

# PROVIDER NEWS

December 2021



## PROVIDER RESOURCES

Contact our office for assistance with any of the following resources:

- Virtual Training Opportunities
- Professional Development Funds
- Credential Assistance
- Quality Improvement Funds
- ExceleRate Illinois Consulting
- Technical Assistance
- Referral Database

Office hours are 8:00am – 4:30pm  
815-484-9442

## SUPPORTING PARENTS AND KEEPING THEM ENGAGED

As many programs are still not able to have parents enter their programs physically; how can parents still engage with your program?

Many parents want to know what their child is doing during their time in care. When they are not able to enter a program, they may feel more left out of what is happening for their child. There are many ways that you can interact with your families virtually. However, there may still be a struggle that some families are unable to participate in virtual activities. The need for confidentiality also arises in sharing with families virtually. There may even be an added expense to create printable ways to share with your families what is happening in your programs.

Here are a few ideas that may help engage families in their child's development and learning.

Present opportunities for families to share what is happening at home as well as in the classroom through classroom sites.

- Share photos of art work. Families can share art they have created with items they have at home. (drawings, tp rolls, empty containers, etc.)
- Photos in the classroom or families reading or working together.
- STEAM activities are great to experience. You may even show a developing plant or garden in your classroom or send seeds home in a baggy so they can see the roots grow and later send a cup with potting soil so they can plant it and watch it grow. Sharing photos throughout on the classroom site.
- Sharing a printed newsletter monthly or bi-monthly may also be a way to share with families that may not have access to necessary technology.

There are many different child care management systems software that may also work that have a parent portal so you are only communicating directly about their child. If they submit general pictures of their child's artwork or projects you may put those pictures on your social media or with permission post family photos they submit without their names. This software may have a fee to purchase but these costs would be a business expense you could include in your tax deductions.

Engaging parents also means supporting them in their journey. Helping them focus on love and kindness rather than fear and frustration. The U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Administration of Young Children & Families has downloadable messages that can be used on Facebook or Twitter that can show families that you care and are there for them through their struggles. You can find them at <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/family-support-well-being/article/supporting-families-uncertain-times-social-media-messages>.

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# YWCA IS ON A MISSION



*Our office will be closed to observe  
the Christmas Holiday  
December 25<sup>th</sup> through 31<sup>st</sup>*

### WISHING WAND NEW YEAR'S CRAFT

**Items needed:** cardstock, contact paper, scissors, assorted sequins/confetti/jewels, marker, a stick/dowel/pencil, ribbon or wired garland (optional)

First cut out your star. (See [www.capturingparenthood.com](http://www.capturingparenthood.com) for instructions). Write goals and/or wishes on both sides of the border of the star. Place the star on the sticky side of your contact paper and trim any excess. Place on a flat surface. Decorate with sequins/confetti on the contact paper. After arranging your sequins/confetti/jewels place your stick/dowel/pencil at the base of the star. Place another piece of contact paper, sticky side down, on top of the star to enclose the decorations and secure your stick/dowel/pencil. Trim any excess contact paper from the sides of the star. You may choose to also add a ribbon or wire garland to your handle.



## **Director's Dialogue and Dinner & Learn Meetings are Back!!**

**Director's Dialogue** is open to center directors to have discussions on program obstacles and struggles.

**Dinner & Learn** is open to any licensed provider (family childcare or centers) to have open discussion regarding special topics or concerns.

*It is our hope that though these discussions  
we can find ways to support each other and help  
build each other up.*

## *We want to know what you think about the Provider Newsletter?*

*We value your feedback and want to extend a gift to the first provider that responds with a topic for next month's newsletter, an organizational tip, or a photo of a child's STEM project.*

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