

COACH'S CORNER

Coach's Corner is a DIEEC blog dedicated to providing fresh ideas for all early childhood education professionals.



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Six Reasons You Should Network... And Seven Ways DIEEC Can Help You Do It

In today's world, networking is important in any field. Connections with other professionals can provide endless opportunities. Networking can lead to camaraderie, a deeper knowledge of the field, and career advancement. Below are just some of the ways networking can benefit early childhood professionals.



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Six Benefits of Networking

1

Gain knowledge of community resources: Networking with local early childhood educators provides greater access to community resources that can strengthen your ability to support the families in your program. Your colleagues may be aware of helpful community agencies, services, and supports in your area. It is also a great way for educators to share their practical experiences and insights about working with different agencies.

2

Discover professional development opportunities: Through networking, educators can share valuable information about virtual and in-person professional development opportunities. You can seek out networks of educators working with similar age groups to get recommendations for specific courses or trainings. In turn, this helps you choose relevant, high-quality opportunities for your own growth and learning.

3

Build essential camaraderie: The importance of being able to share both the good and the bad experiences of caring for and educating young children cannot be overstated. Support from other professionals provides fresh perspectives, helps to combat burnout, and creates a sense of belonging. Running a program can feel isolating for family child care (FCC) educators in particular; connecting with peers helps create the feeling of having “co-workers” to share ideas and challenges with. Similarly, it is important for center administrators to connect with their peers.

4

Find inspiration and re-energize your work: Connecting with other professionals in the field can help re-energize your passion for the important work you do with young children. Hearing stories and successes from across the field reminds educators of the impact of their work, and a shared sense of purpose can sustain motivation during challenging periods.

5

Benefit from mentorship: Seeking out peers with different levels of experience in the field is important for both new and experienced educators. Those who have more experience and education can serve as mentors for newer educators, guiding them through early challenges. Newer educators can learn so much from those who have been in the field for a long time; but they may also have a lot to share, including fresh ideas and current academic knowledge.

6

Involvement in advocacy: Strength in numbers is essential for advocating for the early childhood profession and the work we do. Sharing information and staying current on policies, workforce needs and legislative changes can lead to better outcomes for both educators and children.

Not sure where to start building your own network? Here are seven ways DIEEC and our partners can help you connect with your colleagues in the early childhood field.

Professional learning experience (PLE) cohorts: PLE cohorts provide opportunities to do a deep dive into a specific topic alongside a group of educators. This may include multiple classes/coaching sessions over an extended time period. Participating in a cohort allows you to build more sustained relationships with colleagues focused on a shared area of growth.

DIEEC's annual 1st State Family Child Care Conference: FCC educators can come together for a full day of targeted professional development. Attendees participate in workshops, hear a keynote address, and have plenty of opportunities to network with other FCC educators. (Registration for the 2025 conference is closed, but you can check out our [website](#) and plan to join us next year!)

Monthly Leader Link-Up meetings for program administrators. Hosted by DIEEC, these monthly one-hour meetings provide an opportunity to connect, share inspiration, and gain practical strategies. [Fill out the interest form](#) to receive a Zoom link for the next meeting!

Resource centers: Check out local resource centers for educators- connect with colleagues while exploring tools and materials to enhance your program.

- Wilmington Early Care & Education Council ([WECEC](#)) Resource Center at Stubbs Early Childhood Education Center
- DIEEC's [Family Child Care Network](#) hosts the Sussex Resource Center for family child care educators
- The Early Childhood Innovation Center ([ECIC](#)) at Delaware State University hosts a resource center in Kent County.

Family Child Care Network meetings: DIEEC offers [regular network meetings](#) in both virtual and in-person formats that allow FCC educators to come together each month to share ideas and discuss current topics. In-person meetings are available in each county, and no registration is required.

Professional organizations offer ways to connect with early childhood educators outside of your local community. The organizations below offer membership opportunities and annual conferences.

- The National Association for the Education of Young Children ([NAEYC](#)) and its state chapter, Delaware Association for the Education of Young Children ([deaeYC](#)).
- The National Association for Family Child Care ([NAFCC](#)) and its state chapter, the [1st State Family Childcare Association](#).
- [Zero to Three](#) empowers early childhood professionals, communities and caregivers with knowledge and skills to positively impact the lives of infants and toddlers.

Social media is another way to connect with educators through different groups or pages. [DIEEC maintains an active Facebook page](#) where we share news and opportunities in the field.



We'll leave you with one bonus reason to network: Sharing your successes! Millions of children are impacted by the commitment of early childhood educators, and that is something that should be celebrated every day!

Resources:

- [Amplifying the Voices of Early Childhood Educators- NAEYC](#)
- [5 Reasons to Attend Early Childhood Conferences-Zero to Three](#)