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Upcoming Events:

Child Care Action Council's Carousel Early Learning Conference

April 13, 2019
Grays Harbor College, Aberdeen
<http://www.ccacwa.org/carouselconference>

Child Care Resources' Spring 2019 Child Care Conference

April 27, 2019
Shoreline Community College
<https://www.facebook.com/events/271437523536872/>

Pacific NW Chapter, WAEYC's Rejuvenate Conference 2019

April 27, 2019
Everett Courtyard Marriott
<https://pnwearlylearning.org/education/2019-rejuvenate-conference>

Infant and Early Childhood Conference

May 1-3, 2019
Greater Tacoma Convention & Trade Center, Tacoma
<https://www.ieccwa.org/2019/>

Child Care Resources' Special Connections: Care to Children on the Autism Spectrum

May 4, 2019
Child Care Resources – Kent
<https://www.childcare.org/professional/login-client.aspx>



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WASHINGTON STATE
Department of
Children, Youth, and Families

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Achievers:

<https://childcareawarewa.org>

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Published Quarterly

Early Achievers News

Did you know that over 72 percent of eligible early learning programs in Washington are participating in Early Achievers? They are. Together these dedicated providers serve more than 74,000 children. Also, there are now more rated Early Achievers providers than unrated providers, meaning Washington families have more choices for quality child care and more information about that care.

2019 is a big year for high-quality child care in our state. Early Achievers participants are reaching key milestones and partners across the state are working to increase both the reimbursement rates paid to providers for the subsidized care they provide, and to increase access to high-quality programs so every child who needs child care can enroll in a quality program.

One key milestone is the **implementation of updated aligned child care regulations (WACs) in August**. These WACs were developed after a comprehensive process that included many provider and parent voices. The Washington State Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) is hosting several learning opportunities between now and August for providers, licensors and Child Care Aware of Washington Early Achievers coaches. Visit DCYF's Standards Alignment web page for complete details. <https://www.dcyf.wa.gov/services/early-learning-providers/standards-alignment/events>

Another key milestone is the **Dec. 31, 2019 Early Start Act date** when Early Achievers participants that received a Working Connections Child Care or Seasonal Child Care subsidy check between July 1, 2015 and June 30, 2016, either rate a Level 3 or higher or submit for rating. Many providers have already met this milestone – Congratulations!! For those working toward it, thank you for continuing to make progress. Please make sure to stay on track with your Early Achievers activities and appointments so you don't lose momentum.

DCYF recently announced a new Cohort Moving Policy to help make sure all Early Achievers providers who want to be rated before Dec. 31, 2019 are able to be. Eligible participants may request a change in cohorts due to exceptional circumstances. The list of what is an exceptional circumstance includes leadership changes, high staff turnover, extended illness and more. For complete details, visit <https://www.dcyf.wa.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/ea/ea-CohortMovingPolicy.pdf>.

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New DCYF Online WAC FAQ Tool

Anyone interested in learning more about the updated aligned child care WACs that will be implemented by the Washington State Department of Children, Youth, and Families starting this August can use a new online tool developed by DCYF to help providers get specific answers to specific questions.

The easy-to-use tool allows users to select a category of WACs and then find answers to questions that have been previously submitted by providers, licensors and CCA of WA Early Achievers coaches.

The categories to choose from include Child Outcomes, Family Engagement and Partnerships, Interactions and Curriculum, Environment and more.

DCYF intends to continue to update this tool with additional questions and answers moving forward. Visit <https://www.dcyf.wa.gov/services/early-learning-providers/standards-alignment/faq> to give it a try.

Provider Spotlight—Barbara DeWolf, director, Little Christian Day Care, Castle Rock



Barbara DeWolf always wanted to be a teacher. “I’ve come to find my calling is teaching the littles,” she said.

With a Bachelor’s Degree in Child Development, it’s easy to see she has indeed found her true calling. After being lead teacher at Little Christian Day Care in Castle Rock for two years she was promoted to Director three years ago.

Barbara credits the former director with making the important decision to join Early Achievers over four years ago. Now the Level 3-rated program has been rated twice and is enjoying the benefits of participating.

Early Achievers is helping to keep the program open, Barbara said. Between the tiered subsidy increase Little Christian earns, the Quality Improvement (QI) Awards and other money saving advice she gets from her CCA of WA Early Achievers coach, they have been able to manage the recent minimum wage increases and not implement cuts. The center serves 68 children, half of whom are on state child care subsidies.

The income from the QI awards went to high-quality learning materials that the children love, Barbara said. “We’ve learned so much. It’s helped the children,” she said about Early Achievers. “I just love the support we get.”

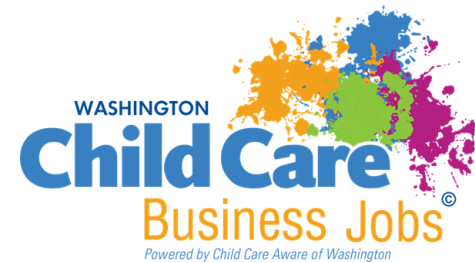
Barbara is especially appreciative of the coaching provided to all of the teachers, and how her coach taught them about the importance of early numeracy and early STEM activities. The parents know about Early Achievers too, and like that their young children are getting better early education because of it, she said.

CCA of WA Announces New Washington Child Care Business Jobs

Have you posted a job yet on Washington Child Care Business Jobs? It’s a new job posting and application management system portal and is part of Washington Child Care Business Edge. Both are free for Early Achievers participants and both are designed to save providers time and money.

When a provider posts a child care position on the site, it automatically appears on nine other job boards, including Indeed.com and LinkedIn. Interested job seekers do not need to be Edge users to see and apply for jobs.

Both Edge and Business Jobs are powered by Child Care Aware of Washington and funded by DCYF. You can find them both here: <https://www.childcarebizedge.org>.



Can Early Achievers Help Your Program Make Ends Meet?

We are hearing from providers across the state that Early Achievers is helping them make ends meet. Whether it’s the tiered subsidy increase Early Achievers participants earn, or the Quality Improvement Awards, or the access to Needs-Based Grants (see below), the great discounts offered on Washington Child Care Business Edge, (our shared business services portal), or the ability to post open positions for free on our new job board Washington Child Care Business Jobs and nine other platforms, providers are finding that Early Achievers can help them avoid cuts to their programs.

With the costs of providing high-quality child care going up due to recent increases in the minimum wage and other factors, finding ways to save money, and ways to earn a little more without having to raise the rates private-pay families pay, can be a huge benefit. Another benefit? Child Care Aware of Washington’s outstanding Early Achievers coaches, who can recommend ways to save money, provide help with applications for grants and help you stay on track with your Early Achievers milestones. At the end of the day, it all adds up.

We heard from one provider who shared that her CCA of WA Early Achievers coach noticed she was following a lot of the guidelines of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) food program, and suggested she consider participating. She agreed and now her program is getting reimbursed for food. She said it is one way her center has been able to avoid cutting staff since the minimum wage increased, and something she would not have considered if it wasn’t for her coach.



Substitutes Available to Help Early Achievers Participants

The Imagine Institute runs the state substitute pool to support Early Achievers providers in their quality improvement work. Eligible providers can qualify to have a substitute for certain Early Achievers activities such as ERS and CLASS preparation, meeting with coaches and preparing evidence of practices. To be eligible, Early Achievers participants must have served a child on subsidy within the last 12 months, be working toward a Level 3 rating and be in good licensing status. For full details, visit the Imagine Institute’s recently updated website here: <http://imaginewa.org/find-a-substitute/>.

Stay Connected!

Follow us on social media to stay on top of all of the latest Early Achievers news and information.

CCA of WA on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Child-Care-Aware-of-Washington-149636987661/>

CCA of WA on Instagram at [wachildcarematters](https://www.instagram.com/wachildcarematters)

CCA of WA on Twitter: [@childcarewa](https://twitter.com/childcarewa)

CCA of WA on Pinterest: <https://www.pinterest.com/CCAofWA>

Early Achievers Needs-Based and Bridge Grants

Early Achievers participants participating in Level 2 or rated Level 2, now have two options for grants to help them rate Level 3. Needs-Based Grants and Bridge Grants are both available from the Department of Children, Youth, and Families and are designed to help participants purchase items like curriculum development, instructional materials, supplies and equipment. Family child care programs are required to have their CCA of WA Early Achievers coach sign their applications. The deadline to apply for both is June 30, 2019.

The amount of the grants are as follows:

- Up to \$750 for family home child care providers
- Up to \$1,000 for child care centers

To learn about the eligibility requirements and how to apply, visit the DCYF website here: <https://www.dcyf.wa.gov/services/early-learning-providers/early-achievers/pre-rating>.