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



September eNews

Update on Play Interventions – Blue Across Rhode Island Day of Service!

We are excited to share an update on the Outdoor Play Interventions Pilot Project (OPIPP), our strategy to aid in the development of low-cost, high-value, simple design interventions for outdoor spaces utilizing architectural design, LISC technical assistance, fundraising, and volunteer coordination.

In July 2017 we were awarded a *Blue Across Rhode Island* volunteer grant, which provided funding for each of our three sites (Children’s Friend – Hartford Ave, Jamestown Early Learning Center, and Westbay Children’s Center) as well as more than 100 volunteers for a day of service. Well that day took place September 15, 2017 and despite the gloomy forecast, the sun came out in full force and the results achieved by these “Playground Crashers” in just a few hours were astounding:



Children's Friend and Services



Jamestown Early Learning Center



Westbay Children's Center

Visit www.bcbsri.com or search #BlueAcrossRI on social media to learn more about this amazing event.

Want to learn more about this pilot project and the designs implemented, or to see what these sites looked like before? You can follow our whole story [here](#).

NEXT STEPS: With projects nearing completion (thanks to our hardworking Blue Across Rhode Island volunteers) we are now focused on studying the impacts of the small-scale modifications as well as developing a free resource guide that will highlight the interventions and outline instructions for how each one can be built by any novice.

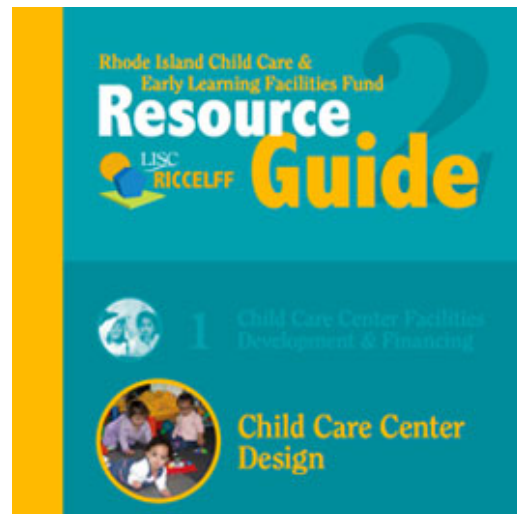
Center Spotlight: Woonsocket Head Start Highland Park Center

With the help of a LISC loan, the Woonsocket Head Start Child Development Association (WHSCDA)'s Highland Park Center was able to undergo a complete renovation. With the exception of some playground and HVAC upgrades no major renovations had been made to the center since its original construction and the wear and tear of running the program over the past 27 years had taken a toll. Utilizing a LISC predevelopment grant for design, LISC TA during bidding and contractor negotiation, the aforementioned LISC loan, along with funds set aside by WHSCDA specifically for long-term purposes such as this project, overall upgrades and cosmetic improvements were made to classrooms, children's bathrooms, offices and the kitchen. Renovations such as improving and updating the kitchen, creating better sight lines and supervision, improving access to outdoors, redesigning spaces to better serve infants and toddlers, upgrading the efficiency of fixtures, maximizing available square footage, repairing the roof, adding compliant safety surfacing, and simple cosmetic changes all help to ensure the continued quality of programming. The construction was swift too – completed throughout the summer and reopened in time for the start of the 2017-2018 school year! Congratulations to Woonsocket Head Start! We were thrilled to be with you every step of the way!



Child Care Design Guide Updated!

We have recently updated our resource guide, *Designing Early Childhood Facilities*, which highlights the connection between well-designed space and high quality programming, and helps early childhood providers, community developers, and architects plan effective spaces for young children. The guide includes an overview of design principles, a tour through a center's functional areas, and information on materials, lighting, security, urban settings, and accessibility. Our update also now includes a whole new section on acoustics! You can check it out by clicking the "Learn More" button.



[Learn More](#)

Save the Date – Certified Playground Safety Inspector's Course

The RICCF is partnering with the [Rhode Island Recreation and Parks Association](#) to host a [Certified Playground Safety Inspector \(CPSI\) certification course](#) on May 2nd – May 4th, 2018 at the South Kingstown Recreation Center in Wakefield, RI. This industry leading course offered through the [National Recreation and Park Association](#) is the most comprehensive training program on playground hazard identification and risk management methods offered nationwide! More information to follow soon!



[Download our Save the Date Flyer Here!](#)

National Children's Facility Network Meeting in Washington, D.C.

The RICCF team is just back from an eventful National Children's Facility Network meeting which was held in Washington DC on September 26th. The National Children's Facilities Network is a coalition of nonprofit financial and technical assistance intermediaries involved in planning, developing, and financing facilities for low-income child care and Head Start programs. LISC was one of the Network's founding partners, and remains an active leader and participant. The Network's purpose is to share information on child care facilities issues; initiate legislation and regulations affecting low-income child care and Head Start facilities; and develop and support various financing strategies, initiatives, and programs. The

members of the Network increase supply and help improve the quality of child care by providing technical assistance and financing to address capital needs.

An increased national emphasis and recognition of the importance of child care and early learning, including efforts to strengthen quality and ensure health and safety, coupled with Pre-K expansion and new Head Start requirements have the Network feeling positive about the potential of federal strategies and investments focused on facility expansion and improvements. We look forward to working together with our Network partners to advocate for resources, policies, and strategies that help ensure that families have access to high quality, affordable child care and early education options in spaces that support programmatic excellence.



[Learn More 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.

