

## Delaware Institute for Excellence in Early Childhood

## REACH

A newsletter for early childhood education professionals

If you're anything like us, you're wondering how on earth it can be October already! Our calendar for the coming month is packed, and this issue of REACH is your guide to all of the good things we have in store.

In this month's Provider Spotlight, FCC educator Tredena Trott shares how she stays connected to her colleagues in the field...and our 1st State Family Child Care Conference is one of her many ways! If you're a family child care educator, don't miss your chance to join us at the conference in November.

DIEEC's Early Childhood Educator Leadership Board is a fantastic opportunity for ECE educators to share their perspectives with us. Feedback from the board has a direct, positive impact on our work at DIEEC, and we invite you to apply and join the conversation.

In early November, we're celebrating Children's Book Week. Our entire staff at DIEEC will head out to serve as guest readers at programs around the state, and we are so excited to connect with you around our shared understanding of how important early literacy is for our children. Even if you're not hosting a guest reader, you can still take advantage of the resources we've shared for promoting literacy and a love of reading.

For those of you working on Quality Improvement Plans, we have important information about working with your QI specialists toward the November 15th Quality Improvement Award application deadline. If you've already received an award, we have supports available to help with the financial management side of things!

If you're an early bird already thinking ahead to spring, check out our new Let's GROW Outside! opportunity - applications open on October 14.

There's plenty more in this issue- read on! May your month be free of tricks, and full of treats.

With warm regards,  
Kristy Sheffler  
DIEEC Interim Co-Director

Delaware Institute for Excellence in Early Childhood



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# DIEEC Action Items

## Register by 10/15: 1st State Family Child Care Conference

Don't miss your chance to join us at the third annual 1st State Family Child Care Conference. Connect with Delaware's community of family child care professionals so that you can be "Your Best Self, for Their Best Future!" The conference takes place on Saturday, November 16 at the CHEER Community Center in Georgetown. To learn more or register, please visit our conference web page at [www.dieec.udel.edu/whats-new/1st-state-fcc-conference](http://www.dieec.udel.edu/whats-new/1st-state-fcc-conference).



## Coming Soon: Let's GROW Outside!

DIEEC's latest outdoor initiative, Let's GROW Outside!, teaches professionals about the possibilities provided through outdoor gardening with young children and provides a grant-funded opportunity to make your own edible garden come to life. This opportunity is open to center-based and home-based programs that participate in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). Applications for the upcoming cohort **will be open from October 14** to 25. Look out for an email with an application link on October 14!



## Need Support for Managing the Financial Side of Your Program's Quality Improvement Award?

DIEEC has partnered with the Small Business Development Center to offer grant-related professional development and coaching. These resources and supports can be applied to other forms of grant funding as well. There are two virtual workshop series coming up; both include free business advising! **The Smart Grants: Budgeting and Tax Essentials Workshop Series begins on 10/23**, and **Grant Readiness: A Three-Part Learning Series begins on 11/7**. Sign up now!



## Early Childhood Educator Leadership Board - Apply Now

Are you an enthusiastic early childhood educator with a passion for making a lasting impact? We invite YOU to apply to join the DIEEC Early Childhood Educator Leadership Board, becoming a driving force in shaping DIEEC's strategies, supports, and initiatives, elevating Delaware's early childhood community to new heights. [Applications are open through November 30!](#)

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## Spark Your Children's Love for Active Play with PALS

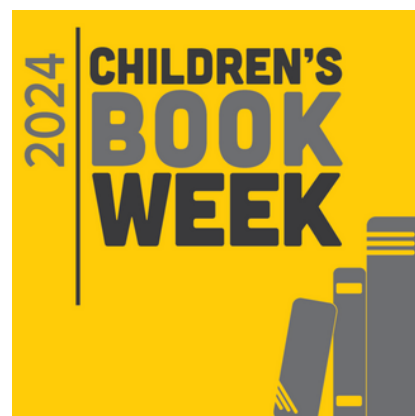
The Physical Activity Learning Sessions (PALS) professional learning experience (PLE) is back! This hybrid multi-session PLE will show you how to incorporate physical activity throughout the day, with playful routines and engaging activities. You'll be empowered to design enriching physical experiences tailored to the children in your program. Participants receive a duffel full of materials to support active play in their own classrooms! Use the following links to register now: we have one [PALS experience beginning in October 2024](#) and a second [PALS experience starting in January 2025](#).

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## Children's Book week 2024: Everyone Can Celebrate!

DIEEC is excited to have our guest readers visit programs during the first week of November! If you aren't hosting a guest reader, you can still celebrate and promote a love of reading during Children's Book Week, November 4th through 10th. Check out [Every Child a Reader](#) to learn more about the national celebration. Visit [DIEEC's Children's Book Week page](#) to see our book selections for this year and find early literacy resources in Delaware.

🎉 **Congratulations** to our Children's Book Week early bird registration raffle winner, Ann (Yvonnise) Bulluck, a family child care educator in Millsboro. Ann won a fantastic book bundle for her program! 🎉



## DIEEC Public Calendar

DIEEC's public calendar is a great way to keep up with what's happening in the early childhood community. Upcoming events are listed on the bottom left side of our homepage, and you can also [click through to the full calendar](#). Click on an event name to get all the details: who, what, when, where and how to join in!

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## Provider Spotlight: Tredena Trott

Tredena Trott has one word of advice for FCC professionals who haven't yet registered for the 1st State Family Child Care Conference: "GO!"

Tredena knows the value of connection, community and self-care for family child care (FCC) professionals like herself. [Read more about how Tredena stays connected and motivated.](#)



*Tredena Trott, Family Child Care Professional  
Image by Stephanie Thompson*

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## Coach's Corner: Developing Emotional Intelligence

Strong social and emotional skills can lead to success in personal relationships and the workplace; they also have a positive impact on self-awareness and self-regulation. Developing these skills is an integral part of early childhood education. [In this month's Coach's Corner](#), Meghan Pallante provides tips for incorporating social and emotional learning into your daily experiences with children.



## Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Highlight

“Children are remarkably good at observing differences in the world. This is an important developmental learning strategy. Adults can support children as they make sense of differences by talking to them about what they observe.” Visit the Head Start eclkc site to further explore “[Talking to Children About Differences and Similarities.](#)”

## Dr. Rena Hallam Named to Leadership Role

DIEEC is proud to share that Rena Hallam has been named Research Co-Director for the [National Early Care & Education Workforce Center](#). Rena has a long history of leadership at DIEEC. In addition to her new role at the Workforce Center, Rena is currently serving as interim dean of the College of Education and Human Development.



# Quality Improvement Planning

## FY25 Quality Improvement (QI) Award Deadline

The next application deadline for the FY25 QI Award is November 15, 2024.

- **Your Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) must be co-created with a Quality Improvement specialist** to be eligible for the award.
- **The program leader is responsible for connecting with their QI specialist.**
  - **If you already have a QI specialist**, you can reach out to them directly.
- **If you do not yet have a QI specialist**, you must request support through the Delaware Early Care and Education portal. See the [Program Portal Guide](#) for information about how to use the portal and request QI specialist support.
- **Developing a QIP is a multi-step process.** You will need to meet with your QI specialist several times. To ensure your plan is developed and submitted on time, we encourage you to connect with your specialist as early as possible.
- **QI specialists are working with programs on a rolling, first-come, first-served basis.**
  - Programs that are not able to submit by the next deadline of November 15, 2024 will have two additional opportunities to apply for the FY25 QI award (by January 15, 2025, or by March 15, 2025).
  - School districts and state agencies must apply by November 15th.

QI specialists are available to support programs in their quality improvement journey regardless of their intent to apply for a QI Award. For more information on the QI process, working with a QI specialist, or applying for an award, please refer to the [Program and Policy Guide for Delaware's Quality Improvement System for Early Care and Education Programs](#).

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## Quality Improvement Resource Highlight

Each month, we share resources that Delaware programs can use as they work towards higher levels of quality.

As part of the continuous quality improvement process, program leaders will use tool(s) and/or survey(s) to document improvements in program practices and assess whether their goals have been achieved. Here are two options that could be used to self-assess your strengths and needs in a variety of areas related to the **Positive Climate and High-Quality Interactions (PCHQ) indicator**, including responsive relationships, routines, schedules, behavior, and interactions.

- [Pyramid Model Practices Implementation Checklist for Infant and Toddler Classrooms](#)
- [Pyramid Model Practices Implementation Checklist for Preschool \(2-5 years\) Classrooms](#)

Your quality improvement specialist can assist you in selecting the most suitable tools or surveys 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](mailto:ecinstitute@udel.edu) to be included in a future edition of REACH.

# DIEEC Professional Learning Experiences (PLEs)

## Upcoming Free Opportunities

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

- [Math 1, 2, 3: Understanding Children's Math Development](#), a 4-hour introductory experience starting on **10/14**.
- [Sing, Dance & Stomp](#), a 4-hour introductory course starting on **10/14**.
- [Promoting Language as Cultural Heritage: Benefits and Strategies PLUS](#), an 8-hour introductory course starting on **10/15**.
- [Developing Relationships, Developing Brains: Infants and Toddlers](#), a 5-hour intermediate course starting **10/22**.
- [Mindfulness Intermediate](#), a 6-hour intermediate course starting on **10/22**.
- [The Right Fit: Recruiting and Selecting Staff](#), an 8-hour intermediate course starting on **10/22**.
- [A Series of Conversations for Family Child Care Networks: Understanding Head Start Program Performance Standards - Environment & Curriculum](#), a 3-hour intermediate course starting on **10/23**.
- [Smart Grants: Budgeting and Tax Essentials Workshop Series](#), a 4-hour intermediate course starting on **10/23**.
- [Culturally Responsive Teaching](#), a 7-hour intermediate course starting on **10/26**.
- [5 Strategies for a Happy and Healthy Classroom](#), a 6-hour introductory class starting on **10/30**.
- [A Conversation with Leadership: Program Positivity PLUS](#), a 9-hour intermediate course starting on **11/4**.
- [Every Day Math PLUS](#), a 10-hour intermediate experience starting on **11/4**.
- [Using Responsive Care Techniques to Foster Social-Emotional Development](#), an 8-hour intermediate experience starting on **11/4**.
- [Grant Readiness: A Three-Part Learning Series](#), a 6-hour intermediate experience starting on **11/7**.

## Self-Paced Professional Learning Experiences

All of the PLEs listed below will begin on November 1st. Click on each PLE name to learn more.

- [Mindfulness, a Resilience Practice](#)
- [Recordkeeping in Family Child Care](#)
- [Engaging Fathers](#)
- [5 Strategies for a Happy and Healthy Classroom](#)
- [Stress and Resilience: Building Core Capabilities Community of Practice](#)

## Additional Professional Development Options for Delaware Early Childhood Professionals

The Delaware Department of Education (DDOE) has created a list of organizations that provide online training hours to meet the educational requirement for the CDA. The Office of Child Care Licensing will also accept training hours from these companies to meet annual licensing clock-hour requirements. This list can be found on their webpage: <https://bit.ly/3Yz8zaa>. Scroll all the way to the bottom of the page to view the list.

### FREE option

Listed on the DDOE site above as “Head Start ECLKC,” the Office of Head Start’s Individualized Professional Development (iPD) Portfolio **offers free online courses** on child development and practical teaching strategies for infant/toddler educators and preschool educators. <https://bit.ly/3WxJ8TI>.

## Important Update from the Delaware Department of Education (DDOE)

Starting January 1, 2025, DEPDNow trainings will be discontinued. This change ONLY pertains to trainings offered on the DEPDNow site. DIEEC and iPD trainings will continue to be offered. If you are currently enrolled in any DEPDNow training, please ensure you complete it by December 31, 2024, to receive credit on your Delaware Institute for Excellence in Early Childhood (DIEEC) transcript.



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