



NORTHEAST KEY CONNECTION

Community Services for Children, Inc.
1520 Hanover Avenue, Allentown, PA 18109

Winter Issue
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THE NORTHEAST KEY STAYS CONNECTED TO YOU IN A VARIETY OF WAYS:



Inside this issue:

Second Friday Conference Call

Don't miss out on this opportunity! Mark this on your calendar!!!! The second Friday of every month from 9AM to 10AM you have the opportunity to ask questions and take part in a discussion about Keystone STARS, Professional Development, Grants, Resources, etc. from our NE Key Panel. (Raine Neal, Ivy Reynolds and Kim Bastian). Hope you can join us in February! The only cost to you will be the cost of the long distance phone call.

Conference call Dial-In Number is (605) 990-0111
Participant Access Code: 157031#

Round Table with the Northeast Key

The staff from Northeast Key are traveling throughout the Northeast region this year to share an overview of the Northeast region outcomes. Participants will have an opportunity to share their thoughts on what works for them, offer suggestions on how the Northeast Key can enhance services to practitioners. Your feedback is valuable to our region! Join us in developing our 2009-2010 Regional Plan for the Northeast! Become involved in this exciting project and share your leadership skills!

Upcoming Round Table with the Northeast Key Staff:

~Lehigh Valley – February 19, 2009 – 1:00-2:30PM

Other counties to follow. Keep watching our Thursday Notes on email for more information.

Please RSVP to Beth Gambone at bgambone@cscinc.org if you are interested in attending.



The Northeast Key Stays Connected to you in a variety of Ways:

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Q & A

“What is a Learning Community”?

A Learning Community is an excellent opportunity to network with your colleagues who share the same goals in meeting or maintaining a specific STAR level in Keystone STARS.

Learning Communities are designed to support Early Learning and School-Age Programs as they move or maintain a STAR level by involving the STARS Manager, Technical Assistance and Professional Development. The Learning Communities are facilitated by the STARS Manager and generally meet monthly over a 6 month period. Programs are encouraged to commit to attending all 6 Learning Communities. You are welcome to attend anytime whether or not you are registered for all 6 meetings. Topics covered during the Learning Communities address Keystone STARS Standards. Resources are also shared addressing various topic areas attended by the group. At times STARS Technical Assistance Consultants or Professional Development Instructors lead a specific topic and Professional Development Certificates are available. (\$5.00 charge if certificate is awarded)

You can find a listing of “Learning Communities” closest to your area in each Thursday Edition of Notes from the Northeast Key. Or you can contact you STAR Manager at the appropriate extension or Diane Milia @ extension 2329.

Updates, Updates, Updates...

NE Regional Key WORK GROUP:

There are Work Groups being held across the region for Start with STARS and STAR 1 sites. At these sessions a STARS Coordinator will be available to help programs to complete the paperwork needed to move from Start with STARS to STAR 1 and for STAR 1 sites to renew at the same level. Participants are asked to bring a copy of their DPW Certificate and any enrollment information. At the past Work Group sessions participants were very appreciative to have someone there to answer any questions. The purpose of the Work Group is to help practitioners to complete the forms necessary to designate or renew. Resources will be available to complete Support Grant forms.

There are Work Groups scheduled for:

Feb. 3, 2009 at Community Services for Children, Inc.
1520 Hanover Avenue, Allentown

Feb. 11, 2009 at Luzerne Community College
1333 S. Prospect St., Building #3

Feb. 17, 2009 at the Hazleton YMCA
75 S. Church Street

Important News Flash!

If you have not submitted a Keystone STARS grant application for 2008-2009, all Merit, Education and Retention Award, Support Grant and Start with STARS Grant applications must be received by the NE Key NO LATER than MARCH 31, 2009. All Merit, Education and Retention Awards and Support grant applications must be submitted, no later than 10 days after your designation or renewal date! Your STAR expiration date is on your STAR Certificate. Check your expiration date today and if you are expiring between January 1, 2009 and June 30, 2009 contact our **Support Line today at 1-800-528-7222 ext. 2305 or your STARS Manager to assist you in your renewal or designation process. You will need to renew your STAR level before it expires. (You can renew or designate earlier than your expiration date!)** If you need a grant application, one can be mailed/ emailed to you or you can go to www.pakeys.org to print out an application.

Send your completed grant applications to:

CSC/NE Key, 1520 Hanover Avenue, Allentown, PA 18109 or Fax to: (610) 432-5700

Professional Development Record Update (For practitioners using the 2002 PDR)

The PDR inserts can only be downloaded from the PA Key website. Go to www.pakeys.org and click on Professional Development/ CBK and PD Record/About CBK & PDR

Professional Development Records

If you are requesting four or more PDRs you can contact the PA Key at 800-284-6031. If you are requesting less than 4 PDRs, you can contact the NE Key. Call Diane Milia TA Manager at (800) 528-7222, ext.2305.

Research and Trends

PA OCDEL Reach and Risk Report 2007-2008:

The Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL) is committed to providing early childhood services to Pennsylvania's young children, with special attention to those at risk of school failure. Research consistently shows that children at risk of school failure, benefit from quality early learning opportunities, with economic and educational benefits which extend to our families, communities and the commonwealth.

The Office of Child Development and Early Learning has recently released the second annual County Risk and Program Reach Assessment Report 2007-08 provides county, as well as city specific information on the level of risk for school failure for children (based on several risk factors) and the availability, or reach, of most OCDEL programs to children in each county and in the 27 largest cities in Pennsylvania. The narrative report and data spreadsheets can be accessed on the PA Key website at www.pakeys.org.

Early Childhood Mental Health

Learning the Signs of Autism

Research has shown that children as early as one year of age can show signs of autism. Screening a child in your care with a highly validated tool, such as the Ages and Stages, will help identify a child for further evaluation. Getting a child help early may be his or her best hope. Here are some red flags for autism provided by the First Signs Organization, www.firstsigns.org:

- No big smiles or other warm, joyful expressions by **6 months** or thereafter
- No back-and-forth sharing of sounds, smiles, or other facial expressions by **9 months** or thereafter
- No babbling by **12 months**
- No back-and-forth gestures, such as pointing, showing, reaching, or waving by **12 months**
- No words by **16 months**
- No two-word meaningful phrases (without imitating or repeating) by **24 months**
- Any loss of speech or social skill at any age

Below is a list of web resources that may also help.

- | | |
|--|--|
| www.do2learn.com | www.med.yale.edu/chldstdy/autism/pddinfo.html |
| www.firstsigns.org/programs/pa.htm | www.ed.gov/parents/needs/speced/resources.html |
| www.dpw.state.pa.us/Disable/ | www.thegraycenter.org |
| www.nichd.nih.gov | www.wrongplanet.net |
| www.autismspeaks.org | www.teacch.com |
| www.wrightslaw.com | www.autism-society.org |
| www.abainternational.org | www.cureautismnow.org |

Partner's...

Health and Safety Consultation

Did you know you can receive **free**-on-site Health and Safety Technical Assistance by a Health Consultant? If you have concerns about diapering, hand washing, emergency practices, health policies or your playground you can request the support of a Health Consultant.

The Health Consultant will review your policies from Exclusion of Children to Administering Medication and more. While visiting your program they will also observe all personal care routines, staff health policies, emergency procedures and the overall health and safety of your program. While conducting the visit the consultant will offer resources and tools to support the everyday operation of your site. Upon completion of the visit, each site will receive a report from the consultant with recommendations if needed, to ensure your program is providing a safe and healthy environment for all. If you would like a Health and Safety consultant to visit your site please contact **Diane Milia** at **(800) 528-7222 ext. 2329** or at dmilia@cscinc.org to complete the request.

Professional Development

CDA Updates

On-line Assessment will be coming soon from the Council for Professional Recognition.

To keep pace with the accelerated demand for teacher qualifications, the CDA Council will launch a new on-line CDA. Assessment option that will facilitate candidate assessments.

This option will mirror the existing CDA Assessment system and allow candidates to submit applications and complete assessments using personal computers. The streamlined process will offer an alternative to the existing paper-based assessment system. We will keep you updated on this new and exciting option in a future NE Key Connection.

Current CDA news and updates are available on the CDA Council's website at www.cdacouncil.org.

Sign up for a free email newsletter, "Councilink" (formerly titled "Council Updates"). Go to CDA Council website at www.cdacouncil.org and click on Councilink. This newsletter features information on preparing teachers of young children. Each issue features an advocacy link, CDA Credential information, as well as tips and ideas contributing to the field of Early Learning.

Orientation Professional Development

At a STAR 2 or higher a standard under Staff Qualifications states, "New Staff Orientation completed by all aides and new staff within 90 days of start of employment". Clarifications state that New Staff Orientation may be provided using the DPW approved Better Kid Care video series or 15 hours of documented topics outlined by "Caring for our Children" 2nd edition, section 1.023, pg. 118. If the Better Kid Care videos offered are not utilized, documentation is required of PQAS approved professional development (including course title, hours, and instructor name/signature) that has been cross-walked to the "Caring for our Children" topic areas. For practitioners working in both Early Learning and School Age classrooms, please complete the New Employee Orientation for the age group of primary focus.

New Staff Orientation

Specifically designed for new practitioners in an Early Learning Program. This is a 30 page workbook with 30 units and 7 videos. Easy to understand information is reinforced with activities and assignments. Units are designed to be used during naptime or other small blocks of time as staff ratios permit. The workbooks and DVD/Videos can be requested and mailed for free to centers in Pennsylvania. There is a \$5.00 prepayment per assignment packet required when submitting Orientation assignments.

New Staff Orientation Refresher

This is an option for experienced practitioners in a new position. The refresher gives the experienced practitioner an opportunity to review the basic information in "Caring for our Children". 6 Units have 15 minute videos/DVD segments with workbooks. Videos based on the original new staff orientation. Awards 3 professional hours. After completing lesson assignments mail packets to Better Kid Care for review. Include prepayment of \$5.00 per six unit packet. You can preview materials online before ordering.

Directors

"Your Personal Best – A Leadership Experience"

This series is designed as continuing education for early childhood and school-age professionals who are working on, or applied for their Director's Credential or have their Director's Credential through the PA Key. It provides the opportunity for participants to learn and apply best leadership practices to an actual leadership project within their organizations. Participants will increase their understanding and recognition of best practices associated with successful leaders, apply these practices to a personal best leadership experience, and develop a professional development plan for furthering their leadership abilities.

**The 6- hour sessions are scheduled on
2/11, 3/11, 4/8, and 5/20, 2009**

at Northampton Community College – Fowler Center.

Cost is \$50.00 for the 4 sessions; the cost includes "The Leadership Workbook", Act 48 credit, and lunch.

**Please contact Susan at 1-800-528-7222, ext. 2316
for more details.**

CBK/PDR on Line Professional Development

The CBK/PDR revised online professional development is completed. Thank you for your patience. If you are in need of a CBK/PDR professional development which is part of the Core Series Professional Development, you can choose between taking the PD online or attending a PD instructed by one of our NE Key STARS Managers. Check the PD listings in the PD Calendar on the PA Key website.

Professional Development, Cont.

CDA Advisor Training March 13, 2009 Luzerne County Community College 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM

In order to meet the growing demand for CDA Advisors in Pennsylvania and to help ensure a consistent quality of observation, you are invited to attend this six-hour professional development activity for advisors. The session will include an overview of the CDA process, basic mentoring skills, an introduction to the CDA Assessment Observation Instrument, review of basic observation techniques, tips for effective observations and practice with the observation instrument. (K6/C1/62)

A vital source of evidence of a CDA Candidate's skill is actual hands-on work as a child care practitioner with children and families. A formal observation of the Candidate will provide evidence of these practices. Each CDA Candidate will need to identify an early childhood professional who is willing to serve as an Advisor and who meets the Advisor qualifications as outlined on the following page. An Advisor can be the Candidate's Director, an Education Coordinator, a site supervisor, a Home-based network coordinator or Home-based provider. The Advisor observes the Candidate and records the observation using the CDA Assessment Observation Instrument.

CDA ADVISOR · ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

The Advisor must meet the following eligibility requirements and provide verifications on the Candidate's Application Form:

A. PERSONAL

- Affirm her/his ability to relate to people of various racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic backgrounds.
- Be knowledgeable about local, state, and national requirements, standards, and guidelines for child care programs serving children ages birth through 5 years.
- Be familiar with the center where the Candidate will be observed and the needs of families and children in the community.

B. EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE

- The Advisor must meet all of the requirements in one of the three combinations of education and experience outlined in sections 1, 2, or 3 below:
 1. **B.A., B.S., or advanced degree in early childhood education/child development, home economics/child development, from accredited college or university.** Must include 12 semester hours covering children ages birth through 5 years.
 - A. Two years of experience in a child care setting serving ages birth through 5 years, including:
 - B. **One year** working directly with children in the same age range as the children in Candidate's classroom as a caregiver, teacher, child life worker, social worker, or similar role; and
 - C. **One year** of responsibility for the professional growth of another adult.
 2. **Associate level (two-year) degree in early childhood education/child development, home economics/child development, from an accredited college or university.** Must include 12 semester hours covering children ages birth through 5 years.
 - A. Four years of experience in a child care setting in a program serving children ages birth through 5 years, including:
 - B. **Two years** working directly with children in the same age range as the children in Candidate's classroom as a caregiver, teacher, child life worker, social worker, or similar role; and
 - C. **Two years** of responsibility for the professional growth of another adult.
 3. **An active CDA Credential plus twelve semester hours of study in early childhood education or child development at an accredited college or university covering children ages birth through 5 years.**
 - A. **Six years** of experience in a child care setting serving children ages birth through 5 years, including:
 - B. **Four years** working directly with children in the same age range as the children in Candidate's classroom as a caregiver, teacher, child life worker, social worker, or similar role; and
 - C. **Two years** of responsibility for the professional growth of another adult.

C. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

1. To promote objectivity and credibility, an individual serving as an Advisor:
 - A. Must not be working as co-teacher with the Candidate on a daily basis in the same room or group.
 - B. Must not be the relative of a child in the Candidate's care at any time during the assessment process.
 - C. Must not be related by blood or marriage or other legal relationship to the Candidate.

Professional Development, Cont.

Unique Professional Development Opportunity in February 2009

Starting in February 2009, Family Child Care Providers that are a STAR 1 or above program can participate in the Mind in the Making Project (MITM). This is a unique professional development activity includes lively discussions, reflective activities and interesting videos regarding the latest research on how children learn and how adults can support children's ability to learn. Each session will give you tools and tips for improving your interactions with children and their families. This project will be twelve, 2-hour sessions, held between January and May 2009 in the evening at Community Services for Children in Allentown.

An additional MITM project will be held in Luzerne County from February – May 2009 for group and center-based facilities that are a STAR 1 or above program. The directors and one staff person is invited to attend all 6 sessions. This unique MITM project provides each director with the 12 MITM modules which allows directors to instruct their remaining staff and award them with at least 24 hours of professional development.

If you are looking for strategies to improve relationships with children, families and staff, this is the opportunity for you! Space is limited so call today to learn details and to get enrolled! Please contact Susan Ritter at sritter@cscinc.org or 610-437-6000 ext. 2316.

Professional Development and Meeting your STARS Standards

The Northeast Key is offering many professional development opportunities to meet your STARS Standards. Please check the PA Keys Calendar at www.pakeys.org, Thursday Notes for detailed information, or contact Susan Ritter at sritter@cscinc.org or 610-437-6000 ext. 2316. Professional Development Activities are added on a continuing basis.

PA Director's Credential	Ounce Scale
Child Abuse Mandated Reporter	Core Body of Knowledge/Professional Development Record
Curriculum	Developing a Facility Professional Development Plan (FPDP)
Environment Rating Scale-Foundations, ECERS, ITERS, SACERS & FCCRS	Health & Safety
Inclusive Practices	Integrating Early Childhood Standards into Curriculum and Assessments (Early Standards)
Observation	Pediatric First Aid
Stars Orientation	Understanding and Planning for Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI)
Work Sampling Online	Work Sampling

Health & Safety 2009

These professional development activities will provide health and safety information to assist programs with the Environmental Rating Scale, meeting state regulations, and meeting STARS Standards.

Common Illness (includes Diapering & Hand washing)	4/20/09-Lackawanna County- 6:30-8:30 PM, Millennium Child Day Care Center, Jermyn
2/7/09-Lackawanna County 9-11 AM, Greater Scranton YMCA, Dunmore	Playground Safety
3/5/09-Northampton County 6:30-8:30 PM, NCC Fowler Center, Bethlehem	3/14/09-Berks County- 9-11 AM, Berks Ag Center, Leesport
3/12/09-Monroe County-6:30-8:30 PM, NCC Monroe Campus, Tannersville	3/28/09-Lackawanna County-6:30-8:30 PM, Goodwill Industries, Scranton
4/13/09-Lehigh County-6:30-8:30 PM, Community Services for Children, Inc., Allentown	4/30/09-Tioga County-6:30-8:30 PM, Tokishi Training Center, Wellsboro
5/13/09-Tioga County-6:30-8:30 PM, Tokishi Training Center, Wellsboro	5/04/09-Lehigh County-6:30-8:30 PM, Community Services for Children's, Inc., Allentown
5/14/09-Bradford County-6:30-8:30 PM, Athens-Sayre Day Care, Sayre	5/14/09-Bradford County-6:30-8:30 PM, Athens-Sayre Day Care, Sayre
Safe Medication	Emergency Preparedness
2/07/09-Lackawanna County- 11AM-1PM-, Greater Scranton YMCA, Dunmore	3/11/09-Bradford County-6:30-8:30 PM, Troy Library, Troy
4/20/09-Lehigh County- 6:30-8:30 PM, Community Services for Children, Inc., Allentown	3/25/09-Berks County-6:30-8:30 PM, Berks Ag Center, Leesport
Fire Safety	4/15/09-Wyoming County-6:30-8:30 PM, H.A.N.D.S. of Wyoming, Tunkhannok
2/25/09-Northampton County-6:30-8:30 PM, NCC Fowler Center, Bethlehem	5/13/09-Tioga County-6:30-8:30 PM, Tokishi Training Center, Wellsboro
3/14/09-Berks County- 9-11AM, Berks Ag Center, Leesport	