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



July eNEWS

## ***Center Spotlight!*** ***The Children's Workshop – Lincoln Center***



Before: Play space located across parking lot



After: Structure relocated to the new play space under construction in an area immediately adjacent to the center

The Children's Workshop in Lincoln, Rhode Island, faced numerous physical space challenges. Some of the most critical issues included:

- Two classrooms, one infant room and one preschool room, completely lacked natural light
- One school age classroom had insufficient natural light
- A playground that required crossing a busy parking lot
- Multiple classrooms with group size challenges

The center was also bursting at the seams, with a long waiting list. Instead of ignoring the issues or using a "band-aid" approach, The Children's Workshop leadership demonstrated

their commitment to quality and decided to tackle a major renovation project that would significantly improve the space and ideally enable them to serve more children. The Children's Workshop began by seeking planning grant funds and technical assistance from LISC so that they could develop a thoughtful and comprehensive plan for the space. They next began negotiations with their long-time landlord to acquire additional space in the building and to get buy-in for a plan to reconfigure the parking lot so that the playground could be relocated next to the building with direct access from the center.



After: Entry to Playspace



After: New I/T Toilet Room



After: New I/T Feeding &amp; Changing



After: New I/T Classroom

Once architectural drawings and playground plans were finalized, The Children's Workshop moved on to the next step of devising a strategy to pay for this costly undertaking. They applied for and were successful in receiving a \$50,000 early learning facility grant. They combined this with some of their own cash and, finally, they obtained a \$450,000 loan from LISC.

More careful planning was required to keep children safe and to minimize disruptions during construction. Working closely with DCYF, LISC, their architect, playground designer and construction supervisor, The Children's Workshop has been able to ensure the project will be completed in a timely way with minimal impact to center operations.

The end result will be a refurbished center that fully meets all DCYF licensing requirements. In the process many quality features will be incorporated, including relocating bathrooms for better proximity to classrooms. The outdoor space is much safer and the plan allows for new quality features to continue to be incorporated over time. And, by adding space and reconfiguring existing spaces, they will increase their licensed capacity from 127-158 children, a 24% increase.

Congratulations to The Children's Workshop on their vision and commitment to quality. We were delighted to play a role in the success of this project!

## Is Your Drinking Water Safe?

Elevated lead levels can be harmful to your health and are a particular concern for young children. Even a low level of exposure to lead can cause damage to the nervous system. Recently, the Providence Water Supply Board reported that elevated levels of lead were found in local drinking water. Please read here to learn more about the findings and how best to go about testing your water to make sure it is safe.



[Learn More](#)

## Creating Shade for Your Outdoor Play Space



2010 American Academy of Dermatology Shade Structure Grant Award Recipient, Meeting Street, in Providence, RI

Not only is having a shady spot on your playground a nice respite from the hot summer sun but shade also offers important protection from exposure to ultraviolet radiation, which can cause skin cancer. We encourage you to review the guidebook, *Shade Planning for America's Schools*, developed by the Center for Disease Control. The guidebook offers important and practical strategies for incorporating shade into outdoor play spaces.

Adding shade can be expensive, but you might be eligible for some help with the cost. The American Academy of Dermatology (AAD) provides grants for shade structures to non-profit organizations and public schools that provide services to children ages 4-18 years old. For more information about the Shade Structure Grant Program, please read more here: [https://www.aad.org/ssp/documents/Shade\\_Structure\\_Guideline\\_Book.pdf](https://www.aad.org/ssp/documents/Shade_Structure_Guideline_Book.pdf)

The 2017 American Academy of Dermatology Shade Structure grant application will open on September 1, 2016 – be sure to check back at <https://www.aad.org/ssp/> then!

## Read More

### ***Have you heard about our Technical Assistance services?***



LISC's Rhode Island Child Care & Early Learning Facilities Fund (RICCELFF) staff and consultants are available to provide child care and early learning centers with technical assistance on all aspects of facility design and development, including guidance on:

- Planning facility improvements that enhance program quality;
- Creating financing and fundraising plans to turn project dreams into realities;
- Assessing the feasibility of proposed construction and renovation projects;
- Assembling a strong facility project team; and
- Obtaining playground audits and priority improvement plans.

Our staff and consultants cannot take the place of your architect or other members of your real estate development team, but we can guide you through each step of the process and help you identify and secure the professionals needed to support the implementation of a successful project.

If you are considering a facility project and would like to utilize our free technical assistance services, please click on the button below.

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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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