



Dear Early Childhood Professional:

As the year winds down, we want to offer our sincerest wishes for a wonderful holiday season. We made it through a full year of living and working in a pandemic because of your dedication to keeping our children safe and healthy.

We know that operating during these challenging times has required flexibility, responsiveness, and innovation, often resulting in the need for additional resources. To this end, if you haven't already done so, be sure to apply for grants through the Delaware Early Education & Child Care Stabilization Fund. The deadline is Thursday, December 23. There are more details about the Fund included in this issue.

As another reminder, now is the time to enroll in healthcare coverage through Healthcare Insurance Marketplace. The deadline is December 15. Check out the included article to learn more.

In this issue's "Voices from the Field," we've featured a family child care professional who has also discovered the benefits of teaching outdoors. Be sure to check out the article on Clarise Brooks and her program "The Kids Zone Child Care."

And finally, the word "thank you" often doesn't seem enough to express gratitude, so our team tried to convey our thanks through different creative videos. They were featured on our social media platforms, but we included each one in this issue in case you missed them.

Rena Hallam  
DIEEC Director



## Voices from the Field: In the "Zone" in the Outdoor Classroom

On a misty, cloudy day, Clarise Brooks runs her classroom with a field backdrop and children sitting on tree stumps. Her classroom is outside, and she and her students couldn't be happier.

For close to 30 years, Clarise has run a family child care program, "The Kids Zone Child Care," located in Middletown, Del. And now, through the support of DIEEC and the "Let's Go Outside" grant, Clarise is spending her days in an outdoor classroom - in all kinds of weather.

Read More Here <https://bit.ly/3GkHpgR>

**Delaware Early Education and  
Child Care Stabilization Fund**  
**Application Deadline - December 23, 2021**

## Stabilization Fund Deadline Fast-Approaching: Apply Today!

Have you applied for the Delaware Early Education & Child Care Stabilization Fund? There is still time! Applications are open through Thursday, December 23rd. Applications accessed here:

- family child care application <https://bit.ly/3yOLDRA>
- center-based application <https://bit.ly/3IIBQdX>

If you have any questions contact the Stabilization Fund Technical Assistants at: 1-877-351-2841 or by email at [StabilizationFund@udel.edu](mailto:StabilizationFund@udel.edu). For FAQs and general information visit the Stabilization Fund landing page <https://bit.ly/3psEplC>

***Please note that when planning and spending the Stabilization grants, programs are still accountable to OCCL regulations.***

## HealthCare Marketplace

### Enroll by December 15



This year, health insurance coverage is more affordable and accessible than ever through the Health Insurance Marketplace®.

Apply for the first time, renew, or change your plan for 2022, between Monday, November 1 and Wednesday, December 15, 2021 for coverage that starts January 1, 2022. Enrollment ends January 15, 2022.

If you choose to buy a health plan through the Marketplace, you may qualify for help paying for health coverage, even if you weren't eligible for help in the past.

For more information and questions check out these two resources:

- HealthCare.gov FAQ for EC Professionals <https://bit.ly/3owVTot>
- Healthcare.gov <https://www.healthcare.gov/>

## Thank You Notes to Early Childhood Professionals

November and Thanksgiving marked the beginning of holiday celebrations. Here at DIEEC, we love this time of year because it gives us another opportunity to recognize you, the early childhood professional.

During November, our social media featured video "thank you note" messages from various staff members. We wanted to make sure you saw them as we wrap up the year. There are not enough words to express to our gratitude, but we gave it a try.

DIEEC Program Coordinator - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hWC1Dxm6HA4>

DIEEC Research & Evaluation - [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-XziQBEh\\_h4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-XziQBEh_h4)

DIEEC Professional Development - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uPkVJtlxaLs>

DIEEC Stars Director - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CZJwAWbtLmk>

DIEEC Communication & Outreach - [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gydhZx\\_ywZA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gydhZx_ywZA)

DIEEC Technical Assistants - [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1YIFN\\_JH\\_74](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1YIFN_JH_74)

## DIEEC Welcomes New Staff

We are excited to share that five new staff members joined DIEEC's team this fall. Please welcome Kim Cruz, Holly Griest, Angie Riley, Kelly Reuter, and Alison Keough. Additionally, two of our current staff members - Molly VanSickle and Jessica Cheyney-Morgan - have changed roles within the Institute. Both Molly and Jessica are transitioning to work as professional development coordinators.

Holly, Kelly, Kim, and Alison will provide technical assistance support while Angie will serve as professional development coordinator. Each team member brings years of experience in early childhood education.

Please join us in welcoming them! We encourage you to reach out to us for technical assistance, professional development, and coaching supports.



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