

R E A C H

a monthly e-newsletter for Delaware's early childhood and school age programs



SEPTEMBER 2020



You're here for Delaware's children and families.
We're here for YOU!



**SUPPORTING OUR
COMMUNITIES TOGETHER**
through COVID-19

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

It's September, which means "Back to School" – and most of us have never experienced a back to school season like September 2020. This particular September may be more challenging than most for our early childhood community. Many of you are continuing to adapt health and safety procedures, developing new plans to serve school-age children, and caring for your children and families.

Here at DIEEC, we want to express our gratitude for your continuing efforts and persistence to create and sustain high-quality learning environments for young children and supports for their families.

Eleanor Roosevelt once said, "We do not have to become heroes overnight. Just a step at a time, meeting each thing that comes up, seeing it is not as dreadful as it appeared, discovering we have the strength to stare it down." As the early childhood community continues to evolve and adapt daily to the changes resulting from the pandemic, we see your strength in meeting these new challenges.

We also strive to provide sources of information and support as you navigate this back to school season. We continue to offer remote Communities of Practice (CoPs) sessions weekly through the Delaware Stars program. These sessions, open to all licensed programs and professionals, provide an opportunity to connect with others who face similar challenges. Through our professional development system, DIEEC is offering "Mindfulness a Resilience Practice," and "Stress and Resilience: Building Core Capabilities."

We are also open to developing new responsive strategies to meet your needs. Please email us at institute-early-childhood@udel.edu to give your ideas about how we, as an institute, can better serve you.

With gratitude,
Rena Hallam, Director DIEEC



STARTING THE SCHOOL YEAR

A fully updated, comprehensive look at what Delaware school districts across the state are planning.

To stay fully up-to-date on back to school plans from districts across the state, click the link below.

[List of District Plans](#)

Additional Website Resources & Updates

[Delaware's Child Care and COVID - 19 Site](https://coronavirus.delaware.gov/child-care/phase-2/)

[DIEEC COVID-19 Resource Page](https://bit.ly/2GrwzGn)

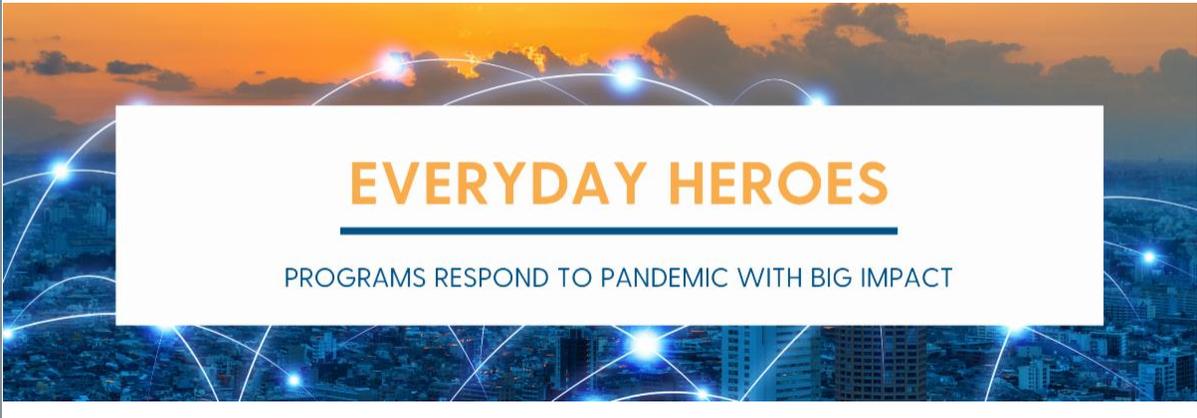
[Blueprint for Reopening Child Care Safely Page](https://www.delawarestars.udel.edu/blueprint-for-reopening/)

New Supplemental Curriculum Available

A new supplemental science curriculum has been added to Delaware's list. Science Start! offers research-based preschool curriculum, lesson plans and activities that use children's curiosity to support learning language, literacy, mathematics and science.

Supplemental Curriculum is attached to this publication or

Click [here](#) for more information.



EVERYDAY HEROES

PROGRAMS RESPOND TO PANDEMIC WITH BIG IMPACT

Lovebug Lane Learning Academy: A Lesson Plan in Resiliency

Early care and education programs continue to define resiliency in their efforts to serve young children by adapting to the evolving health and safety requirements to stop the spread of COVID-19.

Lovebug Lane Learning Academy is no exception. Located in Wilmington, this family child care program not only operated as an emergency child care site, it transitioned to a large family child care program (LFCC) to accommodate expanding families, all of whom are essential personnel.

"We are very committed to our clients and know that they are relying on me to be open during a very scary time in our lives," said Tressa Clemow, program owner.

Tressa was planning to expand her program when two of her families shared they were growing their families. Tressa had no idea COVID-19 would be a part of the plan. In addition to adapting to safety and health requirements, Tressa now had to hire an assistant to increase her capacity.

"Tressa really put thought into who to hire," said Amanda Mackey, Delaware Stars technical assistant (TA). "She wanted to make sure this person was going to complement the way she runs her business. Tressa also utilized insight from a fellow LFCC provider, Jewel Spears, to learn more about this new business type."

Relying on other early childhood professionals and her Stars TA are a few of the ways Tressa is getting support during these challenging times. Tressa participates in Stars Communities of Practice (COPs), an exchange facilitated by TAs, where early childhood professionals share ideas to support and learn from each other.

One idea that has worked well for the children attending her program is switching learning to the outside.

"They really get into their 'work' when we are outside," adds Tressa. "We spend most of our day outside, depending on the weather. Our outdoor play consists of water tables, at least 15 feet apart, dinosaur towers, fairy houses, fairy gardens, and several climbing structures. We paint with spray bottles, fly swatters, pipe cleaners, and then tape it (the art) to our fence to dry."

Operating with the safety and health requirements requires creativity and intention –two of Tressa's characteristics. Amanda concurs.

"Tressa runs her program on information and love," said Amanda. "She is dedicated to doing what is best for the children and families in her program. Tressa values both social/emotional and academic learning equally. It shows in her interactions, the materials she provides for children to interact with, her thoughtful planning, daily communication with families, and more."

In turn, Tressa can't say enough about her relationship with her Stars TA.

"Amanda had been a godsend," said Tressa. "She has been my cheerleader, helped

guide me through hiring staff members, and tells me about the grant money offered during this time of financial stress."



COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE

HEALTH & WELLNESS

**Need Support?
Join a Community of Practice**

**Take Care of You
Practice Mindfulness**

With back to school looking very different this year, child care and education

"Self-care is never a selfish act—it is simply good stewardship of the only gift

programs are called upon to meet school-age children's needs in unique ways. Whether children are going back to a virtual experience or a hybrid in the fall, early childhood professionals are developing innovative strategies to host children and help them in these virtual experiences.

To support programs with these challenges, Delaware Stars Technical Assistants (TAs) put together seven new Communities of Practice (CoPs). A CoP is a group of professionals who share a concern or a passion for an issue. By participating in a CoP, early childhood professionals learn how to improve their practice as they regularly interact while sharing ideas and solutions.

All center-based and family child care programs (those in Stars as well as non-Stars) now have access to school CoPs to address the challenges of preparing and implementing virtual learning supports within their early care and education setting. After each session, shared ideas are added to a document to facilitate collective learning from the other groups. Please review this [document](#) if you are interested in getting an idea of some of the concerns and ideas.

There are also several other CoP groups available. The center-based child care programs have been hosting Pandemic Empowerment CoPs since the spring.

Keep in mind that topics are responsive to issues impacting early childhood. For example, a family child care CoP took a break from the pandemic in the week following the string of powerful storms. Instead, the discussion focused on how emergency plans worked in real time and what upgrades were necessary.

If you are interested in attending any of these CoPs, contact Jen Potts at atjpotts@udel.edu (Center-based Program Manager) or Kristy Smith at

I have, the gift I was put on earth to offer to others."

Parker Palmer

The demands of caring for and educating young children during "normal" times are enormous. Now, amid a pandemic, early childhood professionals are tasked with even more responsibilities.

To survive and even thrive during these challenging times, it's essential to take care of yourself. Practicing mindfulness can help. Mindfulness means maintaining a moment-by-moment awareness of our thoughts, feelings, bodily sensations, and the surrounding environment without judgment.

Mindfulness practices can help us increase our ability to regulate emotions and decrease stress, anxiety, and depression.

To support you with this practice, Kyma Fulgence-Belardo, Infant/Toddler Specialty Technical Assistant, created "Mindfulness Breaks," a newsletter that includes helpful tips and resources for incorporating moments for yourself throughout your day.

The August news letter is attached to this publication or ...

[Please click here for the August newsletter.](#)

kcsmith@udel.edu(Specialty Program Manager).



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Instructor Spotlight: Introducing Jessica DeWese

Jessica DeWese joined DIEEC in March as the program's newest professional development coordinator. Unfortunately, she didn't have the opportunity to instruct in an in-person learning environment because of the pandemic, but many of you have met her virtually. We are thrilled to have her as a part of our team and wanted to formally introduce her to the early childhood community.

With over twenty years of work in the early care and education field, Jessica has served as teacher, coach, and advocate. Some of her previous roles include assistant director, prekindergarten teacher, and instructional coach. Much of her work with school-age students has focused on early literacy. She has taught various grade levels throughout her career, including prekindergarten and third grade, locally and in Texas.

In addition to her passion for education, Jessica loves spending time outdoors and enjoys cooking - these two hobbies have made a wonderful marriage in her backyard vegetable garden that she cultivated and continues to work on with her daughters.

Jessica is excited to join the group of dedicated professionals at DIEEC!

Check out our interview with Jessica below to learn more about the new trainings on resilience, and why they are important.



or click below

[Register Here](#)

Delaware Institute for Excellence in Early Childhood

Delaware Stars for Early Success, website: www.delawarestars.udel.edu

DIEEC Professional Development, website: www.dieecpd.org

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Excellence in
Early Childhood

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EXAMPLES of Early Childhood Supplemental Curricula for Delaware Stars

This is not meant to be an exhaustive list; programs may utilize other curricula, but must provide evidence of implementation

Supplemental curricula for Delaware Stars programs are those resources that further grow children’s skill mastery in specific domains of the Early Learning Foundations (ELFs) and are referenced in Stars Standard LC2. The use of a supplemental curriculum should be based on the results of children’s learning outcomes that are acquired through the formative assessment process. Selection of supplemental curricula should consider the tool’s correspondence to the Early Learning Foundations, engage children in the active learning process and be in agreement with Delaware’s principles for best practice in curriculum development and implementation.

Below are **some examples** of supplemental curricula that are available for programs’ use in various domains.

Curriculum	Website
Healthy Lifestyles	
SPARK Early Childhood Curriculum	http://www.sparkpe.org/early-childhood/curriculum/
Color Me Healthy	https://colormehealthy.com/order-color-me-healthy.php
Early Sprouts	http://www.earlysprouts.org/
Eat Well Play Hard in Childcare Settings	https://www.health.ny.gov/prevention/nutrition/cacfp/ewphccs.htm
Grow It, Try It, Like It	https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/grow-it
Growing, Moving, Learning Infant Toddler Toolkit	https://www.delawarestars.udel.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Infant-Toddler-Toolkit-Complete-Vols-1-2-3.pdf
Head Start Body Start	http://member.aahperd.org/deltabkup/HeadStartBodyStart/pr09_0603.cfm
Sesame Street: Healthy Habits for Life	http://www.sesamestreet.org/parents/topicsandactivities/toolkits/healthyhabits
EatPlayGrow	http://www.eatplaygrow.org/
Choosy Kids	http://www.choosykids.com/
Active Play!	http://activeplaybooks.com/

Curriculum	Website
Literacy	
The Letter People	https://www.abramslearningtrends.com/products/letter-people
Doors to Discovery	https://www.mheducation.com/prek-12/program/MKTSP-001M0.html?page=1&sortby=title&order=asc&bu=seg
BrightStart!	https://www.kaplanco.com/nemours
Building Language for Literacy	http://teacher.scholastic.com/products/bl/correl.htm
Reading Rockets	http://www.readingrockets.org
Building Early Language and Literacy (BELL)	https://www.voyagersopris.com/literacy/building-early-literacy-and-language-skills/overview
Early Learning Literacy Model	http://www.unf.edu/fie/ellm/
Social Emotional Development	
Preschool PATHS	http://www.channing-bete.com/prevention-programs/paths/paths.html
Incredible Years	http://www.incredibleyears.com/
Conscious Discipline	https://consciousdiscipline.com/
Second Step	http://www.secondstep.org/early-learning-curriculum
Flip It-- Infant Toddler	https://centerforresilientchildren.org/dcrc-shop/flip-it/
DECA Preschool Program	http://www.centerforresilientchildren.org/preschool/
Pyramid Model for Supporting Social Emotional Competence	http://csefel.vanderbilt.edu/

Curriculum	Website
Science	
Big Book Science	https://www.abramslearningtrends.com/products/interactive-big-books-science-buy
Mudpies to Magnets	https://www.gryphonhouse.com/books/details/mudpies_to_magnets
Science—Not Just for Scientists!	https://www.gryphonhouse.com/
Science Discovery	http://products.lakeshorelearning.com/learning/Pre-K-Science-Kits
ECHOS-Early Childhood Hands on Science	http://www.frostscience.org/stem-professionals/echos/order-echos/
Growing Up Wild	https://www.fishwildlife.org/projectwild/growing-wild
ScienceStart!	https://www.sciencestart.com/
Mathematics	
Lakeshore Pre-K Math	https://www.lakeshorelearning.com/search/products/N/3701863734+529632449/page-1/sort-best/num-24/?view=grid&Ntt=pre-k%20math%20curriculum
Every Day in Pre-K Math	https://www.hmhco.com/shop/k12/Every-Day-Counts-in-PreK/9780669495386
Big Book Math	https://www.abramslearningtrends.com/products/interactive-big-books-math
Numbers Plus	https://secure.highscope.org/ecom/productpage/9c0454fe-342c-4774-a3f6-cd8d2c112e22
Building Blocks-PreK	https://www.mheducation.com/prek-12/program/MKTSP-TMB02M0.html
Touch Math	https://www.touchmath.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=prek.welcome
Preschool Mathematics Curriculum	http://www.pearsonschool.com/index.cfm?locator=PSZu6e&PMDbSiteId=2781&PMDbSolutionId=6724&PMDbSubSolutionId=&PMDbCategoryId=806&PMDbSubCategoryId=25742&PMDbSubjectAreaId=&PMDbProgramId=22107

MINDFUL BREAKS



MINDFUL QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"Mindfulness is simply being aware of what is happening right now without wishing it were different; enjoying the pleasant without holding on when it changes (which it will); being with the unpleasant without fearing it will always be this way (which it won' t)."

- James Baraz



SOME BENEFITS OF MINDFUL BREATHING

- **REDUCES STRESS**
- **CALMS THE NERVOUS SYSTEM**
- **CAN INCREASE ENERGY LEVELS**
- **INCREASES OVERALL CARDIOVASCULAR HEALTH**
- **BALANCES EMOTIONAL AND MENTAL STATE**

There are many reported mind and body benefits to mindful breathing. If you are uncomfortable slowing down your breath, begin by focusing on the flow of your breath as it leaves and enters your body. You can slowly build up your mindful breathing to last for longer lengths of time. It is recommended that you start for a few short minutes a day.

Here is a video to get you started! 5 minute breathing space https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2ts_ifDB0eQ

MINDFUL EATING

Here is a resource that informs us about eating mindfully. Young children are naturally mindful eaters. Mindful eating starts with you! This resource can help spark great reflection and dialogue on your own eating habits and relationship with food.

<https://www.zerotothree.org/resources/2736-mindful-eating-for-infants-and-toddlers-start-with-you>

MINDFULNESS APP OF THE MONTH FOR KIDS:

Sleep Meditations for Kids (Free)
(iPhone, iPad)

The perfect app to incorporate into your bedtime routine, Sleep Meditations for Kids has four bedtime stories that are transformed into guided meditations designed to promote relaxation and contentment. Available for iPad, iPhone.

<https://apps.apple.com/us/app/sleep-meditations-for-kids/id549414156>

MINDFULNESS APP OF THE MONTH FOR ADULTS:

[Simple Habit \(Free\)](#)

This app was created to offer stress relief for busy people. Commit just five minutes a day, and you'll enjoy less stress, improved focus, better sleep, and easier breathing. The On-the-Go feature teaches you how to quickly calm your nerves and improve mindfulness, while guided meditations for specific situations and symptoms help you tailor your experience. Learn to meditate with our free Basics pack, a 10-day beginner's course that guides you through the essentials of meditation and mindfulness. It'll give you a solid foundation to build your practice on.

<https://www.simplehabit.com/>