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News from Rhode Island Child Care and Early Learning Facilities Fund



April eNEWS

When the Weather Breaks, So Does the Ground!



The Children's Workshop – Rumford



Newport County YMCA



Genesis Center

The capital projects that were funded in our Waves 4 and 5 Race to the Top Early Learning Facilities Grants are under construction! During the cold winter months many centers were in “pre-construction” mode – finalizing design, obtaining bids, negotiating contracts, and coordinating schedules. But now that the weather is clear the real fun can begin. Just take a look at these projects going on at The Children’s Workshop in Rumford, the Genesis Center in Providence, and the Newport County YMCA in Newport. In addition to utilizing these Facility Grants, they have been able to contribute a substantial portion of the project cost on their own. We can’t wait to see some of the new spaces created with the help of these grant funds!

Plans, Plans, and More Plans!

In 2015, utilizing Race to the Top Early Challenge Grant Funding, we were able to offer grants to 60 total centers to allow them to have audits conducted on their playgrounds by independent, certified playground safety inspectors and to have corresponding correction plans developed. The information found on a plan can be so valuable to help organize ideas and concepts. Plans turn ideas into concrete action steps and are the first and most fundamental step in any successful project. Good plans can also be used for fundraising! We are excited to see many centers moving forward and taking steps to turn these plans into reality! We thought we would share some of these inspirational designs and we hope that they might motivate you to take a more careful and creative look at your outdoor space!



View Slideshow

Jumpstart Your Planting!

Are you looking to add some natural elements to your outdoor space but are on a limited budget? If you become a member of the Arbor Day Foundation (at a cost of \$10) you will receive 10 trees that will grow well in your region. You can plant them with your students and watch them grow over the years. Added bonus? As they continue to grow they will become a great source of shade from the sun.



Learn More

Risky Outdoor Play and the Impact on Children's Health

"New research from University of British Columbia and the Child & Family Research Institute at British Columbia Children's Hospital shows that risky outdoor play is not only good for children's health but also encourages creativity, social skills and resilience.

The findings, published in the International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health, found that children who participated in physical activity such as climbing and jumping, rough and tumble play and exploring alone, displayed greater physical and social health."



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Is Your Mulch the Right Kind of Safety Surface?

This is about the time of year that centers start replacing their playground mulch – but are they installing the right kind mulch? Compliant safety surfacing for playgrounds needs to meet the Consumer Product Safety Commission's standards for safe fall zones as well as the American with Disabilities Act (ADA). Appropriate playground mulch is also known as Engineered Wood Fiber (EWF) and is **not like regular landscape mulch**. EWF is hardwood that is shredded to specific dimensions to meet a higher fall height as outlined in the American Standards for Testing and Materials (ASTM) F1292 as well as ADA requirements as outlined in ASTM F1951. It can be installed by a local landscape contractor or site work contractor. Distributers can often recommend an installer, or even have their own in house people to install the surfacing at an added cost.



To verify that you have compliant mulch, ask your installer for the appropriate certificate attesting to compliance with ASTM F1292 for fall height and ASTM F1951 for accessibility. It should look similar to the image above.

[The Quality Space by Design section in our Resource Library has been updated. Be sure to check it out here!](#)

About RICCELFF

The Rhode Island Child Care and Early Learning Facilities Fund (RICCELFF) is an innovative public-private partnership dedicated to expanding access to quality child care and early education opportunities throughout Rhode Island. The RICCELFF provides the capital and technical expertise that child care and early learning centers need to improve the quality and capacity of their physical space. The RICCELFF provides a combination of training, technical assistance, grant funding and flexible, affordable financing for a wide range of indoor and outdoor projects including minor renovations or construction of new, state-of-the-art facilities and playground spaces. [Click here](#) to learn more about what the RICCELFF can offer your program.

LISC Rhode Island Child Care & Early Learning Facilities Fund | 146 Clifford Street
Providence, RI 02903 | riccelff@lisc.org | riccelff.org

