

DELAWARE INSTITUTE FOR EXCELLENCE IN EARLY CHILDHOOD



UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE
EDUCATION &
HUMAN DEVELOPMENT



Delaware
Department of Education

QUARTERLY REPORT

April 1 – June 30, 2023

This report presents data on engagement, services, and support that DIEEC provided to Delaware early childhood programs and professionals during the April – June 2023 quarter.

Home-Based Child Care Team Supports

- 28.7% of all licensed home-based programs in Delaware engaged in DIEEC professional learning experiences (PLEs) and/or technical assistance supports during the quarter (excluding DEPNow).
- The home-based child care team facilitated 31 professional learning experiences (2 are still in progress), offering a total of 127 hours this quarter. Of the 31 PLEs, 18 were virtual, 9 were self-paced, and 4 were a hybrid combination of self-paced, virtual, and in-person.
 - 13 hours were delivered to 3 PLE cohorts, and 22 hours were delivered as part of two *Shining the Light on You* cohorts.
 - *Family Engagement* and *Inclusion* PLEs were delivered to educators participating in family child care networks.
- 154 unique educators participated in home-based PLEs.
 - Educators who participated in home-based PLEs were from 116 programs, of which 66 are home-based and 50 are center-based.
 - 11 educators were part of PLE cohorts. PLE cohorts allow for consistent groups of educators to engage in professional learning experiences together. For example, Spanish-speaking educators participating in a PLE cohort have so far completed 3 PLEs together.
- Professionals from 30 home-based programs engaged in DEPNow.
- 17 home-based programs engaged in Continuous Quality Improvement technical assistance (CQI TA) and 104 engaged in other ongoing TA. CQI TA is centered on the development of goals and strategies, supporting implementation for lasting change. Other ongoing TA includes more general, universal TA such as basic information sharing, provision of resources, and quick check-ins.
- 107 home-based programs engaged in communities of practice during the quarter.
- The home-based team continues to use innovative strategies to engage with home-based professionals in their work with children. Examples include:
 - *Make Time for Me*, a designated time for family child care professionals to come together in-person to focus on their wellness, had 8 participants engaged during the current quarter.
 - A family child care network for home-based professionals in Kent County launched during the current quarter.
- 33 home-based professionals provided feedback on the proposed Key Practices for the new Quality Improvement System (QIS) through 5 feedback sessions facilitated by DIEEC.

Leadership and Administration Team Supports

- 60.7% of licensed center-based programs in Delaware engaged in DIEEC PLEs and/or technical assistance supports during the quarter (excluding DEPNow). Additionally, 18 license-exempt programs participated in these DIEEC services.
- The leadership and administration team delivered 23 PLEs during the quarter (2 are still in progress), offering a total of 97.5 PLE hours. Of the 23 PLEs, 10 were virtual, 5 were self-paced, 1 was in-person, and 7 were a mix of virtual and in-person.
- 92 unique professionals from 55 programs (16 home-based, 39 center-based) engaged in leadership and administration PLEs.
- Professionals from 224 center-based programs engaged in DEPNow.
- During the current quarter, 64 center-based programs engaged in CQI TA and 259 engaged in other ongoing TA. Some of these programs engaged in both types of TA.
- 272 center-based programs engaged in communities of practice facilitated by the leadership and administration team.

Learning Environments Team Supports

- The learning environments team conducted 16 PLEs focused on classroom educators during the quarter. Their mix of 5 virtual, 1 in-person, 4 hybrid, and 6 self-paced PLEs spanned 69 hours.
- 129 unique educators participated in learning environments PLEs. These individuals were from 79 programs, 29 of which are home-based and 50 of which are center-based.
- DIEEC assessors conducted classroom observations at 1 program after an on-site professional learning experience. This PLE, “Reflecting on Teaching Practices for a Happy and Healthy Classroom PLUS,” utilizes observation data, collected using the Climate of Healthy Interactions for Learning and Development (CHILD) observation tool, as the basis for individualized coaching, strengths-based feedback, goal setting, and action planning with classroom educators.
- A microlearning series, designed to support new early childhood educators in Delaware to build fundamental skills, piloted this quarter. The first round of these 5- to 10-minute learning sessions is scheduled to be completed in early August.
- A new PLE titled “Promoting Language as Cultural Heritage: Benefits and Strategies PLUS” was piloted during the quarter.

Communications & Outreach

- The DIEEC research team held focus group sessions with administrators, home-based professionals, and classroom educators during the quarter. The goal of the focus groups was to engage with prospective and current DIEEC website, social media, and REACH newsletter users to understand:
 - Why do they use or not use the DIEEC website, social media, and REACH newsletter?
 - How are the DIEEC website, social media posts, and REACH newsletter used by those who are engaging?
 - Does the DIEEC website, social media, and REACH newsletter content meet providers' and administrators' needs and match what they are seeking?
 - What recommendations or changes do they propose for website, social media, and REACH newsletter content to increase the likelihood of their engagement?

While it should be noted that focus groups were small and there was no effort for participants to be representative, there were several similarities in the feedback provided by each group.

FCC educators prefer the REACH Newsletter and What's Up Wednesday weekly recap as the primary means of communication from DIEEC. The website is used mainly for finding out about professional learning experiences, and social media is rarely used to stay up-to-date with DIEEC activities. Participants noted that they prefer information in short, to-the-point, statements.

Center-based educators expressed wanting to hear more from other classroom educators about their struggles and successes, as well as more about content that directly supports their work in the classroom. They prefer visual content that is easy to consume and presented as pictures or videos, and they recommend Facebook and TikTok as platforms for receiving this content. Like FCC educators, center-based educators mainly rely on REACH for communication.

Center-based administrators also reported they rely on REACH for communication from DIEEC. They specifically expressed the desire for more information about the updated standards as well as the need for more advanced training.

- Several outreach endeavors also took place during the current quarter:
 - During the Week of the Young Child, the DIEEC organized a webinar panel discussion with early childhood experts and distributed backpacks with supplies to 200 children in Delaware's foster care system.
 - The DIEEC Early Childhood Educator of the Year initiative was held. Nominees were narrowed to 5 center-based and 5 home-based finalists, and winners for both categories were selected through popular vote.
 - In honor of Provider Appreciation, DIEEC hosted ice cream socials in each county and shared appreciation videos through social media.
 - The 8th and final episode of season 1 of the *X, Why, Z: Reflections for ECE Professionals* podcast was released. The episode is titled "Building Relationships" and features Patti Lynch, Coordinator for the Wilmington Early Care and Education Council (WECEC) Professional Development Resource Center, and Corsica Jones, a supervisor and coach for the Redding program who also works with Early Head Start. The DIEEC is currently planning for season 2.