

JANUARY 2023

# REACH

a newsletter for Delaware's Early Childhood Professionals

Dear early childhood professionals,

Happy New Year! As we move into 2023, I hope you are able to take a moment to reflect on all you have accomplished over the past year.

Here at DIEEC, we're starting January by focusing on partnerships. In addition to the "Early Childhood Partnering Opportunities" we've highlighted for you below, this month's "Voices from the Field" spotlights one of our current opportunities to build partnerships – participating in a series of Professional Learning Experiences (PLEs) as part of a cohort. Hear from several early childhood professionals learning together, deepening their business practices and professional partnerships.

The third episode of the DIEEC podcast, X "Why" Z: Reflections from Early Childhood Education Professionals, is live. Here, we introduce you to this episode's featured professionals, Sarah Reyes from Seeds of Jesus Daycare and research scholar Chrishana Lloyd. You can listen to the episode wherever you stream your podcasts.

Finally, in our summer survey, most professionals said they would like to know more about the Delaware Early Childhood Assistance Program (ECAP). We're excited to share that we will be partnering with the Department of Education to support programs in understanding and applying to participate in this state funding stream. As the first step, check out the article from our DOE partners, which introduces ECAP.

May you have a healthy and happy 2023,

Kristy Sheffler  
DIEEC Deputy Director

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# Voices from the Field

## Spotlight on the Professional Learning Experience

"The Business of Early Childhood: Leadership Cohort"

We are taking a different approach to this issue's "Voices from the Field" installment. We are hearing from early childhood educators recently taking the DIEEC professional learning experience (PLE), "The Business of Early Childhood: Leadership Cohort." This PLE series brought together leaders in the field to build skills to help improve the quality and culture of their programs while supporting each other.

A group of about ten participants in Sussex County, Del. began meeting in September to participate in the first module, "The Business of Early Childhood: Your Purpose, Passion, and Position as a Leader." In this PLE, leaders learned about the importance of self-reflection and self-awareness and developed their understanding of how their values and beliefs shaped their leadership styles. Each participant identified their leadership style, learned the difference between leadership and management, and shared personal and program core values.

"This module helped me be open-minded and not be so hard on myself," said Mary Akins of Smart Start Learning Center. "I also understand that my staff has a different sense of ownership than I have."

Continue reading here: [bit.ly/3GYyAlh](https://bit.ly/3GYyAlh)



from left to right: Veronica Ayres, (back) Frank Laura, Mary Akins, Rhondalin Cannon-Tingle, Marlette Lofland, Val Renshaw, Chantel Banks, (front-left to right) Kristina Hassler and Delaney Davis

# Partnerships

## Early Childhood Partnering Opportunities

We kick off the new year with our editorial focus on partnerships. Relationships turn into partnerships when the people involved share a common goal. You partner daily with your families because of your shared goal of their children's wellbeing. With this goal in mind, there are available resources through state and federal agencies to help you support the children in your care. ECAP is an example of one those opportunities.

To this end, we are preparing a landing page of partnership opportunities available to you. Stay tuned for more details, but in the meantime, DIEEC would love to partner with you to help you develop a strategy to work on meeting your program's goals. Our website: [www.dieec.udel.edu](http://www.dieec.udel.edu) includes details of ways we can support you.

# FCC Networks

## Family Child Care Networks Celebrate the Season

Last year, the home-based child care team formed Delaware's first FCC Networks as another way DIEEC and educators can work together to enhance a program's quality and operations.

Three networks, one per county, are up and running. Each network met in December to collaborate and reflect on the hard work done in 2022.

You can still join a network by completing this form: [bit.ly/3kdk98u](https://bit.ly/3kdk98u)

For questions, please email us at: [delawarefccnetworks@udel.edu](mailto:delawarefccnetworks@udel.edu).



# ECAP

## ECAP: What you need to know Information from the Department of Education Early Childhood Support Team

As we've shared on recent calls, a new application ("Request for Proposal" or RFP) for state-funded "seats" will be coming out soon. To support interested programs, we're planning a series of opportunities to learn more about what it means to participate as a state-funded preschool program, starting today with an introduction to "ECAP" and "Redding".

### What is ECAP?

The Early Childhood Assistance Program (ECAP) is a state funding stream through the Department of Education (DOE) to provide preschool programming for eligible three- and four-year-old children. ECAP provides educational and comprehensive experiences for all participating children and their families.

### Who are children eligible for ECAP funding?

ECAP supports unserved and underserved communities. Children qualify for ECAP based on family income or other risk factors, such as homelessness.

### What are comprehensive experiences?

The ECAP policy states that participating programs must provide high-quality programming for at least 3.5 hours per day for at least 160 days per year. ECAP includes an identified set of policies and procedures based on the Head Start Program Performance Standards to outline high-quality programming. You can find them here: [bit.ly/3k3ZGmx](https://bit.ly/3k3ZGmx)

Additionally, an essential goal of ECAP is to connect children and families with holistic services within their community, such as a medical home. You can read more here: [bit.ly/3X22zDd](https://bit.ly/3X22zDd)



# December Podcast Episode

The third episode of X "Why" Z: Reflections from Early Childhood Education Professionals is now live and ready for listening. This new episode, "Where the Classroom Meets the Research," features a conversation with Chrishana M. Lloyd, a Ph.D. research scholar with Child Trends, and Sarah Reyes, owner of Seeds of Jesus Daycare in Wilmington, Del.

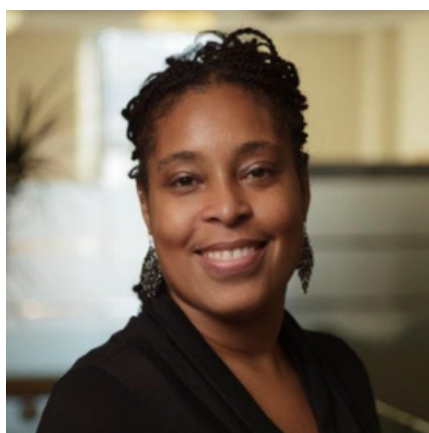
These early childhood education professionals have contrasting jobs in different states but share the same passion for the field, specifically focusing on providing young children with social and emotional support.

Chrishana's recent work includes Head Start's CARES program. She is implementing and evaluating three distinct classroom-based approaches for enhancing children's social-emotional development. One of the key takeaways is that sound classroom management is the foundation of promoting social and emotional development for children. According to Chrishana, this provides a framework for engaging with parents to discuss the importance of consistency.

Sarah provides her children with a bilingual setting, speaking Spanish to them beginning when they are infants. Sarah focuses on the cultural aspect of connecting with families from underserved communities. She supports the entire family's well-being by helping them partner with resources and giving them the tools to improve their circumstances.

We asked each professional who had the most significant influence on their life.

Their answers may surprise you. You can listen here: <https://anchor.fm/dieecud>



The third episode of X "Why" Z: Reflections from Early Childhood Education Professionals is now live and ready for listening. This new episode, "Where the Classroom Meets the Research," features a conversation with Chrishana M. Lloyd, a Ph.D. research scholar with Child Trends (left), and Sarah Reyes, owner of Seeds of Jesus Daycare in Wilmington, Del. (right)