

JANUARY 2023

Ready. Set. Grow!

CAMBRIDGE OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD
NEWSLETTER



CAMBRIDGE
Office of Early Childhood

The mission of the Cambridge Office of Early Childhood is to **connect** the city's early childhood ecosystem, **align** early childhood services and information, and **advocate** for and **advance** the needs of all young children, their families, and the early childhood workforce.

The Cambridge Office of Early Childhood is a collaboration supported by the City of Cambridge and Cambridge Public Schools.



A LETTER FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Cambridge Early Childhood Community,

Over the holidays the federal government passed a \$1.7 trillion dollar spending bill, with some of this funding earmarked specifically for early childhood education. Specifically, the government will increase funding for Head Start and Early Head Start, CCDBG (which provides subsidies for child care across states), Preschool Development Grant Birth to 5 Program, IDEA Part B for Preschoolers, and IDEA Part C for Infants and Toddlers. It is exciting to see a continued, bipartisan focus on the importance of the early years and the need for increased funding to support such initiatives.

At the state level, initiatives like Strategies for Children's "[The Early Childhood Agenda](#)" and the launch of [Massachusetts ECE 101](#) are working to inform and support policy change to improve our state's early childhood ecosystem. I encourage you to learn more, stay connected, and get involved!

Here in Cambridge, we are continuing to draft policy and design what will become our city's Universal Pre-K System. If you are a program owner or administrator, and have not already had a chance to complete our capacity survey, I highly recommend that you do so ([Family Child Care Survey - Center Based Child Care Survey](#)). Your feedback is critical as we assess the scope and scale of the mixed-delivery system that we are slated to put in place in the very near future. It is our goal to identify our UPK partners this spring. Along with the survey, we are also scheduling 1:1 meetings with programs. Have questions about what UPK will look like in your program? Need support in making programmatic changes or decisions in preparation for UPK? Please reach out to us! We'd love to come visit your program and engage in conversations to help prepare you to be a part of our UPK system. Please contact Nicole Johnson, UPK Project Manager, at njohnson@cpsd.us for more information or to schedule a meeting.

I feel so lucky to be able to serve as an advocate and champion for the early education and care profession, and am excited to see all that we can accomplish in 2023. Happy New Year!

In partnership,



Dr. Lisa Grant, Executive Director



DR. LISA GRANT

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,
CAMBRIDGE OFFICE OF
EARLY CHILDHOOD**



Register this January for the **JK / Kindergarten Lottery!**

Will your child be 4 by March 31, 2023, or 5 by August 31, 2023?
APPLICATIONS ACCEPTED JANUARY 3-31, 2023

Apply Here &
Find More Info →



www.bit.ly/cpslottery

CPS Student Registration Center
welcome@cpsd.us | 617.349.6551
www.cpsd.us/departments/src



Find It Cambridge

www.finditcambridge.org



**Looking for activities and resources for
you and your family?**

Use Find It Cambridge to search for childcare,
housing, health services, free events & more!

Visit www.finditcambridge.org ■ **Call or text** 617.686.2998 ■ **Email** info@finditcambridge.org

Need help searching?

Call, text, or email Andrew.
He can help you find what you
are looking for.

STEAM

In The Early
Childhood
Classroom

Workshop Spotlight

For 4 consecutive weeks, a group of 18 educators from diverse backgrounds and life experiences, came together to dive deeper into how STEAM connects to children gaining the skills to be ready for school and beyond. These educators came from after-school programs, home visiting programs, and independent preschool childcare centers. The common thread that connected them all was a willingness to learn new ideas in community and grow their understanding of STEAM and School Readiness.

This is the second series of STEAM and School Readiness workshops hosted collaboratively by the Cambridge Office of Early Childhood and the Cambridge STEAM Initiative. The first series was held last Spring. One of the recruitment goals for this second cohort was to invest in the learners from the first cohort while inviting new learners into the cohort. Many of the educators who participated in the first series joined in this session also. The goal of these workshops is to make connections across programs and develop a new understanding of STEAM and school readiness.

Each week the workshop offered something hands-on and easily transferable into the classroom. Play, joy, and connection was common theme throughout. From connecting drumming to early literacy to seeing STEAM in action in the outdoor classrooms to how mindfulness can be infused in and around all programming activities. Educators also got to play themselves and learn from each other how to scaffold or extend many STEAM focused activities.

Preliminary data from the post surveys indicate a growth in most participants understanding of school readiness as well as STEAM. Participants also expressed that they are thinking about STEAM differently and that the joyful connections they made during the workshops will stay with them.

If you would like to know more about STEAM in the early childhood classroom, please reach out to Liz Barlock, School Readiness Manager, or Barb MacEachern, STEAM Program Quality Manager.



Fun Ways to Promote Movement



It's hard to ensure that kids get enough movement time in the winter, when we're inside more and playgrounds are less accessible. That's why we created two fun activities guides, one tailored for classrooms, and another for use at home!

- Indoor Movement Ideas for EEC includes 18 games and activities that can be done in the classroom!
- Get Families Moving At Home includes 22 games and activities, plus links to free videos for even more fun movement at home!

You can promote these ideas with teachers to help mix up what activities are being done in each classroom. You can also use these ideas with families, send in school newsletters, on social media or just provide the link for folks. These guides (and so much more) can be found on the resources page at the Cambridge Public Health Department website.

Contact Dawn Olcott, Manager of Public Health Nutrition, at dolcott@challiance.org with questions or interest in this or other healthy eating active living projects.

**H.
E.
A.
L.**

U P D A T E S

FOR THE FIELD



Center For Families Baby U Program is beginning in January 2023!

We'll be leading parenting workshops on Saturday mornings for 14 weeks, focusing on a different topic each week. At the end of each workshop, we'll join in family play activities. Our focus is on creating a space where parents can connect with each other, and learn new information on a variety of topics, including brain development, reading, discipline, and stress management. The program works to support and strengthen parent-child relationships and share community resources.

If you live in the Port, East Cambridge, or Riverside neighborhoods and have a child 3 years old or younger, you are eligible to be a part of this session of Baby U.

**For more information and to register,
contact Angela at 617-349-6204
or aconway@cambridgema.gov.**

**This series will run in-person.
Childcare is provided!**

naeyc[®]

Week of the Young Child[®]

SAVE THE DATE!

**And get ready for NAEYC's 2023 Week of
the Young Child[®] celebration!**

Join us April 1-7, 2023 for our annual event
celebrating early learning, young children, their
teachers, and families.



U P D A T E S

FOR THE FIELD



MASSACHUSETTS
Department of
Early Education and Care

Department of Early Education & Care News



The Board of Early Education and Care meets monthly from September to June. The next board meeting will be held on:

Tuesday, January 10, 2023 at 1:00pm

For meeting locations, or any additional information please call:
EEC Main Office at (617) 988-6600

You can watch the meeting live on the Department's YouTube Channel [here](#).



THE CENTER FOR
FAMILIES

The Center for Families Newsletter is now available!

Inside you'll find information about a wide variety of resources and programs from Cambridge Dads to Mindfulness Mondays to free resource bags for families, and more.

To read the January Newsletter click [HERE!](#)



EDUCATOR RESOURCES

Tools to Support Child Development

Continuing its impactful work to keep practitioners across the sector fully informed about the critical importance of data, measurement and evaluation in early childhood, the [EC PRISM project/Institute for Child Success](#) team has just released a full slate of new and/or improved resources to help empower your work. Some of the highlights include -

01

Social-Emotional Development Measurement Guide

Social-emotional development is a critical component of a child's growth and their ability to connect to the world around them. Explore the [Social-Emotional Development Measurement Guide](#) to learn more about how to promote and measure this area of a child's development.

02

Screening Tools For Home Visiting Programs

Check out the new [Home Visiting Fact Sheet](#) from EC PRISM to learn about how screening tools can be used in home visiting programs, and see which screening tools are available and best suited to your needs on their website.

Early Childhood Mental Health

"The role of caregivers and providers is critical in fostering good mental health, so we must support the needs of the adults who care for children, through both individual and systems level approaches."

Dr. Lindsey Burghardt
Chief Science Officer, Center on the Developing Child

Watch this video from the Center for The Developing Child

<https://developingchild.harvard.edu/resources/inbrief-early-childhood-mental-health-video/>

Read more about Early Childhood Mental Health from the Center for the Developing Child

<https://developingchild.harvard.edu/science/deep-dives/mental-health/>

JANUARY-FEBRUARY 2023

UPCOMING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES



JANUARY 2023



Monday, January 9 @ 2 pm ET



The Case Against Preschool Suspension and Expulsion



Dr. Kate Zissner
Associate Professor of
Community and Prevention
Research
University of Chicago Illinois



Dr. Shantel Meek
Director
Children's Equity Project,
Arizona State University



**Senator Christina
Pacione Zayas**
Senator
Illinois Senate



Dr. Tunette Powell
Assistant Research Professor and
Director of K12 Education
Children's Equity Project,
Arizona State University

Did you know that preschoolers are expelled three times more often than students in K-12 programs? That young boys are expelled four times more often than girls? And that Black preschoolers are expelled almost twice as often as their peers?

On Monday, January 9, The Hunt Institute's Early Efforts web series will unpack **The Case Against Preschool Suspension and Expulsion** with an expert panel that you won't want to miss.

You can register now by clicking the link [HERE](#).

**Start Early - National Home Visiting Summit:
Registration is Open!**

The 12th annual Summit will be held virtually on March 14-16, 2023. Early bird rates are available until January 13—register now to secure your spot at the best rate!

Join a growing community of systems leaders, researchers, practitioners, policy advocates, families, key partners and decision makers in a collaborative pursuit to advance the home visiting field. Engage with peers and experts in live interactive sessions and at your own pace on-demand and in Spanish with the new Spanish language track.

To learn more, visit the Summit website [HERE](#).

UPCOMING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

(CONTINUED)

JANUARY 2023

Supporting Trauma-Informed Play to Facilitate Healing in Early Childhood Programs

January 11, 2023

2:00pm - 3:30pm

Presenter: Dr. Barbara Sorrels, Author, Founder and CEO, Connected Kids

Sponsored by Second Step

Play and play based learning are important for healthy growth and development of all children and is psychologically and physically restorative for children with a history of trauma. This session will focus on the benefits of play to healthy brains and bodies and will include practical strategies for creating effective play-based classrooms to help children flourish and heal.

Join this webinar to learn to:

- Identify the key components of a safe and effective learning/caring environment: predictable, home-like, safe communication and attention to the child's internal state.
- Understand the importance of routine and how to effectively establish classroom procedures that support children's autonomy.
- Understand the neurobiological power of play.
- Identify essential types of play for trauma responsive environments and how to introduce play to children.

(continued in next column)

All of the webinars are recorded.

You can earn .2 CEUs for each webinar. The cost is \$15 paid to University of Oklahoma online when you apply.

[REGISTER HERE](#)

Engaging Dads

January 19, 2023

10:00am - 12:00pm

Presenters: Michael Ramos, Fatherhood Consultant at the Children's Trust

Chris White, Fatherhood Initiative Coordinator at the Children's Trust

The positive impacts of father involvement on child wellbeing are well documented, yet family support services are often centered on mothers and children. This workshop explores barriers to father engagement and elevates the practices, attitudes, and behaviors that support best practices with fathers. Participants will learn concrete strategies for making their organizations inclusive of fathers, discuss the benefits of engaging fathers, and learn strategies to connect men with their families.

Questions? Please contact:

fatherhood@childrenstrustma.org

UPCOMING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

(CONTINUED)

Reimagine Documentation to Support the Quest for Program Quality, by Susan Stacey

January 25, 2023

2:00pm - 3:30pm

Presenter: Susan Stacey, Author/Teacher Educator
Nova Scotia College of Early Childhood Education
Sponsored by Storypark

The last two years have been challenging in terms of holding on to our values and intentions for our programs and for ourselves as professionals. This webinar will explore how you can support the use of documentation to help educators refresh their thinking about practice, gain insight into children's actions, and continue to learn? We will uncover how documentation can become a form of professional learning, and how raw documentation is possible – despite the challenges!!

Join this webinar to:

- Re-examine documentation through new lenses
- Learn to help teachers make documentation practical
- Uncover the professional learning within documentation

All of the webinars are recorded.

You can earn .2 CEUs for each webinar. The cost is \$15 paid to University of Oklahoma online when you apply.

[REGISTER HERE](#)

Strengthening Families Protective Factors: An Effective Approach to Supporting Families

January 26, 2023

9:30am - 12:30pm

Presenters: Tammy Bernardi, MA, Prevention Training Coordinator at the Children's Trust
Haley Riley, MSW, LCSW, Family Support Training & Technical Support Coordinator at the Children's Trust

(continued in next column)

The Strengthening Families framework is an evidence-based approach that identifies five Protective Factors that, when present and robust in families, help increase family strengths, enhance child development, and reduce the likelihood of child abuse and neglect. It is based on engaging families, programs, and communities in building five protective factors:

- Parental resilience
- Social connections
- Knowledge of parenting and child development
- Concrete support in times of need
- Social and emotional competence of children

The Protective Factors provide both a framework and an interrelated approach to serving families well, and to reducing incidences of child abuse and neglect. This workshop is considered a "101" or basic training for those who are not familiar with the Protective Factors framework. Participants in this course will understand the five Protective Factors and the Seven Key Strategies that support the presence of the Protective Factors. All participants will understand how the Strengthening Families framework supports the healthy emotional development of children and prevents incidences of child maltreatment.

Learning Objectives:

- Describe the key elements of the Strengthening Families Five Protective Factors.
- Identify ways that you and your work support the development of protective factors in the families you serve.
- Assess how you can help families build protective factors through implementing the seven key strategies.

[REGISTER HERE](#)

UPCOMING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

(CONTINUED)

Bringing the Protective Factors Framework to Life In Your Work: Introduction and Overview

Languages: English, Spanish
Sponsored by ProSolutions Training
Two-hour class available for download with \$15 purchase

This course will provide an overview of the Strengthening Families movement and the protective factors framework and ideas for how you can apply these concepts in your work. This training is designed to be used by anyone who works with children and families – in any field. We use a mix of examples from early care and education settings, child welfare settings, and family interactions. Some of the video resources draw heavily from an early care and education background. While this may not reflect the work you do every day, the videos may open your eyes to what can be done in the context of high quality early care and education, and how those providers can be your partners in the community, an “extra set of eyes” on a child, and a key supporter of a family going through difficult times.

After participating in this course, you will be able to:

- List five protective factors that help keep families strong and prevent child abuse and neglect
- Identify everyday strategies that help families to build those protective factors
- Understand what it means to work with families in a strength-based way
- Become familiar with existing tools and resources that assess and support the building of protective factors.
- After completing this coursework, you will receive a certificate of completion, 0.2 CEUs and, early childhood training approval in Massachusetts.

REGISTER [HERE](#)



FEBRUARY 2023

We hope you can join BTC for our second annual National Substance Use Disorder (SUD) Summit, Families in Recovery: The First 1,000 Days – Pregnancy, Newborns, and the First Years

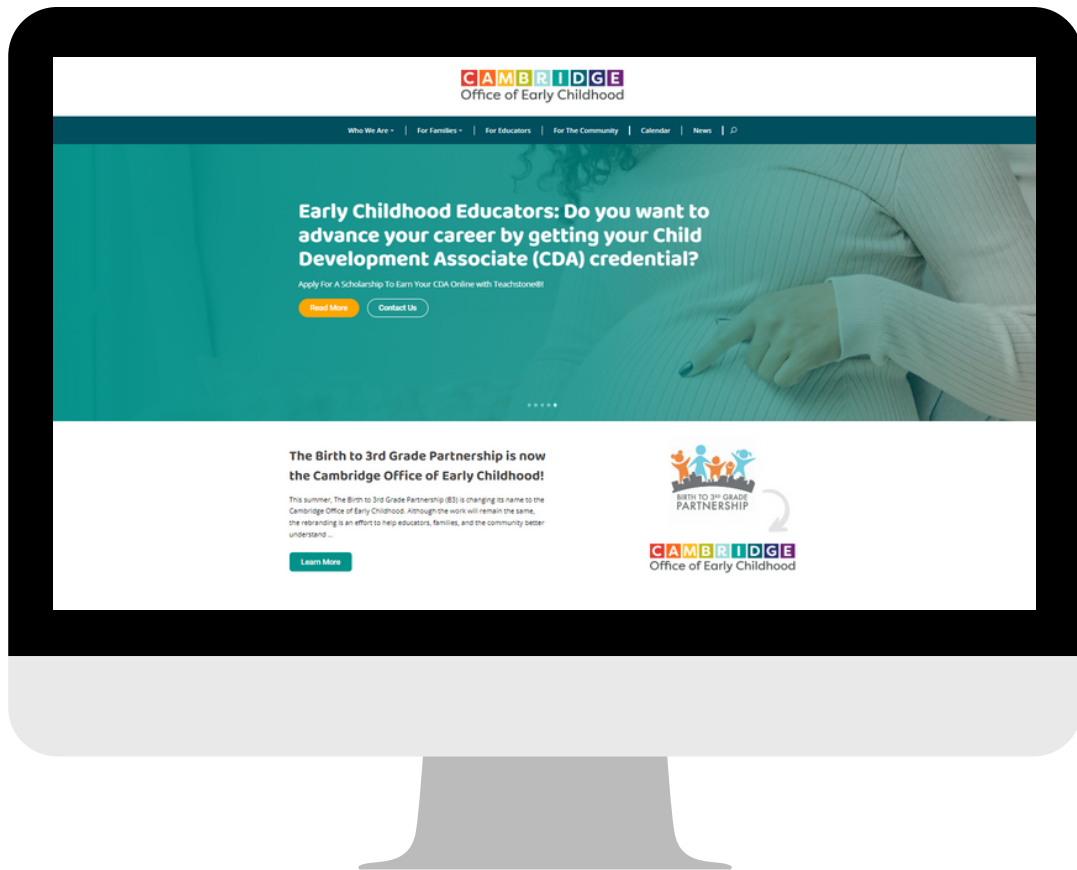
**Wednesday, February 1, 2023,
11 AM – 5:30 PM ET / 8 AM – 2:30 PM PT.**

Families in recovery are the experts on their families and their children — and on the unique challenges and opportunities of their first 1,000 days. This year, BTC is inviting family members with lived experience with SUD, including those who now devote their lives to supporting other families in recovery, to share with us their expertise.

The all-day virtual summit will feature three nationwide conversations on peer-recovery approaches to centering family voice; building on families’ strengths, resources, and wisdom; and shifting power to overcome racial and economic inequities in access to treatment and other resources. Each conversation will focus on a distinct period in a family’s development: preconception and pregnancy, the newborn, and infants and toddlers. Learn more and register [HERE](#).

Need information on all things Early Childhood in Cambridge? Visit the Cambridge Office of Early Childhood website!

www.earlychildhoodcambridge.org



What Information Can I Learn From The Website?

www.earlychildhoodcambridge.org is a one-stop-shop for the Cambridge community to access information and resources related to early childhood education and programs. The new website culminates a rebranding process for the Office of Early Childhood, formerly known as the Cambridge Birth to 3rd Grade Partnership. Some of the information on our websites includes:

- Child Care Resources
- Paying For Childcare
- Preschool Scholarships
- Preschool Lottery
- Early Learning & School Readiness
- CPS Programs
- Program Quality Improvement
- Educator Resources
- Professional Development
- Workshops & Trainings
- Career Pathways
- Announcements & Events
- Collaborating Organizations
- Publications
- Research & Evaluation
- Who We Are
- COEC Contact Information

Need additional assistance? Please email us at earlychildhood@cpsd.us

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The Cambridge Office of Early Childhood is a collaboration supported by the City of Cambridge and Cambridge Public Schools.



CAMBRIDGE
PUBLIC SCHOOLS