



Early Childhood News



Child Care Stabilization Grants



The window of opportunity to apply for the NYS -OCFS Child Care Stabilization Grants will close on **November 30th** at 11:59pm.

Fortunately, all early childhood programs in St. Lawrence County who are eligible for these grants have applied and been approved. These funds will have a significant impact upon daily operations and provide all programs much needed financial stability. The stabilization grants have been a savior for some programs who might otherwise not have survived due to enrollment instability resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic.

A strong stable child care system will be critical for families, employers and the economy of the North Country in the months ahead as we all hope to emerge from the chaos endured because of COVID-19. The North Country simply cannot afford to lose any more child care providers or programs at this time.

Our focus since mid-July has been to ensure that every early childhood provider or program had applied and been approved. Whether it was via email, telephone or in person contacts our mission was to make sure your questions or concerns were addressed so your application would be successful. We are happy to report that challenge has been accomplished.

Now we shift our work to the next phase of the stabilization process through ongoing training and technical assistance to ensure everyone who received a grant remains in compliance with the grant requirements. That's right, we cannot lose sight of the fact that these grants were federally funded and everyone should anticipate the possibility of an audit of how the funds were used.

To accomplish this we will be continuing our outreach efforts to each and every one of you to help you ensure compliance. As you read this it's holiday season, but we all know that immediately following all the festivities, gifts and great food comes **TAX SEASON**.

Keep checking your mailbox and email inbox as we'll be providing or facilitating more training and technical assistance opportunities in the weeks ahead.

Tom Copeland Webinars on the Stabilization Grants



Tom Copeland

Tom, an attorney, has been the nation's leading trainer, author and advocate for the business of Family Child Care. He has also been in the forefront educating child care providers and program operators about the requirements of the federal and state Child Care Stabilization Grants. Make sure to stay informed by visiting:

tomcopelandblog.com

Special points of interest:

- **Copeland - pg. 1**
- **\$500 Grants - pg. 2**
- **Regulation Changes/ Updates - pg. 3**
- **Training Calendar (see insert)**



Child Care: The Key To The North Country's Economy ...

Keeping You Informed on Early Care & Learning Issues ...



Roberta Reardon
Commissioner
NYS Dept of Labor

“Child care is the superhighway for economic recovery in the North Country.”

On September 29th, Dee Burlingame and I participated in the NYS Early Care & Learning Council’s CCR&R Leadership Summit as we do each and every year. Roberta Reardon was one of the featured keynote speakers that day. She noted how New York State had lost 42% of its Early Childhood workforce between 2019 and 2021. Some of that is directly attributed to the COVID-19 pandemic where many child care programs closed and never reopened leaving families with few options.

The world has changed so much since early 2020. We still have COVID in our communities, many parents are working remotely from home and some will remain that way permanently, schools were and may again be constantly opening and closing leaving families with a never

ending struggle to find child care. When and if they could not find care they were often forced to leave the workforce.

Every day we heard or read stories about the essential workers who were on the front lines keeping us safe and keeping our economy alive. Unfortunately, amidst all the television and social media ads thanking those essential workers we rarely, if ever, heard mention of those of you who cared for the children of those essential workers.



U.S. Senator
Kirsten Gillibrand

I want you to know that we, at the St. Lawrence Child Care Council, have carried and shared that message at every opportunity we had. Whether it was on ZOOM meetings, conference calls, in media requests, etc. we repeated the message that child care was critical infrastructure key to keeping North Country families working. In July of 2020 the SLCCC was contacted by Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand’s staff

asking us to facilitate a press conference in Ogdensburg to announce her sponsorship of the “Child Care is Essential” bill in the U.S. Senate.

Our voices were not alone. There were many others across the state and country who were continually lifting up those of you who work in Early Childhood as a cornerstone for economic recovery and growth. When people were unable to return to work because of a lack of child care employers were forced to accept that child care was no longer “a family or women’s issue.” If these workforce development issues were going to change so to did the decades old attitudes about child care.

Fortunately, child care is now part of most workforce and economic development conversations in St. Lawrence County. We are optimistic there will be significant local efforts for the expansion of existing and creation of new child care programs in the months ahead.

If you know of anyone who may be interested in opening their own Family or Group Family Day Care Home please have them contact Katy in our office at (315) 393-6474 Ext. 17



Child Care Regulation Changes / Updates

Keeping You Informed Helps Keep You in Compliance ...



“Are you in compliance? Our safety depends upon you!”

Changes in regulations and new policy statements seem to take programs by surprise, but they need not do so. Both are available to anyone at anytime online at the NYS OFS website <https://ocfs.ny.gov/programs/childcare/info-for-providers.php> click on the Info For Providers banner and you will find regulations for all modalities of child care and don't forget to check the policy statements!!!! The policy statements provide excellent information you may not have seen before. NYSOCFS will also send a “Dear Provider Letter” to all programs whenever significant changes occurs.

Let's take a quick look at one recent change ...

Elijah's Law ...

Are you in compliance? The deadlines have passed!

In 2019, New York State adopted new legislation called “Elijah's Law”. The law is named after 3-year-old

Elijah Silvera from New York City who was given a grilled cheese sandwich while at day care despite having a known severe dairy allergy. After Elijah went into anaphylaxis, his family was not told what he had eaten and 911 was not called. Elijah died in November 2017. Implementation of Elijah's Law requires changes to your child care program, valuable, potentially life saving changes that are intended to prevent further tragedy.

As a child care professional, you play a critical role in protecting the health and safety of the children in your program. On August 19, 2021 NYSOCFS sent a second Dear Provider Letter reminding all programs what must be done in order to be in compliance. Here is the link to that letter:

<https://ocfs.ny.gov/programs/childcare/provider-letters/2021/Dear-Provider-2021Aug19-Elijah-Law.pdf>

Here is the link to the link to the Anaphylaxis Policy for

Child Day Care Programs:

<https://ocfs.ny.gov/programs/childcare/policies/CC-Policy-2020Dec-Anaphylaxis.pdf>

A Word About Email ...

ALL licensed or registered child care providers and programs are required to have an email address on file with the state. Earlier this year SLCCC staff contacted all programs in St. Lawrence County to make sure your email address was correct in the state database.

NYSOCFS is no longer sending Dear Provider Letters via the US Mail. Instead, all communications are being sent via email they are also posted to the NYSOCFS website.

In order to stay informed you must check your email of record on a regular basis. Staying informed helps keep you in compliance ... this means you have a responsibility to check your email on a regular basis and monitor the NYSOCFS website periodically to stay ahead of changes.

We will also do our part by informing you of changes as soon as we know of them. As always, if you have any questions contact the SLCCC!



Our Mission

The mission of the St. Lawrence Child Care Council is to coordinate, assist, strengthen and expand child care services in St. Lawrence County with an emphasis on education and networking to promote quality child care environments for all children regardless of income, race, ethnic heritage or family configuration.



Our Staff

Executive Director

Bruce Stewart

Program & Quality Assurance Coordinator

Dee Burlingame

Registrar Supervisor & Provider Services Coordinator

Katy Pinkerton

Provider & Registration Services

Renee Armstrong
Becky Stewart

Legally Exempt & Subsidy Assistance Coordinator

Shana Wisdom

Legally Exempt Enrollment & Referral Services

Ashleigh Carter

Parent Services

Dee Burlingame

Health Care Consultant

MAT Instructor
Theresa Gardner

Our Board of Directors

Chair

Sarah Sachs

Public Services Manager
Potsdam Public Library

Vice-Chair

Donna Seymour

League of Women Voters
Host - North Country Matters

Treasurer

Angela Gray

CPA / Partner
Gray & Gray and Associates CPA's

Secretary

Ginger Thomas

Teacher's Desk Consultant
SUNY Canton College ECE, Adjunct

Members

Barbara Adams

Director
SLC Community Development Head Start

Lori Moulton

Director
SUNY Potsdam Child Care Center

Dana Olzenak-McGuire - PT, PhD

Clinical Associate Professor
Department of Physical Therapy
Clarkson University

Michelle Ladouceur

Attorney
NYS Unified Court System



Office Location
314 Ford Street
Ogdensburg, NY 13669

Business Hours
Monday - Friday
8:30am - 4:00pm

Contact Information
Phone (315) 393-6474
Fax (315) 394-6809
Toll Free (800) 246-5352



Partial funding for Early Childhood News provided by the NYS Office of Children & Family Services.