

# Connector



PSESD Early Learning Monthly Newsletter

May 2023

## Crisis Supports for Early Learning



[Jorge Urosa](#)

Read more in [Mental Health](#).

### Editing

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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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Washington State Department of  
CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES





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# News in General

## Office Hours on IFSP/IEP Data Entry

**Dani Hoffman, Johna Rhooms, Malena Swarthout & Tamara Rosario | Disabilities Consultants**

As we head into the spring and summer months, more children are moving through the special education and early intervention process. In May, the Disabilities Consultants Team are hosting two live Q&A sessions on IFSP and IEP Data Entry for folks who would like support to accurately document children eligible for IFSP or IEP services.

The available sessions are:

- Tuesday, May 9, 12-1 PM on Zoom
- Thursday, May 25, 3-4 PM on Zoom

Folks may sign up on the [Training and Meeting Calendar](#).

If neither of these times work, remember you can also reach out to [your primary Disabilities Consultant](#) for one-on-one IFSP/IEP technical assistance.

**Disabilities Consultants  
May Office Hours:  
IFSP/IEP Data Entry**

**09** LIVE Q&A VIA ZOOM  
May 9, Tuesday at 12-1 PM

**25** LIVE Q&A VIA ZOOM  
May 25, Thursday at 3-4 PM

Sign up on the  
EL Training and Meeting Calendar



## Policy Council

**Quincy Stone | Parent Leadership Manager**

**Newly Elected Representatives:** Don't forget to submit the online [Policy Council Notice and Verification Form](#) so we can connect with them prior to the next Policy Council meeting.

Still recruiting? Check these out!

- [Policy Council Video](#) for you to show at parent meetings or one-on-one with parents!
- [Policy Council recruitment flyer](#) in 10 languages.

PC Reps are also available to speak at your in-person and/or virtual parent events. Contact [Quincy Stone](#)

**Monthly Trainings and Office Hours:** Connect with your [Family Engagement Coach](#) to learn more and how to attend.

- Policy Council Trainings provide interested parents and newly elected representatives with an overview of Policy Council and an opportunity to ask questions. Training takes place on the second Tuesday of each month.
- Parent Leadership Office Hours are open to PSESD and center/site staff only. Bring your Parent Leadership (Policy Council, Peer Programs, Advocacy Day) questions!



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## Policy & Legislative Updates

### Lori Pittman | Early Learning & K to 12 Policy, Advocacy and Government Relations

The Washington State Legislative Session is closed. The information below summarizes information applicable to Early Learning. If you have questions about ECEAP, please reach out to [Talena](#). For other questions, please reach out to [Lori](#).

**ECEAP Rates:** This is the most significant rate increase ECEAP has ever seen. PSESD will pass the increases through to your 23-24 subcontracts.

- School Day (SD) – 18% increase
- Working Day (WD) – 9% increase
- Part Day (PD) – 7% increase

**ECEAP Slots/Expansion:** All the new/conversion is for School Day – nothing for Working Day. For those of you who applied for new or converted slots, we do not know the outcome of the RFA process. We will notify those who applied as soon as we have some news.

- Expansion: 500 new SD slots in 2024, 500 in 2025
- Conversion: 1000 PD to SD in 2024, 1000 PD to SD in 2025

**Early ECEAP:** All slots continue to be funded, with a 20% rate increase in 2024 and 1.8% increase in 2025. There are no new Early ECEAP slots so there will be no Early ECEAP RFA award for those who applied.

**Early Learning Facilities:** More information regarding applications is forthcoming from DCYF.

- \$42.05M for competitive Early Learning Facilities Fund (ELFF) expansion grants, \$5M for renovation grants.
- \$17.6M for Member projects
- \$5.41M for School District projects
- \$350K Capital Readiness Proviso

#### On the policy side, awaiting Governor signature:

- [HB1550: Transition to Kindergarten](#) – This bill gives us a framework for ensuring that transitional kindergarten meets quality expectations and cooperates with early learning programs. There's still work to do, but there is a place to start.
- [SB5225: Working Connections access for undocumented children.](#)
- [SB5316: Background Check and Licensing Fees](#) – This will continue the waiver of background check and facility licensing fees for early learning.



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# Inclusion Corner

**Dani Hoffman, Johna Rhooms, Malena Swarthout, & Tamara Rosario | Disabilities Consultants**

## Supporting Inclusive Transitions



This time of year, children, families, and staff are gearing up for transitions to new classrooms and new settings. Sometimes those transitions are simple and sometimes they are complex, but there are things to look for and expect so that you can ensure an inclusive transition plan for every child. Just like children, adults experience dysregulation at times of transition, so we want to help you plan for your children with disabilities (and their families) as you all navigate this busy season. The following is a short breakdown of some tips and resources on transitions for infants and toddlers, children transitioning from Preschool to Kindergarten, parents and families, and even some great children's book recommendations.

Whether you support children turning three and entering a Head Start or ECEAP program, or children in a preschool program going on to Kindergarten, successful transitions require some planning and intentionality! Remember that your Disabilities Consultant is always available to connect with you as questions arise in your planning process. [Read more in this month's full Inclusion Corner.](#)

## Inclusion Corner

PROFESSIONAL  
LEARNING COMMUNITY

**Inclusion Corner PLC**  
Disabilities and Dual Language Learners Teams present:  
**Can language differences result in challenging behavior?**  
1 STARS HOUR OFFERED

Join us for our quarterly PLC to build community, discuss strategies and gather ideas around:

- Language development, access, and barriers
- Implementing visual supports
- Shifting views on challenging behaviors impacted by language
- Reflecting on personal experiences
- Building educator capacity to understand and meet the needs of dual language learners (DLLs)

May Inclusion Corner PLC  
Wednesday, May 31  
from 12-1 PM

Register on the Training and Meeting Calendar on:  
[earlylearningwa.org](http://earlylearningwa.org)

Early Learning  
**psepd**  
excellence & equity in education  
Puyallup School District

### May 31, 2023

Join us on May 31 from 12 to 1 pm for our next Inclusion Corner PLC where we will dig into the question "Can language differences result in challenging behavior?" We are co-hosting with our amazing Dual Language Learners Coach team and look forward to unpacking the vignette below, to discuss the relationship that language acquisition has to challenging behaviors. We will share some strategies and as always, provide a space for you all to connect with each other in community. All active participants who are able to join for the full hour will receive 1 STARS hour! We have been really enjoying these PLCs, and attendees have made the spaces rich and meaningful for all. Registration is on the [Training & Meeting Calendar on ELWA](#). We look forward to seeing you there!



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## Data and Monitoring

### ECEAP: Exit Children at End of School Year

#### Sue Gettmann | Application Specialist

As each of your classes end for the school year, exit each child from their class in ELMS. All classes must end, and children must exit **by June 30**; however, you can re-enroll continuing children immediately in the new year. Exiting all children is required before you can submit your monthly report for the final month of classes. You can complete bulk exits from the following locations:

- **Child Search** – select the child names you want to exit, then click the “Exit” button at the top of the search results.
- **Exit Child** link – on the child tab, select the Exit Child menu item. Select the child names you want to exit and click the “Select Checked Children” button.
- **Locations & Classes** > Class >Class Roster page – Click the “Bulk Exit” button at the top of the class roster. This button will only be visible after classes end.
- **Monthly Report** class pages – for the month when the class ended, click the “Bulk Exit” button on Step 2. This button will only be visible for the month classes end.

### ECEAP: Exit Message – There Are Unsaved Changes

#### Sue Gettmann | Application Specialist

While completing a child’s exit, you may see the **red message**, “Are you sure you want to leave this page? There are unsaved changes.” Once you finish and click Exit Child, it will disappear.

### Program Information Report (PIR)

#### Carol Weaver | Information Systems Consultant

As we get close to the end of services for the year for some of our HS/EHS classes, we need to be sure we have **all** the PIR data for **every child** (and their adults) that was enrolled **at any point** during the program year. PIR should be entered throughout the year. Please take some time now to catch up with anything still needed.

Please run report #9800 with the following criteria:



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# Data and Monitoring

- The report will show which fields are still blank and let you access them by clicking on links within the report.
- Please remember you still need to add **both** Race and Ethnicity for all children.
- Check that **both** adults (if two parent family) have Education Level and Employment Status entered.

## 2023-2024 Returning Applications

**Dawn Patterson** | Data Systems Technician

Now is the time for HS/EHS school year classes to send in your Returning Apps for next program year. Any program that closes for the summer should be getting those Returning Applications completed by parent/guardians and sent in for entry in the next couple of months. If you start the process now, it won't be such a rush later in the year when you are busy with so many transitions. Thanks for thinking ahead!

## Attendance Entry in ChildPlus – All Programs

**Tiffany Lyons** | Data Systems Technician

As we approach the end of the school year, please ensure attendance is entered in ChildPlus for every child **before** you leave for summer break.

## Application Upload Reminder

**Lisa Boyd** | Data Systems Technician

Prior to uploading an application to ChildPlus, please check the scan and verify that all pages are included.

## ASQ Results

**Anjanette Abbe** | Data Systems Technician

We are still receiving ASQ results uploaded by site staff to 45-day screenings. ASQs do not need to be written there. Please leave that part of the form blank.

## ELMS Monthly Report

**Sue Gettmann** | Application Specialist

ELMS Monthly Report must be submitted by the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month.





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# Center Directors

## E-Alerts from April 2023

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

**4/14** [Immunization Requirements for Children Who Are 4 Years Old on or After 9/1](#)

## Center Director Meetings

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

## Legislative Updates

**Lori Pittman | Early Learning & K to 12 Policy, Advocacy and Government Relations**

**Talena Dixon | Director, Program Operations & ECEAP**

Please refer to the [Policy & Legislative Updates](#) section for important information.

## Center Director Feedback Survey

**Taryn Kyle | Program Manager, Monitoring and Compliance**

Thank you all for bearing through our technical difficulties with the Center Director Feedback Survey during the Center Directors Meeting. We hope that you were still able to have some discussions around the support you are receiving, and hearing experiences from colleagues. Continuous quality feedback is the focus of our self-assessment process and getting your feedback supports it. We want to hear the strengths and needs of the support you've received. Later this Spring, we will survey teachers, family support staff, and parents. We will analyze the results and, as we enter the next program year, we will share strengths and any modifications to support.

The [survey](#) is now ready for your open and honest feedback! It should take about 30 to 40 minutes to complete, depending on the amount of stories you have to share.

## Center Directors: Center Calendars

**Sue Gettmann | Application Specialist**

Inclement weather and unexpected school closures have impacted child contact days. If your last day of class has changed since the school calendar was submitted, please submit revised calendars to your Team Manager so it can be updated in ELMS. If you want to know the Last Day of Class listed in ELMS, contact [Sue Gettmann](#).



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## Washington State Fellows' Network

### Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction

The [Washington State Fellows' Network](#), a three-year program, is a group of instructional leaders convened by the OSPI and the Association of Educational Service Districts (AESD) to support district and community implementation of state learning standards in mathematics, English Language Arts (ELA), science, and the Early Learning Guidelines.

Applications for the 2023-2024 Early Learning Fellow's Program are now ready to be filled out and submitted. Visit [OSPI's Washington State Fellows' Network](#) page for more information.



## Reporting Staff Leaves of Absence

### Cheryl Habgood | Systems Manager, Professional Learning

We have added two new Staff Information Forms (SIF) to our gallery of forms: [Leave of Absence](#) and [Return from Leave](#).

- At the point you know that a staff member is going on leave for longer than 2 weeks, please notify us using the [Leave of Absence](#) form.
- When they return to work, use the [Return from Leave](#) form.

Any questions about this process should be directed to [Cheryl Habgood](#).



## Hiring New Staff?

### Taryn Kyle | Program Manager, Monitoring & Compliance

Please complete the appropriate online [Staff Information Form](#) as soon as you know of any staff changes. Please refer to the [Hiring and Personnel Management Guide](#) in [ELPM: Program Administration](#) when submitting SIFs for any new hire or changes that have occurred. As new SIFs are being submitted, PSESD staff are working hard to get new staff access to the platforms that are needed. Our Monitoring Team will also be following up via email regarding any missing documents.

Per the requirements of our funders, we do require [VPP \(Verification of Parent Participation\)](#) for all HS/EHS/ECEAP funded positions. Please submit those with all New Staff SIFs.

We have noticed many [MR \(Medical Release Forms\)](#) being submitted are outdated. Please use the most recent Medical Release form when submitting your SIFs.

Contact the following with questions:

#### Qualifications:

[Cheryl Habgood](#)

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

[Beth Larsen](#)

#### All Other Hiring Questions:

Team A & C: [Lingsue Hwang](#)

Team B & D: [Kathy Schirman](#)





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## Important Reminders

### Talena Dixon | Director, Program Operations & ECEAP

- **HS Deliverable:** [Staff Compensation and Operating Budgets](#) are due to [ELfiscal@psed.org](mailto:ELfiscal@psed.org). Your Operating Budget should represent real costs; therefore, it is likely that it may not balance. We want representation of your real costs so we can understand what it takes for you to operate.
- **Spending One Time Fund Requests:** For those who have approved *One Time Funds Requests*, please work on spending right away. All HS/EHS COVID and ECEAP orders must be received by June 30.
- **Claims:** Please connect with the fiscal staff in your organization to ensure that claims are sent in within 45 days. Additionally, to help with the PSESD year-end, we will be asking all subcontractors to be caught up on claim submissions by August 2023, and the August claim by end of September.

# Education



## Spring Checkpoint Due by May 15

### Education Coaches

Please have checkpoints complete and finalized by May 15, 2023.

1. All children must have completed checkpoints.
2. **Children who score a two or more** on the Home Language Survey are **required to have objectives 37 and 38** (English Language Acquisition) checkpoints completed.
3. An age/grade (color band) is required prior to checkpoint completion.
4. If a child has been enrolled for less than two weeks and you do not have enough documentation or data to complete one or more checkpoints for that child, you must indicate that for each missed checkpoint.

Check out [MyTeachingStrategies Documentation Best Practices](#), for effective strategies that may work for you. Please reach out to your Education Coach if you have questions or need additional support.

## Guiding Children's Behavior

### Education Coaches

Supporting, rather than directing, gives children the strongest chance of recognizing and understanding their emotions. With positive guidance, teachers can gently guide children's behavior in respectful and caring ways and help them feel good about themselves. Please take some time to review the [Child Guidance and Support Procedure](#) and reach out to your Education Coach if you have questions or need support.



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## Conferencing with Families

### Education Coaches

It's Spring Conference time! 🙌 Conferences are an important opportunity to connect with families and discuss their children's progress. Please review the [Conferencing with Families](#) guidance and provide additional support for families with children entering Kindergarten. A few gentle reminders:

- Be prepared. Gather samples of the child's work to show growth.
- Be positive. Focus on the child's strengths and areas of growth.
- Be respectful. Listen to the family's concerns and feedback.
- Be collaborative. Work with the family to develop three school readiness goals for supporting their child's learning. If a child is on an IEP at least one goal must be related to the child's IEP.

If you have any questions, please reach out to [your Education Coach](#).

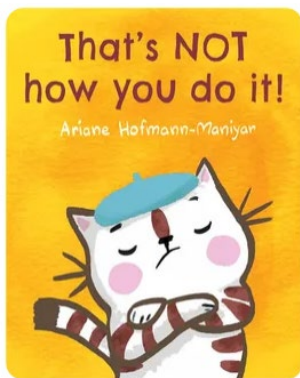
## Importance of a Print-Rich Environment

### Lindsay Lowry, Michelle Williams-Nelson, Jesse Acosta & Maha Shamdeen | Dual Language Learners Coach

One suggestion you might have heard from your DLL Coach this year is to add books and print materials in languages other than English to your classroom. We know that print exposure is key to literacy development (even before children can read!), and this remains true for students learning multiple languages! By bringing in environmental print (food labels, appropriate magazines, and newspapers) and/or posting alphabet posters and labels in the home languages of the students in your class, you are exposing them to print that is key to their home language development. As an added bonus, you're showing families that enter that classroom that you respect their culture and language enough to have included it in the classroom environment. What a great way to welcome families of all backgrounds! To read more about print-rich environments, check out [Using Environmental Print](#) and [5 Must-Haves in a Bilingual, Print-Rich Environment](#).

## Book Feature: *That's NOT How You Do It!*

### Lindsay Lowry, Michelle Williams-Nelson, Jesse Acosta & Maha Shamdeen | Dual Language Learners Coach



Lucy knows how to do everything! Even her friends come to her for help on the right way to do things. Until Toshi shows up, and he does everything wrong – eats differently, his music is different, even the way he paints is different. This short story is appropriate for many ages and can be used to start a conversation about accepting and respecting differences in our friends. Sometimes those differences are even exciting! Learn more about the story: [That's NOT How You Do It!](#)

## MyTSG Updated Teacher App Coming Soon

### Education Coaches

MyTSG is releasing their next generation teacher app! Check out the sneak preview video [here](#).



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# Multilingual Services



## Interpreter Directory

**JoAnna Williams-Diggs | Senior Coordinator, Multilingual Services**

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

Interpreter Directory  
(Click me for Updated List!)

# ERSEA

**Martha Waiters | ERSEA Consultant**



## ERSEA Updates for 2023-24

The Enrollment and Attendance sections of ERSEA Procedure have been updated for 2023-24. See [this E-Alert](#) for a summary of changes and additions.



## Selection Plans

Remember to send your Selection Plans to [ersea@psed.org](mailto:ersea@psed.org) for approval before selecting for the 2023-24 program year. Check out the Selection guidance in the 2023-24 ERSEA Procedure before creating your Selection Plan.



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# Family Engagement

## Peer Programs

### Quincy Stone | Parent Leadership Manager

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

Parents participating in the second session of Peer Programs training in Math and Money are engaged and learning! Soon, they too will be ready to present Teachbacks for your center/site.

To request a virtual teachback, please complete the [Teachback Request Form](#). Questions? Please contact [Quincy Stone](#).



### Parent Leadership Office Hours

**Parent Leadership Office Hours – open to PSESD and center/site staff only.** Bring your Parent Leadership (Policy Council, Peer Programs, Advocacy Day) questions and we'll ensure you get the support you need! **Our next Office Hours is May 18, 8:30 am to 10:30 am. Come join us!**

# Mental Health

Alex Clifthorne, Laurel Benz, Melissa Russell, & Maureen McDonald | Mental Health Consultants

## Crisis Supports for Your Early Learning Center/Site

Many times, as you are supporting Early Learning children and families, you may face times of crisis. When this happens, **please do not hesitate to contact your [Mental Health Consultant](#) for support.** We are available to process, debrief, and provide informal and formal support. For example, initially, a Center Director or other staff member may benefit from having someone present as they gather information and just be there as a listener. As the Mental Health Consultant makes themselves available, they may think of resources to connect you to such as books, counseling supports, or local crisis teams. Another support we can offer is an informal reflective group and/or individual times to support staff through a crisis that has been encountered.



Many programs can also refer their staff to Employee Assistance Program (EAP) plans. They may benefit from a referral to a counselor covered by their insurance and there are providers available on a sliding scale for those that need it.



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The Office of Head Start asks us to consider what types of emergencies we could encounter at our centers and provides tools for making some contingency plans. [“What types of emergencies have occurred in your area?”](#) Is your early childcare education program in a flood zone? Do you experience severe weather events? Is there a history of violence in your community?”

An important piece of being prepared for crisis is having a written crisis plan and a working knowledge of local supports available. A crisis can look different whether it is child specific, involving an adult, or an act of violence or threat to an entire center. **Considering these pieces will be a part of your discussion with your Mental Health Consultant.** You are not expected to be able to process this alone.

The Office of Head Start gives us some structure to understand crisis specifically for a family: [“Crisis intervention](#) is guided by six major goals that influence decisions about Head Start and Early Head Start's role with a family in crisis and their aim to stabilize and strengthen the family.”

Please consider your **local crisis response teams** as well and who you may want and need to call in times of crisis.

[King County](#) || [Pierce County](#) || [City of Tacoma](#)

**Know you are not alone, and we are here to support you.**

Questions? Contact a Mental Health Consultant!



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# Health, Nutrition, & Safety



## COVID-19 and ELPM Updates

We have a new [COVID-19/Infectious Disease Mitigation Procedure](#), found at the top of each Connector page, as well as in the [COVID-19 Information page](#).

Updates were also made to the following – please connect with [your HNS Coach or PSESD Nurse Consultant](#) if you have questions:

- [Child Health Plans Procedure](#)
- [Seizure Management in the Classroom](#)
- [Health History](#)



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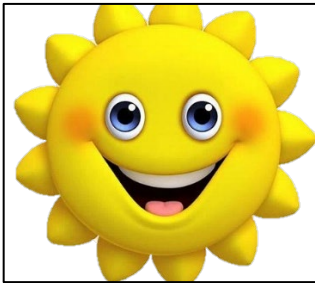
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## Spring Has Arrived!

### Mary Eddy | Health, Nutrition & Safety Coach

Spring is finally here! Remember, Early Learning Programs are required to apply sunscreen to all children over 6 months of age from May through September, and on sunny days throughout the year. Use the parent permission for [Over-the-Counter Non-Medical Items Form](#) and complete the Sunscreen Classroom Log.

Sites should purchase FDA Approved sunscreen that is at least SPF 15 and apply 30 minutes before going outdoors (even on cloudy days).



#### Did You Know?

- Skin of any color can get sunburned.
- Sun burns can lead to skin cancer.
- Skin cancer prevention begins when children are very young.
- A single bad sunburn when you are young doubles the chances of skin cancer.

Remember: Block the Sun, Not the Fun!

## Double Dollars for Fruits and Vegetables

### Rebecca Finkel | Health, Nutrition & Safety Consultant

Now through June 30, when Washington state Basic Food participants buy at least \$10 of fruits and vegetables using their SNAP/EBT card at participating grocery stores and online retailers, they will receive a \$10 SNAP Produce Match promotion to use for future purchases. This is especially important right now, after the expiration of a temporary federal increase in SNAP benefits during the COVID-19 pandemic.



Families who are enrolled in Basic Food can take advantage of this opportunity to stretch their fruit and vegetable dollars in ways that support their household's health. With double dollars available for fruits and vegetables, this is a great time to explore and taste new foods as a family, enjoy the more expensive spring produce that kids love, and increase the variety of fruits and vegetables offered for meals and snacks. Research has shown that repeat exposure to new foods increases the likelihood that children will accept them, and eating a variety of colorful fruits and vegetables is a healthy habit that provides children with the vitamins and minerals they need as they grow.

For more information, including participating stores and online retailers, visit [the Washington State Department of Health website](#).





### To-Do Lists

[Center Director](#) | [Teaching Staff](#) | [Family Support](#) | [Health, Nutrition, Safety](#)

### News Archive

[E-Alerts](#) | [Connector](#)

### COVID-19 Information

[Information Page](#) | [COVID-19/Infectious Disease Mitigation Procedure](#)



[ELPM Directory and Updates](#)

### Other Info

[Anti-Racism Resources](#) | [PSESD Press Releases](#)

# 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!](#)
- [Washington State Association of Head Start and ECEAP \(WSA\) News](#)

## Staff Strategies

### EarlyLearningWA Quick 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](#)

# Center/Site & Classroom Activities

We would love to know about the awesome work at your center/site and in your classrooms!

If you'd like to be featured in the next Connector issue, email [Venissia Buyco and Cammy Ariola-Moku](#). Please ensure the following before submitting:

- **Photographed children must have initialed and signed parent consent** on the [Emergency Treatment and Consent Form](#) ("Photo/video to build partnerships with community agencies"). You do not need to submit proof of consent, but make sure it is on file.
  - If any child in a photograph does not have consent, please conceal their face(s) using shapes or smiley face emojis. Or use a different photo 😊
- **Center/site and classroom celebrations must not be associated with religious and commercial holidays or birthdays**, in accordance with the [Early Learning Equity, Inclusion, and Classroom Celebration Policy](#).

Questions? Contact [Venissia Buyco](#).