

Key Notes

A Publication of the Southeast Regional Key

Key Notes—It's BAAAACCKKK

The Southeast Regional Key at PHMC is working hard to streamline communication with providers and the ECE community in the region. You may have noticed an increase in emails through the Pelican system. Pelican is the statewide system, and we are anxious to utilize it as a means of communication. We have heard that there have been some problems with duplication and "flooding", and we apologize

for that. Please be aware, however, that we are working on this issue.

To better streamline communication from our office, we are creating a weekly email "flash" that will contain all of the important information for that week. This will make communication predictable. The information will be identified as "must read", "important", and "for your information" so

the key pieces will not be missed.

As much of the information will be issued by email, it is imperative that we have a current, valid email address for each program. Please verify with your specialist that we have your email address.

We appreciate your patience as we refine our process. Keep us informed so that we may keep you informed!

Grant Paperwork Now Available

Is your site eligible for a Keystone STARS grant? The new grant paperwork is now available.

As in previous years, the Keystone STARS program is offering Start with STARS grants for those providers

just entering the program. There is also the STAR 1 Support grant that is available for a maximum of two times. The Merit Awards are available for programs at the STAR 2, 3, or 4 level. Staff at STAR 2, 3, or 4 level sites may be eligible

for an Education and Retention Award.

Grant Request paperwork and the Full-time Equivalency (FTE) tool are available on the PA Keys website, or through your Keystone STARS Specialist.

Electronic Payments

In an effort to get grant checks in the hands of our practitioners as soon as possible, we are offering electronic payment. Similar to paypal or direct deposit, the electronic payments

will eliminate the need for paper checks, deposit slips, and waiting in line at the bank!

If you have not already done so, please complete

the *attached form* and return with a copy of a voided check to the Southeast Regional Key as quickly as possible. The form can be mailed, emailed, or faxed.

Use Merit Award for Playground to meet DPW

Effective May 9, 2009, the Department of Public Welfare (DPW) regulation for playground safety surface was updated. Code 3290.102b of the regulations now follows those of the United States Consumer Public Safety Commission's *Outdoor Home Playground Safety Handbook*, Publication 324. This means that

the protective surfacing material must be safe and shock absorbing for a fall from the highest designated play surface on a piece of equipment.

Many child care programs in the region will now need to make changes to their playground to meet this requirement. Providers are encour-

aged to consider the use of Merit Award funding to make the necessary updates to their playgrounds. The goal is to provide an area for children to develop their motor skills that is as safe as possible.

For a copy of the Consumer Public Safety Commission handbook, see the box below.

<http://www.cpsc.gov/cpsc/pub/pubs/324.pdf> or call (800) 638-2772

Out of School Time Resource Fair

Save the Date!! It's the 2nd ANNUAL PHILADELPHIA OST RESOURCE FAIR! When? Monday, November 8, 2010 from 10:00 AM - 1:00 PM Where? Free Library of Phila-

delphia, 1901 Vine Street, Philadelphia 19103 Registration information will be available shortly. For details, contact John Price III at johnep@sp2.upenn.edu.

ECE Summit

The Early Childhood Education Summit is scheduled for Oct. 13-15th at the Penn Stater Conference Center. Check www.PACCA.org for more information.

Read for the Record

October is promising to be an exciting month for child care in PA. On Oct. 7, many programs will be participating in the "Read for the Record" event. The goal

of this event is to raise awareness of the importance of early literacy by breaking a world record by having the same book read to more than 2.5 million

children, . The book this year is the classic *The Snowy Day*, by Ezra Jack Keats. For more information see below.

www.readfortherecord.org at SERK contact Antoine Murray 267-773-4410

Notes from the Nurse

The fall edition of the ECELS newsletter, Health Link Online, is now available. Visit the ECELS website below to access this valuable resource.

ECELS would also like to remind everyone that anyone working in child care should get influenza vaccine this fall. Free flu vaccine will be of-

fered by the PA Department of Health at the Early Childhood Summit conference in State College in October. Be prepared!

www.ecels-healthychildcarepa.org