

January 2021



Message from the Director

Here at DIEEC, we are all excited to welcome in a new year and to continue to serve Delaware's early childhood education community. In our first REACH issue of 2021, we introduce a new feature called "Voices from the Field" where we hear firsthand from you on a range of topics impacting our profession. This month Mariam Banoub and Shannon Wright, both administrators, share their thoughts on leadership. Additionally, we've included information about our new professional development offerings for January, spotlighting our new specialized series for administrators.

You will also find an update on the revision of Delaware Stars. To date, many of you have indicated an interest in participating in the revision process and providing feedback. THANK YOU! Please know that additional opportunities still exist to provide feedback, and we want to hear your perspective on Delaware Stars. Please go to the QRIS landing page [here](https://www.delawarestars.udel.edu/qris-revision-update/) to sign up.

Finally, we share strategies, ideas, and resources for engaging in outdoor play during the winter months. We hope this issue is useful to you, and please reach out to us with any questions or suggestions.

Happy New Year!

Rena Hallam
DIEEC Director



Perspectives on Creating Conditions for Quality

In addition to providing news and updates, REACH is committed to featuring your perspectives and feedback in the new series "Voices from the Field." The series will continue to include spotlight articles on early childhood education programs in addition to the individual interviews with early childhood professionals

This month we talked to Shannon Wright from A Leap of Faith Child Development Center and Daycare and Mariam Banoub from Bright Kidz Learning Center.

Please take a listen to their perspectives on recently participating in DIEEC's training for administrators. The work these leaders are doing will set them up well for the revised Delaware Stars standards that include strengthening business practices as a critical component of creating conditions for quality.

These modules are now available through professional development opportunities. Check out when the trainings are offered [here](https://dieecpd.org/registry/calendar). <https://dieecpd.org/registry/calendar>



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ddP4o5Y338c>



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wA0g1gnMGHQ>



OUTDOOR PLAY IN WINTER

The Value of Outdoor Play

As we embark on the winter months, we encourage you still to get your children outside for play and learning activities. There are many benefits of time spent outdoors.

First, for early childhood education programs, outdoor play is one of the safest ways for children to interact under the pandemic's current state guidelines. Additionally, according to The National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care and Early Education, viruses and bacteria that make children sick are more likely to spread indoors.

In addition to the physical benefits, having time for active play also helps children focus on their classroom activities. Active physical play - whether indoors or outdoors - twice a day is essential for healthy child development.

Something else to keep in mind is almost any activity that can be done indoors, can be done outdoors! Think about what plans can be done outside. You can explore the weather, seasons, plants/gardening, insects, and more for science. An outdoor math lesson plan could have children gather sticks or rocks to count. There are many possibilities!

This article is excerpted from January's Coach's Corner. To read the entire blog, click [here](https://files.constantcontact.com/0b075da8401/1f9a7522-ff89-48a8-8de7-36d6f599a7d1.pdf).



New Virtual Professional Development Opportunities

A new year and a new opportunity to work on your skills. We are excited to offer a full calendar of virtual training, including several new online workshops such as Every Day Math Plus and Six Pillars of Character in Spanish.

This brief video provides an overview of what's on the calendar for the next few months.



Register Here

<https://dieecpd.org/registry/calendar>



Transition News

The transition to the revised Delaware Stars is underway. We spent the last months of 2020 meeting with groups of center-based early childhood professionals representing various perspectives in our field. These meetings included discussions with administrators, classroom educators, Non-Stars and Head Start program representatives. The focus was on the proposed key practices and pathways to improve quality in support of the seven new standards. Thank you for your time.

Beginning this month, we are getting feedback from family child care (FCC) and school age (SA) early childhood professionals about key practices that uniquely support their work. We're excited for the opportunity to look at FCC and SA-only programs in a new way, in ways that highlight the strengths of these programs.

For the most updated information on the QRIS Revision click [here](https://www.delawarestars.udel.edu/qr-revision-update/).
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