consequences

Actions online and content posted can negatively affect your reputation among families, colleagues, and the program where you work; it may even have consequences for your career. Once a post is out there, it is there for world to see and it doesn't disappear.

4. Separate the two

Consider separating personal and professional content online. That is, you might have a personal Facebook or Instagram page and a professional one, using different versions of your name. Do not share anything controversial on your social media pages. Your professional pages should stay neutral in sensitive topics, like politics or religion.



Update Your LOCATE Record



**MARYLAND
FAMILY
NETWORK**

LOCATE: Child Care
marylandfamilynetwork.org
(Toll-Free) 877.261.0060

Every day, parents contact Maryland Family Network's LOCATE: Child Care for comprehensive information to make informed decisions about child care. The more complete and current a child care provider's record is, the better MFN can help parents find and choose the right child care program.

If you are child care provider, please review and update your record today at

locate.marylandfamilynetwork.org/Provider/login.

Your information will be reviewed and made active in MFN's database within just two business days.

Everyone who updates their record will be entered into our sweepstakes for a \$50 Amazon gift card. If you need a paper copy of the questionnaire, please call MFN's LOCATE Provider Line at 866.752.1614.



Strengthening Families Maryland Parent Cafes

Hundreds of parents throughout Maryland have participated in Maryland Family Network's Strengthening Families Maryland Parent Cafés. These are structured opportunities for parents of children ages zero - five to come together and talk with one another about topics which can help to keep their families strong. Based on the five research-informed protective factors that have been identified by the Center for the Study of Social Policy to build family strengths and help reduce the likelihood of child abuse and neglect, Parent Cafés are a peer-to-peer process which engage parents in meaningful conversations and provide significant opportunities for parent engagement and parent leadership.

Of Maryland Parent Café participants last year, 98% said the experience was helpful to them and 97% said they would attend another Parent Café. In addition, as a result of participating in the Parent Café, 93% said they will be more willing to ask for help when they need it, 98% said they plan to take better care of themselves, and 95% said they learned something that will help them as a parent. Participants in one Strengthening Families Maryland Parent Café shared this about their experience:

- "It helped me to be a better mother and to better understand my children's needs."
- "I learned that it is beneficial to talk about one's problems with others, it makes one feel better about them selves, and that it is

not good to keep your feelings bottled up, it only makes you feel more isolated."

- "It helped me to be a better person, by better considering things I can make better decisions for my home and my loved ones, and to be more positive."
- "What did we learn? To love ourselves more in order to better love others."

Register Now for MFN's 9th Annual Sandra J. Skolnik Lecture

Richard V. Reeves will be the



lecturer at Maryland Family Network's 9th Annual Sandra J. Skolnik Lecture on October 4th at 5:30 PM. A senior fellow in

Economic Studies and co-director of the Center on Children and Families, Reeves' research focuses on social mobility, inequality, and family change. Prior to joining Brookings in 2013, he was director of strategy to the UK's Deputy Prime Minister. Reeves' latest book is called *Dream Hoarders: How the American Upper Middle Class Is Leaving Everyone Else in the Dust, Why That Is a Problem, and What to Do about It*. Dream Hoarders acknowledges the conventional wisdom of focusing on the excesses of the top 1% but says the more important, and widening, gap in American society is between the upper middle class -- incomes are in the top 20% of American society -- and everyone else.

Register now at **marylandfamilynetwork.org.**



Welcomes New Executive Director



The Executive Leadership Committee of Ready At Five is pleased to announce that Keri Hyde, former Administrator for the Howard County Office of Children and Families, within the Howard County Government, has been named the new Executive Director. "Keri is exceptionally well qualified to lead our organization," said Meredith Callanan, Chair of the Ready At Five Executive Leadership Committee. "She brings tremendous collaboration, partnership and management skills, along with a deep commitment to young children, their families and the teaching profession. The entire Executive Leadership Committee looks forward to working with Keri as she leads the next phase of our work."

Hyde has spent more than 15 years in the Howard County Government addressing issues impacting

children, youth and families, and working closely with the Howard County Public School System and the Early Childhood Advisory Council. She is an innovative leader with an extensive background in public-private partnerships, family engagement and community-based programming. Prior to her work in local government, she was an elementary school teacher in Carroll County, and started her career in social services, working with individuals and families facing substance abuse.

Ms. Hyde holds a post-graduate certification in Elementary Education from McDaniel College, and a bachelor's degree in Sociology and Anthropology from Washington and Lee University.

Working with the Executive Leadership Committee and the Ready At Five staff, Hyde will advance the organization's mission to improve the practice and quality of early childhood education so that all children in Maryland enter kindergarten ready to succeed. She is also charged with supporting the organization's long-term financial sustainability and building public awareness and support for Ready At Five's work.

"Over the past 15 years, I have engaged with Ready At Five in a variety of ways and have always been impressed with the work and commitment of this organization," said Ms. Hyde. "I am excited about the opportunity to be a part of the future of Ready At Five, as we work collaboratively to ensure that all of Maryland's children are ready to succeed."

Ms. Hyde began her new role with Ready At Five on Monday, July 16, 2018.

We Need You... You can Make a Difference!



A Note from Ready At Five:

Please help Ready At Five improve the practice and quality of early learning in Maryland and join our list serve.

[readyatfive.org/resourcesdownloads/ newsletter.html](http://readyatfive.org/resourcesdownloads/newsletter.html)

Ready At Five is a self-sustaining program of the Maryland Business Roundtable for Education (MBRT) and does not receive funding from the MBRT. One-time or monthly donations of \$100 or more are sought and gratefully accepted to expand Ready At Five's impact. To contribute this; or any amount visit

readyatfive.org/donate-to-ready-at-five.html



R E S O U R C E S

Maryland EXCELS Toolkit Connection

We are continuing to expand providers' knowledge about quality child care and early learning with the help of the Maryland EXCELS Toolkit.

The Toolkit offers individualized experiences based on program type and children's ages, step-by-step guides with requirements for each Maryland EXCELS standard, and a Policy and Statement Builder tool for developing or revising policies, handbooks and documentation.

Over 3,500 users have accessed the Toolkit since it launched six months ago! We are excited to see so many providers utilizing the Toolkit to learn about best practice and to achieve and increase their Maryland EXCELS Quality Ratings.



Ready At Five Introduces New Learning Party Curriculum:

The Parent Leadership Learning Party!

This Learning Party, developed in collaboration with experts at Every Person Influences Children (EPIC), 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.

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

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT



CDA Project Entering Its 2nd Year

Now in its second year, Maryland Family Network and the Baltimore City Child Care Resource Center (BCCCRC) are proud to offer the Child Development Associate Project in partnership with Baltimore City Community College (BCCC).

This effort allows for participants in the CDA project to earn 6 college credits and the 90-hour Maryland Child Care Certificate while also working on the CDA requirements.

The CDA is the most widely recognized and only portable credential in the early childhood

education field. It is a widely accepted stepping-stone on the path to a four-year degree in early childhood education. The CDA represents a significantly higher level of professional development than Maryland requires to become a licensed provider.

Program graduates will become more competent child care providers, and that means better prepared young children who will be ready for kindergarten.

Participants (Baltimore City residents only) must apply for the Child Care Career and Professional Development Fund through the BCCC to pay tuition fees while BCCCRC will continue to pay the fee for the CDA application and provide the CDA books.

For additional information on the CDA Project contact Nancy Pelton at npelton@bccrc.org.

Preparing for Active Shooter: Training for Child Care Providers

In 2018 we have seen multiple school shootings in the United States. While none this year have taken place at an early childhood education center, care providers are concerned for their children's safety.

How can child care providers be prepared in the event of an active shooter at their facility?

Maryland Family Network has heard your concerns and is offering the new emergency preparedness training from Child Care Aware® of America: Preparing for Active Shooter: Training for Child Care Providers—the first of its kind aimed specifically for child care providers.

Grounded in real-world evidence, the training examines the lessons of prior mass shootings and also offers child care providers with tactical methods, hands-on exercises and strategies for responding to an active shooter incident as well as developing an individualized active shooter emergency plan.

For more information or to register contact Consuelo Dailey, 410.659.7701 x273 or cdailey@marylandfamilynetwork.org.

Advance Your Child Care Career: Online Professional Development



Maryland Public Television (MPT) supports the professional needs of child care providers in Maryland by offering a variety of

online courses in each Core of Knowledge area. Providers can build career-relevant skills in a flexible learning environment, and earn MSDE-approved clock hours from the comforts of home, or on-the-go.

Choose from 10 self-paced courses designed for family and center-based providers. Each media-rich course includes engaging interactive activities, graded quizzes, and helpful online resources. Through MPT's self-paced courses, early educators build essential knowledge, skills and strategies they can immediately put to use in program settings.

Pre-Service and Continued Training Clock Hours

Family Child Care Series:

- Understanding Child Development
- Curriculum Development
- Creating a Safe and Healthy Family Care Program
- Building an Inclusive Program
- Professionalism: Owing Your Own Business
- Building Community Connections

Continuing Training Clock Hours

- Developmental Screening Overview
- Policies in Your Child Care Center
- Your Career as a Child Care Center Aide
- Child Care Director: Understanding Your Roles

Visit ececourses.thinkport.org to learn more and register!

Explore Early Learning on Thinkport

Prepare children for success in school and create new learning experiences in your child care program with innovative resources from PBS KIDS and Maryland Public Television (MPT). Discover effective ways to help children build early reading, literacy and math

skills using engaging digital games, educational videos and interactive activities. It's all available for free on Thinkport.org, Maryland Public Television's PreK-12 education website.



Get started today and visit Thinkport.org to explore our early childhood Learning Resources, Online Courses and Education Community!

New MFN Podcast



**MARYLAND
FAMILY
NETWORK**

*Leading Maryland's
Child Care Resource Centers*

Maryland Family Network has launched a new podcast for child care professionals. Each episode of Child Care Tips, focuses on health and safety topics or best practices for child care providers. The first episode delves into epilepsy and seizures as they relate to young children and their caregivers. This fifteen minute conversation, between MFN's Registered Nurse Consultant Melanie Conway and Latonya Anderson, who is playing the part of a Child Care Provider, provides clear instructions on what to look for, what to do, and who to contact.

Listen now at marylandfamilynetwork.org/mfn-podcast.

P R O V I D E R
P R O F I L E S

Niesha Franklin: An Advocate for Parents



Niesha Franklin believes all parents and families want their children to succeed. As a Howard County Judy Center Family Service Coordinator, she is responsible for providing access to high-quality early childhood programs as well as comprehensive family support services. This includes family well-being and an adult education component, which meet the 12 Component Standards, and Goals One and Four of the Maryland Early Childhood Family Engagement Framework.

“I am constantly advocating for parents to better utilize our community partners,” said Franklin.

Franklin has regularly implemented several family engagement strategies, including parenting skills and health screenings. However, she had experienced a barrier to family engagement after she established a relationship with the local library to create a continued education and workforce development program.

“Unfortunately, some of my

parents didn’t feel comfortable or ‘qualified’ to walk into a library,” said Franklin. “I later learned that they thought it [the library] was just for reading and checking out books.”

By keeping an open mind and gaining a better understanding of the parents Franklin serves, she was able to better support them. As an added benefit, she had help from Ready At Five.

Train the Trainers (Facilitators)

Franklin recognized that her parents would benefit greatly from leadership skills. Still, the question remained: how do you encourage parents to take advantage of much-needed community resources? Ready At Five offered a solution: the Parent Leadership Learning Party (PLLP) Train the Trainers training session.

Natalie Dean, Communications Director for Ready At Five, explained that the PLLP increases parental capacity to engage in their children’s school experience, and to build their own leadership abilities. These leadership skills lend value to parents both in the context of the school community and for their own personal growth. Developed in collaboration with Every Person Influences Children (EPIC), the PLLP curriculum also meets Goal Seven of the Maryland Early Childhood Family Engagement Framework: Family engagement initiatives should support the development of families as leaders and child advocates.

Through the PLLP, Franklin learned how to offer greater support of

parents and families as they take more active roles in their children’s education, early learning programs, schools, and communities.

Sarah Bar Excels with EXCELS

Washington County Family Provider shares her experience with EXCELS

Sarah on joining EXCELS

I wanted to get my name, my business name, out. I wanted to improve the quality of care I offered to my current families and future families. I have worked with children in different child care settings but I wanted to expand my knowledge of new material.

Improving with EXCELS

EXCELS has helped me improve my Parent-Provider Agreement to make sure I have everything I need to cover myself and show parents all of my qualifications. I recently achieved Level 3. I was at a Level 2 for a very long time... Darlene Schmidt (an EXCELS Quality Assurance Specialist) offered to visit me at my home and guide me in the right direction. In conjunction with Darlene’s visit, I went to a workshop on a Saturday to reach Level 3...I have improved on the quality of care I give.

Advice to a provider considering joining EXCELS

I think all providers should join EXCELS! There is help available to assist with the requirements. I have been happy with the help I have received from the EXCELS staff, especially Darlene. If you get overwhelmed take a break and go back to it.

Teaching, Developing and Growing: Special Olympian Shines as Child Care Provider



In February, Alicia Gogue took the Basic Health and Safety course. In the face-to-face version, Alicia did a tremendous job sharing all of her knowledge on this multilayered topic. She was very confident discussing the importance of counting our children and making sure that

we are keeping them safe at all times. As a result of her enthusiasm we are highlighting her accomplishments and sharing her success.

Alicia completed CCBC Single Step Childcare Program at the Dundalk Campus and received the Maryland State 90 Hour Childcare Certificate in May 2006. She initially started working with children between the ages of five and eight at a local church. In October 2004, the School of Incarnation in Gambrills offered Alicia employment to work as a teacher's assistant in the first grade class during regular classroom hours. After school hours, Alicia continues to work in the Extended School Program (ESP) with pre-kindergarten and first grade students. Additionally, she teaches first grade Faith Formation Class on Sundays at the Ft. Meade Chapel Center.

Alicia is determined to do her best and improve herself wherever necessary so that she can provide premier services to PreK and school age children. Her positive attitude and willingness to go beyond the extra mile, combined with successes in other areas which includes sports, continue to make her enthusiastic in caring and working with children of young ages. Elaine Shai from School of the Incarnation shared, "Alicia (fondly known as Alley) began working for the School of the Incarnation Extended School Program in October 2008. Through the years she has worked with our kindergarten and 1st grade classes, caring for and watching over each and every one of them. She loves to do art work with

the children and always comes up with great ideas for holiday art projects. She loves teaching them as she plays games and participates in outdoor activities. All the children call her "Miss Alley". She is a true blessing to our ESP staff and children."

Mrs. Guenther, first grade teacher at SOTI, commented by saying, "I have had the pleasure of working with Alley for over five years in my first grade classroom. As soon as Alley walks into my classroom, she checks to see what needs to be done that day and gets right to work. She files the folders, organizes materials, helps with lunch, and prepares items for classroom activities just to name a few. Alley also helps students with their work. She is very kind and patient and encourages our first graders to work hard. Alley is a diligent worker and puts forth her best every day she is with us. I call her my 'First Grade Angel', a term of endearment that she loves."

Alicia's aspiration to work in an environment with children has come to fruition. Her passion to teach, develop and grow with children has been truly rewarding. She is gifted with reaching out to children and make them feel that "little people" are very important in life.

Baltimore City Head Start Earns MSDE's Highest Rating

Congrats to Union Baptist/Harvey Johnson Head Start in West Baltimore City! The program recently became the first Head Start in the city to earn Level 5, Maryland EXCELS highest quality rating.

Check out the feature article and video on Union Baptist at <http://foxbaltimore.com/news/project-baltimore/baltimore-city-head-start-earnsstates-highest-rating>.



A S S O C I A T I O N S

Introducing MSFCCA's NEW Mission & Vision Statement!

Our Mission:

The mission of the Maryland State Family Child Care Association (MSFCCA) is to educate, unify and advocate to strengthen the profession of family child care; enriching the lives of providers, children, families and communities.



Our Vision:

We envision MSFCCA as leaders and experts that empower and support family child care providers with continual professional growth, networking opportunities, and collaborative relationships with stakeholders in order to enrich Family Child Care.

Email contact@msfcca.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 obligation 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.

Work with us to make MSFCCA the Family Child Care Voice of Choice!

msfcca.org | contact@msfcca.org | 240-994-0292 | Jacqueline Grant, President, MSFCCA

Top 5 Reasons to join the Maryland State Child Care Association (MSCCA)

- 1 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.
- 2 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.
- 3 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.
- 4 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.
- 5 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 mscca.org to join MSCCA. For more info contact Christina Peusch, Executive Director at: mscca1@comcast.net or call 410-820-9196

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 organizations 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.

For more information please contact Simeon Russell at: execdir@md-hsa.org



Over 10,069 children attend Head Start Programs in Maryland. Learn more about Head Start on page 17.

Maryland Early Childhood Professionals (MECP)



The MECP mission aligns with the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) to empower those who care for and educate young children. Our vision is

to promote high quality early childhood education standards and to improve the status of the profession through education and compensation. MECP, in conjunction with Partners across Maryland, continues to offer:

- ◆ Professional development opportunities
- ◆ A chance to connect with other professionals in your community
- ◆ A voice in early care and education policy issues

MECP Values:

Support for the best interests of the child, particularly all of Maryland’s children and especially those in non-parental care, through accessible, high-quality, and developmentally appropriate programs and practices.

Improving public and governmental understanding, appreciation, and respect for the early childhood professionals who teach and care for Maryland’s children.

Competency, continuity, and enthusiasm of those professionals educating and providing services to children and their families, through equitable, high quality and accessible education, skill development, and compensation.

Look for the new website and go to naeyc.org for more info on membership!



Annual Family Engagement Summit



On Thursday, July 26, 2018, the Division of Early Childhood hosted its annual Family Engagement Summit to bring together parents, providers, teachers, program coordinators, and other stakeholders to learn new early learning initiatives, share best practices and build community partnerships.

During this educational and thought-provoking Summit, the Division also launched Maryland's new Family Engagement community Hub website:

marylandfamiliesengage.org. In addition, over 250 members of the early care and education community also gained access to national and local early learning and child development experts who shared insight on topics affecting today's families such as opioid addiction, immigration, violence, poverty, and more.

In its third year, the 2018 Maryland Family Engagement Summit offered attendees creative approaches to identifying and meeting the needs of parents as well as innovative strategies to engage families and children, and support their mental health and social emotional learning. Early learning and child development expert, Dr. Joyce L. Epstein, director of both the Center on School, Family, and Community Partnerships and the National Network of Partnership Schools (NNPS), and a research professor of education and sociology at Johns Hopkins University, delivered the keynote address. Dr. Epstein has more than 100 publications on the nature and effects of family and community involvement. In 1995, she established NNPS to help school, district, and state leaders develop research-based programs of family and community engagement linked to student success in school.

Judy Center Annual Conference



The bad weather did not stop the 2018 Judy Center Annual Conference at the Hyatt Chesapeake in Cambridge, Maryland. There were 131 total attendees including superintendents and assistant superintendents, principals and vice principals, child care partners, MSDE staff, and teachers! The conference presenters were dynamic

and informative, covering topics of trauma, mental health, transition, teacher burnout, and working with children of incarcerated parents. The conference offered valuable networking time for Judy Centers across the state to share ideas and collaborate. We are already looking forward to next year's conference!

More photos from the Family Engagement Summit



U P C O M I N G E V E N T S

SAVE THE DATES!

Maryland State Child Care Association



Caring For Maryland's Most Important Natural Resource™

Leadership Symposium

Preparing Our Children for the Future

October 11, 2018

Ten Oaks Ballroom
5000 Signal Bell Lane
Clarksville, MD 21029

mscca.org



Maryland State Family Child Care Association



2018 Conference

Child Care Professionals: Unleashing Our Superpowers

October 12 - 14, 2018

CAROUSEL HOTEL & CONDOS
OCEAN CITY, MD

Would you like to be a Volunteer?

Contact Jacqueline Grant at Jacqueline.n.grant@gmail.com
or Jody Lamberti at jlamb75@gmail.com

National Association for the Education of Young Children



NAEYC 2018 Annual Conference

Largest Early Childhood Education gathering in the world

November 14-17, 2018

Washington, DC

naeyc.org

Ready At Five



School Readiness Symposium

The Surprising Importance Of Early Math
Keynote: Douglas H. Clements

December 5, 2018

Turf Valley Conference Center
8:30 AM - 3:30 PM

readyatfive.org



Workgroup and Training Schedule

Looking to advance your professional development and your child care program?

Work directly with a Quality Assurance Specialist to develop, revise and submit documentation when you attend a Maryland EXCELS Workgroup or Training.

Programs and providers can also find training opportunities through the Maryland Family Network. Different formats are available to suit various needs, including online classes, in-person workshops, and having trainers come to your site.

Access the Workgroup and Training Schedule at

earlychildhood.marylandpublicschools.org/child-care-providers/maryland-excels

MARYLAND EXCELS



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IMPACT

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