

Delaware Institute for Excellence in Early Childhood

REACH

A newsletter for early childhood education professionals

Dear Early Childhood Professionals,

Welcome to the June edition of REACH. This month, we are pleased to announce the upcoming launch of our refreshed DIEEC website. This redesign aims to provide more efficient access to our professional development, technical assistance, and quality improvement resources, all organized to enhance your experience as you work to support young children.

This issue also features insights into findings from the Everyday Quality project that are directly relevant to our family child care educators. DIEEC is proud to be a partner in this project. We encourage you to check out the final installment of our 3-part Coach's Corner series on supporting early literacy, and explore our available professional learning experiences, designed to offer practical support for your programs. Thank you for your continued dedication to early childhood education in Delaware.

With warm regards,

Kristy Sheffler
Interim Co-Director, DIEEC

DIEEC Action Items

Annual Provider Survey Extended Through June 6- Respond Today!

DIEEC is committed to continually improving the services we provide to early childhood professionals in Delaware. In coordination with the Delaware Department of Education, we would like to hear from you about your participation and experiences with the DIEEC over the past year.

Survey results will be used to inform and improve the supports provided to the early childhood education community in the coming year. **Please take a few minutes to tell us how we can better support YOU!**

[Survey for classroom educators and family child care providers](#)

[Survey for program administrators](#)

Raffle Alert! 🎉

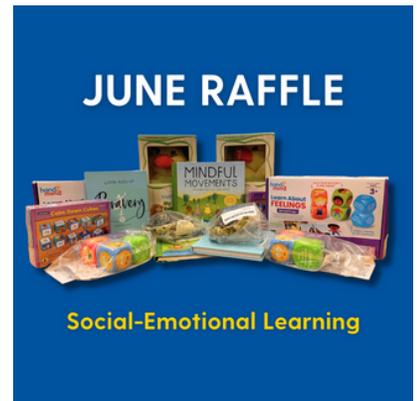
This month, we are raffling off TWO incredible bags packed with social-emotional learning (SEL) treasures—the perfect tools to help children thrive emotionally, socially, and academically. There will be one family and one center winner.

To enter June's raffle: [Answer our survey question about social-emotional learning by June 27.](#)

Congratulations to our June raffle winners!

Family Child Care: Jodie G.

Center-based Educator: Eman H.



This month's raffle: social-emotional learning materials for your teaching space.

Physical Activity, Nutrition and Obesity Prevention (PANO) Listening Sessions for Family Child Care Educators

We want to hear from family child care (FCC) educators about the supports they need to better serve their children and families in the areas of physical activity and nutrition!

Join us during DIEEC's in-person FCC Community Meetings in June for these special PANO listening sessions that include refreshments and giveaways! No registration is required.



These special PANO listening sessions offer a chance to share your thoughts, plus you'll enjoy refreshments and giveaways. No need to register, just show up!

- **6/4/25** 501 S. College Avenue, Newark 6:00-8:00*
- **6/7/25** Paradee Center, 69 Transportation Drive, Dover 10:00- noon*
- **6/10/25** WECEC Resource Center, 1100 N. Pine Street, Wilmington 6:00-8:00
- **6/18/25** Sussex Resource Center, 20359 Sand Hill Road, Georgetown 6:00-8:00

*A guided yoga session will be held during the Newark and Dover meetings.

DIEEC News

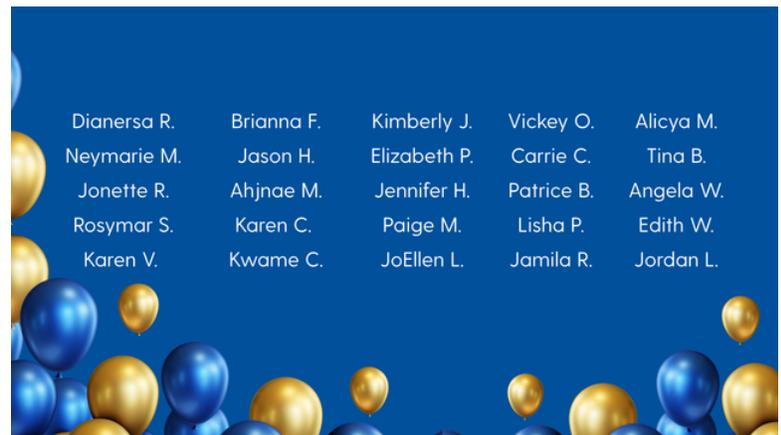
Excellence in Early Childhood Awards: Stay Tuned for Our 2025 Winners

The countdown is on! 🎉 We can't wait to reveal the winners of this year's Excellence in Early Childhood Awards! Check DIEEC's [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) feeds on **June 13th at noon** for the big announcement!



Provider Appreciation Day Raffle Winners

In honor of Provider Appreciation Day, DIEEC randomly chose 25 names from FCC educators and classroom educators who've participated in DIEEC professional learning experiences in the past year. Winners have been contacted and gift cards are on the way. **Congratulations to our winners!**





Coach's Corner: Literacy in the Early Childhood Environment: Writing

This month, coach Meghan Pallante wraps up her three-part series on supporting emergent literacy skills in the early childhood setting. In [April, she discussed ways to create a literacy-rich environment](#), and in [May, she covered activities to support different areas of emergent literacy](#), including oral language, alphabet knowledge, and phonological awareness. [Check out her final article on supporting early writing skills](#) in your daily play activities!

Quick Tip: Boost fine motor skills! Let kids form letters with play dough or "write" them in sand on a baking sheet. (AI image generated with Microsoft Copilot)

Everyday Quality: Family Child Care Educator Study Findings

[A recent research brief from the Everyday Quality project](#) explores what family child care (FCC) educators think about higher education and credential requirements. Researchers from the University of Alabama and the University of Delaware (DIEEC) conducted focus groups with FCC educators in 20 states. They found that FCC educators believe ongoing education is important and beneficial for their work. However, they generally don't think that specific degrees or credentials should be required, especially because it can be hard to access those qualifications. FCC educators also emphasized that it's important to give credit for their years of experience and to provide funding to help pay for further education.

What do YOU think? FCC educators can participate in upcoming Everyday Quality project interviews and observations – [find out more and sign up for information here](#).

Meeting the Needs of All Children

In the early childhood setting, implicit bias can subtly influence how we interact with children. Even though we intend to treat everyone equally, implicit bias might lead us to react differently to a child's behavior based on their gender, race, or family background. We might unknowingly have different expectations for a child's abilities, be quicker to discipline one child over another for the same action, or interpret their emotions in varying ways. Recognizing that we all carry these unconscious biases is the first step toward ensuring that every child receives truly equitable and supportive care, helping us respond to each child's unique needs with genuine fairness and understanding.

One way to start is by recognizing our own implicit biases- everyone has them! It can be humbling, but the key is to become more aware of these biases so we can capture them, name them, and redirect ourselves. [Take a few minutes to participate in a few of the many free implicit association tests](#). The results may surprise you!

This [Effects of Racism on Child Development Infographic from Harvard's Center on the Developing Child](#) helps us to better understand how even small, unintentional biases can add up- and how taking the time to identify and reduce them can have a positive impact on the well being of the children in our care.

Office Hours: DIEEC is Here for YOU!

Did you know that DIEEC has open, virtual office hours for family child care educators and center-based programs? These are in addition to any office hours that your Quality Improvement Specialist may hold. We can provide technical assistance and help get your questions answered. No appointment needed- just drop in. Open office hours are listed on [DIEEC's public calendar](#)- click on the event title and use the Zoom link to join.

Coming This Month: A Refreshed DIEEC Website

In just a few weeks, the refreshed [DIEEC website](#) will arrive! By the end of June, you'll have access to the new Resource Hub, plus all the information you need for technical assistance, professional development, and quality improvement planning- all conveniently organized for you.

Summer Hours at DIEEC

From **May 27 through August 29, DIEEC will be on summer hours.** Our main phone line, 302-831-3239, will be staffed Monday through Thursday, 7:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and Fridays, 8:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. You may also email us at your convenience at ecinstitute@udel.edu and you will receive a reply during business hours. You can visit our website anytime at www.dieec.udel.edu.

News from Our Partners

Job Opening: Education Associate at the Office of Early Learning (OEL)

The Education Associate, Systems and Partnerships position will manage the Quality Improvement Award (QIA) system, one component of DE's Quality Improvement System (QIS) and other OEL projects and initiatives that focus on Quality Improvement and access to services and supports for young children, their families, the birth-five workforce, and early care and education (ECE) programs.

Applications close on June 13 at 11:59 p.m. Full details: [Education Associate, Systems and Partnerships](#).

Quality Improvement Planning

Upload Your Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) Pre- and Post-Assessments to WELS

As part of this year's quality improvement planning process, programs were asked to develop a method for measuring progress toward their selected goal. To complete this process, the post-assessment—along with your original pre-assessment—must be uploaded into WELS.

For additional details about the pre- and post-assessment process, please see page 6 of the [Program and Policy Guide for Delaware's Quality Improvement System for Early Care and Education Programs](#).

Quality Improvement Resource Highlight: Trauma Informed Practices

Each month, we share resources that Delaware program leaders can use to support themselves and their staff as they work toward higher levels of quality.

In case you missed it, May was Trauma Awareness Month in Delaware. In early childhood settings, trauma awareness means recognizing how trauma can affect young children's behavior, development, and relationships, and creating nurturing, responsive environments that promote healing and resilience. Many valuable resources were shared during the month. Here are a few:

- **Trauma Matters Delaware:** Explore local efforts, training opportunities, and resources focused on building trauma-informed practices across Delaware's communities, including early childhood education settings.
- **Zero to Three: Supporting Young Children Through Uncertain Times: Resources for Stress and Trauma:** This website offers practical tips, videos, and tools to help early childhood education professionals support young children's emotional well-being during times of stress or trauma.
- **HeadStart.gov: Trauma-informed Practices:** Find strategies and resources designed to help early childhood education programs implement trauma-informed care that fosters healing and emotional security in young children.

If you want to focus your quality improvement efforts on supporting trauma-informed processes in your program, your Quality Improvement Specialist can assist you in selecting the most suitable resources for your Quality Improvement Plan.

If you have a resource to share or something that you're doing in your program that we can highlight, we'd love to hear about it! Submit your ideas to ecinstitute@udel.edu to be included in a future edition of REACH.

DIEEC Professional Learning Experiences (PLEs)

Upcoming Free PLE Opportunities with DIEEC

DIEEC's professional learning experiences (PLEs) are available at no cost to you. You can browse and register for a variety of PLEs on the [DIEEC professional learning experience calendar](#). Check out these upcoming offerings.

Virtual-Live and Hybrid Professional Learning Experiences

Title	Hours	Level	Start Date
Bridging the Connection Gap: Individualizing Relationships	4	Intro.	June 5
Flip It! Flipping the Challenging Behavior	10	Inter.	June 5
Implementing Teaching Strategies GOLD	7	Inter.	June 10
A Child's View of Diversity: Curious ME! PLUS	6	Inter.	June 10
Individualized Teaching of Social-Emotional Skills: The Pyramid Model	4	Inter.	June 16
The Business of Early Childhood: The Art of Strengths-Based Observation and Feedback for Leaders PLUS	10	Adv.	June 17
Rock Solid Foundations: Friendship and Play Skills	6	Inter.	June 19
Strengthening Business Practices: Fiscal Management Part 1: Budget, Planning, Projection for Family Childcare Providers PLUS	8	Inter.	June 21
Child Assessment for Teachers: The Power of Practice PLUS	10	Intro.	June 24

How to Access Former DEPDNow Trainings

Three of the former DEPDNow trainings can be accessed through DIEEC using an online platform called Canvas. Please note that the timing for this process has changed—you'll now need to allow up to 48 hours between registering for a course and beginning it. We appreciate your patience as we all navigate this new process together.

Steps to get started:

1. Register for a course
 - [Health & Safety Training for Child Care Professionals](#)
 - [Administration of Medication Certification](#)
 - [Maintaining Equity in Early Childhood: Suspension / Expulsion Prevention](#)
2. Within 24 hours, you will receive an email titled “UD Guest Account Invitation.” Follow the instructions in the email to set up your account.
3. Within 24 hours after setting up your account, you will receive an email titled “Course Invitation” from Instructure Canvas. Click the “Get Started” button in this email to log in to Canvas and begin your course.

Need help with the steps above? Take a look at [our Canvas Access instructions](#).

Additional information regarding DIEEC online and Canvas courses can be found [here](#).

Additional courses. The Office of Early Learning (OEL) has prepared a [chart to guide you in accessing trainings](#) similar to the others formerly available through DEPDNow. These can be accessed through the Office of Head Start’s [Individualized Professional Development \(iPD\) Portfolio](#).