

REACH

a monthly e-newsletter for Delaware's early childhood and school age programs



May 2020



You're here for Delaware's children and families.
We're here for YOU!

OUR PATH FORWARD

Supporting your programs while
navigating through COVID-19.

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dr. Martha Buell

Dear Members of the Early Care and Education Community of Delaware:

As the Director of DIEEC, I want to let you know, on behalf of everyone who works at DIEEC, we continue to be inspired and grateful for your continued hard work and dedication to the children and families of Delaware.

While child care providers are not often called first responders, that is what you are, responding to the immediate needs of Delaware's youngest citizens at a time when our state needs you most. Your tenacity and resilience inspire us in navigating the new reality of our state systems.

To quote Christopher Reeves, "A hero is an ordinary person who finds the strength to persevere and endure in spite of overwhelming obstacles." You are all heroes. And for those of you who may not be serving children right now, you are heroically working to ensure that you and your programs will be poised to operate once Delaware goes back to work.

The early care and education workforce is essential to revving our state's economic engine, and you are making sure that our field and our programs are ready to open as soon as we get the green light. Some of you are even taking the time to get in your PD hours. We honor your dedication to our profession and to your professional development. We honor the work that you are all doing. Thank you.

In this newsletter, our goal is to bring you some resources that might help you meet the challenges you are facing; we hope it is helpful.

[Delaware's Child Care and COVID -19 Site](#)

STRESS MANAGEMENT

Beyond Stress Management
By Lucinda Ross
Executive Director
St. Michael's School and Nursery

Unprecedented, enormously challenging, unparalleled, extraordinary —words we typically use sparingly are commonplace these days. These times are all of those and more—frightening, threatening, surreal—and the list goes on.

Stress management seems like such a benign term compared to the exhausting effort of keeping our heads above water during this tsunami of illness and death. What do we do? What helps when all seems so hopeless, overwhelming, and out of our control?

We need to think outside of ourselves, beyond management; we need to find a

HEALTH & SAFETY

Your Nutrition and COVID-19
By Irene M Soucy, MS, RD, CSG, LDN
Nutrition Specialist
New Directions Early Head Start

Does what you eat make a difference?

During these uncertain times, we may feel helpless and easily misled by inaccurate reporting or well-meaning friends and family. Teasing apart fact from fiction can prove to be difficult, especially when the experts are still learning so much about COVID-19.

Here's what we know. Good nutrition works to enhance immunity, decrease the risk of chronic disease, and aid in the recovery from illness. The potency of lean protein, the vigor of vegetables, and the capacity of whole-grain carbohydrates to strengthen our cells for a daily fight is impressive.

purpose that is bigger than all the darkness. We need to be those helpers that Mister Rogers urged children to watch for, to look for when things look horrendous.

These times are challenging in ways never before experienced. September 11th, the Sandy Hook shootings, the Boston Marathon bombing were all horrific experiences. In response, populations I cared deeply about reacted to, came together for, and brought out the best in each other. But these events were delineated; people could stop, cry, breathe, hug, make plans, and move forward.

The complete article is available at the end of this publication

We need to equip our bodies with what we need to be healthy. The basics of healthy eating include balance, adequacy, variety, and moderation. The further we get from whole foods, the more difficult it becomes to realize their powers.

Whole grains are important because refined grains undergo a milling process that strips the entire grain of its germ and bran, leaving it without many B-vitamins, iron, fatty acids, and fiber. To better understand "processing," think of an apple. Peel it, slice it, and then expose it to air and packaging. Bake it into an apple pie. We lose vital nutrients with each step.

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COMMUNICATIONS

There is a lot of information shared about COVID-19 from a variety of organizations. Our inboxes are overflowing, creating what some have called email fatigue.

We understand and want to support you with an organized and easy way to manage this information. To this end, we have created two COVID-19 webpages. As you may know, DIEEC is housed in the College of Education and Human Development. The college now has a COVID-19 page at <https://www.cehd.udel.edu/covid19-resources/> that includes safety and health information and resources for educators and families.

DIEEC's COVID-19 is linked to both the Delaware Stars and PD webpages. This page provides you with resources as well as the most updated information from DIEEC and the Office of Early Learning. <https://www.delawarestars.udel.edu/delaware->

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Your commitment to professional development is evident by the number of participants in our trainings delivered through technology. We appreciate your support and applaud your dedication.

As you have seen, we are doing a weekly newsletter every Monday that includes new offerings as well as registration details.

The sessions are organized by:

Virtual - An instructor facilitates these trainings. We refer to these sessions as "Community of Practice," which means learning is collaborative because of the participants' shared goals. These trainings are self-paced and do not meet at a specific time.

Live - An instructor facilitates these trainings as well, and they are REAL time. Participants log in several minutes before the start time via Zoom. This option is the most similar to our In-Person trainings.

[institute-for-excellence-in-early-childhood-covid-19-resources/](https://www.institute-for-excellence-in-early-childhood-covid-19-resources/)

Finally, we are sharing information on social media that is consistent with the topic areas featured in the COVID-19 issues of REACH. The days are designated as follows:

- "Mindfulness Monday" (Stress Management)
- "Tech Tuesday" (Technology-April Issue Topic)
- "Wellness Wednesday" (Health & Safety)
- "Teach Thursday" (Professional Development)
- "Finance Friday" (Financial Insights)

Online - This format does not include an instructor. Participants work through content built into the platform.

As always, if you have questions, please call us on (302) 831-3239 or email us at institute-early-childhood@udel.edu.

Visit our website

FINANCIAL INSIGHTS

Managing Through the COVID-19 Financial Impact Federal Relief Resources

The COVID-19 pandemic is impacting every aspect of our life, especially our economy. The financial toll is hard-hitting, particularly on small businesses like early child care and education programs.

Fortunately, there are both state and federal resources available to support you during this crisis. The federal government, through the Small Business Association (SBA), offers various types of loans to sustain small businesses at relatively low interest rates.

Selecting the loan that makes the most sense for your program and navigating the application process can be daunting. The Delaware Small Business Development Center (SBDC) can support you. This organization is staffed with a team of financial advisors that can meet with you to review financing options and resiliency strategies.

SBDC Advisor Anthony George recently facilitated a Federal Relief Resources Webinar for early childhood professionals. During this session, George highlighted several of the loans available for small businesses and the criteria to apply.

Of particular interest are the Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL) and the Payment Protection Program (PPP). Both of the loans' objective is to help cover operating expenses. You are able to apply for both programs; however, please note that they cannot be used for the same purpose (such as payroll).

George emphasizes that because funds deplete quickly for each of these resources, it is essential to "act quickly." He also adds that there are additional resources for borrowing money if these options aren't viable such as the SBA Express Bridge Loan.

We know this time is overwhelming on many fronts, but there are resources available to help. You can reach out to the Small Business Development Center (<https://delawaresbdc.org/>) Additionally, the Delaware SBA Regional Office hosts daily Zoom Calls for assistance in filling out applications. This information along with other resources is available at <https://delawaresbdc.org/>

Delaware Institute for Excellence in Early Childhood

Delaware Stars for Early Success, website: www.delawarestars.udel.edu

DIEEC Professional Development, website: www.dieecpd.org

Main: (302) 831-3239 | Fax: (302) 831-4223



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Today, it truly is a tsunami, and it has not stopped; it has only prevented us from coming together for those hugs, sharing those tears. I urge you to stop, cry, breathe, call the people you want to hug, make plans, move forward, and above all else, reach out. Call an old childhood friend, send a funny YouTube video—beat this monster at what is hurting us most—not having human contact when it is needed the most.

One of my favorite people in the world was my Uncle Red. He died when I was 16, and I am most grateful that I not only had his unconditional love for those 16 years, but I also was able to have some of those soul-searching adolescent conversations before he passed. My uncle had a degenerative spinal disease; by the time of his death, he had no muscle function, only uncontrollable spasms. I never heard

him complain or curse; it was always “Okay, that’s over. What’s next?” I asked him once how he could do it—how he could not be angry or bitter. He answered that the challenge was not his deteriorating body, but it was maintaining and strengthening his soul, and that was a challenge he could answer.

While none of us chose this pandemic (another word we likely never considered becoming a daily term), we can decide how to respond, with grace, humor, and love for our fellow human beings.

Sending strong, loving thoughts your way,

Lucinda Ross

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Excellence in
Early Childhood

Your Nutrition and COVID-19

By Irene M Soucy, MS, RD, CSG, LDN

Nutrition Specialist, New Directions Early Head Start

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Research supports the many benefits of whole foods as a source of immunity-supporting nutrients:

- Beta carotene (found in orange and dark green plant foods) serves as an antioxidant and plays a role in the development of immune cells. You can get vitamin C in orange juice, but did you know that bell peppers, broccoli, strawberries, and potatoes are also good sources? In addition to enhancing immunity, vitamin C helps to build collagen, a structural protein in the body.
- Zinc works with many proteins to help with immunity and growth and development. The best sources of zinc come from protein foods, such as lean meats, chicken, seafood, nuts, and beans.

Beyond these and other nutrients, phytochemicals, and fiber substances in real foods can enhance nutrient absorption. A supplement can never replace the opportunity to slow down, catch up, and genuinely enjoy a home-cooked family meal. Whole foods and a diet filled with powerful immunity-enhancing nutrients can give mealtime the power of prevention!

SBA or Other Resources

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- SBA Regional Office Zoom or Conference Calls:
 - **Application Help:** 10:30 a.m. (Monday-Friday)
Download the ZOOM. Enter meeting i.d. #6794772946
 - **Update Call:** 3:00 p.m. (Monday-Friday) Dial in to Skype: 202-765-1264 pin: 827299626#
 - **Application Help:** 8:00 p.m. (Monday - Friday)
Download ZOOM. Enter meeting i.d. #6794772946
- **SBA Website:** www.sba.gov/disaster
- **US Treasury Website:** home.treasury.gov/policy-issues/cares/assistance-for-small-businesses
- **Delaware SBDC Website:** delawaresbdc.org/disaster-assistance