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News from the Rhode Island Child Care and Early Learning Facilities Fund



April 2018 eNEWS

Update on Our Outdoor Play Interventions Program

Five child care programs have been selected through a competitive request for proposals to participate in our second year of Outdoor Play Interventions, a program focusing on increasing play value with small investments, volunteers, and thoughtful design. Site visits are currently underway with the design team and ideas are starting to flow. We are excited to introduce the following participants at their “before” stage and hope you continue to follow the project throughout the year:

Connecting for Children and Families (CCF) – Bulldog Park

Utilized by their school age program, this Woonsocket based center will look to add loose parts and much needed storage to a completely open and empty community space, which once housed a traditional playground structure.



Over the Rainbow Learning Center – Johnston

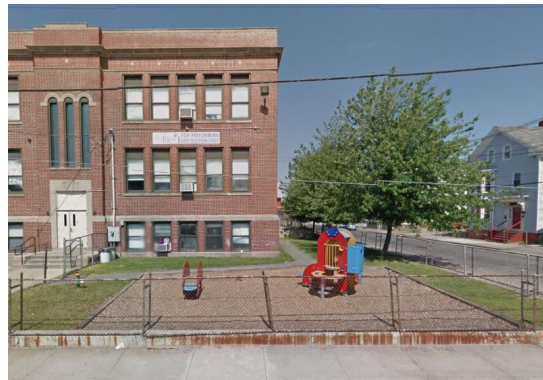
This center, located in Johnston, has already gone through an intensive



playground planning period, and even made major modifications to the preschool playground. Having just stopped short of implementing the design plan on the infant and toddler side, they are hoping to add some high-quality components dedicated to art, sand and water play.

The Genesis Center

With the desire to remove outdated play structures and rectify hazards, this Providence-based center is looking to include more nature-based activities and loose parts, and also utilize the existing chain link fence as a base for art easels and other play activities.



Y's Owl Nursery School – Kent County YMCA

This Warwick center is hoping to utilize its amazing surroundings to inspire a more natural play space. Removal of plastic components and inclusion of a mud kitchen, outdoor classroom, and space for quiet play will incorporate all the benefits of this grand outdoor space.



Federal Hill House

Located right in the heart of Providence, this center is looking to add more privacy, natural elements, and create an engaging outdoor classroom through many opportunities for stimulating and dynamic play.



While these sites are very unique they share equally in their desire and potential to offer more valuable play opportunities for Rhode Island's children. We appreciate their enthusiastic commitment and we hope as this project continues you are also inspired to make some quality changes to your space!

Three Centers Selected for the Infant and Toddler Interior Design Intervention Program



The quality of your space can either significantly enhance or inhibit the quality of your program. Space has the ability to provide a sense of community, well-being, and belonging to all the people – large and small – who enter it. Very young children are particularly influenced, either positively or negatively, by the environment around them. This is why child care facilities play an especially critical role in offering environments that support children's learning and development. And even small improvements to a space can have a positive impact.

We've selected three different locations in Providence, Johnston, and Warwick to help make minor interior modifications that will increase the quality of the environment. Proposed interventions include adding more access to natural light, reducing noise levels in space, rearranging furnishings, creating child-level views to the outside, and incorporating more plush and private spaces for children. We look forward to sharing the final designs when complete!

No Lead for Kids in Schools or Child Care Facilities

National report cites untapped opportunity to reduce toxic risks to children.

National experts in education, child care and children's health today issued a joint call to get the lead out of schools and child care facilities. More than 66 million children in the U.S. are enrolled in schools and child care programs, where they may be exposed to lead in old paint, water pipes and fixtures, soil, air, and products on a daily basis.

The report, *Eliminating Lead Risks in Schools and Child Care Facilities*, is the first to set strategic priorities for reducing lead exposure in learning environments. Cleaning up these large group settings offers great potential to prevent lead risks for significant numbers of children. The report is the result of a workshop convened by the Children's Environmental Health Network, Healthy Schools Network and the Learning Disabilities Association of America, and is being released during National Public Health Week and the day after National Healthy Schools Day.

[Read the Report Here](#)

New Child Care Facilities in Rhode Island

We have been receiving a lot of technical assistance inquiries about opening new centers. This is really exciting, especially knowing there is a growing need for additional child care spaces throughout the state. If you are thinking about expanding, relocating, or opening a new center, apply for our free technical assistance services. We can provide guidance on the following:

- Navigating physical space challenges related to licensing and quality improvement;
- Creating financing and fundraising plans to turn project dreams into realities;
- Assessing the feasibility of proposed construction and renovation projects; and
- Obtaining playground audits and priority improvement plans.



Apply for Technical Assistance Here

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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.

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