

# APPENDIX B

## **Appendix B**

### **About OCDEL, Keystone STARS and Child Care Works**

#### **OCDEL**

**History:** The Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL) was established in 2007 as a joint initiative between the Departments of Education and Human Services. It was established to promote opportunities for all Pennsylvania children and families by building systems and providing supports that help ensure access to high quality child and family services. The Pennsylvania Early Learning Keys to Quality (Keys to Quality) is a quality improvement system in which all early learning programs and practitioners are encouraged and supported to improve child outcomes.

**Mission:** OCDEL provides families access to high quality services to prepare children for school and life success.

#### **Goals:**

- Work effectively, collaboratively, creatively and successfully to ensure that all families have access to high quality programs for their children.
- Engage stakeholders in actionable ways that provide guidance on programs and policies.
- Identify and use key data and research to improve policies and practices.

#### **Guiding Principles:**

1. High Quality Benefits for Children;
2. Individually and Culturally Appropriate High Expectations for Children's Learning;
3. Leadership;
4. State and Regional Coordination;
5. Commitment to Quality Content;
6. All Practitioners Participate in Quality Improvement Activities;
7. Focus on Credentials and Professionalism;
8. Systems Coordination, Integration and Accountability;
9. Compensation, Funding and Financing; and
10. Public, Stakeholder and Community Engagement input.

#### **Bureau of Certification Services:**

The Bureau of Certification Services is responsible for the regulation of all child care centers, group child care homes and family day care homes in Pennsylvania. The Certification Bureau receives inquiries regarding a variety of topics, including:

- The requirements and process for opening a child care facility.
- The statutes and regulations for operating a child care facility.
- The status and compliance history of specific facilities.
- The complaints regarding child care facilities.

**Bureau of Early Intervention Services:**

Early Intervention (EI) Services assures that all eligible children from birth to five with developmental delays receive services and supports that maximize their development so they are successful in any early education setting. Programs are provided to at-risk infants and toddlers or those with developmental delays, as well as to young children three and older who have disabilities and/or developmental delays. The Bureau oversees the Early Intervention Program for children from birth to school age, through their work with local administrators.

**Bureau of Early Learning Services:**

Early Learning Services develops and implements standards for early learning programs and professionals to improve the quality of early learning for our young children; provides financial supports and technical assistance for programs and professionals to improve quality; and provides family support programs that strengthen families, reduce risk, and increase early learning opportunities for children.

**Bureau of Subsidized Child Care Services:**

The Bureau of Subsidized Child Care Services provides families with information about early learning opportunities in their communities. The Bureau is also responsible for administering Pennsylvania's subsidized child care program called Child Care Works. This work is managed through a statewide network of local agencies contracted to do the work. The local agencies provide families a central location for information on child care and early education opportunities as well as eligibility determination, case maintenance and provider management for the Child Care Works program.

## **KEYSTONE STARS**

**Keystone Standards, Training, Assistance, Resources, and Support (STARS):** The Keystone STARS program provides Standards, Training (Professional Development), Assistance, Resources, and Support to facilitate continuous improvement and recognize achievement by early learning and school-age programs in Pennsylvania, including Head Start and Pre-K Counts. Keystone STARS establishes a quality rating improvement system in PA, whereby each STAR designation is based on research-based performance standards or benchmarks that are linked to improving outcomes for children. The standards address staff qualifications and professional development, the learning environment, partnerships with family and community, and leadership and management.

Keystone STARS will be managed through a partnership between OCDEL and the new ELRC. The ELRC undertake the following responsibilities in the management of Keystone STARS:

- A. Promote Keystone STARS through community education and publicity, as the centerpiece of the quality improvement system for program and professional development, and encourage all eligible early learning programs to enroll in the program.
- B. Through Keystone STARS, align resources to assist programs improve their STAR levels, provide technical assistance, program resources, financial supports necessary, and link professional development opportunities to Keystone STARS standards, best practice and emerging early learning requirements.
- C. Oversee and implement the Keystone STARS program including all STARS Standards, Policies, and Protocols.
- D. Facilitation of provider participation in the Early Learning Network (ELN) including dissemination of information/resources regarding the utilization, training, and support of national vendor early childhood assessment tools.
- E. Regional management of the PELICAN Keys to Quality database for program management as well as PA PACT, SMART, ECMH, Peer Mentorship databases and the PD Registry in cooperation with Department,
- F. Assist programs in accessing financial supports and distribution of approximately \$32 million dollars in Keystone STARS Provider Grants and Awards on an annual basis.
- G. Accountable management of the Keystone STARS program including management of program participation and upward movement targets, financial spending targets and subcontractor management.

## **CHILD CARE WORKS**

Child Care Works (CCW) is Pennsylvania's Subsidized Child Care Program. The CCW program ensures the consistent management of all eligibility determinations, provider payments, resource and referral services, provider management, and funds management services throughout the Commonwealth.

The CCW program uses state and federal funding to help low-income families pay for child care so they can go to work and school.

Families meeting CCW guidelines will:

- Have a portion of their child care cost paid directly to their approved provider. This is called a subsidy payment; and
- Be responsible for paying a weekly family co-pay directly to their child care provider.

**Basic guidelines for family eligibility to participate in the CCW program include:**

- Residing in Pennsylvania;
- Having a child or children who are citizens of the US or are lawfully admitted to the US needing child care while the parent/caretaker(s) work or attend an education program;
- Meeting income guidelines for family size;
- Working 20 or more hours a week or working 10 hours a week and going to school or training for 10 hours a week;
- Having a promise of a job that will start within 30 days of CCW application;
- Being a teen parent attending an education program;
- Providing proof of identification for each parent or caretaker in the home.

### **Income Guidelines**

The annual income for a family to be eligible to receive subsidy is 200 percent or less of the [Federal Poverty Income Guidelines](#):

<b>Family Size</b>	<b>Maximum Yearly Family Income (May 2016)</b>
2	\$32,040
3	\$40,320
4	\$48,600
5	\$56,880
6	\$65,160
7	\$73,460
8	\$81,780

(Note: The above information provides only general guidelines. Other conditions may apply.)

### **Additional Guidelines**

- Each adult family member must work at least 20 hours a week or work at least 10 hours a week and participate in an approved training program at least 10 hours a week.
- The hours that a child may receive subsidized child care must coincide with hours of work, education, or training.
- Children are eligible for care from birth through the end of the eligibility period when they turn 13. Children with disabilities may be eligible through age 18.
- The parent is responsible to help pay for child care. This is called the family co-payment. The co-payment may be as little as \$5.00 per week and varies according to the family's income and size.
- The parent may choose the provider of his or her choice. The parent may choose a child care center, a small family day care home, a group day care home or a relative who meets program requirements to care for his or her child.
- The parent who is receiving subsidy must choose an eligible child care provider. Relative providers must: complete an Agreement with the ELRC, comply with the participation requirements listed in the Agreement, and complete criminal history clearances in order to be eligible to participate in the Subsidized Child Care Program. The process for criminal history clearances is "CareCheck". CareCheck is the process used to fulfill the Department of Human Service's child protective services.
- If funding is not available at the time that a low-income, working parent applies and is determined eligible for subsidized child care, the child may be placed on a waiting list.