


ANNOUNCEMENT: ELRC-19 #05
Office of Child Development and Early Learning
Bureau of Policy and Professional Development
Bureau of Early Learning Resource Center Monitoring

Issue Date: August 21, 2019

Effective Date: Immediately

SUBJECT: Tools for Promoting Healthy Weight Practices in Early Childhood Education: An Integrated Approach to Coaching

TO: Early Learning Resource Center (ELRC) Grantees and ELRC program representatives.

FROM: Tracey Campanini 
Deputy Secretary, Office of Child Development & Early Learning

PURPOSE:

This announcement provides important information regarding mandatory nutrition and physical activity trainings that the Pennsylvania Department of Health (DOH) and its partners will be conducting for Early Learning Resource Centers (ELRCs) beginning September 2019.

BACKGROUND:

On September 30, 2018, Pennsylvania DOH received a five-year State Physical Activity and Nutrition (SPAN) grant from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention. Pennsylvania's Department of Human Services (DHS), Department of Education (PDE), and Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL) are partners with DOH in this grant through September 29, 2023. DOH and partners have created a training for ELRCs on evidence-based strategies and updated resources that will assist providers in meeting nutrition and physical activity standards. This training will be offered to ELRCs beginning in September 2019. Implementation of the SPAN grant will include integration of nutrition and physical activity standards in early childhood education (ECE) systems.

DOH and partners modeled the new SPAN training after the Pennsylvania Nutrition and Physical Activity Self-Assessment for Child Care (PA NAP SACC). PA NAP SACC is a web-based continuous quality improvement (CQI) intervention designed to help child care providers improve the nutrition and physical activity practices within their (ECE) settings. Beginning in September 2019, PA NAP SACC will become a component of the SPAN grant implementation.

DISCUSSION:

DOH has provided the following information related to the SPAN grant that ELRCs should implement to fulfill the grant's goals.

Training

Professional learning opportunities will be provided regionally beginning in September 2019. These trainings will support ELRCs in understanding the complexity of childhood obesity and the evidence that supports implementing healthy weight strategies in ECE settings. As a result

of the training, participants will have the knowledge to support ECE programs in their implementation of practices and policies related to nutrition and physical activity standards.

ELRC Quality Coaches will be required to participate in the *Tools for Promoting Healthy Weight Practices in Early Childhood Education: An Integrated Approach to Consultation* training. ELRC Quality Coach supervisors and training coordinators are also strongly encouraged to participate. Future regional trainings will be offered during the duration of the grant.

To gauge the effectiveness of the training, participants will complete surveys. In addition, quality coaches will complete long-term surveys to inform utilization and application of the training.

ELRC training coordinators are responsible to ensure continuity of this training when onboarding new quality coaches.

A recorded training will be available at: www.keystonekidsgo.org

Implementation

ELRCs should collaborate with DOH and OCDEL to:

1. Recruit ECE programs for the PA NAP SACC program;
2. Refer ECE programs to trainings and resources on obesity prevention initiatives;
3. Support the addition of obesity prevention content to required trainings for providers. (Note: DOH will pay for additional costs incurred in development of nutrition and physical activity content to be added to existing modules);
4. Inform DOH of existing trainings that address obesity prevention to avoid duplication of efforts;
5. Continue collaboration with DOH to identify additional professional development needs related to SPAN;

Specifically, ELRC coaches will be responsible to:

6. Apply the training in their work to promote healthy weight practices as they engage with ECE programs.
7. Utilize the electronic toolbox, found here: www.keystonekidsgo.org to support ECE programs in implementing practices and policies.
8. Refer licensed ECE programs to the PA NAP SACC mini-grant program.

NEXT STEPS:

1. Review this announcement and all attachments with appropriate staff.
2. Plan to participate in the *Tools for Promoting Healthy Weight Practices in Early Care and Education: An Integrated Approach to Consultation* training scheduled September 2019. Coaching teams or a designee is required to participate.
3. Direct questions to your ELRC program representative.