

National ECELC Newsletter

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The National ECELC

Welcome to the National Early Care and Education Collaboratives Project (ECELC) Newsletter! We hope this newsletter is helpful as we offer supplemental information to help you prepare for the Learning Sessions and provide technical assistance to early care and education (ECE) providers. Topics within each newsletter will emphasize areas outlined in the *Lets Move! Child Care* goals including healthy eating, physical activity, screen time, and breastfeeding support. We hope you enjoy it!

-The National ECELC Team

www.healthykidshealthyfuture.org

Building Positive Trainer/Provider Relationships

A partnership is generally defined as involving parents, families, and early care and education (ECE) providers working together to benefit children. Good relationships are built on trust. How are your relationships with your programs? Do providers feel comfortable sharing their challenges with you because they know you won't judge or think they are failing?

ECE programs should continuously think about ways to build positive relationships between child/staff and staff/parents. It is important to make sure programs are providing successful lines of communication with the parents. Effective communication, such as engaging in a conversation and actively listening, will reassure the parent that you are being attentive to their needs. Ask

what methods are being used to promote effective and positive communication? Posing these questions may prompt the programs to think about parental engagement. Encourage the programs to seek new ways to help get parents involved. Suggesting a trial period for one form of communication may be helpful. If a program is only using paper flyers to get parents information, maybe suggest to them to try using email blasts for a month and see if they notice the difference. This may help programs to adjust to trying something new.

Remember, building communication with programs, parents, staff or children is key in making successful long lasting relationships.



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Building Community Relationships

Are you confident in discussing healthy eating, physical activity, screen time, and breastfeeding support with early care and education (ECE) providers? If there are areas that you do not feel like you're an "expert" in then connect with local organizations and initiatives that can help you further your work in encouraging changes in ECE programs. Sometimes it's not about telling someone WHAT the best practices are around health and nutrition, but HOW they can create change and WHO can help them. Below is a list of federal programs that aim to assist organizations and individuals on the state and local levels to make these changes. Building community relationships will help enhance your efforts and can help strengthen the trust between you and ECE program staff.

Cooperative Extension Service
www.csrees.usda.gov/Extension

Women, Infants, and Children
www.fns.usda.gov/wic/Contacts/statealpha.HTM.

Head Start/Early Head Start
<http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/HeadStartOffices>

Child and Adult Care Food Program
www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/Contacts/StateDirectory.htm

Questions? Please contact your State/Local Project Coordinator or one of our Content Specialists:

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Building Community Relationships

Cooperative Extension Service (CES) is an informal educational opportunity where "Extension Agents" go in to the community to educate residents on evidenced-based research surrounding several topic areas. One specifically addresses food, nutrition and health. Three specific programs accomplish the goal of spreading sound nutrition and health information:

- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program – Education (SNAP-Ed)
- Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP)

Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) is a program that provides supplemental food, nutrition education and consultations, and health referrals to pregnant women and their infants and children up to the age of five who are deemed eligible.

Head Start/Early Head Start Health Specialists, such as Registered Nurses and Registered Dietitians, are located in local Head Start/Early Head Start programs to track children ages birth to five within the Head Start program that are at risk for health and/or nutrition-related issues. They may conduct home visits, parent workshops, classroom observations, and provide one-on-one counseling to families and their children.

Child Care and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) provides reimbursement for meals for infants and children in ECE programs that serve lower income children. CACFP has a wellness initiative in which they encourage states to strengthen CACFP guidelines through educating ECE program staff. CACFP monitors can be a great source of information.

Each program or organization website will also have resources in the form of parent handouts, tip sheets, or general information that you and ECE providers can use to inform parents on best practices for healthy eating, physical activity, screen time, and breastfeeding support. All of the programs and organizations listed above have experts in the field of health and nutrition. Reach out to them to serve as guest speakers at Learning Sessions, staff trainings, parent workshops, and/or to provide additional contacts and resources within the community.