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



June eNEWS

Thank you to the United Way of Rhode Island for Supporting the Rhode Island Child Care and Early Learning Facilities Fund with a Grant Award in the Amount of \$150,000!



The Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) has been awarded a grant by the United Way of Rhode Island in the amount of \$150,000 (\$50,000 per year for the next three years) to support the Rhode Island Child Care and Early Learning Facilities Fund (RICCELFF) and its work to help child care and early learning programs develop safe, high quality learning environments – indoors and outdoors.

The grant is awarded by United Way as part of its new 2016-2019 competitive grant cycle,

with a focus on funding efforts that help kids fall in love with learning, help adults reach new career goals, and help families meet their basic needs. In total, United Way has awarded \$3.1 million in grants among the \$12 million it has committed through 2019 to help change the lives of 250,000 Rhode Islanders by 2020, the overarching goal of its new strategic plan, LIVE UNITED 2020.

[Read the Full Article Here](#)

Paying for Deferred Maintenance

Deferred maintenance is the practice of postponing much needed repair to buildings and building systems. Examples include: roofs that need renovation or replacement, poorly functioning heating systems, damaged flooring, windows needing replacement, etc. When funding is limited, the list of postponed repairs and maintenance can become very long – very fast. Projects that are put on hold, repair that is neglected, and preventive maintenance that is ignored adds up to a costly and complex problem. We know that funds are tight and that it is often difficult, if not nearly impossible, to budget for on-going facility maintenance; however, not doing so can come with an even greater cost. We encourage you to read this great article on “*Paying for Deferred Maintenance*” that will help you to think about the issue and begin to formulate a plan.



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Water: The Extra Dimension of Play



The warm weather is here and there is no better way to cool off than with some revitalizing water.

“Water is timeless; it has a universal appeal. It transcends cultures and generations and appeals to all age groups. Water draws people in and brings people together. It unites people in a shared sensorial experience that is, at once, refreshing, relaxing, thrilling and exciting.” - Marie Catherine Dube, water-based playscape designer

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Here are some fun ways to incorporate water play outside at your center:

- **Create a water panel:** Attach open-ended pool noodles (a hollow foam tube used for swimming), plastic tubes, funnels, and water bottles to a board (or fence!) and let children pour water in from the top to see how these troughs can transport water.
- **Make a tricycle and car wash:** Drill some holes in a few PVC pipes, elevate them above the ground in a row with some more pipe, and attach a hose to the end. With water pouring down, the kids will love driving their trikes or cars through the wash! For added fun bring out some sponges and soapy water for the kids to use on their vehicle of choice.
- **Collect water in rain barrels:** Not only is this economical and sustainable, but it allows children to see how rainwater can be harvested and reused for play. With a low-mounted nozzle children will be able to access the water independently. When it's raining head outside so the kids can see the collection in action (and maybe jump in some rain puddles too!).
- **Water gardens, plants, and grass:** Children love to help out. By simply letting them water the gardens and other natural elements with child-sized watering cans they can feel like they are contributing to the health of their outdoor space – and learn a good lesson about the importance of regular maintenance as well.
- **Create your own mud kitchen:** You can build or buy some kind of elevated play surface or you can just bring out some old pots and pans and use right on the ground. Just add water to your favorite dirt patch and start “cooking.”

- **Use a water table for some fun splashing:** Large plastic bins work just as well as a commercially marketed water tables. Fill them up with some water and a variety of loose parts and let the kids have at it.
- **Or – set up a good old fashion sprinkler:** A sprinkler hose is a great, low-cost way to add water fun to your playground this summer. Sprinkler hoses, which can be found in any retail garden center, spray water throughout the length of the hose. For a different effect you can hang the hose in the air allowing the water to mist down!

Creating a “Yes” Environment for Children

The summer months are synonymous with playing outside – especially when that play includes a healthy dose of risk-taking.

“Risk is a vital component of children’s play. It allows children to be challenged, to face uncertainty, to problem-solve, to work with others to find a solution, and to think outside the box. All of these qualities serve to expand children’s cognitive, physical, and social-emotional abilities. They become the building blocks for later learning and managing of experiences, both throughout school and as an adult.” - Teresa Gonsoski, early education teacher.



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City of Providence Selected for Planning Phase to Better Connect Children to Nature

The City of Providence has been awarded a planning grant from the National League of Cities and the Children & Nature Network to be part of a seven-city cohort dedicated to exploring opportunities for children of all backgrounds to play and learn outside in a natural environment as well as to develop strategies for implementation.



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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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