

R E A C H

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



OCTOBER 2020



You're here for Delaware's children and families.

We're here for YOU!



Website Resources & Updates

Delaware's Child Care and COVID -19 Site

<https://coronavirus.delaware.gov/child-care/phase-2/>

DIEEC COVID-19 Resource Page

<https://www.delawarestars.udel.edu/delaware-institute-for-excellence-in-early-childhood-covid-19-resources/>

Blueprint for Reopening DE Early Care and Education Safely Page

<https://www.delawarestars.udel.edu/blueprint-for-reopening/>



GiggleBugs Early Learning Center: Defining Essential in Early Childhood Education

Jennifer Spinks, Executive Director of GiggleBugs Early Learning Center, knows that keeping staff motivated during normal times is essential in providing quality early care and education. And now, during the pandemic, it is even more critical.

Located in Millsboro, Del., GiggleBugs serves children from two months through fifth grade. During the early pandemic months, GiggleBugs served close to 50 children and now they are up to more than 130.

"My staff and I always have to stay on the same page," said Jennifer. "I checked in with them about opening as an emergency child care site, and it was unanimous. There was no question. We are dedicated to serving our kids and their families."

The children and their families help fuel GiggleBugs staff's passion. The families have been especially supportive during the pandemic by bringing in meals, gift cards, and other treats.

Additionally, Jennifer offers her teachers and staff perks, all types, to make sure they know their value. "From special t-shirts to bonuses and extra vacation days, Jennifer continues to invest in her staff," said Alyssa Stein, Delaware Stars technical assistant."

Jennifer also cites participating in Delaware Stars Communities of Practice (CoP) as great support and motivation for operating during the pandemic. She notes the value of connecting with other providers, especially when understanding the safety and health requirements.

Like every early childhood professional knows, managing through this crisis is challenging and fatiguing. "Every day is different, but it's our job to bring a dose of normalcy into our students' lives," said Jennifer.

And now, with schools utilizing remote learning, the GiggleBugs team is once again stepping up to support school-age children.

"We have a class of twenty from five different schools and varying grade levels, kindergarten through fifth grade," said Jennifer. "This is no easy task!"

Despite the challenges and the tireless work, the team at GiggleBugs keeps its focus on meeting their students' needs while making sure they stay safe and healthy. "For us working with young children is a calling," adds Jennifer.

"We are passionate and that keeps us going.



Investing in Early Childhood Professionals

The pandemic is bringing much-needed attention to the critical role of early childhood professionals. Dr. Rena Hallam, DIEEC director, penned an op-ed, featured on "Delaware Online" addressing this issue.

Be sure to check it out [here](https://bit.ly/2F6eb5l). <https://bit.ly/2F6eb5l>



DIEEC Celebrates Tenth Anniversary with Special Screening of No Small Matter

In celebration of DIEEC's tenth anniversary, we invite you to register for a special, virtual viewing of "No Small Matter." This film is the first feature documentary to explore the most overlooked, underestimated, and powerful force for change in America today: early childhood education.

You can view the documentary by registering on dieecpd.org. Two viewing date options are currently available: October 22 and October 23.

Once registered, a password protected link will be sent via email. Registrants will have until the end-of-day on Friday, October 23 to watch the film on their device.

To get the most out of this viewing, consider signing up for a reflection session entitled: No Small Matter: Self-Paced Reflection. Participants will be prompted to think about the film's implications and the actions necessary to move our field forward.

This session is a virtual, self-paced training, meaning you complete a reflection form independently and submit it for quality assured hour. You must register and view “No Small Matter: Feature Documentary” to take this workshop.

The documentary viewing and workshop require separate registration and offer one hour of QA for each (two hours total if you complete both).

Don't miss out on this opportunity to celebrate the critical work of early childhood education.

All registrants will receive special DIEECDP Tenth Anniversary Giveaways.

To register for the viewing and reflection workshop: dieecpd.org/registry/calendar

Watch the full trailer for No Small Matter. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2nGiNfEfyjg>



New Family Child Care Communities of Practice Available

Supporting School-Age Children

In many cases, back to school is changing your program's dynamics with increased responsibility for overseeing remote learning. In response to this new challenge, DIEEC is hosting new Communities of Practice (CoPs) to give a voice to FCC/LFCC early childhood professionals' needs. These sessions are a dedicated time when you and your colleagues can share ideas. The CoP is facilitated by both a technical assistant and a professional development instructor for additional support.

Wellness

This 10-week wellness CoP is committed to providing TA and health coaching support to FCC providers to incorporate new wellness habits into their lives. The participants will have the opportunity to give and receive group support and encouragement to and from their peers and use reflective practices to create an environment for their wellness goals success! The group facilitators are Kyma Belardo (I/T Specialty TA) and Eric Plautz (Health Coach) and the virtual meetings meet on Tuesdays, 6 p.m.

[Register here](https://dieecpd.org/registry/calendar)
<https://dieecpd.org/registry/calendar>



Your Health & Wellness Matter

Taking care of yourself is always important, and now even more critical during COVID. October includes a focus on depression and breast cancer.

October 8th is National Depression Screening Day.

The U.S. Census Bureau recently reported that a third of Americans show signs of clinical depression and anxiety. There is an uptick of these and other mental health conditions during the pandemic.

National Depression Screening Day is held annually and is important for many reasons:

- It can help people make an informed decision.
- It drags depression out of the darkness.
- It can bring help to those who need it.

Click [here](#) for more information.
<https://nationaltoday.com/national-depression-screening-day/>

October is also Breast Cancer Awareness Month, an annual campaign to increase awareness about this disease, especially the importance of early detection. According to the American Cancer Society, when breast cancer is detected early, and is in the localized stage, the 5-year relative survival rate is 99%.

For more information on Delaware's breast cancer resources click [here](#).
<https://www.healthyladelaware.org/Individuals/Cancer/Breast>



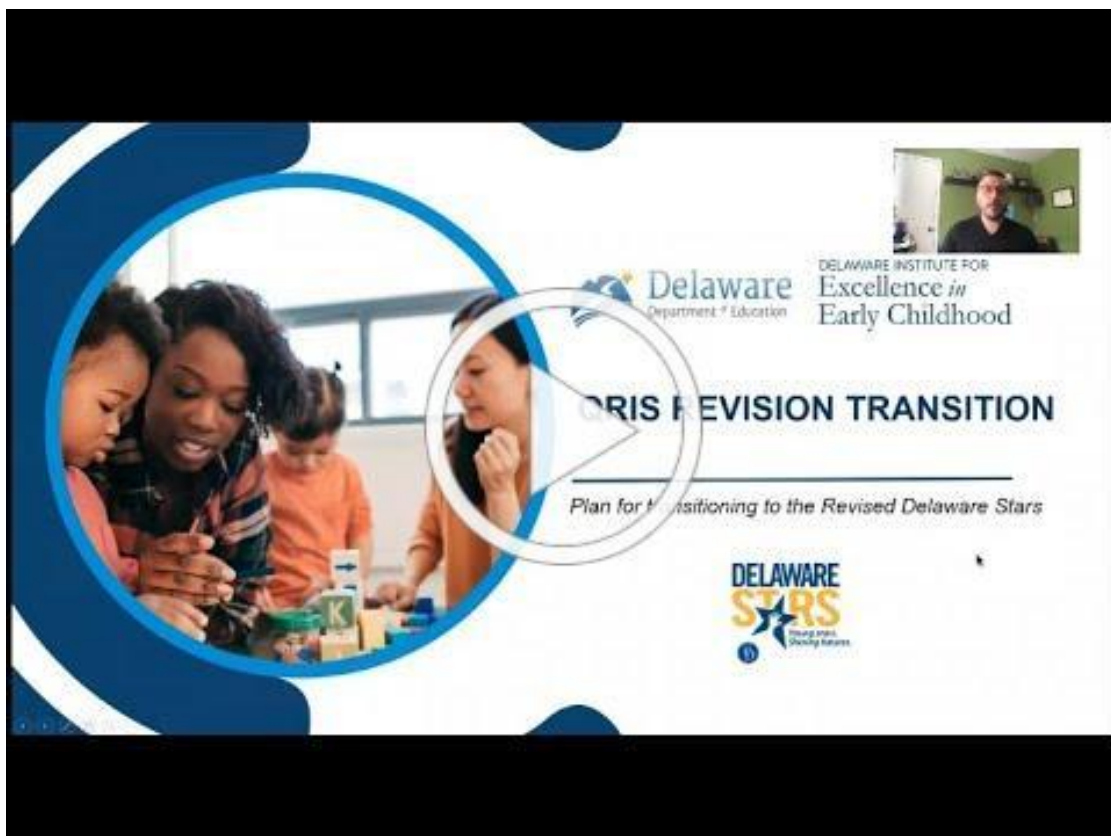
The QRIS Revision team is excited to share the plan for transitioning to the revised Delaware Stars. The video below (and [presentation slides](#)) outline the next steps. <https://conta.cc/3nlqdZR>

As always, your feedback and investment in this process are critical. There are many different ways to be involved. We will be reaching out beginning next week to share opportunities for Phase 1.

In the meantime, if you'd like to share feedback, please:

- email to delawarestars@udel.edu or
- use the comment box on the [QRIS landing page](https://www.delawarestars.udel.edu/qr-is-revision-update/). <https://www.delawarestars.udel.edu/qr-is-revision-update/>

The revision is a step forward in improving the quality of care for all young children. Together we will continue to make progress.



Delaware Institute for Excellence in Early Childhood

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