

Connector



PSESD Early Learning Monthly Newsletter Summer 2021

We Are Grateful for You!



Photo from Microsoft Stock Photos

As we wrap up the 2020-2021 program year, our PSESD team sends endless words of gratitude to all who worked through very trying and ever-changing circumstances to support children and families. We heard incredible stories that showed you have been relentless in finding innovative ways help children learn and support families no matter the need; all the while creating meaningful relationships both in-person and on-screen.

We hope you'll take time to reflect on all that you have accomplished, overcome, and learned.

Take care of yourself – Enjoy the summer sunshine – Rest – Breathe – Laugh and smile a lot!

PSESD Early Learning Connector

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



Washington State Department of
CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES



Deliverables/To-Do Lists

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COVID-19 Information

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What's New in General



Online Platform at Classes.EarlyLearningWA.org to Close July 5-18

Mike Condardo, Senior Coordinator | Education Technology

As we transition to the 2021-2022 Program Year, the online platform at Classes.EarlyLearningWA.org will be closed for set up July 5-18. This means there will be no access to online courses, reporting, Monthly Menus, Class Profiles, or any other functions during that time. If you have any questions, please contact [Cheryl Habgood](mailto:Cheryl.Habgood@psed.org) (Systems Manager, Professional Learning) or [Mike Condardo](mailto:Mike.Condardo@psed.org).



Enrollment for 2021-2022 Program Year

Natalia Juarez, Program Manager | Monitoring and Compliance

Center Directors and Family Support Staff: This is a very tricky time with unknowns going into the upcoming program year. Please keep in mind that DCYF and Office of Head Start (OHS) will move towards the expectation of full enrollment. OHS has shared new [Program Instruction](#) regarding Enrollment for next year. DCYF will be releasing something soon as well. Department of Health guidance also aligns with supporting full enrollment at sites and providing on-site services. Continuous recruitment will be crucial, as well as processing applications and determining eligibility during these next months to meet the coming expectations. The [COVID-19 Guidance](#) has been recently updated to include new eligibility and enrollment information. As additional information is shared throughout the summer, the [COVID-19 Guidance](#) will continue to be updated to reflect any changes. If you have any questions, please reach out to ERSEA@psed.org.

Family Child Care Has Openings!

Kathy Schirman, Family Educator | Family Child Care

Head Start and ECEAP services are offered in smaller Family Child Care (FCC) settings. FCC is a nice option for families that qualify for childcare subsidy. Contracting FCCs are in the following zip codes: 98030, 98032, 98373 and 98409.

FCC programs are licensed for a smaller number of children than Centers are, and siblings can often stay together.

- Head Start FCC serves children age infant – 5 years.
- ECEAP FCC serves children age 3 – 5 years.

Please share this information with colleagues and families. Reach out if you have any questions. I'd love to talk to you.

Kathy Schirman | Family Educator
PSED Family Child Care
425-917-7762 | kschirman@psed.org

Early Learning Program Manual (ELPM) Updates

Venissia Buyco, Senior Coordinator | Management Systems

Reminder: ELPM forms on [EarlyLearningWA](https://EarlyLearningWA.org) are now available to direct download! Just click on a form and it will download directly to your computer.

Many ELPM procedures and forms have been updated in most content areas. **Make sure to review [ELPM Directory and Updates](#)**. Please reach out to any of your Coaches with questions or for additional support. All [To-Do Lists/Deliverables](#) have also been updated to ensure alignment with ELPM.

Don't forget to check out our new and improved [Website Support](#) (FAQ) page and [leave feedback](#)!

Center Directors: See [Center Director section](#) for more on Program Administration ELPM updates.

Policy & Legislative Updates

Lori Pittman, Governance and Advocacy Advisor

Watch for updates in the future.

Multilingual Services Updates and Reminders

JoAnna Williams-Diggs, Senior Coordinator | Multilingual Services

Interpreter Program Changes

Janet Hinrichs, the Program Specialist for our Interpreter Program, retired on March 15. She has been an integral part of the Interpreter Program for many years. I am going to miss her and all that she added to the program. Best wishes to Janet on the next chapter in her life.

Reminder: Please email interpreter time verifications and any questions you may have to [JoAnna Williams-Diggs](#).

Online Interpreter Training

Thank you for your patience! We are in the final stages of creating our online interpreter training. We will keep you informed as to when the training dates will be available and the process to register.

Using Interpreters in Virtual Spaces

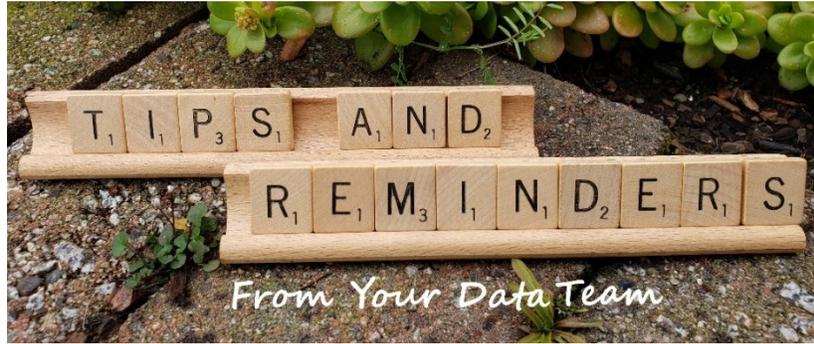
Reminder: When you need interpreter services, please use the updated Interpreter Directory that is attached to your monthly Connector email. When scheduling an interpreter, consider the format and technical needs you may need for virtual spaces. This is the staff's responsibility – the technical assistance part of virtual learning is beyond the scope of our interpreters' expertise. If you have any questions, please contact [JoAnna Williams-Diggs](#) for assistance. Also, please remember to review the [September Connector \(page 9\)](#) for information about Interpreter timesheet documentation.

Language Link

Reminder: Please **do not** use the Language Line. We are no longer contracting with this company. If you need an interpreter for a language not found in the Interpreter Directory. We have contracted with **Language Link** to provide over-the-phone verbal interpreter services. **The number to call is listed at the end of the Interpreter Directory.**

Bilingual Instructional Assistants

Reminder: Due to COVID-19, there is a shortage of available Bilingual Instructional Assistants (BIAs). However, if you have a child in your class in need of language supports, you can still complete a [Bilingual Instructional Assistant \(BIA\) Request](#) form (found in [Forms Library](#) and [Multilingual Services](#)). If a Bilingual Instructional Assistant is available, we will place them. If not, please reach out to your Dual Language Learners (DLL) Coach for additional classroom language supports.



Head Start/Early Head Start Attendance Trends

Tiffany Lyons, Data Systems Technician | ERSEA

Incomplete attendance sheets submitted to the attendance line are on the rise. Some common trends include:

1. Attendance sheets missing signature and date.
2. Attendance is not documented for all children.
3. Meal totals missing or partially complete.
4. Children showing in the wrong classroom (i.e., classroom transfer).

Before you submit attendance, take time to review the information to ensure it is complete, accurate, and legible by checking the following:

- Attendance sheets are signed and dated.
- Children are showing in the correct classrooms for the week being recorded.
- Children are marked correctly.
- Meals are documented with a checkmark and totaled.
- Attendance totals and percentages are calculated correctly.

Submit attendance each week as a PDF attachment to the [Head Start attendance line](#). Please do not attach as a picture in the body of an email. Review page 4 and 5 of the [Attendance and Meal Count Procedure](#) for additional guidance. For questions, please contact [Tiffany Lyons](#).

Health and Development Screenings

Anjanette Abbe, Data Systems Technician | Health, Nutrition, & Safety

For those sites that were able to conduct 45-Day Growth Screenings in the Fall, it's time for Spring Growth Results. Please make sure to include the screening or assessment date for all screenings.

Please refer to the Early Learning Program Manual: Health and Nutrition page and then the Health and Growth Screenings tab for the most recent instructions and forms, or refer to the following: [Preschool Height and Weight Screenings Procedure](#) and [Spring Growth Results Form](#).

For more helpful information for accurate screenings, please see the [Height and Weight Screening Tip Sheet](#).

For questions, contact your Health Nutrition and Safety Coach. For data questions, contact [Anjanette Abbe](#).

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 May 2021

5.12 Topic: ECEAP Expansion and Head Start Competitive Grant

Center Director Meetings

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

ECEAP & HS Center Inventory

Jayme Estep, Systems Manager | Operations

Please take a moment to review the **new** [Inventory Tab on ELPM](#). You can review the procedure to find instructions for reporting new purchases made with ECEAP/HS funds, requesting disposal of items, reporting lost/stolen item(s), and what to anticipate annually to physically verify location/condition of items. Please reach out to [Jayme Estep](#) if you have any questions or feedback regarding the new process.

New Site Approval(s) & Slot Movements

Jayme Estep, Systems Manager | Operations

Please take a moment to review the **new** [Site Approval & Slot Movement Tab on ELPM](#). There are accompanying forms you will use if you need to request approval for new sites and/or classrooms as well as moving slots from one class/site to another. Please reach out to [Jayme Estep](#) if you have any questions or feedback regarding the new process.

Coming Soon! Updated Hiring Procedures and Forms

Venissia Buyco, Senior Coordinator | Management Systems

We will soon have a new *Hiring and Personnel Management Guide* that includes all hiring procedures, from background checks and staff health requirements to the different types of [Staff Information Forms](#). Stay tuned for more information this month.

Reminder: Please complete the appropriate online [Staff Information Form](#) as soon as you know of any staff changes.

Questions on Qualifications and Requirements:
[Cheryl Habgood](#) and/or your Team Manager

Technical Assistance with SIFs/Document Uploads:
[Venissia Buyco](#)

ECEAP Summer Programming

Talena Dixon, Director | Program Operations & ECEAP

For those programs who have committed to offering summer services, we will continue to correspond with you via email and your Team Manager. If you have questions, please reach out to [Amanda Kirk-Woodbury](#) and your Team Manager.

Changes Due to Fair Start Act

Talena Dixon, Director | Program Operations & ECEAP

With the historic passing of the Fair Start Act, there may be changes from DCYF that will be announced over the summer months. We will communicate with you via email as these changes are known.

Please Spend COVID One-Time Funds (HS & EHS Only)

Talena Dixon, Director | Program Operations & ECEAP

HS and EHS programs, a reminder to please utilize the opportunity to support your program by using the federal CARES Act funding. The [COVID One-Time Funds Request Form](#) outlines appropriate spending as well as the process to submit.

Any items purchased **must be received and be in-hand by the dates listed below**. Unfortunately, any spending or purchases received after this date will not be reimbursed.

- HS 715 TBD based on Carryover Request (Tukwila and KYFS, we will notify you with a date)
- HS 412 June 30, 2021
- EHS 412 June 30, 2021
- EHS CCP August 31, 2021

On Time Fiscal Claims

Talena Dixon, Director | Program Operations & ECEAP

It is imperative that you turn in your monthly fiscal claims on time. We are always assessing where we are with program-wide spending on each grant. When we don't receive claims in a timely way, we can't project future spending to know how we fair with our budgets. If you have a pattern of late claims, please work with the fiscal staff in your organization to remedy this. Thank you! We know this isn't always easy.

Nontraditional Remote Services (NTRS) Reporting (ECEAP Only)

Talena Dixon, Director | Program Operations & ECEAP

Reporting Nontraditional Remote Services (NTRS) is now part of the Monthly Report in ELMS. This replaces Smartsheet data entry and is only done once each month. To find this, click the Monthly Report tab; select the Site link or Class link to see the new Step 4: Nontraditional Remote Services Reporting section on the bottom of the page. To complete reporting, click the "Report NTRS provided this month" button and answer the questions in the pop-up window.

- [December 2020 webinar](#)
- [Monthly Report Instructions](#)
- Email questions to elms@dcyf.wa.gov

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.

Disabilities Supports over the Summer Months

Dani Hoffman, Johna Rhooms, & Tamara Griffith | Disabilities Consultants

Children’s development does not take the summer off – and neither do we! We’re here to remind you, whether you are providing services through the summer or gearing up for promoting inclusion in the fall, Disabilities Consultants are here to support all aspects of serving children with identified and suspected disabilities:

- Attend existing Staffings
- Technical assistance for Performance Standard requirements and data entry
- Goal planning for children on IFSPs/IEPs
- Virtual observation and consultation
- Other interdisciplinary partnerships
- Celebrate success stories and talk through challenges

Please continue to reach out to us and remember that there may be cross-support within the Disabilities Team as schedules may fluctuate during the summer months.

Exciting Inclusion Resources!

Dani Hoffman, Johna Rhooms, & Tamara Griffith | Disabilities Consultants

[Head Start Center for Inclusion](#) has been revamped and is a treasure trove of free, useful resources for understanding and inclusively supporting children with suspected and identified disabilities. This resource is available to **all** early learning professionals and families and can be used in a variety of educational settings. It offers everything from training videos, to tip sheets, high impact teaching and learning tools, and templates and how-to’s for visual supports (such as visual schedules, social stories, choice boards, identifying feelings, and more!).

New to inclusion or a veteran provider? This website has something for everyone no matter where you are on your journey with understanding and implementing inclusion. On your journey, take a look at our guidance ([Inclusion of Children with Disabilities and Developmental Delays](#)) and utilize this website to inform your approach to providing individualized, inclusive care.

If you want to talk about anything you’ve read or think about strategies for your classroom space, Disabilities Consultants would love to partner with you through virtual consultation over the summer and as you prepare for the Fall.

Important Information: Timing for an Elevated GOLD® Experience

From Teaching Strategies – shared by Julie Gretchen, Education Coach

An elevated GOLD® experience will begin the week of July 12.

Teaching Strategies is working to make GOLD® easier to use on a daily basis with new, streamlined workflows; mobile optimization; and fewer clicks.

There are many ways to learn how to use and make the most of all the new features and workflows. Here are some highlights of the support that will be available.

- **Roadmap Webinars & Recaps:** Join roadmap webinars in July to get an early look at what's coming and to plan ahead and ask questions. You will also be able to watch an on-demand, 20-minute Roadmap Recap after each set of webinars!
- **Quick Hit Videos:** [Check out this series of short videos](#) that demonstrate the benefits of the improvements that lie ahead.
- **Blogs:** [Learn more](#) about what's coming and when, see it in action, and register for upcoming webinars.
- **Support Webinars:** Beginning in July, [join us for specialty support webinars](#) to ensure you are ready to adopt the elevated experience.

Wednesday July 14, 2021 | 12 PM PST

Thursday July 22, 2021 | 10 AM PST

Tuesday August 03, 2021 | 12 PM PST

Tuesday August 17, 2021 | 9 AM PST

Friday August 20, 2021 | 12 PM PST

Wednesday August 25, 2021 | 10 AM PST

- **Knowledge Base:** Explore our updated [Knowledge Base](#) that puts the information you need right at your fingertips.

Supporting Dual Language Learners and Summer Resources: Summer Slide

Maha Shamdeen, Dual Language Learners Coach

The bell rings, and schools are out! It's the most exciting time of the year for teachers and students to rejoice, relax and take vacations before the new school year starts! At this point, students have learned and gained lots of knowledge that must be continued, not lost. While students are enjoying the lovely long hot summer days, as educators, we must think about Summer Slide. Summer Slide is a decline in academic skills such as reading over the summer months when school is not in session. We can help Dual Language Learners and all students not fall through the cracks of learning loss. There are various ways educators and parents can collaborate to prevent summer sliding while enjoying summer and gaining knowledge!

You will find helpful tips in English and Spanish language to share with parents by visiting the following: [Preventing That Summer Slide](#) and [How to Beat the Summer Slide](#).

Family Engagement



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.

Enrolling Returning Over Income Children for 2021-2022

Natalia Juarez, Program Manager | Monitoring & Compliance

ECEAP Only – Please send a list of returning Over Income children and the class ID they will be enrolled in for 2021-2022 to ERSEA@psed.org.

HS/EHS Only – Please follow the process for all returners, including those who are Over Income. They will be re-enrolled in ChildPlus in the Fall.

Please reach out to ERSEA@psed.org if you have any questions.

Recruiting and Enrolling Children with Disabilities for 2021-2022

Dani Hoffman, Johna Rhooms, & Tamara Griffith | Disabilities Consultants

Summer is a great time to examine recruitment efforts to promote enrolling children with already identified disabilities through an IFSP (Individualized Family Service Plan) or IEP (Individualized Education Program). The 10% requirement for Head Start is achieved through a combined effort between recruitment/enrollment of children who already have IFSPs/IEPs **and** identifying children over the course of the program year ([HSPPS 1302.14](#)).

Both ECEAP and Head Start programs are required to actively locate and recruit children with disabilities because they are a vulnerable population; children with disabilities have the right to access the high quality programming of our ECEAP, Early Head Start, and Head Start programs ([HSPPS 1302.13](#) and [ECEAP PAO-37 Section 2\(b\)](#)). PSESD is committed to closing the opportunity gap for all children by promoting inclusion in all ECEAP, Early Head Start, and Head Start programs which can be outlined in the [Inclusion of Children with Disabilities and Developmental Delays](#). All children benefit from learning alongside and from their ability-diverse peers. Recruitment and enrollment efforts are the first step in ensuring that children with disabilities are represented and have access to our programs.

If you have questions about recruiting and enrolling children with disabilities, please reach out to your Family Engagement Coach. Once the child is enrolled, your Disabilities Consultant is happy to partner with you and the teachers to make sure children have access to the full range of activities in their program.



Photo by PSESD Early Learning

Policy Council

Visit the [Policy Council page](#) regularly for a calendar of Policy Council events, information, recruitment tools, meeting materials, and more!

Policy Council Updates

Quincy Stone, Parent Leadership Manager

Policy Council 2020-2021

Policy Council completed a two-part training on Race and the Opportunity Gap. Members explored the concept of equity versus equality, gained knowledge on the opportunity gap and the lack of equitable learning opportunities afforded to children of color, and discovered what it means to be color brave rather than color blind. This transformative work enables parents to reflect on their own experiences with racial injustice and to deepen their understanding of structural inequality.

Still recruiting? We have a great [Policy Council Video](#) for you to show at parent meetings or one-on-one with parents! [New Recruitment Flyers](#) can easily be shared with your families through email or print and post on-site.

Need more recruitment ideas? Current Policy Council Reps are available to speak at your virtual parent meetings. Please contact [Quincy Stone](#).

Peer Programs

Peer Health and Peer Literacy training are complete! The newly trained Parent Educators are excited to facilitate teachback presentations. Our Peer Educators need opportunities to practice their leadership and presentation skills. Teachbacks provide an excellent opportunity to engage the families at your site/center, impart education in health and literacy, and increase the proficiency of our Parent Educators!

Support our trained parent educators and [schedule your teachback](#) today! Questions? Please contact [Quincy Stone](#).

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.

Treatment Tracking Follow-Up

Xinying He, Nurse Consultant

It is almost the end of the school year. We would like to thank you for working hard to support the children and families during this unprecedented year. If you are working with HS/EHS students, it is important to follow up with Treatment Tracking, then document your hard work and effort in ChildPlus. We understand there can be challenges and we would like to hear from you. Please reach out to your PSED Nurse Consultant and let us know if you need any support following up with Treatment Tracking or documenting in ChildPlus.

Center for Disease Control Quick Guides

Bethany Larsen, Program Manager | Safety

As COVID-19 continues to be a part of our lives, the following infographics from the CDC are great visuals to explain ways to help protect children, families, and staff from COVID-19 exposures. Two guides are available:

- [Family Child Care Homes](#)
- [Child Care Centers](#)

Tips and Tricks to Reduce Screen Time for Children

Kristi Walters, Health, Nutrition & Safety Consultant

Over the past year, Patrizia Vacca, PhD student at Pacific Lutheran University, has gathered research about the effects of screen time in children under 5 years. For her final PhD project, Patrizia created a series of three short YouTube videos to help families understand and find ways to reduce screen time for their young children. Her videos are below and are now available as a [staff resource in the Early Learning Program Manual](#).

The videos are available to share with families, discuss at parent events, or include in your resource folder:

[Video 1 \[8 minutes\]](#)

Child brain development
Tips for caregivers
Screen time benefits and risks

[Video 2 \[8 minutes\]](#)

Screen time recommendations
Handling challenges when enforcing
media-use rules

[Video 3 \[2 minutes\]](#)

Skills to teach children

See the [Resources section](#) for Non-Screen Activities.

Mental Health

Mental Health Consultant Site Distribution List

Melissa Russell, Alex Clifthorne, and Laurel Benz | Mental Health Consultants

With Alex Clifthorne soon going on parental leave (June 18), there are new assignments for the Mental Health Consultant Team. Please remember that as needs change and flux, there will likely be cross-support from within the Mental Health Team.

Note: The Early Learning Staff Directory will be updated with this information later this month.

| Mental Health Consultants Site Assignments | | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| Melissa Russell | | Laurel Benz | |
| Team D Tiered Support: Kent Youth and Family Services Pierce College Midland's Kiddie Korral WCCW | | Team D Tiered Support: Angle Lake The Lighthouse Educare Tukwila School District Heritage | |
| Teams A and C | | Team B | |

Mental Health, Wellness and Ongoing Integrated Work

Melissa Russell, Alex Clifthorne, and Laurel Benz | Mental Health Consultants

Integrating Mental Wellness into our work in Early Learning is an ongoing focus for our Mental Health team. Our children, families, and staff have been through a life changing experience over the pandemic. It is important to be thoughtful in our approach to how this has impacted very young minds as they develop, and their relationships to family members and peers. Some families have been isolated while others have continued to participate in childcare and other more integrated settings. Recent discussions regarding children coming back to programs now or in the Fall have brought up questions about how children may need some time to reacclimate to peer interactions and to reintegrate into classrooms. This may be a first time in a group setting for some, while others may be needing to practice their skills or need help remembering how to play with others. We also want to take time to reflect on our own wellness, what feelings come up for us as we work with high needs children and families, as well as the impact of depression on parents. To ensure that we can support the children and families in our programs and fully understand the needs they have, we will need to be intentional, including making time for comprehensive Staffings and reflective practice and supervision. To provide additional support to our work, please check out the [resources from the Office of Head Start](#).

Resources

For Staff and Families

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

- **Webinar Series: Addressing Early Childhood Suspension by Addressing Implicit Bias**
Join us for a four-part webinar series with Dr. Rosemarie Allen, CEO of the Center for Equity & Excellence. Learn critical first steps to ensure equitable observation and assessment practices. Dr. Allen's approach supports and reflects many cultural ways of being for children in early childhood classrooms. [Register here](#). All webinars are scheduled from 9:00 am to 10:30 am.
 - **June 4:** Reflection and Planning

Priority will be given to ECEAP staff. Others will be placed on a waitlist. Non-ECEAP Staff will receive notification as space is available.
- [Free Online Professional Learning Opportunities](#) with Office of Head Start
- **WSA Head Start and ECEAP virtual Birth to Three Institute and 30th Annual Summer Institute**
 - [Summer Institute \(June 7-25\)](#): Primarily for Pre-K staff (teachers, supervisors, coaches) and family support. These are 10-hour courses on a single topic, offered on 4-5 consecutive days.
- **Non-Screen Activities:**
 - Find lists and handouts for fun activities in Winter, Fall, Spring or Summer in the [Family Play Plan](#)
 - Discover at home activities, tips, and crafts for children at [PBS for Parents](#)
 - See current research at [Common Sense Media](#)
- [Puget Sound Energy COVID Bill Assistance Program](#) – Apply by August 1

Staff Strategies

EarlyLearningWA Website Links

- [Website Support \(FAQs\)](#)
- [Early Learning Program Manual \(ELPM\) Directory and Updates](#)
- [Website Feedback Form](#)
- [Find a Classroom](#) and [Find a Classroom Update Form](#)
- [Staff Professional Learning, ERSEA Committee, HSAC, etc.](#)

ELMS and GOLD Resources (ECEAP Only)

- [ELMS Administrator's Manual](#)
- [ELMS Eligibility and Enrollment Manual](#)
- [ELMS Support](#)
- [GOLD® Getting Started Checklist 2020-21 for ECEAP Teachers](#)
- [GOLD® Getting Started Checklist 2020-21 for ECEAP Administrators](#)
- [Teaching Strategies GOLD® Support](#)