

exceed

Rhode Island's
Early Childhood Commitment



Save The Date

August 4: ECEDS [registration session](#), 6:00 -7:45, South Providence Library, [RSVP here](#)

August 13: Facility grant information sessions (9am,11am,1pm,3pm] RI Food Bank, [register here](#)

August 14: Fun Family Activity [mini-grant application](#) deadline

Sept 22: ECEDS [registration session](#), 6:00 -7:45, South Providence Library, [RSVP here](#)

Rising Star Awards

The Department of Human Services is pleased to announce **Rising Star Awards**.

This time-limited program will recognize programs that join BrightStars at a star level two or higher, apply for and receive a higher star rating and/or convert to the 2013 standards. Programs that join*, convert, or increase their star rating between June 1, 2015 and December 15, 2015 are eligible for an award.

[Click here](#) for the application and additional information ([en espanol aqui](#)). Call [Deborah Anthes](#) at DHS for additional information at (401)462-6842.

	1 Star*	2 Star	3 Star	4 Star	5 Star
	<i>*Conversion only</i>	Join, Convert, Move up			
Centers/Public Schools	\$500	\$ 2,000	\$ 4,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 6,000
FCC	\$500	\$ 1,000	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,500	\$ 3,000

CCRI's Early Childhood Associate Degree Program is awarded national accreditation

In 2013, as part of the initiatives under Race to the Top - Early Learning Challenge, the Community College of Rhode Island set forth to pursue accreditation of its Early Childhood Education AA program through the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). The purpose for engaging in this process was to promote excellence in early childhood teacher education; to provide a valid and objective external evaluation of these programs as a service to the public; and to prospective students and to the profession.

During this two-year endeavor, a collaboration was developed and inclusive of: CCRI faculty degree candidates, alumni, and community stakeholders representing various early childhood programs and state agencies. Members were engaged in intensive self-study of many elements within the program including: courses, advising, field placement program resources, student comprehension and success.

As a direct result of participation, CCRI's AA ECE program has been awarded accreditation through NAEYC!

In the words of the commission: *"The CCRI program substantially meets expectations regarding alignment...the program enjoys a reputation of excellence throughout the state of Rhode Island. Students benefit from high levels of quality in teaching, advising, and support. Students also benefit from a strong, committed faculty who invest time in professional development, reflection, and program development and from administration who supports faculty in the development and implementation of program outcomes. The NAEYC Commission on Early Childhood Associate Degree Accreditation commends the program for its many strengths related to the Accreditation Criteria revealed through this accreditation process beyond the areas noted."*

This thorough evaluation has resulted in a strengthened, relevant and re-imagining of the CCRI program. CCRI has demonstrated its commitment to excellence in higher education through this achievement. Faculty will continue to engage in ongoing quality improvement plans with students and stakeholders to ensure that its programming options are viable for the early childhood workforce in Rhode Island.

Early Care and Education Data System Update

New resources and supports will be available soon! Rising Stars, two waves of facility grants, program quality improvement grants, and technology grants to support assessment will be available soon.

Did you know? In order to be eligible Program Administrators, Family Child Care Owners, and Education Leaders must register and enter program data into the Rhode Island Early Care and Education Data System (ECEDS). All providers have been mailed and emailed their registration credentials.

Need help registering? [RSVP](#) for a registration session: [August 4](#) or [September 22](#). If those day/times do not work, please call us at 222-8164 to set up an individual appointment or for help over the phone.



Fun Family Activity Mini-Grants



[Mini-Grant funding](#) is designed to help programs offer the Fun Family Activities training series. Participating families will explore how “play” nurtures growth and skills which are important for their child’s future learning. Awarded programs will contract with a Fun Family Activity certified facilitator and host training series between September 2015 and May 2016. The application deadline is August 14, 2015. Visit [this website](#) for more information about the application process and the requirements.

Spotlight: Heritage Park YMCA Facility Grant

This month Exceed is thrilled to spotlight Heritage Park YMCA Early Learning Center in Pawtucket, Rhode Island. Heritage Park YMCA is a recent recipient of a facility grant through the LISC Rhode Island Child Care and Early Learning Facilities Fund ([RICCELFF](#)). In November 2013, the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge funded it’s first round of facility grants to help early learning programs fix facility issues related to their DCYF licensing status, major health and safety concerns, and/or issues that prevent a program from moving up the quality ladder.

With the implementation of the 2013 State of Rhode Island Department of Children, Youth, and Families Child Care Program Regulations for Licensure, Heritage Park had two classrooms that were deemed non-compliant due to lack of natural light. These two classrooms were then closed and the license capacity was reduced by 40 preschool children. When funding was made available for facility grants, Heritage Park YMCA sought capital grant funds to punch openings and create windows in their existing classroom walls to gain access to natural light. By simply adding windows, at a cost of less than \$8,000, these two rooms could be licensed, and become state-funded Pre-Kindergarten classrooms. Pictured below is the classroom before and after the punch openings were created.

For more information about facility grants, please visit the [Exceed website](#). The next opportunity to apply for facility-related grants will be later this summer.



BEFORE



AFTER

Child Trends is seeking Data Collectors

The Department of Human Services has contracted with [Child Trends](#) to conduct a statewide study of early care and education programs. The study will provide valuable information about BrightStars' Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System (TQRIS). Child Trends has invited a random sample of BrightStars programs from all five star levels to join this study. This study will help us continue to strengthen BrightStars and make informed decisions about future investments related to quality early care and education for young children in our state. It is our hope that programs who are contacted will participate. Child Trends will provide results of the study to BrightStars at an overall level only. We will not know who is participating in the study, and the researchers will not share information with us about any specific program or individual. Look out for the results of the study which will be shared once available.

Child Trends is also seeking Data Collectors who will work independently, with oversight from Child Trends full-time staff on an evaluation of BrightStars, Rhode Island's child care TQRIS. This will involve visiting child care programs across Rhode Island and collecting data from preschool classrooms during the 2015-2016 school year. Please direct interested applicants to the job [posting here](#).



Interested in learning more about the work of the Race to the Top - Early Learning Challenge grant from June 2015? A copy of the June report to the Early Learning Council is [available here](#).

