

# Connector



PSESD Early Learning Monthly Newsletter

## February 2022

### Advocacy Week – February 7-10, 2022



Learn more and register on [EarlyLearningWA.org](http://EarlyLearningWA.org)!

~ Your PSESD Early Learning Team

#### PSESD Early Learning Connector

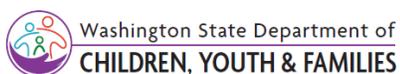
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The Early Learning Connector e-newsletter is produced monthly throughout the school year, providing information for the PSESD Early Learning Program.



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# What's New in General

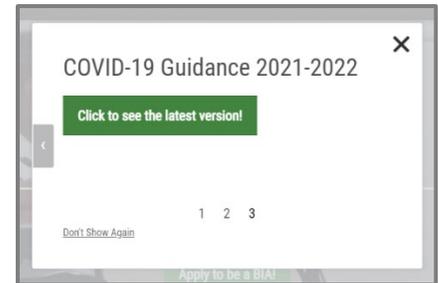


## COVID-19 Guidance

Make sure to refer to the [COVID-19 Guidance](#) periodically for adjustments to regular procedures. You can find it in the following places:

- [EarlyLearningWA home page](#) picture gallery (scroll right)
- [For Staff > COVID-19 Information > 2021-2022 Procedures and Forms](#)
- Linked at the top of every page of the [Connector](#)

When updates to the Guidance are made, it is published on Friday morning. You'll see a "page pop" on the [EarlyLearningWA home page](#) from the publish time all the way through 6 pm the following Monday. You can't miss it!



## At-Home Rapid COVID-19 Test Portal

**Xinying He, Nurse Consultant | Health, Nutrition & Safety**

This week the federal government and Washington State each released programs where households can order free COVID-19 rapid at-home test kits. Please have families read the instructions to double check the ages for which the tests can be used. Different testing kits have different age requirements, and some are not approved for children. Please use tests as directed per manufacturer's instructions.

Get your test kits using one or both of the websites below:

- [sayyescovidhometest.org](http://sayyescovidhometest.org) - Say Yes! To Covid Test
- [COVIDtests.gov](http://COVIDtests.gov) - Free at-home COVID-19 tests

## EHS/HS Grants Only: Reporting of Enrolled Children Served with IFSPs/IEPs

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

In the early spring, Head Start Region 10 will request current counts of all children enrolled and served through IFSPs and IEPs per the [HSPPS 1302.14 Selection Process](#): "**1302.14 (b) A program must ensure at least 10 percent of its total funded enrollment is filled by children eligible for services under IDEA**".

It's important to have your documentation up to date to reflect the reality of serving families furthest removed from opportunity. **Centers must accurately document all children who are found eligible for IFSP and IEP services and attended at least one (1) day this program year.** This means:

<b>Having physical copies of all IFSPs and IEPs and filing in the child's file</b>
Use the <a href="#">Release or Exchange of Confidential Information - Non-Health</a> to acquire a copy
<b>Accurately documenting and uploading the IFSP or IEP in ChildPlus under the child's record</b>
See <a href="#">IFSP and IEP Data Entry in ChildPlus</a> for instructions
<b>Using the IFSP or IEP to inform individualized instruction</b>
See <a href="#">Inclusion of Children with Disabilities and Developmental Delays</a> for guidance



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## EHS/HS Only: Required ASQ-3 Follow Up: Developmental Concerns Checklist & ChildPlus

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

Please ensure you are completing all required follow-ups for ASQ-3 screenings. Per the [Required 45-Day Developmental Screenings Procedure](#), a [Developmental Concerns Checklist](#) must be created for all children who have scored re-screen or referral indicated on their ASQ-3, or for families who have developmental concerns. This document is updated for each decision. To meet PIR requirements for Head Start and Early Head Start programs, upload the Developmental Concerns Checklist to ChildPlus under the child's record. [Click here](#) for instructions.

## New Recruitment Guidance and Documents for 2022-2023

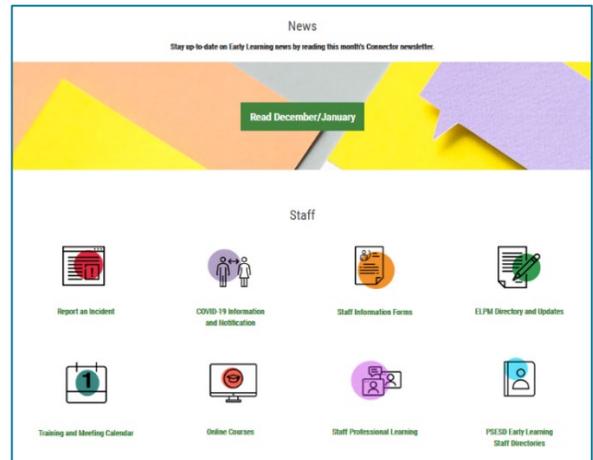
**Martha Waiters, ERSEA Consultant**

As you begin to plan recruiting efforts for next program year, please visit the new Recruitment guidance and documents in the ERSEA section of the ELPM, which we expect to publish on February 9.

## EarlyLearningWA Home Page Update Coming Soon!

**Venissia Buyco, Senior Coordinator | Management Systems**

To support recruitment efforts, a family-friendly design update to the ELWA home page is coming this month! Staff quick links will still be available on the home page.



## PSESD Disabilities Survey: Barriers to Recruitment and Identification of Children with Disabilities

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

What has identification, evaluation, and enrollment for children with suspected and identified disabilities looked like at your center this year?

In February, Disabilities Consultants will be sending a survey to all centers to collect information about experiences with and barriers to the recruitment and identification processes for children with disabilities. The purpose of the survey is to reflect the very real reality with our funders of providing early learning services during the 2021-2022 program year. Your insight is invaluable to living into PSESD's mission to eliminate the opportunity gap for all children, as well as serving families furthest removed from opportunity.

Any role within your center may submit this survey, as each role holds its own experience. Educators, Family Support, and Center Leadership are welcome to respond. Keep an eye out for an E-Alert in February for a link to this survey. We're looking forward to hearing about your experiences and value your time and effort in helping us collect this important data.



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## Early Learning is Hiring!

Check out our [Jobs page](#) for open positions at PSESD and Early Learning centers. We are also looking for Bilingual Instructional Assistants. Please share the [flyer](#)!

## Data

Stay tuned for updates or reminders in March!



Photo by PSESD Early Learning

## Policy Council Updates

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

### Policy Council 2021-2022

#### Quincy Stone, Parent Leadership Manager

Policy Council is in full swing for the 2020-2021 term! Do you have a recently elected representative? Don't forget to submit the online [Policy Council Notice and Verification Form](#) so we can connect with them prior to their first meeting.



Please see the [Policy Council Composition Chart](#) to learn how many parent representatives should be elected from your **center** (agency, school district, college, or child care; ex: Bates Technical College as a whole, not per campus or per classroom). **Note: We no longer have "alternates";** please elect only the number of representatives indicated on the Composition Chart.

Still recruiting? Below are some reminders about upcoming dates and useful materials:

- [Policy Council Video](#) for you to show at parent meetings or one-on-one with parents!
- Policy Council recruitment flyer is available in [English](#) and [Spanish](#)!
- [Meeting date flyers](#) are available in English and Spanish.
- **PC Reps are available** to speak at your in-person and/or virtual parent events. Contact [Quincy Stone](#).
- For guidance on parent reimbursement, please see Parent Leadership Reimbursement - COVID-19 Guidelines (English and Spanish) on the Policy Council [webpage](#).

Spanish interpreters will be available. If other languages are needed, contact [Quincy Stone](#).



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# Policy & Legislative Updates

## Washington State Legislative Session 2022

### Lori Pittman, Early Learning Policy and Advocacy Advisor

The 67th Legislature reconvened on Monday, January 10 for its 2022 Session. Due to the recent rise in COVID-19 cases statewide, both the Senate and House of Representatives recently adjusted their operational plans to begin their work predominantly virtual. All committee hearings will be virtual and, initially, only a limited number of legislators and staff will be in-person for floor sessions. There will be no in-person meetings on the Capitol campus.

The short, 60-day Supplemental Sessions run at an intensive pace, with public hearings on legislation starting on the first day. With the first cutoff for bills to get out of policy committees rapidly approaching on February 3, 2022.

Although this is a Supplemental Session, typically for adjustments to the current operating budget, there are many proposals and bills that may impact K – 12 Education, Early Learning and Care, and other PSESD priorities.

We have included a few resources to help track bills, hearings, amendments, and other developments:

- **Washington State Legislative Website.** The #1 go-to for all legislative information. This is where you can read the latest [bills](#); sign up to [testify](#); find the [legislative calendar](#); look up the [legislative committee schedule](#); and much more.
- **TVW.org.** With much of the legislative activity virtual, TVW becomes all the more important, airing all legislative hearings and floor sessions live. If you miss something, you can go back and catch it in their archives. TVW also produces a number of documentaries and informative shows, including [Inside Olympia](#) and [The Impact](#). TVW's website was updated over interim to make it more user friendly.

### Governor Inslee's Proposed Budget Relating to K-12

The Governor shared, his proposed [State Supplemental Budget](#) on December 16, 2021. Governor Inslee's 2022 supplemental budget proposal builds on the current state budget, which is making vital advancements on racial justice and ample funding for community priorities, like schools, infrastructure, and health care. He shared his intentions for this session are to protect previous investments in areas such as education, child care and early learning, climate action, behavioral health reform, combating homelessness, access to health care and moving beyond the pandemic.

The Governor proposed an additional **\$500 million in investments in staffing** to support student learning and well-being recovery and acceleration, increase to the number of social and emotional well-being focused staff in our schools; funding counselors, psychologists, social workers, family engagement coordinators, and safety staff at **1-1351 values**. In addition to these significant investments in staffing, the Governor's budget:

- **fully funds the school mascot changes required by House Bill 1356** (an additional \$4.5 million in fiscal year 2022)
- increases support for the **Beginning Educator Support Team (BEST) program by \$4.5 million**, establishes a **future teacher residency program (\$10.5 million)**
- increases support for further implementation of **the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) by \$2 million**



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# Center Directors

Review the E-Alerts from December 2021/January 2022

Also check your inbox for any additional emails sent by your Team Manager.

- 1/18 [Advocacy Week Feb 7-10: Act Now!](#)
- 1/12 [Important COVID-19 Information: Isolation/Quarantine, Masking, and Vaccination](#)
- 1/7 [ELWA Update](#)
- 1/5 [EarlyLearningWA Website Error](#)
- 12/7 [Child Health Information Documentation](#)

## Center Director Meetings

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

## Staff Information Forms

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

### Qualifications:

[Cheryl Habgood](#)

### Portable Background Checks/ Staff Member Safety Plans:

[Beth Larsen](#)

### All Other Hiring Questions:

Your Team Technical  
Assistance Coordinator  
(Monitor)

### Assistance with Document Uploads:

[Venissia Buyco](#)

## EHS/HS Only: Confirm IFSP/IEP Counts by Grant with Disabilities Consultants

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

As noted above in [What's New in General](#), Head Start Region 10 will soon request the official counts of children found eligible for IDEA services (IEPs, IFSPs) for the 21-22 program year for all EHS and HS grants.

**Center Directors will be required to confirm their center's IFSP and IEP counts by Early Head Start and Head Start grant, with their primary Disabilities Consultant via a Google Form. This Google Form will be sent to Center Leadership by email from their primary Disabilities Consultant in early February and is due Friday, February 18.** This task has been added to the February Center Director To-Do List.

Centers will additionally be asked about the barriers their specific program has experienced, as well as how centers have navigated the noted barriers in recruitment/enrollment and identification of children with disabilities. Your noted barriers and experiences will be shared with our funders to reflect the reality of service delivery this program year. For questions, please reach out to your primary Disabilities Consultant.



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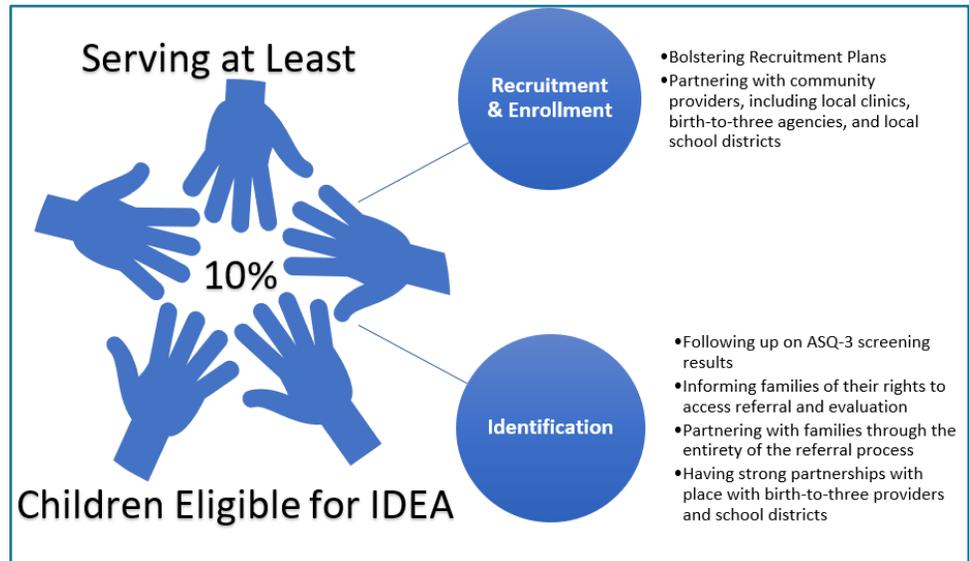
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## EHS/HS Only: Conversations Around Meeting the 10%

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

The PSESD Disabilities Team has been communicating with each EHS and HS center throughout the program year to clarify current IFSP and IEP counts as documented in ChildPlus, as well as providing technical assistance from referral processes to documentation. If you need help documenting IFSPs or IEPs in ChildPlus, your primary Disabilities Consultant is happy to provide virtual technical assistance to walkthrough the data entry.



Disabilities Consultants will be reaching out to schedule conversations with Center Leadership regarding barriers for programs who are struggling to meet this 10% requirement. Meeting this minimum 10% requirement is a coordinated effort between recruitment and enrollment practices and identifying over the program year. We may also suggest you partner with your Family Engagement Coaches to strategize recruitment and enrollment efforts for children in the community with IFSPs and IEPs.

## Underspent Grant Funds & Staffing Crisis

Talena Dixon, Director | Program Operations & ECEAP

Many subcontractors are currently underspent largely due to understaffing. As well, subcontractors currently have staff who are working long hours and covering for more than one position. Please work with your organization to compensate staff for additional responsibilities and work hours. We recently learned from our funders that it is permissible to use contract funds to give retention bonuses to staff.

If you are underspent at this point in your grant cycle, please work with your organization’s fiscal staff, as well as our EL Fiscal Team, to project where your spending is and should be. If you determine that you won’t spend all your contract funds, please begin a conversation with your Team Manager right away so they can support you as you think about programmatic needs where funds could be spent. As always, Team Managers will reach out to other PSESD staff to support this conversation when needed. Please remember that for anything over \$5,000, we must get approval from funders prior to purchasing.



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# Education

## ECEAP MyTeachingStrategies® Training Resource

### Cheryl Habgood, Systems Manager | Professional Learning

There is a new streamlined process for Creative Curriculum® and GOLD® Teaching Strategies Online Professional Development courses. These are now available for in-service (STARS) credit for ECEAP staff with MERIT accounts. These trainings meet the requirements in ECEAP Performance Standard PDTR-10. [Learn more here.](#)

## Webinar | Inclusion Series: Supporting Instruction for Dual Language Learners with Disabilities Disabilities Consultants & Dual Language Learners Coaches

The Office of Head Start hosts a free Inclusion Series webinar for Early Learning professionals. On Tuesday, February 22, 2022, at 12 PM PST, join us for a webinar on supporting DLLs with disabilities.

Supporting Instruction for Children Who Are Dual Language Learners with Disabilities	
<b>Hosted by:</b> OHS National Center on Early Childhood Development, Teaching, and Learning	<b>Location:</b> Online
<b>Date:</b> Tuesday, February 22, 2022, 12:00 - 1:00 PM Pacific Standard Time	<b>Registration Link:</b> <a href="https://event.on24.com/wcc/r/3485060/2C1CC6FA44A8563C1216D472327CE3EB">https://event.on24.com/wcc/r/3485060/2C1CC6FA44A8563C1216D472327CE3EB</a>
High-quality language and literacy practices are vital to support the development of children who are dual language learners (DLL) with disabilities or suspected delays. In this Inclusion Series webinar, discover ways to create culturally and linguistically responsive and inclusive environments. Explore what research says about strategies that support language and literacy development for DLLs who also have a disability. This webinar will have <b>English and Spanish captioning.</b>	

## Meaningful Math for Dual Language Learners (DLLs)

### Michelle Williams-Nelson, Dual Language Learners Coach

There's nothing boring about math, but some math activities **can** be boring or hard to understand. This is especially true for children who are dual language learners. They need math activities that are embedded in meaningful contexts that interest them, to help them understand. Using empty plastic, paper or worksheet items with no real meaning can cut dual language learners off from comprehending what you want them to learn. Math learning can be supported with activities that are highly effective for dual language learners, including authentic, hands-on explorations, use of materials that support content learning, and opportunities for connecting with other domains like language and literacy. Take a look at these ideas from [Make Math Meaningful for Diverse Learners](#) that make learning math fun and exciting!



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## Resources from MyTeachingStrategies®

### Aeryn King, Program Manager | Education Services

Check out these resources from MyTeachingStrategies®:

- Looking for support as you (and your students) return from the winter break or a closure? Beth White offers [three simple tips to help with the readjustment back into the classroom](#).
- [Register here](#) to attend a New GOLD® Standard GOLD Winter Checkpoint Support Webinar happening February 2, 9, and 11, 2022.
- [The Mathematics Guide to The Creative Curriculum® for Preschool & Language and Literacy Guide to The Creative Curriculum® for Preschool](#). Comprehensive resources that illustrate how this curriculum nurtures mathematics and language and literacy during instruction, and through unplanned teachable moments throughout the day.
- Explore the Blog Series Feature: Our “[Educating the Whole Child](#)” blog series is designed to address questions about how different subjects are taught within a whole-child curriculum, such as The Creative Curriculum®. The series addresses a wide range of subjects [e.g., reading, writing, math, social-emotional learning (SEL), arts], but also talks about how a whole-child curriculum supports children with special needs and diversity and inclusion efforts.
- Monthly Community Call: Join folx from Teaching Strategies to ask questions and stay informed! [Register here](#) for the next call or watch last month’s call on demand.

Please contact your Education Coach with any questions.

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# ERSEA

Martha Waiters, ERSEA Consultant

## New Federal Poverty Level Guidelines

The new Federal Poverty Level (FPL) Guidelines have been released, and updates to the current FPL document and 2021-2022 Selection Points Charts are expected to publish on **February 9**. Once published, please use these new guidelines for any new applications you process.

## ERSEA Updates for 2022-2023

February 9 is the expected publishing date for Recruitment and Eligibility guidance and documents for 2022-2023. Selection Points Charts will be published once approved by Policy Council and the PSESD Board. We expect them to be approved mid-February.

## Alternative Attendance Plans

Please review updated guidance about Alternative Attendance Plans in the 2021-2022 [ERSEA Procedure](#).



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## ECEAP: Please Keep Waitlists Up to Date

Washington State Legislature is currently in session and will be looking at our waitlists when considering future support of ECEAP programs. Please be sure to add all prospective children to your ELMS waitlists. The Department of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF) has said that prescreens done over the phone can be added to ELMS.

## ERSEA Staff Refresh

Our second ERSEA Staff Refresh is February 16, from 9-11 am. We will review ERSEA changes made so far for 2022-2023. Please register through the [2021-2022 PSESD Early Learning Training and Meeting Calendar](#).

## ERSEA Office Hours

Each Wednesday, from 11 am to noon, I will be virtually available for you to drop in and ask questions or engage in conversation about ERSEA. You can join via the link on the [2021-2022 PSESD Early Learning Training and Meeting Calendar](#).

# Multilingual Services

JoAnna Williams-Diggs, Senior Coordinator | Multilingual Services



## Interpreter Directory

Make sure to click the orange Interpreter Directory button **in your monthly Connector email** to get the most up-to-date information.

Connector emails are no longer able to include physical attachments.

Interpreter Directory  
(Click me for Updated List!)

## Multilingual Services Updates

Bilingual Instructional Assistants (BIAs), Interpreters and DLL Coaches are excited to work with you, families, and children in your program. If you have a child in your class in need of language support, please complete a [BIA Request](#).

We are experiencing a shortage of available BIAs. Multilingual Services (MLS) is looking for new BIAs to be a part of our program. If you know anyone who may be interested in part time employment, please ask them to [email me](#).

Please review the [September Connector \(page 13\)](#) for Interpreter and BIA updates. The updated monthly Interpreter Directory is linked in your Connector email.

## Effectively Using Interpreters

**Lindsay Belden, Jesse Acosta, Maha Shamdeen, and Michelle Williams-Nelson | DLL Coaches**

The Multilingual Services (MLS) team would like to invite you to review [how to effectively use interpreters](#). There are several steps to ensure a successful meeting included in this document, such as understanding what an interpreter is, how long to schedule meetings, and a helpful diagram showing how the participants in the meeting should sit for the best relationship building between site staff and families. Interpreters provide equitable services to families, and we want to ensure that everyone gets the best experience while utilizing this service!



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# Family Engagement

## Peer Programs

### Quincy Stone, Parent Leadership Manager

#### Peer Programs Health & Literacy Training 2022 is in full force!

Parents participating in session one of Peer Programs Training (Health and Literacy) are engaged and learning! Parent Educators are feeling welcomed, informed, and valued.

Have you referred parents for session two of Peer Programs Training (Peer Math and Peer Money)? Virtual training begins March 17 and runs for eight consecutive Thursday evenings from 6:00-7:30 p.m. Parents will be reimbursed an hourly rate for their time, as well as a technology reimbursement and a dinner allowance per meeting.

The [Peer Programs promotional video](#) is a great way to share about Peer Programs.

Peer Programs recruitment flyers are available in [English](#) and [Spanish](#)!

Questions? Contact [Quincy Stone](#) at 425-917-7875.

#### Schedule a Virtual Teachback Today!

**What is a Teachback?** A teachback is an opportunity to share information and distribute tools parents can use right away to help their children and families succeed in school and life. Support our trained parent presenters and schedule your Site's Teachback today! **Note: You do not need to have a trained presenter from your site to host a Teachback.**

A Teachback is also a great way to involve your families at the start of the year and to have another parent share about the available opportunities to currently enrolled families in Early Learning. Trained parents are excited for the opportunity to facilitate Teachback presentations. This is easy to do with a [Teachback](#) event! Get your parents connected with each other and excited about being involved in the program! To request a virtual teachback, please complete the [Teachback Request Form](#).

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# Health, Nutrition, & Safety

## Winter Outside Time

### Bethany Larsen, Program Manager | Safety

Spending time outside with fresh air and exercising big muscles is always a great way for children and adults to experience good health! [Head out to keep colds out!](#) includes information to support the importance of getting outside even when it's cold outside.



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# Mental Health

## PSESD Mental Health

### Melissa Russell, Mental Health Consultant

**Reminder:** Mental Health will lead our monthly Lunch and Learn for Direct Service Staff on Tuesday, February 22 from 12 – 1:30 pm. Please see the [Training and Meeting Calendar](#) for the Zoom link and join us!

**Stress levels for staff and parents have been very high as we are in the third year of living life in a pandemic. Please be kind to yourselves and consider reading the article from the Office of Head Start on “[What can a mental health consultant do to help staff, families and children who are feeling stress?](#)”.**

There are, of course, many ways your Mental Health Consultants can support staff, families, and children. Most recently, we have provided a training for parents on stress management and self-care. This was an engaging group of parents and staff who were able to share their experiences and challenges, and benefit from understanding that their experiences are similar to others. They were able to gain support and learn new skills that help them in being well regulated caregivers. Please check in with your Mental Health Consultant if you are interested in talking more about how stress management can help your program.

All programs have also received board books titled “Worries are Not Forever”, “Calm Down Time”, and laminated stress management posters last year that could be posted at your centers. These are from the [Center for Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation website](#) that provides many resources including the posters, complete training, stress management exercises, etc. You may utilize with families yourselves at parent nights, or during home visits.



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# Resources

## For Staff and Families

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

- [Head Start News via Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center \(ECLKC\)](#)
  - [Subscribe for email updates!](#)
- **New Staff Support – Inclusive Care:** The recorded January New Staff Support training is now available on [earlylearningwa.org](#). Watch a recorded session on [Inclusive Care](#) presented by both the Disabilities Consultants Team and Mental Health Consultants Team. While meant for onboarding, this session is a great reminder of the program wide expectations for inclusion in all of our early learning settings. Session objectives include:
  - Overview of Inclusion
  - Distinguishing Screening from Evaluation
  - Importance of Relationships and Attachment
  - Next Steps for When an ASQ Indicates Referral
  - Referral Processes
  - Suspension and Expulsion

## Staff Strategies

### EarlyLearningWA Website Links

- [Website Support \(FAQs\)](#)
- [Early Learning Program Manual \(ELPM\)](#)
- [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](#)
- [Teaching Strategies GOLD® Support](#)