

Connector



PSESD Early Learning Monthly Newsletter
November 2020

Your “Surge Capacity” Is Depleted – It’s Why You Feel So Awful



From Elemental. Illustration by Adrian Forrow

We hope this [article](#) will help you understand how **indefinite uncertainty**, **surge capacity** and **ambiguous loss** can heavily impact your life during this pandemic, and how to find real ways of coping to help function during this unprecedented time.

PSESD Early Learning Connector

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The Early Learning Connector e-newsletter is produced monthly throughout the school year, providing information for the PSESD Early Learning Program.



Deliverables/To-Do Lists

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COVID-19 Information

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What's New in General

A Powerful Session with Erin Jones

Cheryl Habgood, Systems Manager | Professional Learning

We are making the recording of the recent Family Support Staff Training available to everyone because everyone needs to hear Erin Jones speak! Erin is a local long-time educator and racial equity advocate who is nationally recognized. Her words are powerful, and we hope you can take some time to listen.

The objectives for the session were met and then some:

1. Understanding of the power of **gratitude** to thrive during this difficult season.
2. Strategies to create the **brave** spaces necessary to have difficult conversations about race.
3. Ability to understand and explain racial equity and its role in the work of education.

The session recording is available [here](#).

Congratulations to Gail Neal & Multicultural Child & Family Hope Center!

Kathy Binkley, Family Engagement Coach & Noelle Wilkins, Team A Manager

Congratulations to Gail Neal & MCFHC in receiving the Champions for Children Award from Project Child Success and First Five Fundamentals. We applaud you all! MCFHC shows excellence in approaching everyone with an equal measure of respect, humility, and hope – always welcoming, encouraging, and honoring children, families, staff, and community partners. MCFHC leads with determination and in partnership with others. The celebration included over 30 people on Zoom and a parking lot full of attendees on site inclusive of staff, children, parents, and community leaders. Singing, testimonies, and tears of joy filled the atmosphere as Gail received the award with her ever present humble heart in her amazing work within the community.

Multilingual Services (MLS)

JoAnna Williams-Diggs, Senior Coordinator | Multilingual Services

Multilingual Services would like to welcome Emily Stephens to our program as our new Senior Coordinator. Emily will be supporting the sites on Teams A & B and JoAnna will be supporting sites on Teams C & D.

If you have a child in your class in need of language supports, please complete a [Bilingual Instructional Assistant \(BIA\) Request](#) form, which you can find on the ELPM. If you have any questions about language supports, please contact your Dual Language Learners (DLL) Coach. Also, please remember to review the [September Connector \(page 9\)](#) for information about Interpreter timesheet documentation.

Policy & Legislative Updates

See the [Center Director page](#) for a related ECEAP update.

Check back next month for more information!

Center Directors



Review [deliverables](#) to ensure that you complete all requirements. Make sure to also review [Health Nutrition & Safety deliverables](#).

Also review the [COVID-19 Guidance](#) that provides all the up-to-date information needed for the 2020-21 program year. This document will be continuously updated as information changes.

Review the E-Alerts for October 2020

10.28 Topic: Reminder – HS/EHS & ECEAP Monthly Due Dates

10.21 Topic: ASQ Online Program Administrator Survey

10.14 Topic: Reminder - DCYF Bi-Monthly Spreadsheet Due 10-15-20

Center Director Meetings

Check the [Center Director page](#) monthly for Zoom links, recorded updates, and recorded meetings.

Important Information Regarding Fingerprint Background Checks

Cheryl Habgood, Systems Manager | Professional Learning

Governor Inslee's [Proclamation 20-31](#) allows DCYF to complete a name-based background check and approve unsupervised access to children while fingerprints are pending due to the limited fingerprint resources during the COVID-19 pandemic. This proclamation continues through September 30, 2020 and may extend through the remainder of the calendar year.

Childcare and early learning background check applicants must now complete the fingerprint process to be compliant by January 1, 2021.

DCYF will use previously submitted background check applications of individuals who were conditionally approved under the proclamation to initiate the fingerprint process. These individuals will receive an email from dcyf.backgroundcheck@dcyf.wa.gov with instructions to complete the fingerprint process. They may continue to have unsupervised access while their fingerprint-based background check is pending and will not be required to submit a new application or pay an additional \$12 application fee.

New applications received on or after October 1 will be required to complete fingerprints before January 1, 2021.

Please contact DCYF at dcyf.backgroundcheck@dcyf.wa.gov or call 1-800-998-3898 (option 4) or 1-866-482-4325 (option 4) if you have questions or need additional information.

Legislators Need to Know – ECEAP SmartSheet Data

Talena Dixon, Director | Program Operations & ECEAP

An important reminder that the information you enter in the SmartSheet survey on the 15th and 30th of each month is highly valuable! Each day, DCYF's ECEAP team is getting data requests from legislators and DCYF leadership team so that they can understand how ECEAP is operating during the pandemic. Please ensure that the information you enter is current and tells the story of your services and challenges.

- **Enrollment:** Continue to do your best to enroll children and families and reach out to your FE Coaches for support. Enrollment numbers continue to be looked at and questioned.

- **Health & Nutrition:** There are no specific questions about health and nutrition services, however, as you tell the story about services offered to children and families, please include health and nutrition.

Are Teachers Okay?

Implementation Team

We hope you'll read this short [article](#) about toxic positivity as you work with staff during the pandemic.

Fall Check-In Training Shifted

Cheryl Habgood, Systems Manager | Professional Learning

The fall site-based training originally planned to occur sometime between October and December has shifted to a mid-January through mid-March timeline because of the many demands on time and focus you are currently experiencing.

Team Managers will work with Center Directors to schedule the most appropriate time for this 90-minute training. Stay tuned for more information. Don't hesitate to reach out to your Team Manager with questions.

Monitoring Update

Natalia Juarez, Program Manager

The [2020-21 Monitoring Schedule and Protocols](#) has been published on ELWA. As other monitoring tasks get finalized, they will be added to the document and shared out. Please reach out to [Natalia Juarez](#) with any questions.

Staff Database and Rosters – Your Attention Needed

Mike Condardo, Senior Coordinator | Communications, Educational Technology

As you know, late in July the PSESD computer server network was attacked by hackers which disabled our systems for several weeks. While nearly all computer systems have now been restored, Early Learning suffered one major casualty as we lost our HS/EHS Site Staff Database, which is used to track the comings and goings of your staff throughout the program year. The good news – EL data was not compromised. The bad news – HS/EHS database structure that housed the site staff data was destroyed.

We have created a “transitional” database with basic information that is needed for staff and site locations. We continue to plan and design for a new HS/EHS/ECEAP integrated database with the goal of completion in 2021.

Last week, each Center Director was emailed what we have for a Site Staff Roster for their Center/Sites, including ECEAP. If you haven't yet, please review and make corrections in two main areas:

1. Site Locations (address, phone, fax, etc.) – submit changes directly to [Mike Condardo](#)
2. Site Staff (names, positions, email addresses) – use the [Staff Information electronic forms](#)

Staff Information Forms (SIFs) and Hiring Documents

Venissia Buyco, Senior Coordinator | Management Systems

Staffing Changes? Please take a moment to fill out the appropriate online [Staff Information Form](#). For new staff and position changes, hiring documents may be uploaded with the electronic form or emailed directly to [Venissia Buyco](#). For new Head Start staff, transcripts must be uploaded with the [New Staff Form](#) so that qualifications can be verified. New Head Start staff will not be entered into any of our systems until qualifications are determined.

Questions about Staff Qualifications:
[Cheryl Habgood](#)

Questions about Hiring Documents:
[Venissia Buyco](#)

Online Professional Learning Opportunities

Cheryl Habgood, Systems Manager | Professional Learning

There are many opportunities to engage in professional learning in these COVID times. One that we'd like to highlight is the [Head Start iPD Portfolio](#), which is an online platform created to support ongoing professional learning for staff in early learning settings. It is free and available to all, regardless of your funded program.

For information about the number of required annual professional learning hours you must have based on your program and role, check out the [Professional Learning Plan Procedure](#).

Here is the [list of other online professional learning opportunities](#). It's located in [COVID-19 Information: Other](#).

Education



Review [deliverables](#) to ensure that you complete all requirements. Make sure to also review [Health Nutrition & Safety deliverables](#).

Also review the [COVID-19 Guidance](#) that provides all the up-to-date information needed for the 2020-21 program year. This document will be continuously updated as information changes.

Checkpoint Update

Decca Calloway, Program Manager | Education, Disabilities, Multilingual Services

The Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) informed us that the scaled down version of the *MyTeachingStrategies GOLD* assessment will not provide valid or reliable results. **As of now, the full assessment of all Fall checkpoints will be required and will be due November 30.** They do not want to put additional disproportionate burden on staff or on families to provide samples of work, etc. They understand that it isn't possible to get all assessments done. They are asking for both virtual and in-person models, that staff do the best they can and that families are not further burdened. They are trusting the judgment of teachers to decide what families will be able to do around this.

ASQ Update

Decca Calloway, Program Manager | Education, Disabilities, Multilingual Services

Developmental and Social Emotional Screening deadlines remain 45 days after a child begins in program. We know many teachers are patiently waiting to implement the ASQ Online as a resource and tool to support the screening process. We are currently experiencing some difficulty getting the ASQ issued to sites and centers. As soon as it is ready to share, all sites will receive guidance on how to get started. We sincerely apologize for the delay and we will continue to update you as we get information. Please continue to use the paper forms to gather that data from parents. Please review the [procedure](#) and [instructions for submitting results](#). To access forms, please contact your Education Coach or Disabilities Consultant. The languages available are as follows:

- **ASQ-3:** Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Spanish, Vietnamese
- **ASQ:SE2:** English, French and Spanish

How to Design a Socially Distanced Classroom During COVID-19

Decca Calloway, Program Manager | Education, Disabilities, Multilingual Services

We know that providing a safe place for children to learn and play during the pandemic is not an easy task. We also know there are various ways to organize your classroom spaces and that resources are growing. Please send in pictures of your spaces to your Education Coach (**no children, please**). They will be added to [EarlyLearningWA](#) to share with other sites and centers. Please also feel free to share any activities that you think would benefit Early Learning teachers. [EdWeb has also released a short video](#) that supports teachers in creating a great learning space. The webinar is 1 hour, and the objectives are as follows:

- Define physical distancing vs. social distancing
- Identify potential classroom design mistakes
- Apply suggested solutions for classroom setup
- Encourage classroom community while practicing physical distancing

Disabilities Consultants Site Assignments

Tamara Griffith & Dani Hoffman, Disabilities Consultants

As Dani Hoffman has joined our Education Services team as our newest Disabilities Consultant, site assignments have changed. [Dani Hoffman](#) is assigned to support Teams A & B. [Tamara Griffith](#) will support Teams C & D. Please don't hesitate to reach out to us for technical assistance, consultation, or support.

Home Language Survey Reminder

Jesse Acosta, Dual Language Learners Coach

Home Language Surveys in *MyTeachingStrategies GOLD* should be completed within 2 weeks of child's enrollment (if not completed at enrollment). The survey should be completed for every child and no answers should be marked as "N/A". Reach out to your DLL Coach with any questions.

Classroom Observations

Tamara Griffith & Dani Hoffman, Disabilities Consultants

As part of the scope of work to support students with suspected and identified disabilities remotely, Disabilities Consultants can conduct live virtual classroom observations through secure and HIPPA compliant platforms such as Zoom, Ring Central, or Teams. Please reach out to your assigned Disabilities Consultant to set up a virtual observation as part of your synchronous remote instruction or in-person instruction.

Supporting Dual Language Learners During Remote Learning

Jesse Acosta, Dual Language Learners Coach

The pandemic and remote learning have presented unique challenges in best supporting dual language learners (DLLs). [Read this article](#) for suggestions on how to support DLLs and their families during this difficult time. Reach out to your DLL Coach to request more resources or to further explore this topic.

Family Engagement



Review [deliverables](#) to ensure that you complete all requirements. Make sure to also review [Health Nutrition & Safety deliverables](#).

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Preparing for the 2020-2021 Policy Council Year Quincy Stone, Parent Leadership Manager

The first Policy Council meeting for your 2020-21 Parent Representatives is Tuesday, November 17! Submit the online [Policy Council Notice and Verification Form as soon as possible](#). Policy Council representation is required by your Site's funding source. Please see the [Policy Council Composition Chart](#) to learn how many parent representatives should be elected from your site. **Note: We no longer have "alternates"; please elect only the number of representatives indicated on the composition chart.**

Encourage prospective and elected representatives to attend Policy Council Training on November 10, 11:00 am to 1:00 pm. Zoom link can be found on the [Policy Council Events Calendar](#).

For more information on recruiting, visit the Policy Council page and share the [Policy Council Video](#) at parent meetings or one-on-one with parents! Brochures can still be requested [here](#). We also have current Policy Council Reps who are available to speak at your virtual parent meetings; please contact [Quincy Stone](#).

Eligibility Monitoring Begins

Lingsue Hwang and Martha Waiters, Technical Assistance Coordinators | Monitors

Online (Desktop) Eligibility Monitoring has begun for Head Start/Early Head Start and is scheduled to continue until early March. When you receive an email with instructions, you will have 2 weeks to upload requested materials to ChildPlus. Though monitoring adds additional tasks to your work, as a monitoring team, we wish to be a support to you and partner together for continuous program improvement.



Photo by PSESD Early Learning

Policy Council

Check out the [Policy Council page](#) for information, recruitment tools, meeting materials, and more!



Stock image via Microsoft

Parent Professional Learning

Check out the [Parent Professional Learning page](#) for information, recruitment tools, registration, teachback requests, and more! **Peer Health & Peer Literacy Training start in January!**

Health, Nutrition, & Safety



Review [deliverables](#) to ensure that you complete all requirements.

Also review the [COVID-19 Guidance](#) that provides all the up-to-date information needed for the 2020-21 program year. This document will be continuously updated as information changes.

Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfecting Environments

Bethany Larsen, Program Manager | Safety

During a time when we are more aware of cleaning surfaces in our environments than ever before, it's critical to continue to clean, sanitize and disinfect surfaces safely to reduce potential exposure to COVID-19. At home, in the office or in classrooms, always remember to use the appropriate disinfectant, use appropriate protection, read the instructions on the label before use, and never store or use disinfectants near children. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has [Updated Guidance](#) to review. The Center for Disease Control and Environmental Protection Agency also has a [Quick Reference Guide](#). As always, please reach out to your Health, Nutrition, Safety Coach, Nurse or Health, Nutrition, Safety Consultant for support or questions.

Tooth Fairies Dental Screenings Available

Cheryl Polasek, Program Manager | Health & Nutrition

Whether you are open for site-based services or providing services remotely, the Tooth Fairies are ready to serve ECEAP children for dental screenings. Consent forms/pink envelopes have been delivered to PSESD and will be sent out to sites by mid-November. If your site has been previously served by the Tooth Fairies, please feel free to [contact them to schedule](#) when you are ready. They will come and safely conduct individual screenings for children.

Is the Certificate of Immunization Status Valid?

Kristi Walters, Health, Nutrition and Safety Consultant & Xinying He, Nurse Consultant

The new validated Certificate of Immunization Status (CIS), printed from the Immunization Information System (IIS), will be updated by the end of October 2020. More information and resources are available at the [Department of Health](#).

- [Validated CIS Reference Guide](#)
- [Certificate of Exemption FAQs](#)
- [How to Print the CIS](#)
- [Acceptable Versions of CIS](#)

Dental Screenings are Happening at Sites – Community Health Care & Sea Mar Xinying He, Nurse Consultant

Our dental health partners, Community Health Care and Sea Mar Dental, are still providing dental services to children and families in our program. Community Health Care started their service on October 6 and visited East Side Baptist Church ECEAP, Tacoma Community College, and MCFHC. They will also go to Bates Technical College, Fife/Milton ECEAP (Mission Woods Church) and Puyallup ECEAP (First Presbyterian Church) this month. Sea Mar Dental will start their service to our sites in November. Some of the forms have been sent out to the sites for preparation. Leticia Salcido is working on confirming the schedule with Sea Mar Dental and will communicate with sites when it's confirmed.

Nobel Peace Prize 2020 Kristi Walters, Health, Nutrition, Safety Consultant

[The World Food Programme](#) has been awarded this year's Nobel Peace Prize. Marion Nestle explains the significance of this award to use food as an agent of peace and security. In her [Good News #2 Article](#), Nestle voices the importance of requiring world-wide anti-hunger policies to reduce inequities.

Mental Health

Reminders

Alex Clifthorne, Vanessa Davis & Melissa Russell, Mental Health Consultants
Noelle Hoori, Program Manager | Family Engagement, Mental Health, ERSEA

Direct Supports: The Mental Health Team continues to offer consultations and referrals to contracted mental health providers for enrolled families who may qualify for up to 10 sessions of free counseling services. We are also available to provide virtual observations to the classroom. Please complete a signed [Request for Mental Health Observation or Consultation](#) if you would like to consult on a child, or have a formal observation of a particular child. If you would like to refer an enrolled child to one of our contracted mental health therapists, please complete the [Referral for Contracted Mental Health Services](#) and a [Release or Exchange of Confidential Mental Health Information](#). **The release of information is between your program/site and the contracted therapist assigned to the family, not the PSESD Mental Health Consultant.** You will be given the name of this therapist after you have spoken with your PSESD Mental Health Consultant. Please see your Mental Health Consultant with any questions regarding this process.

Lunch and Learns: We will be holding a Mental Health Lunch and Learn on [November 13, 10:00 am – 11:30 am](#). We will explore how to create resilience for infants, toddlers, preschoolers. Join us to reflect on the impact of stress and worries on infant, toddlers, preschoolers' social-emotional development and to consider ways to support them during an on-going pandemic. We will simultaneously practice self-care ourselves. Our session will feature Elizabeth Verdick's book, [Worries Are Not Forever](#). These calls are open to all Early Head Start, Head Start and ECEAP staff.

Book Distributions: All classrooms should have a copy of [Calm Down Time](#) and [Worries are Not Forever](#), both by Elizabeth Verdick. If you have not received these books, please let us know. We also have these [books available virtually as "read alouds"](#) to support the virtual work you are doing with families.

Staff Support: Included with book distribution, all sites should have received posters to support staff wellness, stress balls, and bubbles. We continue to be available to meet with staff to reflect on their work and have several reflective groups running. Please let your Mental Health Consultant know if you are interested in a reflective group to support your work.

A Letter of Gratitude for You – Pass it On The Random Acts of Kindness Foundation

“Dear Amazing Person,

It’s been too long since we told you this, but we are grateful for you. We appreciate you.

Times are tough right now and we know things sometimes look dark, but **you are a beacon of light for others**. The world needs what you’re putting out there – laughter, love, kindness, compassion, and courage. It’s going to get better – it already is in many ways. And boy, oh boy, there is a ton to be thankful for right now. It can be hard to recognize all the good things, but they are there. You’re one of them. Keep shining. The world is a better place because of you.

We just wanted to tell you that.”

~ Offered by [The Random Acts of Kindness Foundation](#)

Resources

For Staff and Families

Most resources will be moved to their respective content area pages on [EarlyLearningWA](#) at the end of each month.

- COVID-19 symptoms may look like the flu or the common cold. See the [differences in symptoms between COVID, Flu, Cold and Allergies](#).
- Strengthen Your Immune System During Flu and Virus Season.

Do healthy choices guarantee health? No. Are healthy lifestyle choices worth a try? Absolutely. Consider these winning strategies in the battle for wellness:

- [Harvard Health](#) encourages **adequate sleep, daily exercise, and minimal stress**.
- [EatRight.org](#) concentrates on a **wide variety of nutritious foods**.
- [Samaritan Health](#) reminds us to **drink lots of water and choose foods over supplements**.
- [The Department of Health](#) recommends a **flu shot**, likely free to children under 18 years.
- Drive-Thru Flu Shots – [Visit the Seattle Visiting Nurse Association website](#) for more information, to find locations, and to make an appointment.
- The Washington State Department of Health shared that uninsured adults can now receive the flu vaccine at no cost. Learn more [here](#).

Staff Strategies

- [EarlyLearningWA Website Frequently Asked Questions](#)
- [Early Learning Program Manual Updates](#)
- [Early Learning Program Manual Google Drive](#)
- [EarlyLearningWA Website Feedback Form](#)