

Update from the Department of Early Learning May 2011

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Making sure that children in licensed child care are safe and healthy is a core responsibility for the Department of Early Learning. We work closely with licensed providers around the state to make sure they offer places where children can learn and grow. On May 6, I hope you will take a moment to share your appreciation with a provider in your life. You can find the Governor's proclamation for Child Care Provider Appreciation Day along with a list of local events hosted by our partners at the Washington State Child Care Resource & Referral Network, online here: www.del.wa.gov/resources/calendar.aspx



I had the pleasure of visiting a child care in Lacey just last week, where the grandchild of one of our DEL team members attends. It was a facility filled with fun, laughter and plenty of chances to run, jump and make messes--just what we want for all children in our state! I thank the more than 7,400 licensed providers in Washington for all you do for children.



Governor Gregoire signs DEL agency request legislation (Senate Bill 5389) changing the statute around the Early Learning Advisory Council membership, on April 27, 2011. From left: Sen. Rosemary McAuliffe, D-Bothell, Governor Chris Gregoire, DEL Director Bette Hyde, Rep. Roger Goodman, D-Kirkland.

The 2011 Legislature adjourned on April 22, followed by the beginning of a special session to finalize a 2011-2013 operating budget. Even as the House and Senate continue this work, Governor Chris Gregoire is considering bills sent to her for signature. Already, she has signed Senate Bill 5172, which allows employees of certain facilities to use drop-in child care up to two hours per day while they're working on-site. The Governor also has signed SB 5389, which changes the membership of the Early Learning Advisory Council so that we can use a \$1.7 million federal State Advisory Council grant.

We will post a full legislative session wrap-up once the budget is complete and the Governor has considered all early learning related bills.

—Bette Hyde, Director



Last month, Thrive by Five Washington kicked off the statewide awareness campaign "Love, Talk, Play" that helps parents of babies and toddlers understand three simple actions they can take to give their child a great start in life. DEL is proud to be a sponsor of this simple, effective way of supporting parents! Find out more at www.lovetalkplay.org

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Proposed new family home child care rules filed April 20

Filing culminates four and half years of work by many people around the state

DEL filed proposed family home child care rules on April 20, 2011 after an intensive and collaborative negotiated rule making process. In general, the proposed rules:



- Increase licensee and staff education, and training standards.
- Enhance standards for playground safety, food service, cribs, emergency preparedness, nurture and guidance, and “screen-time.”
- Reduces licensee paperwork to renew licenses.
- Are less prescriptive regarding how the licensee meets standards.
- Clarify confusing fire escape provisions in the current rules.
- Require a higher level of licensee-parent communication regarding the child’s development and the licensee’s child care philosophy.
- Provide more clarity for consistency in interpretation and application than the current family home child care rules.

To view the full text of the rules and a list of public hearings in June, visit www.del.wa.gov/laws/development/negotiated.aspx

Communities selected for first year of federal home visiting grant

Four-step process used for selection; additional funding available over course of grant

DEL, in partnership with the Department of Health, Department of Social and Health Services, and the Council for Children and Families, has selected four communities and two evidence-based home visiting models for funding in the first year of a five-year federal grant through the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program. Home visiting matches parents with trained professionals (or paraprofessionals) to provide information and support related to children’s healthy development, to strengthen the parent-child relationship and to promote early learning

The communities and home visiting models are:

Pierce County: County Council Districts: 2, 4, 5 and 6	Nurse Family Partnership	\$145,000
Snohomish County: North Everett	Nurse Family Partnership	\$123,000
Yakima County	Nurse Family Partnership	\$63,000
Yakima County	Parents as Teachers	\$71,000
South King County	Nurse Family Partnership	\$250,000

This federal funding opportunity builds Washington’s capacity to implement a key strategy in our state’s Early Learning Plan to make home visiting available to at-risk families. Washington can receive \$1.3 million in federal grant funds from October 2010-September 2012 for home visiting services.

For more information about the selection process and state home visiting plan, visit: www.del.wa.gov/development/visiting/

DEL holds hearings on draft CCDF plan

DEL is seeking public input on the state's two-year plan for the federal Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF), which helps promote accessible, affordable, quality child care around the state. DEL serves as the lead CCDF agency for the state, and must submit a plan every two years describing how the state will spend its federal child care dollars. CCDF funding is used to:

- Help low-income families find and pay for child care.
- Fund activities to improve the quality of child care.
- Fund child care resource and referral services for parents and caregivers.
- Provide training for child care providers.

Many activities in the plan are federal or state requirements. About 70 percent of CCDF federal dollars provide the funding to help low-income families pay for child care. DEL will post a draft CCDF plan online this month at www.del.wa.gov/government/CCDF/ and will hold two public hearings.

- May 9 from 4 to 7 p.m. in the Tahoma Room
Children's Administration and DEL offices in Kent
1313 W Meeker Street Suite 102
- May 11 from 4 to 7 p.m. in the ATEC Mastro Conference Center
Big Bend Community College in Moses Lake
7611 Bolling Street NE

DEL will also host an online webinar on May 12 from 5 to 7 p.m. where we will also accept comments about the draft plan. Visit DEL's CCDF webpage to learn more about the webinar.

DEL also filed rule changes for the Seasonal Child Care program last month, including having Department of Social and Health Services determine eligibility for the program, changing copayment amounts for some families, and enrollment caps on how many families the program is able to serve each year. Seasonal hearings are May 12 in Anacortes and May 14 in Yakima. For more information, visit www.del.wa.gov/laws/development/seasonal.aspx

State preschool program earns nine out of 10 quality points

More than 8,000 3- and 4-year-olds being served in ECEAP this school year

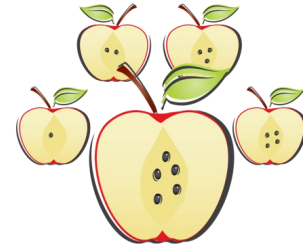
Once again, Washington's publicly funded preschool program ranks among the top in the nation, according to the National Institute for Early Education Research. Our state's Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP) earned nine out of 10 quality points in the national organization's 2010 Preschool Yearbook, released April 25. The quality checklist ranks several standards, including:

- Whether the state has comprehensive early learning standards.
- Staff-to-child ratios
- Class sizes
- Teacher qualifications
- Screening/referral and support services
- Program monitoring

Read the report at <http://nieer.org/yearbook/states/>

Seeds to Success field test near end; DEL prepares to expand statewide

On June 30, the field test will end for Seeds to Success, our state's quality rating and improvement system (QRIS) and DEL will begin moving toward statewide expansion.



DEL partnered with Thrive by Five Washington to conduct the field test in five communities (Thrive demonstration communities of East Yakima, White Center, and Spokane, Clark and Kitsap counties). Working with the communities, Thrive, and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, we've developed and tested quality standards, evaluated incentives and supports for child care providers, and created a nationally recognized program that has served about 3,000 children and 90 child care providers statewide. We have learned a great deal about what works and what can be improved to better support child care providers in creating quality environments.

In recognition of their work to ensure high-quality learning environments for Washington's children, eligible field test participants will have the opportunity to continue with the program. They will become early adopters of the final QRIS model and continue to receive training and support to improve child care. Application criteria for early adopters will be available in May.

DEL is committed to expanding Seeds statewide. After June 30, we will have the final data to refine the quality standards and begin building the technology, policies and systemwide training necessary to expand to more communities. This work will take time, and DEL does not anticipate inviting new child care centers and family homes to participate until next year.

UW seeks children for autism sibling research projects

DEL is sharing this information on behalf of the University of Washington Autism Center

The University of Washington Autism Center is seeking families to participate in its Baby Sibling Research projects. Families with a child diagnosed with an autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and a younger biological sibling may be eligible to participate in one of the studies below. Typically developing siblings may also be eligible to participate. Parents will receive feedback regarding their child's development and will be compensated for their time.

Early Detection Study: UW Autism Center researchers are examining whether a commonly used autism screening tool works well for young children who have an older sibling with an ASD. Participation involves completion of mailed questionnaires and phone interviews for parents when their infant is 16, 24, and 36 months of age. Parents may also be asked to bring their children to the UW Autism Center for up to two comprehensive evaluations.

Social Development Study: The purpose of this study is to understand the social and communication development of infants who have an older sibling with an ASD. We assess the growth of social and communicative skills at several time points, starting at 6 months and ending at 36 months of age. Participation involves the completion of questionnaires as well as several visits to the UW Autism Center. During these visits, children's social and communicative skills are assessed as they play and interact with parents, and with a trained researcher. For some visits, we will measure children's brain waves as they view pictures by placing soft sensors on the child's head.

Infant Brain Imaging Study: The purpose of this study is to learn more about very early signs of autism and brain development in young siblings of children with an ASD. Participation involves completing questionnaires, phone interviews and bringing their younger child to assessment visits at the UW Autism Center at 6, 12, 24, and 36 months of age. Parents will also be asked to bring their child to Seattle Children's Hospital for an MRI scan at each age point. Developmental evaluations of the younger child along with a detailed clinical report will be completed at each visit.

Contact UW at 1.877.408.UWAC, uwautism@uw.edu or <http://depts.washington.edu/uwautism>

WaKIDS survey of child care providers underway until May 4

Weekly prizes awarded to one participant

Our state is piloting a kindergarten readiness assessment process called the Washington Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills, or WaKIDS. This statewide project is focused on learning more about Washington's incoming kindergartners, including the transition from early learning to kindergarten.

Child care providers and preschool teachers are invited to participate in an online survey to help inform the work. The survey is open until Wednesday, May 4. Each week, one \$150 Amazon.com gift card will be awarded to a provider who completes the questionnaire at www.surveymonkey.com/s/WaKIDS_ELPsurvey

WaKIDS is a collaboration between DEL, the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, Thrive by Five Washington, and the University of Washington.

New immunization requirements

Effective July 1, 2011, the Department of Health has updated their immunization requirements for 2011-2012. For more information or questions, visit www.doh.wa.gov/cfh/Immunize/default.htm.

If you have five minutes...

- Kids can't concentrate on learning when their teeth hurt. Preschoolers in the state-funded preschool program ECEAP were among those surveyed for the new Smile Survey:

www.king5.com/health/Kids-dental-health-smile-report--120778874.html



DEL Director Bette Hyde met with the Southeast Seattle Child Care Directors Consortium where they discussed the impact of cuts to the Working Connections Child Care program and the partnerships with DEL licensing staff.

Upcoming early learning events...

May 4-6 — Infant and Early Childhood Conference in Tacoma, www.ieccwa.org

May 16-18 — Trainer & Educator Conference 2011 in Lake Chelan, www.educationaltrainingpartners.org

August 11-12 — Starting Strong Conference in Spokane, www.esd101.net/startingstrong



For more events, visit www.del.wa.gov/resources/calendar.aspx