Early Childhood Provider Updates



Welcome



Webinar Questions

- Throughout the webinar today, for questions, please utilize the chat feature
- Please also include your email address.



Agenda

- Welcome
- Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) Reminders & Updates
- Home-Based Provider Reminders & Updates
- Licensing Reminders & Updates
- Child Care Criminal Background Check (CCCBC) Reminders & Updates
- Teaching and Learning Reminders & Updates
- Special Focus: Farm to ECE
 - Haley Holeton, New Orleans Food Policy Action Council
- **Upcoming Events**



Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP)



Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP)

Reminders



KinderConnect Attendance Tracking

It is important for providers to submit their KinderConnect attendance records weekly, for all CCAP-enrolled children. As a reminder:

- Authorizations must be utilized by families at the time child care services are rendered.
- KinderConnect attendance records will be examined as part of the underutilization review of CCAP attendance.
- If you have any questions about how to verify and submit your attendance records weekly via KinderConnect, please refer to <u>KinderConnect-Submit</u> <u>Attendance QRC</u> for detailed instructions.



Underutilized Monitoring

- CCAP continues to make child care payments based on enrollment for eligible families that utilize the authorizations.
- Providers are required to ensure the KinderConnect Attendance Tracking system is accessed by parents daily to capture attendance.
- If a family is using KinderConnect to sign in and out, the case will not appear on the LDOE Underutilized Report.





Underutilized Monitoring

- Families who have not scanned their children in/out of care for 30 days are considered to be underutilizing participants. This may result in termination of the family's CCAP benefits.
- If child care services are still needed, the parent may contact the Department immediately at 1-877-453-2721 or submit a CCAP 10 Report of Changes form (ensure section 8 is completed), indicating services are still needed.
- Timely receipt of the call to the Department or Report of Changes form will prevent closure of the family's case.
- If the case is closed, the parent will have to reapply and then, if still deemed eligible, will be placed on the Waiting List until additional funds are available for Child Care Assistance.

Special Needs Copay



Per the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), to establish that a child meets "Special Needs" requirements, the following are acceptable forms of verification:

- Current Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP)
- Current Individualized Education Plan (IEP)
- Current Supplemental Security Income (SSI) Award letter for the child
- A written medical statement from the child's physician



Special Needs Copay

- Families meeting the Special Needs criteria receive CCAP assistance at the state maximum rate per age of the child.
- Providers may charge a daily rate above the state's maximum rate, and parents are required to pay the difference to the provider for child care services.





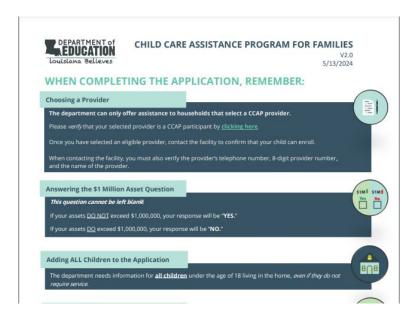
Application Asset Question

As providers assist parents in completing the CCAP application, particular attention should be given to answering the asset question properly.

- Parents may access the <u>Family Assets</u> video and the <u>Remember Guide</u> on the Department's website to aid in responding correctly, so that delays with application processing will not occur.
- Specifically, if the family's assets DO NOT exceed \$1,000,000, the response should be Yes.
- If the family's assets DO exceed \$1,000,000, the response should be No.

If answered incorrectly or left blank on the application, processing delays will occur.

Application Asset Question







Completing the CCAP Application in Cafe

Applying online is the most efficient way to submit a complete CCAP application with verifications. The Cafe portal also allows families to check the status of their application.

- Families must use a desktop computer to properly upload needed verification and submit the application.
- The <u>Application Guidebook</u> can assist families with identifying needed verifications prior to applying.
- Additional resources include the <u>Application How-to Guide</u> and <u>Income</u> <u>Guidebook</u>, which can be located on the CCAP <u>web page</u> under the "For Your Information" section.

Provider Help Desk Ticket System

The <u>CCAP Provider Help Desk</u> Ticket System is the support tool that aids providers with solutions and guidance on CCAP processes as well as other early childhood resources.





Provider Help Desk Ticket System

- Providers choose a "Help Topic" and include details (e.g., child and parent name, Case ID#, dates, etc.) of an issue within a ticket.
- Assigned staff research the issue and share the findings within the ticket or request additional information to continue researching the issue.
- Within 72 hours after submitting a ticket, the provider receives a resolution for the issue or acknowledgement of receipt of the ticket if the query requires further research.

Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP)

Changes Effective October 1, 2024



Presumptive Eligibility for Redetermination Applications

- To improve application processing and payment practices for families and providers, the LDOE will implement a brief period of Presumptive Eligibility for Redetermination Applications for families, effective October 1, 2024.
- Presumptive Eligibility will allow additional time for families to submit all documents required for a renewal application in Cafe for CCAP services to continue.
- This will eliminate a possible lapse in child care services for families as they work to renew their certification.

Presumptive Eligibility for Redetermination Applications

How can providers support presumptive eligibility for redetermination applications?

- Providers can assist by having families complete their Child Care Assistance Program applications and requests for changes online through the Cafe Customer Portal.
- A complete application at redetermination means the CCAP office receiving an application with **all** supporting documents for processing the application, prior to the end of the family's certification.



Presumptive Eligibility for Redetermination Applications – Example



Sara Lee has submitted an application before the redetermination date of 10/31/24.



Sara Lee has a missing document by 10/31/24.



Sara Lee is given a specified amount of additional time to provide needed documentation before case is closed.



Child Support Update

Also effective for applications received on or after October 1, as families submit complete initial or redetermination applications in Cafe and report income, the unearned income of child support will no longer be budgeted in the family's income as part of CCAP eligibility determination and certification.

- Applications received after October 1, 2024, will no longer have child support budgeted in the household income as a requirement for certification.
- Applications submitted prior to October 1, 2024, will still have child support budgeted in the household's monthly income.

CCAP Home-Based Providers

Reminders & Updates



Home-Based Provider Inspection Trends

The LDOE Division of Licensing inspections of Family Child Care and In-Home providers revealed the following trends as the most cited deficiencies from August 2024-present:

Medication Administration Training -

 Certified providers must present documentation of current medication administration training at initial and renewal certification.

Child Daily Attendance -

 The Daily Attendance Log must accurately reflect all children in care at any given time and include each child's first and last name, arrival and departure times, and first and last name of the person or entity to whom the child is released. This log must include times the child may leave and return to the home during the day.

State Fire Marshal -

• A current State Fire Marshal report with no critical deficiencies is a requirement to care for children in the home.

Home-Based Provider Inspection Trends

The LDOE Division of Licensing inspections of Family Child Care and In-Home providers revealed the following trends as the most cited deficiencies from August 2024 - present:

Current E-mail Address -

 Home-based providers must maintain a current e-mail address and notify the Department immediately upon a change in such e-mail address, by submitting written notice to the LDOE via fax, via email, or via the EdLink portal.

Continuing Education Training -

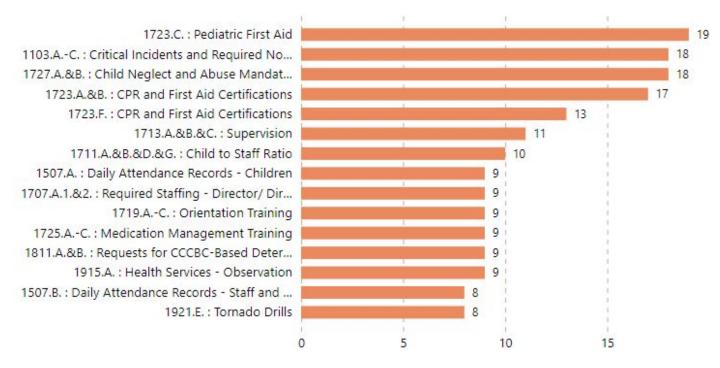
O Home-based providers must annually complete 12 clock hours of required job-related training topics. The <u>CCAP Training and Technical Assistance</u> webpage provides more information on the required training topics. A list of trainers can be found at <u>Louisiana Pathways</u>. Once accessed, refer to the Approved Trainer Referral List on the web page.

Licensing

Reminders & Updates



Top-Cited Deficiencies in September





Health Services - Parental Notification

When there is an injury, accident, illness, or unusual behavior that occurs at the facility, it must be documented and reported to the parent or legal guardian.

The following injuries can be reported no later than the day of injury, when the child is released to the parent or authorized representative:

- Scrape on the knee with no bleeding
- Cut on the elbow

Parents or legal guardians must be notified *immediately* in the following circumstances:

- Blood not contained in an adhesive strip
- Head, neck, or eye injury
- Human bite that breaks the skin
- Animal bite
- Impaled object
- Temperature reading over 101° Fahrenheit



End-of-Day Check

It is important to ensure, every day, that the entire center and play yard are both checked after the last child leaves, to ensure that no child is left behind.

The end-of-day check must be documented and include the following:

- Date of visual check
- Time of visual check
- Signature of the staff conducting the visual check



Daily Health Checks

Every day a staff member must conduct a health check of each child as soon as possible after the child enters the child care facility:

- Staff members should gain information necessary to complete the daily health check by direct observation of the child, by querying the parent/guardian, and, where applicable, by conversation with the child.
- Daily health checks seek to identify potential concerns about a child's health, including recent illness or injury to the child as well as any signs of abuse or neglect



Daily Health Checks

Bulletin 137 requires that, upon arrival at the center, the physical condition of each child must be observed for possible signs of illness, infections, bruises or injuries.

When something is observed it shall be documented.

Note: It is also a best practice to document when nothing is observed to indicate that the daily check of each child was completed.



Restroom Supervision

Supervision is fundamental to safety, the prevention of injury, and maintaining quality child care, and this includes use of the restroom:

- Staff members must be ready to provide assistance and guidance when children are ready to use the restroom.
- Older preschool children and school-age children may use the restroom without direct visual observation, but staff members must remain within hearing range, in case children need assistance and to prevent inappropriate behavior.

Restroom Supervision

Bulletin 137 requires the following:

- A staff member is in proximity to and can see the children who are developmentally-able to go to the restroom independently, to ensure immediate intervention to safeguard a child from harm while in the restroom.
- Individuals who are not staff members must not enter the center restroom area while in use by any child other than their own child.
- A child age four and older may be permitted to go and return from the restroom without staff.

Child Care Criminal Background Check (CCCBC)

Reminders & Updates



Applications with Out-of-State Residential History

In accordance with federal regulation 45 CFR §98.4, the CCCBC Section must request the following for applicants who have legally resided in another state within the past five (5) years:

- A name-based search of the Criminal History Record Information (CHRI) of the state(s);
- A name-based search of the Sex Offender Registry (SOR) of the state(s);
 and
- A name-based search of the Child Abuse and Neglect (CAN) Registry of the state(s).



Applications with Out-of-State Residential History

- The provider must download the out-of-state forms and unique instructions located in the "Attachments" section of the CCCBC application.
- The provider must then upload the completed forms into the CCCBC System in order to complete the application process.
 - Please note, some states require original documents to perform checks. If original forms are required by other states, the provider must mail the completed original CAN and CHRI forms to the LDOE; the LDOE will then mail the original documents to the other state(s).
- The Department will review the uploaded forms for completeness and request background checks from each particular out-of-state's agency.

Application Guidance

In order to prevent delays with scheduling fingerprints, pay close attention to all information entered. The following must match the applicant's ID:

- The spelling of the applicant's name please omit any spaces or apostrophes in the applicant's name
- The applicant's Date of Birth
- The applicant's Social Security Number

Before submitting an application, please review the information entered, to ensure accuracy.

If a correction is needed, please email LDECCCBCprocessing@la.gov.

- Be sure to include the application ID and the correction needed in the subject line of the email.
- Please also include a call back number so we are able to reach out if clarification is needed.

Teaching and Learning

Reminders & Updates



Tulane Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation (TIKES)

The Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation Program, or TIKES, is an intervention that teams a mental health professional with early childhood professionals, to support and promote the overall well-being of young children in early learning settings:

- These services are at no cost to all Louisiana Type III centers and to Family Child Care Providers who have opted into Academic Approval.
- The services are provided in 6-month consultation cycles at the provider's request.

Tulane Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation (TIKES)

Program-centered services include Tulane Mental Health Consultants providing foundational learning opportunities within classroom settings on the following topics:

- Behavior Guidance
- Age-Appropriate Expectations
- Creating Supportive Environments

In addition, professional feedback can be provided, including specific referral resources for families, as needed. For more information, please contact TIKES@tulane.edu.



School Readiness Tax Credits (SRTCs)

The Department will send email notifications of site star ratings and levels to eligible directors by late October 2024.

Parent School Readiness Tax Credit (SRTC) forms (R-10614) will be mailed to Type III sites and Family Child Care sites with Academic Approval in December 2024.

Once tax forms are received, directors should complete the child care portion and distribute the forms to all eligible parents.



School Readiness Tax Credits (SRTCs)

Director and Staff School Readiness Tax Credit (SRTC) forms (R-10615) will be mailed from Louisiana Pathways beginning in January 2025.

For re-leveling on the Louisiana Pathways Career Ladder, new credentials and certifications should be submitted via e-mail to cowanj@nsula.edu or via mail to Louisiana Pathways before December 31, 2024, at the address below:

Louisiana Pathways Attention: Career Development 1800 Warrington Place Shreveport, LA 71101-4425



School Readiness Tax Credits (SRTCs)

Early childhood educators must have a valid Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate (ECAC) by December 31, 2024, to qualify for certain levels of SRTCs.

- Directors and teachers with an expiring Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate
 must submit a renewal application at least six to eight weeks before expiration,
 via the <u>LDOE Educator Certification Portal</u>.
- Complete initial or renewal applications must be submitted no later than November 1, 2024, to guarantee processing by the processing deadline of December 31, 2024.
- Incomplete applications, or those submitted after December 1, may not be processed by the Certification team before the deadline and thus may not qualify for re-leveling and a potential increase in SRTCs for tax year 2024.

October 1 Child Count

Per Bulletin 140, Community Network Lead Agencies (CNLAs) and publicly-funded sites are required to count publicly-funded children served at each of those sites as of October 1 and submit to the LDOE by October 31.

CNLAs will work with each publicly-funded early learning site in capturing accurate data as of October 1, 2024:

- Child count is intended to count every publicly-funded child birth through age four at each publicly-funded site in the state.
- Child count is intended to be an unduplicated count: Only count children under one funding source.



October 1 Child Count

- Sites should count the age of the child as of **September 30, 2024**, not based on the age configuration of the classroom.
- Full-time children enrolled during the "regular" learning day are included in child count. Part-time children are not included in child count.
- Full-time children attending a Family Child Care (FCC) should be included in child count if the provider is participating in accountability and maintains a certificate of Academic Approval.
- To assist in verifying child data, it is recommended that sites maintain a copy of classroom rosters based on October 1 enrollment.

TS GOLD® Checkpoint Completion

- The Fall TS GOLD® checkpoint is October 31, 2024.
- This assessment process is mandated through program assurances and included within Bulletin 140:
 - "Sites ensure all required information for classrooms containing children from birth to five years is entered in the GOLD® online system. Additionally, all child assessment results for publicly-funded infants, toddlers, and pre-K children must be entered and checkpoints finalized by October 31, February 28. and May 31."
- Completion rates should be monitored throughout the year and completed at the site level during these checkpoint times.



2024 Early Childhood Conferences







2024 Early Childhood Conference Certificates

In October the LDOE will provide 2024 Early Childhood Conference training certificates and presentation materials to educators who attend either conference date:

- The Shreveport Early Childhood Conference participants will receive training certificates and presentation materials by October 1, 2024.
- The Baton Rouge Early Childhood Conference participants can expect training certificates and presentation materials by October 25, 2024.



Early Childhood Teacher and Leader of the Year Award Program

The Louisiana Department of Education, in partnership with <u>Dream Teachers</u>, recognizes and celebrates some of the state's most exceptional educators through the Early Childhood Teacher and Leader of the Year programs:

These programs provide an opportunity to acknowledge those teachers and leaders who are making exceptional gains with Louisiana's youngest learners.

The nomination portal for the Early Childhood Teacher and Leader of the Year Award Program for the 2026 award year opened on **September 3, 2024,** and will close on **October 10, 2024**.

- The nomination survey (which will take less than 5 minutes to complete) can be accessed via the Nomination Form.
- Please review the <u>Awards Programs</u> page for more information on this award program.





Farm to ECE

Haley Holeton, New Orleans Food Policy Action Council



FARM TO EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION (ECE)

NEW ORLEANS FOOD POLICY ACTION COUNCIL





WHAT IS FARM TO ECE?

Farm to Early Childhood Education (ECE) is a movement to increase healthy and sustainable dietary practices during early childcare years (0-5yrs) by providing access to healthy food options and nutritional education to Head Start and early childhood centers.

YOU MAY ALREADY BE DOING FARM TO ECE

- Do you encourage students to try new fruits or vegetables?
- Do you talk about fruits and vegetables as a class and learn a bit about them?
- Do you use pretend food for play in the classroom?
- Have you planted seeds in a cup or pot and watched them grow?
- Have you used local produce in your classroom? (Popular seasonal items for Louisiana include strawberries, satsumas, greens, etc.)
- Do you have a school garden?
- Do you play with dirt and talk about seeds?

GROWING FARM TO ECE

Farm to ECE does not have to be a daunting experience. As you saw on the last slide, there are many small ways you may already be participating or can begin! There are also more tools you can utilize to build your program.

- Enrichment Activities
- Seeds to Success
- Build a small or large school garden
- Start small by picking one activity per month

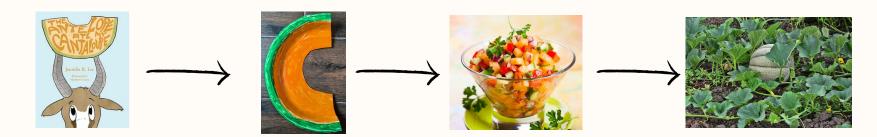


HOW TO USE ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES

You can utilize enrichment activities in your classroom. The great thing about these activities is that you can modify them to your classroom's individual needs.

Here's what we recommend:

Each month, pick a fruit or vegetable to focus on. Then, choose one activity that you would like to do with your class. We recommend starting out with something small like reading a book about a fruit or vegetable. If you have the capacity to choose more activities, we recommend doing a craft or classroom activity, and a taste test! If you have the gardening space, you can also plant the seeds of the fruit or vegetable.



HOW TO BUILD A GARDEN

Start big or small! Gardening does not have to be cumbersome.

How to Start Small:

- Start a windowsill garden in your classroom in small containers that contain easy to grow herbs
- Start in pots around your outside your play area

How to Start Big:

- If you have a large space for a garden, we recommend using metal garden beds for longevity. We use "Vego" brand.
- Plant vegetables or fruits in your garden from either seeds or starts.

Resources and Suggestions

- LSU Ag Center for gardening tips
- Appoint someone from your center to maintain the garden
- Buy local dirt or compost if you can. We use Schmelly's Dirt Farm when we can.
- Buy local plant starts. We shop with Too Tall Farms, Harold's, and Urban Roots.



GARDENS IN ACTION





GARDENS IN ACTION









GARDENS IN ACTION





LOCAL PROCUREMENT

How to incorporate local procurement:

- Substituting local food in your menu items is a great way to participate in Farm to ECE.
 - For example, if you have a recipe that calls for sweet potatoes, consider buying local sweet potatoes and using that in the recipe. Or make an easy snack switch- satsumas instead of apples are easy to eat and easy to find in stores.
- Trying a new recipe that focuses on a new fruit or vegetable per month
- Ordering local food for classroom taste tests.
 - For example, we have done a strawberry s'mores taste test that involves graham crackers, yogurt, and a strawberry. We ordered strawberries from our local farmer.

How to buy locally?

- Look for Locally Grown stickers or signage where you already shop, or hit the farmers market. Many grocery stores or distributors have local food.
- Here in New Orleans, we have partnered with Sprout, an organization that has a lot of farmer connections.
 We then are connected with farmers and can order produce from them. There are also local distributors such as JV Foods and LA Fresh.

SUMMARY

Farm to ECE is something that can be continually built upon.
You do not have to do *all of the things* to be participating at your center or school. Start small, and do what feels good for your classroom.

- Aim for at least one Farm to ECE related activity per month
- Sign up for Seeds to Success on their website
- Sign up for enrichment activities (email Haley)

HOW TO GET INVOLVED

- Download the NEW Farm to ECE Enrichment Guide (https://www.nolafoodpolicy.org/farm-to-ece)
- Join the Louisiana Farm to ECE Work Group (email elisa@nolafoodpolicy.org)
- Are you a Baton Rouge center interested in local procurement?
 (https://forms.gle/fXWAFzSuEmgTBxad9)

CONTACT INFORMATION

THANK YOU!

Haley Holeton

Program Manager

New Orleans Food Policy Action Council

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Upcoming Events



Upcoming Events

The LDOE team holds new director webinars that focus on topics related to early childhood quality or operations while also helping to expand new directors' network of peers.

This month's topic is "An Introduction to the Tulane Mental Health Consultation Services" Program." Participants will learn the purpose and methods of Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation, including promoting healthy development, supporting caregivers in fostering this development, and addressing challenging behaviors or mental health concerns of young children.

Attendees can access the webinar using the information below:

Webinar Date/Time: October 25, 2024 at 12:00 p.m.

Webinar Link: https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/92298578944

Phone Number: 1-346-248-7799 922 9857 8944 **Meeting ID:**



Upcoming Events

The Department hosts monthly webinars for early childhood providers. These webinars include important reminders and updates for all provider types.

Providers can access the next provider webinar using the information below:

• Webinar Date/Time: Thursday, November 7, 2024 at 1 p.m.

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Phone Number: 1 470 250 9358

Meeting ID: 915 3298 2014

Passcode: 519100

Provider Webinar Slides

This month's webinar slides will be available early next week on the Louisiana Believes website.





Mellynn Baker, Assistant Superintendent of Early Childhood Care and Education Mellynn.Baker@la.gov

Contact Information

Child Care Licensing

- Call 225-342-9905
- Email <u>ldelicensing@la.gov</u> or email licensing consultants directly

Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP)

- Call 225-250-7635 or 225-614-5917
- Email <u>ldeccap@la.gov</u> or enter a <u>ticket</u> at the Provider Help Desk

Child Care Provider Certification

Email <u>providercertification@la.gov</u>

Child Care Criminal Background Checks (CCCBCs)

 Call 225-342-2716 or 225-342-5311 or email ldeCCCBCBprocessing@la.gov

General Early Childhood Support

Email <u>earlychildhood@la.gov</u>

