



PARTNERS

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

What's Next: Criminal Background Check Updates



In our last article, we discussed the changes that will affect child care providers in Maryland as a result of the re-authorization of the Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG) in 2014. Below is a brief summary of the changes as they relate to criminal background checks:

A Federal Bureau of Investigation fingerprint check using Next Generation Identification;
A search of the National Crime Information Center's National Sex Offender Registry; and
A search of the following registries, repositories, or databases in the State where the child care staff member resides **and each State where such staff member resided during the preceding 5 years:**
State criminal registry or repository, with the use of fingerprints being required in the State where the staff member resides, and optional in other States;
State sex offender registry or repository; and
State-based child abuse and neglect registry and database.

Maryland's Criminal Justice Information System (CJIS) anticipates the statewide roll-out of a federal rap-back program in mid-July, 2017. This rap-back will negate the need for a new background check every five years.

The Office of Child Care Regional Licensing offices will notify providers through an email blast once the system goes live. **Please make sure your licensing specialist has your current email address** to ensure you receive timely notification. Providers who fail to meet the new background check requirements will not be allowed to be left with children unsupervised.

We are aware that not only is this a time consuming process for all involved, but it is also costly. Unfortunately, because of the requirements of the CCDBG reauthorization, this is a Federal requirement. To minimize the financial burden, the Office of Child Care will be picking up the cost of the background checks through a reimbursement procedure. The schedule for fingerprinting and reimbursement is indicated in the chart on page 2.

To make certain the background clearance systems can handle the influx of applications at the fingerprinting sites located statewide <https://www.dpscs.state.md.us/publicservs/fingerprint.shtml>, we are asking that child care providers follow these procedures:

If the FBI Rap-Back System is Live:

New providers and providers not fingerprinted within the last 5 years should begin the new fingerprinting process as soon as they receive notification from their regional offices that the system is live. If you are uncertain when you were fingerprinted, please contact your regional office.

Existing providers fingerprinted within the last 5 years, should be fingerprinted no later than the dates listed below to get enrolled in the federal Rap-Back system:

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Stay up-to-date on fingerprinting news at: [earlychildhood.marylandpublicschools.org/ fingerprinting](http://earlychildhood.marylandpublicschools.org/fingerprinting)

If the FBI Rap-Back System is NOT Live:

Providers and staff printed within the past 5 years (from 9/30/17 back):

Maryland residents only need to get a criminal background check from Maryland and any other state(s) of residence during the past 5 years. If the individual has lived at their current residence for 5 years, additional criminal background checks are not necessary at this time. Please wait for further notifications about the status of the system roll-out to get re-fingerprinted.








Non-Maryland residents will need to get fingerprinted in Maryland and their state of residence. They also need criminal background checks from any other state(s) of residence for the past 5 years. If the individual has lived at their current residence for 5 years, additional criminal background checks are not necessary at this time. Please wait for further notifications about the status of the system roll-out to get fingerprinted.

Providers and staff printed more than 5 years ago (from 9/30/17 back):

Maryland residents fingerprinted more than 5 years ago will need to get re-printed for FBI and Maryland in addition to getting criminal background checks from any other state(s) in which they resided during the past 5 years.

Non Maryland residents will need to get criminal background checks for Maryland and their current state of residence and any other states in which they lived during the past 5 years.

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Are You Getting Your Monies Worth?

Approved trainers are expected to provide high-quality training to child care providers in Maryland.

When a trainer or training organization receives approval to provide training hours to child care providers in Maryland, they must submit each training or course to the Office of Child Care (OCC) for a full review of each training or course prior to delivery.

Here's what to look for:

Time – make sure you're getting the right amount of time for your money! When training content is approved, it is approved for the requested number of hours it will take to effectively deliver that content. If a provider is participating in a 45-hour course for example, the trainer is required to provide 45 hours of direct instruction to the participants. You should be spending 45-hours with the instructor.

Materials – make sure you get everything you paid for! Handing participants reading materials and requesting that these materials be read outside of the training or course is allowed however; this activity must never be counted in the instructional hours of any training or course.

If the OCC is notified that a trainer is not providing training for the amount of hours for which they are approved or not delivering direct instruction, the trainer risks having their approval number revoked and participants may be in jeopardy of having to repeat a full course or training. Training provided by trainers without a valid/current approval number are not accepted by the OCC.

YOU are in charge of your professional development and should receive training delivered in the way it was intended, for the hours it was approved. Make sure you are getting your monies worth and that trainers are following regulations...being ethical and providing high-quality training is their responsibility.

For providers who must request criminal history/child protective services (CPS) information from a state other than Maryland (if they resided in a State other than Maryland within the previous 5 years), please follow that state's process for requesting the criminal history and CPS information. **We cannot accept information from the provider** – it may only be accepted directly from that state's central repository or CPS organization.

Fingerprinting:

Filling Out the Livescan Pre-Registration Application
<http://www.dpscs.state.md.us/publicservs/fingerprint.shtml>

Once the federal rap-back program goes live, child care providers should take a copy of the Livescan Pre-Registration Application with them to the fingerprint site of their choice so that the information for the regional authorization numbers is on-hand and easily accessible. There are several sections of the application – all of them need to be filled out prior to fingerprinting.

Regional Authorization Numbers

- 110000016- OCC Region 1 – Anne Arundel County**
- 110000020- OCC Region 2 – Baltimore City**
- 110000031- OCC Region 3 – Baltimore County**
- 110000042- OCC Region 4 – Prince George’s County**
- 110000053- OCC Region 5 – Montgomery County**
- 110000064- OCC Region 6 – Howard County**
- 110000075- OCC Region 7 – Western Maryland (Allegany, Garrett, Washington)**
- 110000086- OCC Region 8 - Upper Shore (Kent, Talbot, Dorchester, Queen Anne, Caroline)**
- 110000090- OCC Region 9 – Lower Shore (Somerset, Wicomico, Worcester)**
- 110000101- OCC Region 10 – Southern Tri-County (Calvert, Charles, St. Mary’s)**
- 110000112- OCC Region 11 – North Central (Cecil, Harford)**
- 110000123- OCC Region 12 – Frederick County**
- 110000182- OCC Region 13 – Carroll County**

Applicant Information:

This section asks for demographic information for the person being fingerprinted, such as name, gender, date of birth, etc.

Agency Information:

This section is specific to the child care business

Agency Authorization:

Child care center staff must use the regional authorization number, the authorization number specific to the child care center and the ORI # below.

Family child care providers will use the regional authorization number and the ORI # below.

ORI # - MD004455Y

Reason fingerprinted – Child care

Position Applied for –

Fill this out according to the position you are seeking

Request Type – Child care

Three Steps & You Are Out: Changes in Procedures for Criminal History Information

*Child care centers, letter of compliance facilities
and large family child care homes –*

There are three steps you must take when an employee transfers out of your organization, resigns, or leaves.

It is your responsibility to contact the Criminal Justice Information System (CJIS) to have that person removed from your employment roster. Once someone leaves your employment, you are no longer legally entitled to receive criminal history information on that person. To request the roster of employees for your organization, send an email to:

EmployeesRosterReport@dpscs.state.md.us

You can email the list, with an 'X' next to the names of the people you want to remove, by returning the list (in the same format) via email to:

EmployeesRosterReport@dpscs.state.md.us

If your roster is current and you would like to remove just one person, you must send an email with the tracking number that was on the criminal background history report and the name of the person.

You must also contact your licensing specialist (in writing) to inform them of the staff change. Once the person is no longer employed by your organization, the Office of Child Care is also no longer legally entitled to receive criminal history information on that person and we must remove them from our roster.

In addition to notifying CJIS and your regional office, you must also notify TJ Bennett at tabatha.bennett@maryland.gov as well. Ms. Bennett has the responsibility of ensuring our rosters remain up-to-date so that we are in compliance with the rules governing criminal history record checks.

You can send one email to all three (CJIS, your licensing specialist and Ms. Bennett) and you will have met the requirement. Please be sure to include the full name and the tracking number for each person.

Family and large family child care providers - If you decide to close your business, you are required to report this to the regional licensing office and Ms. Bennett. Remember to include the names of any other people who were required to be fingerprinted as part of your family child care business and the tracking numbers that were on the criminal background history report.

Everyone - Also – and this is the MOST important of all – if you are hiring a contractor (such as a general contractor who is going to do some maintenance for you, etc.) and you are requiring them to get a criminal background check – do NOT give them the authorization number for the Office of Child Care.

You should supply them with your authorization number only. The Office of Child Care is not legally permitted to have information on these contractors since they aren't providing child care services.



Trazi Verzi of MSDE, left, presents Dr. Gerri-Lynn Ballard, right, with a Governor's Citation.

MSDE Honors Dr. Gerri-Lynn Ballard for Her Service

The Maryland State Department of Education, Division of Early Childhood Development recently recognized Dr. Gerri-Lynn Ballard with a Governor's Citation for her outstanding service and continued dedication.

Dr. Ballard has served the community as an approved trainer for child care professionals officially since 2005 but her commitment to educating child care providers began long before. She has selflessly delivered high quality training and support to child care providers across the state. Dr. Ballard has volunteered her time as a member of various on-going committees within the Office of Child Care. She has been diligent in upholding regulations and requirements. Her willingness to support the community and the state in multiple capacities continues to be an inspiration.

Farewell to LaTanya Taylor – Credentialing Specialist

The Credentialing Branch bids farewell to LaTanya Taylor as her ship sails to pursue her dream. We say thank you and wish you enormous success in your future endeavors. Ms. Taylor coordinated the Child Care Career and Professional Development Fund (CCCPDF) and the Training Voucher/Reimbursement programs.

Training Voucher/Reimbursement and CCCPDF materials or inquiries should be sent to Ruby Wilson.

You should only use our authorization number for staff hired to work directly with children, or staff that are reasonably expected to have contact with children, such as cooks, bus drivers, office staff, etc.

If in doubt about when to supply the Office of Child Care authorization number to someone, please contact Ms. Bennett at: Tabatha.bennett@maryland.gov and she'll provide assistance.

Basic Health and Safety Training is now available!

To take the **FREE** on-line training, go to:
<http://earlychildhood.marylandpublicschools.org/basic-health-safety-training>

Childcare
Training



Note: *The knowledge check required at the end of this training must be hand scored before the certificate is generated and sent via email to the provider. This process may take 10-14 business days.*

Who is required to take the Basic Health and Safety Training?

All child care providers and staff (aides, teachers, directors, family child care providers, additional adults, and co-providers) are required to complete an approved training.

When must the training be completed?

The Health and Safety training is a pre-service requirement for new child care providers and staff. Current child care providers and staff should complete the training by July 1, 2017. Both the on-line version and approved face-to-face versions will count toward meeting the yearly Core of Knowledge training requirement.

What happens if the on-line training knowledge check is not passed?

If a provider or staff take the training on-line and do not pass the knowledge check with a 75% or higher they may take the on-line training again. If they do not pass the second attempt they will be required to successfully complete the training in an approved face-to-face format.

Is the training available in other languages?

A Spanish version of "*Health and Safety Basics: Requirements for Certification*" is available from Penn State Better Kid Care. Certificates are issued for CEU credit so a small fee is charged by Penn State for processing. This is currently the only Health and Safety Training available in another language recognized by MSDE- Office of Child Care.

Information will be updated with additional training offerings in other languages as it becomes available.
<http://extension.psu.edu/youth/betterkidcare/lessons/espanol>

Does this training need to be updated?

Training must be taken annually (every 12 months) based on the initial completion date for current providers and staff or 12 months from date of employment for new staff. The Office of Child Care will send out and have available on the website a yearly update that all child care providers and staff will be expected to read and sign and is to be placed in the personnel file at the program. Providers and staff may simply read, sign and file the acknowledgment of the yearly update in their personnel file OR choose to take the online or face-to-face training again and file the certificate of completion with their training records. This on-line version will be updated yearly, if needed. Clock hours will only be counted for the initial completion of this training. Yearly updates will not be recognized for meeting yearly training requirements.

If you have further questions, please contact your Licensing Specialist.

The
SEFEL
website
has a
new
look!

The updated site now features eye-catching design and easier navigation. The site includes enhanced resources, such as:

teaching children to cooperate with requests, handling challenging behaviors, classroom tools for teaching social-emotional skills, and how to choose a social, emotional curriculum.



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Multiple tools to teach strategies to promote healthy development, as well as communication and the necessary strategies and activities to help develop pro-social behaviors in children are also included.

Multiple tools

The SEFEL website is the perfect tool for parents, providers, and trainers or anyone working with children on social-emotional skills. Check out the new look at site at <https://theinstitute.umaryland.edu/SEFEL/>.



A Happy Provider is a Paid Provider

Child care providers are business owners. You have the right to establish your own policies and procedures. Incorporating the following suggestions into your policies and procedures will reduce hardship resulting from not being paid timely or from not being paid for all services rendered.

Parents and providers can reduce confusion related to child care subsidy payment by following these four suggestions:

- ◆ If payment is expected from the Maryland Child Care Subsidy Program, enroll the child only at the point when the parent can produce a voucher;
- ◆ Only provide child care services within the authorization dates on the child care subsidy voucher, never before or after;

- ◆ Require payment for services not covered by the child care voucher weekly, this minimizes financial loss in the event the parent chooses not to continue care with your facility; and
- ◆ Submit vouchers and invoices upon receipt and completion.

The Maryland Child Care Subsidy Program is an excellent program that allows children from low-income families to access quality child care. The Maryland State Department of Education appreciates all providers that participate in the Child Care Subsidy Program. Our goal is to pay providers accurately and timely. If you follow the above suggestions, the parent-provider-payment relationship is less likely to encounter conflicts revolving around money. *When payment for child care is not an issue, all parties benefit - especially the child!*

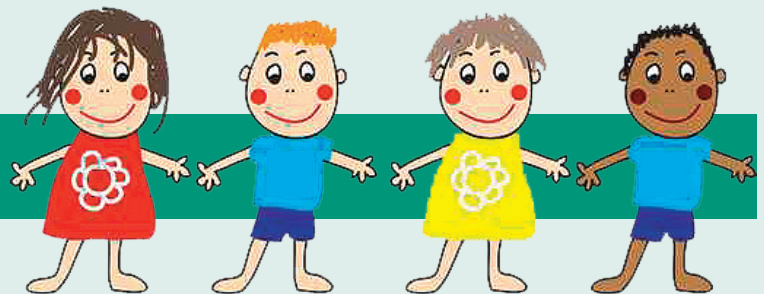
Recommended list

Recommended list of early childhood curricula for 3 and 4 year olds has been updated

The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE), responsible for early care and education programs throughout the state, has updated its recommended list of early childhood curricula for 3 and 4 year olds for child care, Head Start programs, and nursery schools.

Find the updated list at <http://earlychildhood.marylandpublicschools.org/child-care-providers/early-childhood-curriculum>.

MSDE is in the process of developing a comprehensive curriculum for programs for 3 and 4 year olds. The curriculum will be accessed on line at no cost. A list of supplementary materials and resources that programs may purchase will be provided.



Programs implementing MSDE recommended curricula with an expiration date of December 2017 can continue to use this curriculum until the time that the new MSDE developed curriculum is available for public use.

Once the MSDE developed curriculum is available programs currently implementing MSDE recommended curricula with an expiration date of December 2017 will have the choice of:

Implementing the MSDE developed curriculum or; Purchasing and implementing a curriculum on the MSDE State Recommended Curriculum list that has not expired.

The Early Learning Assessment (ELA) is aligned with the Maryland College and Career Ready Standards and the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment. Child care programs, Head Start and public school systems are using the ELA for children 36 to 72 months of age.

The teacher can select and administer observational items that best support the children and curricula needs of the program with the number of assessment items being flexible. Comments and student work samples can be added to any item by the teacher.

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
- Minimal cost for training and the use of the ELA is free
- Can be administered multiple times during the year

More than 500 programs have expressed an interest in the ELA. The current enrollment window for child care programs interested in receiving training on the Early Learning Assessment is April 16 to July 15, 2017. Programs must sign up by completing the online Interest Survey no later than July 15 to be eligible for training beginning in August. By completing the survey, you are not obligated to attend training. *Please click on the following link to complete the survey:* <http://bit.ly/elainterest>

Maryland Family Network (MFN) is providing training to child care programs through a grant with MSDE. For training information contact Jennifer Lentz at MFN: jlentz@marylandfamilynetwork.org

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

For more information on the ELA, go to: <https://connect.johnshopkins.edu/p13p9bqp64a/>

Child Care Credential Program Application Basics



Child Care Central

PO Box 598, Baltimore, MD 21203
Fax Number: 410.229.0145

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

*Do not mail your application packet to MSDE. Applications received at the Maryland State Department of Education for the Maryland Child Care Credential program will be returned.



We are still receiving an average of thirty to forty credentialing applications at MSDE monthly. ***These applications are returned to sender immediately upon receipt.***



It Pays to be a Credentialed Provider!

Some of the benefits for participating in the Maryland Child Care Credentialing Program are:

- Achievement bonuses
- Training Voucher/Reimbursement up to \$400.00 yearly if credentialed at level 2 or higher
- Tuition Assistance - We will pay for your tuition, books and college fees if you are enrolled in an ECE degree program if credentialed at level 2 or higher
- Career pathway

The Credentialing Branch encourages family child care providers and center staff to apply for the Maryland Child Care Credentialing program. We accept applications all year round.

Providers who previously participated but their credential has expired are encouraged to submit new applications. ***We Want You Back!***

Currently enrolled in the Maryland Child Care Credentialed Program

Provider Region

| | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------|
| 1 - Anne Arundel County..... | 759 |
| 2 - Baltimore City..... | 770 |
| 3 - Baltimore County..... | 1115 |
| 4 - Prince George's County..... | 811 |
| 5 - Montgomery County..... | 723 |
| 6 - Howard County..... | 644 |
| 7 - Western Maryland..... | 381 |
| 8 - Upper Shore..... | 238 |
| 9 - Lower Shore..... | 317 |
| 10 - Southern Tri Counties..... | 468 |
| 11 - Harford and Cecil Counties.. | 295 |
| 12 - Frederick County..... | 465 |
| 13 - Carroll County..... | 406 |
| Grand Total..... | 8392 |

Provider Facility Type

| | |
|------------------------------------|-------------|
| Large Family Child Care Home..... | 4 |
| Letter of Compliance Facility..... | 170 |
| Licensed Child Care Center..... | 7574 |
| Registered Family Child Care.... | 644 |
| Grand Total..... | 8392 |

Provider levels

| | |
|-------------------------|-------------|
| Admin Level 1..... | 58 |
| Admin Level 2..... | 12 |
| Admin Level 3..... | 5 |
| Admin Level 4..... | 48 |
| Staff Level 1..... | 1138 |
| Staff Level 2..... | 945 |
| Staff Level 3..... | 2630 |
| Staff Level 4..... | 1399 |
| Staff Level 4+..... | 178 |
| Staff Level 5..... | 769 |
| Staff Level 6..... | 1200 |
| Grand Total..... | 8392 |

Training Voucher and Reimbursement Program

Receive up to \$400 each credential year for Training and Professional Development!

Training Vouchers and Reimbursement are designed to assist child care professionals participating in the Maryland Child Care Credentialing Program at Level Two or higher with the costs of training and professional development. **Funds can be used for:**

- Approved Core of Knowledge Training
- Pre-Service Courses
- Registration at local, state and national child care conferences

Training Voucher and Reimbursement Applications can now be submitted online! Participants must be able to upload required documents for each application. Incomplete applications will not be processed. For more information, visit: <http://earlychildhood.marylandpublicschools.org/>

Training Voucher and Reimbursement Applications can also be mailed to:

**MSDE-Credentialing Branch
200 West Baltimore St. 10th Floor
Baltimore, MD 21201**

Child Care Career and Professional Development Fund

Current fund participants must submit a continuation application by June 30th.

The next deadline for submitting new applications is March 1, 2018. Interested participants are encouraged to submit a credential application 30-60 days before the deadline for submitting the CCCPDF application.

205 new applications were received by the March 1st deadline!

Applicants were notified of approval or denial by **4/30/2017**.

Are you interested in pursuing an associate's or bachelor's degree?

The Child Care Career and Professional Development Fund (CCCPDF) is a tuition assistance program for Child Care providers to obtain a college education at participating colleges/universities in Maryland. Funding is available for child care providers to earn a college degree in the following areas:

- ▼ **Early Childhood Education**
- ▼ **Child Development**
- ▼ **Elementary Education**
- ▼ **Special Education**

Eligibility Requirements:

CCCPDF applicants must meet the following requirements to receive funds (COMAR 13A.14.09):

- Participate in the Maryland Child Care Credential Program at Level Two or higher
- Work in a licensed child care center or be a registered family child care provider in Maryland and work at least 10 hours per week
- Fulfill entrance requirements at the participating college of your choice
- Have at least one year of documented experience working with groups of children in an approved setting

■ Maintain employment in child care in Maryland while participating in the Program

■ Participate in professional development

■ Agree to complete the child care service requirement in Maryland for at least 10 hours per week after completion of the degree and/or withdrawal from the fund

■ Maintain at least a 2.50 cumulative GPA from the point of first entering the Program

For more information about the application process and a list of participating colleges, please visit our website: <http://earlychildhood.marylandpublicschools.org/>

MARYLAND EXCELS Updates

Maryland By the Numbers

- **50%** - The percentage of child care providers participating in Maryland EXCELS
- **70%** - The percentage of Child Care Centers participating in Maryland EXCELS
- **39%** - The percentage of all Family Child Care providers participating in Maryland EXCELS
- **3,902** - The number of child care programs with a published quality rating on the Maryland EXCELS website.

These programs receive free advertising and marketing support from Maryland EXCELS and are listed on the MarylandExcels.org website.

If you are published at a Maryland EXCELS Level 1 or 2 and you are receiving Child Care Subsidy reimbursement all you have to do is move to a Level 3 to...

MAKE *more* MONEY

3 things you need to know about EXCELS payments

- 1 EXCELS payments are for providers who are receiving Child Care Subsidy reimbursement.
- 2 Child Care Providers need to be published in Maryland EXCELS at a Level 3, 4, or 5.
- 3 Child Care Providers can receive payments of 10% to 44% higher than their regular Subsidy reimbursement.

Don't leave money on the table!

Contact your Maryland EXCELS Quality Assurance Specialist today.

MARYLAND EXCELS

KAPLAN EARLY LEARNING COMPANY

and Maryland EXCELS Partner for Monthly Giveaway

To kick off 2017, Maryland EXCELS announced a collaboration with Kaplan Early Learning Company to provide a \$2,500 shopping spree for two selected Maryland EXCELS winners (*one Family Child Care Provider and one Child Care Center*).

These winners worked with their Quality Assurance Specialists and Julie Dobies, a Kaplan representative, to select materials that would improve their program's quality.

Congratulations to Gladys Arredondo Montgomery County family child care provider pictured here, was one of two Maryland EXCELS child care providers who won a \$2,500 shopping spree from Kaplan.



Harford County's Good Shepherd Lutheran Preschool was a winner of \$2,500 in Kaplan Early Learning supplies (Lois Dobart, Program Director and Emma King, Teaching Assistant pictured here).



"We are extremely pleased to be partnering with Maryland EXCELS to support and promote quality early childhood care and education," said Julie Dobies, Territory Manager for Kaplan Early Learning Company. "Kaplan and Maryland EXCELS share the same commitment and belief that children are our future, and we look forward to working with the winning programs to help provide a better future for Maryland's children."

MSCCA Conference Winners!

Maryland EXCELS and the Maryland State Child Care Association partnered up to give five (5) lucky winners a **FREE** 2017 Conference registration.

Congratulations to...

- ▼ Play Keepers at New Town Elementary - Baltimore County
- ▼ Day Timers Early Learning Center - Baltimore County
- ▼ CCDCS/AlphaBEST at Indian Head - Charles County
- ▼ Barbara Akinmade - Family Child Care Provider - Montgomery County
- ▼ Day Care Inc. - Queen Anne's County

To learn more about the Maryland State Child Care Association and why you should be a member, log on to <http://www.mscca.org>

Reaching Maryland Families: Maryland EXCELS New Marketing Initiatives

Did You Hear Us on the Radio?

Maryland EXCELS just completed an eight (8) week radio personality endorsement campaign. The campaign began in March and ran through May 12th, Child Care Provider Appreciation Day. The radio personalities mentioned Child Care Provider Appreciation Day in their radio spots to remind parents to thank their Maryland EXCELS child care provider for caring about quality.

Some of Maryland's most recognizable voices on radio were included in the campaign. It reached over 225,000 listeners, spanned over a variety of music formats. Our radio endorsement personalities included:

Laurie DeYoung, 93 WPOC
(5:00 am -10:00 am)

Persia Nicole, 92Q
(10:00 am – 2:00 pm)

Scott Reardon, 98 Rock
(5:00 am – 10:00 am)

Maria Dennis, MIX 106
(10:00 am – 2:00 pm)



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Reaching Maryland Families: Maryland EXCELS New Marketing Initiatives

Did You See Us?

Maryland EXCELS has been out at events throughout the State like the recent B'More Healthy EXPO at the Baltimore Convention Center. With more than 40,000 people on-site, Maryland EXCELS talked to parents and passed out "Parents Guide to Quality Child Care" brochures along with Maryland EXCELS magnets and bags.

A new minor league baseball initiative is providing major league opportunity to reach parents!

In April, Maryland EXCELS began new partnerships with all the Maryland Minor League Baseball teams from the Hagerstown Suns to the Del-MarVa Shore Birds and every team in between. The Southern Maryland Blue Crabs, the Frederick Keys, the Bowie Baysox, and the



Aberdeen Ironbirds have all joined the initiative. Maryland EXCELS will also be out at Camden Yards again this year entering our second year as an advertising partner with the Baltimore Orioles.

Look for Maryland EXCELS this summer at Farmers Markets, County Fairs, and other family-oriented events.

With the increased outreach and marketing initiatives Maryland EXCELS now includes 50% of all child care providers in the State of Maryland!

The two goals of our marketing initiatives are to:

Build awareness among parents and families that quality matters when choosing child care and education for their children.

Bring new business and well-deserved recognition to participating Maryland EXCELS providers for their commitment to quality.

Thanks, and Best Wishes to Louise

We, Ready At Five, would like to wish Louise Corwin a fond farewell and thank her for her fifteen years of leading the organization as our Executive Director. Her dedication and commitment to ensuring that all Maryland's children be school-ready has laid the foundation for our future success.



Welcome Steven Hicks!

The Executive Leadership Committee of Ready At Five is pleased to announce that Steven Hicks, former Senior Policy Advisor on Early Learning at the U.S. Department of Education, has been named the new Executive Director.

Mr. Hicks has spent nearly 30 years teaching and working to build and improve quality early learning systems for America's young children. Most recently, at the U.S. Department of Education he focused on advancing the national early learning agenda through, among other areas, the Preschool Development Grants and Early Learning Challenge programs. Read more about Steven and his message to the community at www.readyatfive.org.





Ready At Five monitored, submitted testimony and testified on early childhood bills, including House Bill 548 and Senate Bill 667 – the ELA Prekindergarten Student Assessment – Moratorium Bill; House Bill 516 – Senate Bill 581 - the Workgroup to Study the Implementation of Universal Access to Prekindergarten for four year olds; and House Bill 654 – Senate Bill 145 – State Kindergarten Assessment Completion Bill.



Parents and Families are Looking For You!

When parents are searching for the best child care setting for their child, they compare and contrast information they have on providers to see what works best for them and for their children. Each year **LOCATE: Child Care** with searches for 6,376 children through its telephone counseling service, and 45,662 searches statewide through its online service...*Is your information up to date?*

LOCATE: Child Care at Maryland Family Network now has an interactive online provider update available. Providers can see all of the information we have for them currently and make changes right there. Go to <http://locate.marylandfamilynetwork.org/Provider/login> to check and update your information.

If you have any questions, contact FloJean Speck, Director LOCATE: Child Care at tel: 443-873-5808.

Maryland Family Network's Online Training is Wildly Popular

Maryland Family Network's (MFN) Supporting Children with Developmental Disabilities in Child Care is the second most requested training on the Child Care Aware of America eLearning platform.

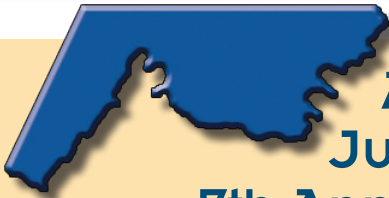
Developed and implemented with support from the Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council, Supporting Children with Developmental Disabilities in Child Care is available in both English and Spanish.

The course costs only **\$29.99** to register and users will receive three Core of Knowledge clock hours and 0.3 CEUs upon completion.

Register today by visiting <http://www.smarthorizons.org/naccrra/mfnb/> or on **MFN's website**, <http://www.marylandfamilynetwork.org>.



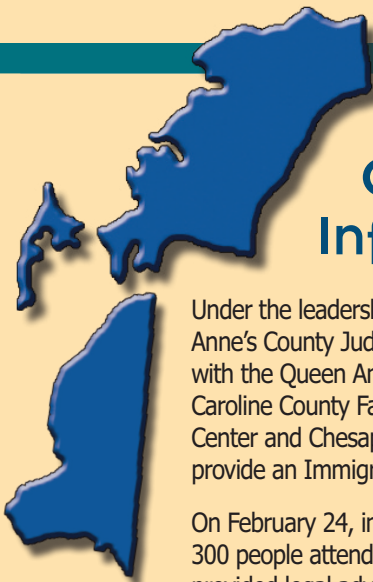
Judy Center News



Allegany County Judy Center Partnership Hosts 7th Annual School Readiness Fair

On Saturday, March 11, the Allegany County Judy Center co-hosted its 7th Annual School Readiness Fair at the Country Club Mall, along with Allegany County Head Start and the Allegany County Library System. Over 40 vendors and community partners assisted the roughly 2,000 attendees. Held in conjunction with Dr. Seuss' Read Across America, the goal was to have agencies available that work with children birth through age 5 and their families so that if a family had a specific question about their child or

a specific family need there would be an agency available to answer their question. Many of the participating vendors and agencies provided activities around the Dr. Seuss theme and others engaged children in STEM activities and arts and crafts. A local magician and a dance troupe entertained everyone throughout the day. The LaVale Lions Club provided free vision screenings on children. Seventy-three vision screenings were performed and resulted in 12 referrals. Free speech screenings were also available.



Queen Anne's County and Caroline County Judy Centers Host Immigration Information Forum

Under the leadership of Elizabeth Miller of the Queen Anne's County Judy Center, a partnership was formed with the Queen Anne's County Family Support Center, Caroline County Family Support Center, Greensboro Judy Center and Chesapeake Multicultural Resource Center to provide an Immigration Information Forum.

On February 24, in a church hall in Caroline County, over 300 people attended the standing room only forum that provided legal advice about the federal government's priorities in deportation and how immigrants, documented and undocumented, should handle their affairs. A panel of seven guest speakers specializing in immigration led the event. Families from Kent, Talbot, Queen Anne's and Caroline Counties and Delaware attended.

The forum began at 6:00 p.m. with the formal session ending around 8:30 p.m. and individualized consults ending after 10:00 p.m. The main presenter, Alan Hubbard, Esq., from the Protection and Legal Advocacy of the Mexican Embassy, advised attendees to stay calm and emphasized that the priorities of deportation are still people with criminal records. He recommended



Photo by Christopher Kersey - Alan Hubbard with the consular section of the Mexican Embassy in Washington D.C. was a guest speaker of an informational forum about immigration issues held on Feb. 24 in Maryland.

immigrants consult with an immigration attorney to determine if there is a possibility for the immigrant to qualify for a legal remedy and avoid deportation.

Guest speaker Klaudia Hall, Esq., who limits her practice exclusively to immigration affairs, noted that in the past, U.S. immigration officials focused primarily on undocumented immigrants who had committed a serious crime but that is no longer the case; any crime committed is now a priority.

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Judy Center News

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Queen Anne's County and Caroline County

Other panelists included Ramon Gras, Esq., who practices family and immigration law and is on the Board of Directors of the Chesapeake Multicultural Resource Center; Kaitlin Thomas, a certified medical and legal interpreter for the Maryland Shore Medical System and Maryland Judiciary System and Associate Professor of Spanish Language and Cultural Studies at Norwich University; Nina Qureshi, Esq., and Jennifer Ibanez, Esq., from the Immigration Law Office of Nina Qureshi; and Matthew Peters, Director of the Chesapeake Multicultural Resource Center.

The more than two hour question and answer session was followed by individual consultation on immigration issues. Space was designated throughout the hall for private consultations and some families stood in line for hours waiting for an opportunity to speak with the panelists.

The Judy Centers and Family Support Centers from Queen Anne's and Caroline provided refreshments, a variety of instructional and informational resources and bilingual staff to assist families in gathering information.

Plans are already underway to provide another forum.



Frederick County Judy Center Sponsors "Family Tunes and Tales"

The Frederick County Judy Center has partnered with Frederick County Public Library to bring stories, told with live music accompaniment, to the weekly playgroups. The activity called, "Family Tunes & Tales", is made possible in part by a grant from the Frederick Arts Council and the Community Foundation of Frederick County. Once a month, Frederick County Public Library staff member, Robyn Monaco, brings a member of the Frederick Symphony Orchestra along to read and play music together. This gives the families exposure to instruments they might not otherwise see up close and personal.

Robyn reads the story and the musician "illustrates" it with the sound of their instrument. Stories have been accompanied by instruments such as the bassoon, violin, clarinet, viola, and cello. Robyn incorporates music vocabulary into each lesson and concepts such as dy-

namics (loud and soft), pitch, and tempo are demonstrated for the children. Duets are often played between Robin on the viola and the guest orchestra member with their instrument. It is amazing how the story, set to music, grabs the attention of both the children and adults. The final number usually has the children up, moving, and dancing.

After story time, children explore the instrument "petting zoo." Drums, tambourines, electronic piano keys, maracas, shakers, harps, and much more are all available for the children to explore and make music.

Greer Llewellyn, from the Frederick Symphony, showing Julius Isaac, a playgroup participant, the cello.



Judy Center News



Howard County Judy Center Sponsors "Abrushcadabrush"

In celebration of National Children's Dental Health Month in February, the Howard County Judy Center Partnership at Cradlerock Elementary School, in partnership with Howard County Recreation and Parks, hosted Dr. Craig Schneider's "Abrushcadabrush"® Oral Literacy Magic Show which he provided at no-cost.

Dr. Schneider actively engaged audience members of more than 50 families, including some as young as 9 months old with his humor and magic. He taught the "magic" of good oral hygiene, fluoride and the dangers and risks of "sugar bugs" and a sweet tooth.

Families enjoyed a healthy dinner provided by the Judy Center and received a dental health kit that included a toothbrush with a case, toothpaste, oral health activity, and an oral health children's booklist provided by the Maryland Dental Action Coalition. Children also received a copy of *Just Going to the Dentist* by Mercer Mayer at the end of the program to encourage the ongoing practice of good dental health.



Kindergartener Oluwanifemi Aina volunteers as an audience participant for Dr. Schneider's Oral Literacy Magic Show at the Howard County Judy Center.

That evening, a Judy Center preschooler went home and was offered candy by her grandmother. She refused the candy, stating, "No. I'll get sugar bugs!"



The Early Learning Station Arrives in Washington County

On Wednesday, February 22, the grand opening of the First Stop Early Learning Station kicked off a multi-year partnership between the Washington County Judy Center and the Washington County Free Library to the Washington County community. The First Stop Early Learning Station is a new children's area in the Alice Virginia and David W. Fletcher Library Branch. It provides a special area where families with children under eight can come and learn and play.

The Station provides areas for dramatic play, quiet reading, and puppet shows. Parents

are encouraged to put down their cell-phones and interact with their child through reading, singing, writing, talking, and playing. Jeff Ridgeway, Head of Children's Services at Washington County Free Library, has seen more parents playing, reading, and talking with their children. He estimates that 100 families a day come into the Alice Virginia and David W. Fletcher Library Branch. The Station provides one more reason for families to love the library.



Matthew Semler, Director of Early Learning and Elementary Instruction for Washington County Public Schools, and Ny'lah Jones, 3, explore the new First Stop Early Learning Station

MPT Offers Online Professional Development Opportunities

As a professional, career development is an essential part of creating a safe and productive child care program. To ensure quality care, and meet the diverse needs of children and families, your continuing education is a top priority.

Maryland Public Television (MPT) in partnership with MSDE, offers convenient online courses to meet your pre-service and training needs, and fulfill licensing requirements. Providers can earn up to 4 Core of Knowledge clock hours per course, and apply what they have learned immediately into program activities.

Online courses are accessible via Thinkport.org, MPT's PreK-12 education portal, and can be completed anytime, anywhere, putting you in charge of your learning. Opportunities are available for family and center-based providers, and designed to help learners gain practical application, skills and knowledge to stay current on the job, and move forward into fulfilling careers.

Additionally, Thinkport.org is home to a collection of free PBS KIDS activities and early learning adventures. Visit Thinkport.org to learn more and take the next step in your career.

A Message and Update from the Maryland AfterSchool Association (MdAA)

Members of MdAA recently returned from the 2017 National AfterSchool Association Convention in Dallas, Texas where we had the opportunity to network with thousands of after-school professionals from around the world.

A wide range of topics were covered in workshops and keynote addresses; these messages stood out as being worthy of sharing:

Promoting Professionalism: "We expect the OST [Out of School Time] workforce to excel at the most difficult forms of teaching – such as project-based learning and inquiry based approaches without anywhere near the resources or training available to K-12 teachers." We agree, and don't let that challenge get in your way. Always look for opportunities to learn and add resources!

You Matter: Keynote speaker, Matthew Emerzian, shared his life experience and what led him to begin the Every Monday Matters campaign and reminded us to embrace adventure. The foundation has free curricula and tools to promote positive social and emotional learning (SEL) at: <http://www.everymondymatters.org>.

Networking and Community: Remember how important it is for our personal and professional well-being to connect with others in the field. Take advantage of the opportunities in your area to share your professional experience, learn from others, and work together toward positive change.

Ordinary Heroes: Author Brad Meltzer, reminded us that "Ordinary people can change the world." You may never know the impact or influence that you have on the children in your care. One positive message, word of affirmation, or challenge to do their best, can all make an impression on a child that stays with them well into their adult lives.

MdAA is committed to supporting quality and professionalism in Maryland's afterschool community. Please visit our website at: <http://www.msacca.org>, like us on facebook (Maryland AfterSchool Association) and consider becoming a member. Members receive discounts on state level conferences and training, MdAA eNews, and Ambassador level membership to the National AfterSchool Association.



Get Involved - Maryland Association for the Education of Young Children (MDAEYC)

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

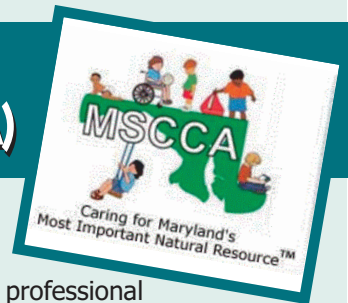
Becoming a member is easy! Visit naeyc.com or mdaeyc.org and complete the online registration to become a member of NAEYC and MDAEYC simultaneously.

For more info LIKE their Facebook page or contact: marylandnaeyc@gmail.com via email or call 410-820-9196.

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



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 PAUs for your full staff! 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 mscca.org to join MSCCA. For more info contact *Christina Peusch, Executive Director at:* mscca1@comcast.net or call 410-820-9196

PAST EVENTS

Building Equity in Early Learning



We were pleased to offer our spring School Readiness Symposium *Building Equity in Early Learning* at the BWI Marriott. The Keynote was delivered by Walter S. Gilliam, Ph.D., Director of the Yale Child Study Center. Dr. Gilliam spoke about Shining a Light on Implicit Bias to Improve the Quality of Early Learning for All Children. Following lunch, Angelique Kedem, Senior Associate, Race Equity and Inclusion from the Annie E. Casey Foundation

spoke about Embracing Equity – 7 Steps to Advancing Race, Ethnic Equity and Inclusion. Participants then had the choice of four different afternoon workshops to complete the enriching experience. View presentations from the Symposium and find out about the programs we offer at: <http://www.readyatfive.org>. Also be sure to check out our newly released Annual Report and our new Families Matter publication.

Are you looking for MSDE-approved training workshops?



- The Statewide Training Clearinghouse Calendar, a project of Maryland Family Network, is a free online resource available to all child care providers in the State. This web-based program allows you to search for approved training workshops in your county or region, as well as for eLearning training, and for trainers who will provide workshops onsite.
- Redesigned in 2016, the Statewide Training Clearinghouse Calendar has greater search capabilities, including the ability to search by topic area, specific types of training and keyword.
- All trainers advertising in the Statewide Training Clearinghouse Calendar are approved by MSDE's Office of Child Care to conduct training.

To access the Statewide Training Clearinghouse Calendar, please visit: <http://www.marylandfamilynetwork.org/childcaretraining> and in the left toolbar, follow the link to Search the Statewide Training Clearinghouse.

Have questions?

Contact Consuelo Dailey at: cdailey@marylandfamilynetwork.org
or Lacey Tsonis at: ltsonis@marylandfamilynetwork.org

Don't be challenged by challenging behavior!

Zero to Three works to ensure that babies and toddlers benefit from the early connections that are critical to their well-being and development.

As young children are just beginning to develop self-control, challenging behavior is common and expected in the years from birth to three. Young children are also developing self-regulation—the ability to calm or regulate themselves when they are upset. This process leads to some challenging moments for both adults and children. Learn more about how to respond to challenging behaviors like crying, aggression and defiance, and how to support your child's development of self-control and self-regulation.

Visit: <https://www.zerotothree.org/early-development/challenging-behaviors> for a video on responding to challenging behaviors, **and be sure to share it with parents!**

CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES

Attention Camps

Port Discovery Children's Museum

CHILDREN'S MUSEUM OF HOUSTON presents
AMAZINGLY IMMATURE

New Visiting Exhibit Opens May 20, 2017
KLUTZ! Amazingly Immature

Combine science and math with practical jokes and interactive fun based on KLUTZ® Encyclopedia of Immaturity. Embrace your inner zany genius. Explore behaviors that teach about science, engineering, math, and literacy. Produced by the Children's Museum of Houston in partnership with KLUTZ® (All ages)

\$10.50 per person.
Groups of 15 +
Bring your lunch!

Totally Tremendous Tot Days!
Dedicated days for all ages 2 - 5!
Special programming!

\$4.00

Save the Dates
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September 1, 8, 15, 22, 29

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Fisher Price presents
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Port Discovery Children's Museum
35 Market Place, Baltimore Maryland, 21202



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Upcoming Conferences

Save the Date

SEPTEMBER 23, 2017

Building Our Profession:

Putting Excellence into Practice
State-wide conference for early
childhood professionals to con-
nect on issues that will improve
the outcomes of young children.

Hagerstown Community College
Hagerstown, MD

6 CoK plus 2 PAU (CEU available)

*Hosted by MDAEYC in partnership
with Western Maryland Early
Childhood Conference*

Save the Date

OCTOBER 12, 2017

MSCCA Leadership Symposium

Ten Oaks Ballroom
Clarksville, MD

*Earn 7 hours of MSDE
approved, quality training!*

**REGISTRATION BEGINS
JULY 2017**

VISIT: www.mscca.org
or call **410-820-9196**

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