



**Issue #49**  
January, February, March 2022



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**Mosinee | WI 54455**

(Across from Central WI Airport,  
Baymen Professional Building)

**715.841.9490**

**1.800.628.8534**

**www.childcaring.org**

**info@childcaring.org**



#### Office hours:

Monday-Friday 8:30am - 4:30pm

Limited Office Coverage M-Th

Additional office hours available  
by appointment.

#### Our Mission

To enhance and support a quality  
early childhood education system  
by providing resource and referral  
services to families, child care  
programs, and communities.

## The Resource Connection

### We Support a Quality Early Childhood System!

#### 2021 Community & Child Care Provider Stakeholder Surveys

Each year we request feedback on the services we offer from both child care providers and community members. This gives us an opportunity to assess needs in our area and gauge the satisfaction with our work. We also use the information collected to guide us in our future planning. Data collected for the 2021 Stakeholder surveys included:

#### Top 5 concerns about early care & education from Provider and Community Stakeholders

- Availability of child care slots
- Shortage of qualified staff
- Cost of child care
- Low wages/availability of benefits for child care staff
- Quality of programs

#### Suggestions on how Childcaring could better serve child care providers:

- Grants to providers
- More variety of trainings
- Advocate more for providers

#### Top 5 services received from Childcaring in the past year according to survey results:

##### Community Stakeholder:

- Community Collaboration/Meetings
- Child care referral search
- Data on supply/demand of child care
- Other: newsletter and weekly email
- Professional development and training

##### Provider Stakeholder:

- YoungStar services
- Professional development and training
- Good Start Grants or Scholarship Aid
- Provider support
- Child Care Provider Portal support



Andrea is wearing  
Childcaring's NEW,  
Support a Quality  
Early Childhood  
System t-shirt!

#### Services child care providers indicated as most helpful or supportive:

*"Over this past year and a half I've had many questions and concerns/fears and they were always there to answer my questions. They would look into things that they weren't sure about always contacted me back in a timely fashion."*

*"Good Start Grants and Scholarship Aid for our families. The last year has been very difficult financially for many of our families due to COVID and other illnesses. This program has helped families have peace of mind knowing they can keep their children enrolled in quality child care with the financial assistance."*

*"I appreciate my time in the huddles. I think these are a wonderful way for providers to connect and I wish more providers would get in on them."*

Serving: Adams | Clark | Langlade | Lincoln | Marathon | Marquette | Portage | Taylor | Waushara | and Wood Counties

## YOUNGSTAR CORNER

### How Does YoungStar Work?

**Step 1: Apply to YoungStar.** Providers who want to participate in YoungStar can do so by filling out a YoungStar Contract. To download a YoungStar contract, as well as find more information on participating in YoungStar, visit the YoungStar Contracts page: <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/youngstar/providers/contract>

**Step 2: Local YoungStar Offices Process the Application.** When the local YoungStar office receives the Contract, they will reach out to the provider to let them know that their forms have been received and to answer any additional questions the provider may have.

**Step 3: Technical Assistance is Provided.** If a provider requests technical assistance as part of their application, then staff from the local YoungStar office will contact the provider within four (4) weeks of receiving the completed application to set up the first visit. A Technical Consultant will work with the program to identify opportunities for quality improvement and assist with creating a plan for how they will use their time together. Once consultation has been completed, the program can move on to the rating process.

**Step 4: Provider Is Rated.** Ratings will happen in one of two ways:

**1. Technical Rating** - For a technical rating, the program's consultant will observe and verify information from the YoungStar Evaluation/Rating Criteria. A technical rating is generated based on the information entered, along with the provider's verified education and training information. The consultant then reviews the rating results with the provider and the Department of Children and Families (DCF) will post the rating on the YoungStar website.

OR

**2. Formal Rating with Observation** - For a formal rating, the program's consultant will observe and verify information from the YoungStar Evaluation/Rating Criteria, just as they would for a technical rating. The difference between a technical and formal rating is that for a formal rating an Environment Rating Scale (ERS) observer will visit the program to complete the required ERS observations. The ERS Observer and Technical Consultant will then review the rating results with the provider, and DCF will post the Formal Rating on the YoungStar website.

Visit the Environment Rating Scales page to learn more about ERS tools:  
<https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/youngstar/providers/ers>

### Child Care Assistance Available for Eligible Families

Families should not have to choose between affordable and high quality child care.

There are options for families that may need help paying for child care.

For more information, contact Childcaring or visit our website:

<https://childcaring.org/needhelppaying>

Scan QR code with the camera on your smartphone:



**Kelly Borchardt** ~ Executive Director

**Micki Krueger** ~ Assistant Director

**Linda Francis** ~ Financial Manager

**Audrey Bittner** ~ Early Childhood Consultant/Trainer

**Kristine Joyce** ~ Early Childhood Consultant/Trainer

**Mary Olson** ~ Early Childhood Consultant/Trainer

**Andrea Mueller** ~ Early Childhood Consultant/Trainer

**Lori Shafranski** ~ Early Childhood Consultant/Trainer

**Carrie Steinke** ~ Early Childhood Consultant/Trainer

**Kao L. Xiong** ~ Early Childhood Consultant/  
Trainer - Bilingual

**Gayle Schiszik** ~ Certifier/Pre-licensing Consultant

**Rachele Johnson** ~ Training/Program Coordinator

**Tracy Verjinsky** ~ Program Coordinator

**Shelley Nelson** ~ Referral & Communication Specialist

**Tara Biebl** ~ Resource & Referral Specialist

### Provider Support / Advocate Groups

**Adams, Clark, Langlade, Lincoln,  
Marathon, Marquette & Waushara  
County:**

Contact Childcaring if interested in developing  
an advocate group at 800.628.8534

**Portage County:**

Portage County Child Care Association  
Joan Garski at 715.341.5873

Portage County Leaders  
Becky Helf at 715-346-4370

**Taylor County:** Meet the 3rd Monday of month  
For more information, call Kelly Emmerich at  
715.465.0993

**Wood County:**

Marshfield Area Child Care Association  
Deb Decker 715-898-2220



# Early Childhood Professionals Make a Difference and Support Young Learners

Are You or Someone You Know Interested  
in Providing Child Care?

*"We can be that special person for them when they are away from their grown-ups, we share many smiles and fun times with them and comfort them when they need it. Teaching them to take turns or be kind is the start of continuing those traits later in life."* - Nina M., Regulated Child Care Provider

Early care providers who enjoy helping children grow and learn are needed. If you are excited about committing to a career that includes making a difference in the lives of young children and families, early care may be the profession for you. Communities need child care for children of all ages, but especially for infants and toddlers.

#### Do you have questions like:

- How many children can I legally care for?
- What are the benefits to becoming regulated?
- What classes or training do I need to get started?
- What would I charge the families?



Childcaring is offering FREE virtual information sessions, facilitated by Childcaring Certifier/Pre-licensing Technical Consultant Gayle Schiszik, 12:30-2:30pm:

**Wednesday, January 26th (Register by Friday, January 21) -OR- Tuesday, March 1st (Register by Thursday, February 24).**

These sessions will be presented virtually by RingCentral. To achieve optimal experience, you must have a reliable internet connection and technology that supports video and audio. A link to log into the session will be sent via email prior to the start date.

#### Start-Up Grants are Available!

Eligible providers have used startup grant funding to purchase equipment, materials, and classes required to obtain regulation (ie: safety gates, developmentally appropriate materials for a variety of age groups, smoke detectors, etc.).

A regulated child care provider said, "This grant helped me to get new stuff for the children that will last. Also gates and covers to keep them safe." If you became regulated within the past three months you may still be eligible to apply.

#### Child Care Counts: Stabilization Payment Program

To support Wisconsin's early care and education community, The Department of Children and Families (DCF) has also launched an updated Child Care Counts: Stabilization Payment Program. Regulated child care providers are eligible to receive monthly payments through 2023, providing the financial stability they need to stay open, to recruit and retain qualified staff, and to continue providing high-quality care for children. A total of \$351 million in funds will be available over the next 18 months and will be distributed through two programs targeting the challenges early care and education providers are facing. More information about this program can be found at:

<https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/childcare/payments>

- Note: Payment amounts are subject to change based on available funding and applications received.

**Many group child care centers are looking for staff.** If you're interested in working at a child care center please contact Childcaring for our latest Weekly Email that contains potential job openings and sign up for our list serve here: <https://childcaring.org/newsletters>. To learn more about providing child care or to register for a free session contact Childcaring at: 1-800-628-8534 or visit: [www.childcaring.org](http://www.childcaring.org) for more information.

## Child Care Counts: Stabilization Payment Program

The next application/update week is  
January 17-21, 2022, at 11:59 p.m.

Here are some tips to help you with your new  
application or updates to your current  
Child Care Counts information.

Review the UPDATED Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs).

**Do I have to upload new verification documents?** You are only required to upload new verification documents if you have entered a significant change in child/staff information. If additional documentation is required, you will be taken to the Verification Documents. You will need to upload attendance records for all children and/or staff entered on your application for the Count Week.

See DCF helpful new videos and resource guides in the Resources and Guides section to help you complete or update your Child Care Counts application.

Note: Spanish Closed Captioning is available. Click the Settings icon on the video and select Spanish to view closed captions.

See the Child Care Counts Calendar for upcoming Count and Updates Weeks.

<https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/childcare/calendar>

Email [DCFDECECOVID19CCPayments@wisconsin.gov](mailto:DCFDECECOVID19CCPayments@wisconsin.gov) with questions. Please note that email is recommended for faster response. If you are unable to email, you may call and leave your detailed questions at: 608-535-3650. The Call Center is open 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. Monday - Friday.







# Training Opportunities

Scan this QR code or visit our website to view our online training calendar for the most up-to-date training opportunities.

## Register Online for Childcaring Trainings

To register for individual trainings, visit [www.the-registry.org](http://www.the-registry.org), click Search for Trainings and search by Course Title. Training information is sent to the email address listed in the Registry. You need to have a current and unique email address in your Registry profile. If you do not receive the information, check your spam/junk mail or contact Childcaring.

### CPR with AED

The training will provide participants with Infant, Child, & Adult CPR. Childcaring, Mosinee 6:00pm-9:00pm  
\$45 / Book: \$5

- Tuesday, January 18
- Tuesday, February 15
- Tuesday, March 15
- Tuesday, April 19
- Tuesday, May 24

### Exploring the Third Edition of the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale, Supporting Program's Participating in YoungStar - Presented Online (3 spots open)

This five-hour online course will provide you with a comprehensive look at the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale-Third Edition, referred to as ECERS-3. ECERS-3 is designed to assess center-based childcare programs for preschool children 3 years through 5 years of age.

- 01/13/2022 - 01/19/2022
- Register by January 9 / \$20



### Exploring the Third Edition of the Infant/Toddler Environment Rating Scale, Supporting Program's Participating in YoungStar - Presented Online

This five-hour online course will provide you with a comprehensive look at the Infant/Toddler Environment Rating Scale-Third Edition, referred to as ITERS-3. ITERS-3 is designed to assess center-based childcare programs for children birth to 3 years.

- 4/7/2022 - 4/13/2022
- Register by April 3 / \$20

### Abusive Head Trauma Prevention Training for Child Care Providers - Presented Virtually

Gain awareness of AHT, its adverse consequences and how it is preventable.

- February 17
- April 21
- 10:30am-12:30pm
- Register week prior/\$15

### WINTER PARENT CAFÉ

Parent Cafés help build strong families using The Five Protective Factors. At a parent café you will be able to connect with other local parents, learn strategies to strengthen relationships with your children and receive concrete support for your family.

Please join us for some great conversation about ways to keep going when parenting gets hard.

#### VIRTUAL

Theme: Seeing the beauty in the blizzard

- Thursday, January 27
- 6:30-7:30pm



Join us virtually from your computer, tablet or smartphone

Please register at:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/winter21cafe>

Or use the QR code.

We are excited to announce that each participant will receive a gift card thanks to a Family Support Emergency Funds Grant through the Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Board.

Link to join the virtual cafe will be emailed the morning of the session.

For questions or to register by phone, please contact Childcaring at 800-628-8534.





## with Regulated Early Childhood Staff at: Licensed Group Center, Amherst's Own Child Care Inc

### What does staff enjoy most about working in early care and education?

We appreciate that this is a career where you get tackled with hugs from young children yelling your name and saying hi!

### What was your favorite part about participating in the Virtual Huddles for Child Care Providers?

It is great to get feedback in the Virtual Huddles from other child care providers on how they handle different situations. Very helpful conversations we have had in the huddle include: information about the Child Care Counts program; different ways to handle stress in the classrooms; and precautions other providers have set with COVID cases going up again.

### How has YoungStar helped your program grow?

YoungStar helps us provide guidance around the whole child through lesson planning and curriculum. The program supports our center staff by creating a uniform structure for educators to follow. We also appreciate that we can reach out to a Technical Consultant for additional help if needed. Our families know that when they leave their child at our center every day, their child is building a love of learning through play and life skills.



## Director Cohort Provides a Network of Helpful Connections

The Director Cohort is a group of individuals who lead and gather with a commonality. Directors from entry level to experienced veterans meet to share their knowledge with one another. The directors are very busy professionals who have been gifting themselves some time to meet as a group.

The cohort meets monthly in person or virtually. The first question directors are always asked when entering the cohort is "what do you want to get out of this cohort?" These topics include: reflective practices, coaching/mentoring, staff evaluations, learning environment, staff expectations, communication/listening skills, building relationships, and self-care. Throughout the four years that the cohort has been offered, it seems the information revolves around these same topics all pieced together to make the larger picture of success.

The September cohort meeting was in person. The weather was beautiful and the directors participated in a gallery walk. They had one-on-one conversations while walking outside regarding topics like: on-going cycles of sickness, staffing shortages, closures, and financial burdens. The directors then discussed the outcomes of the gallery walk together as a group.

The conversations grow deeper as the directors share personal experiences. They laughed about their wish for a 40-hour week and how chocolate helps make the day better. When we think about the "why" or the "answers" that people seek in a Director Cohort, it is ultimately to be supported. The group comes together to grow, learn and to help each other find the answers they are seeking.

Contact Childcaring if you would like to be placed on a wait list for a director cohort opportunity.





# Talking about Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion with Children



Children are naturally curious about the world around them. As parents and child care providers, you can surely think of a time (or several!) when a child asked you a pretty big question you weren't sure how to answer. For example, children might ask why their friend has leg braces, or has darker skin, or has hair that feels different, or dresses in unfamiliar ways, or lives with two moms.

Often, when we're faced with questions that deal with other people's differences and identities, our first reaction is fear—"What if I say the wrong thing? What if I teach this child to say the wrong thing?" That fear is a sign of your recognition that the stakes for appreciating difference are high. We don't want to hurt anyone's feelings or be offensive! Sometimes we let that fear of making a mistake stop the conversation! When we "shush" children, we teach them that it's embarrassing or shameful to acknowledge difference.

## So what can you do instead?

Allow children to explore their natural curiosity! This is a really important part of the learning process. Noticing difference is not a bad thing!

## Ask children what they have heard and seen.

They pick up on a lot! You may have to clarify some misunderstandings.

**Explain that each person is unique** in how they look, how they dress, what their bodies are like, what their families are like, etc.

**Be honest** that sometimes people are treated differently by others around them because of who they are or what they look like.

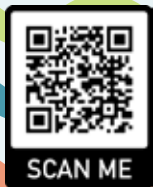
**Children might ask questions you can't answer.** That's okay! Tell them you're not sure, and then work with them to find accurate information.

**Embrace this chance to talk** with children about empathy, and to empower them to stand up for others when they think someone is being treated badly simply for who they are or what they look like.

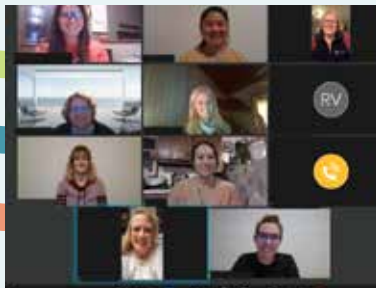
Article submitted by: Lindsay Bernhagen, Ph.D. (she/her/hers), Director, Center for Inclusive Teaching and Learning at UW-Stevens Point



## 2022 VIRTUAL HUDDLES FOR CHILD CARE PROVIDERS



Scan QR code with the camera on your smartphone to register.



"I enjoy getting different ideas, sometimes I am bored with the same routine. It is good to have a place to speak comfortably about some of the stressors that we deal with each and every day and more so this past year." – Regulated Child Care Provider

### Connect to share ideas, concerns, and resources

Virtual Huddles allow child care providers to share experiences, discuss issues and help each other.

- Examples of past huddle topics include:
- Child Care Counts program
  - Supporting staff in times of stress
  - Fundraiser opportunities
  - Strategies for working with various challenging behaviors
  - COVID protocols and quarantining

### There are separate huddles for:

#### Group Center Staff

Last Wednesday of the month from 1-2pm

- January 26
- February 23
- March 30

#### Family Child Care

Thursdays from 6-7pm

- January 13
- February 10
- March 10

### Chance to Win!

Everyone who joins in the huddles will have their name entered in a gift card drawing. The more huddles you attend, the more times your name is entered. There will be a separate drawing for the Family Child Care Huddle and the Group Center Huddle. The two winners will be announced on Facebook Monday, April 4. Winners will also be contacted by phone.

### Register Now!

(At least 3 days prior to the huddle date)  
Email: [info@childcarings.org](mailto:info@childcarings.org) or  
scan the QR code ABOVE  
Call: 715.841.9490 or 1.800.628.8534

Virtual huddles will be through Zoom, powered by RingCentral. To access, participants may need to download an app to a device such as a computer, tablet, or smart phone. Participation by telephone is also available, however Zoom is encouraged as information could be shared visually.

## Visit & Like the Childcarings FB page!



Childcarings is planning three holiday prize drawings. Like the Childcarings Facebook page and then enter/comment for your chance to win.



## Start with your goal, then go searching for your activities:

**WMELS B.EL.2** Exhibits eye-hand coordination, strength, control, and object manipulation.

Children need a lot of practice with a pincer grasp before they can successfully use a writing tool. Crumpling aluminum foil into small balls would be an example which also works on strengthening fingers. Let the children put those balls into the sand table to find amongst the sand and pull out - or use a sifter.



Pinterest has endless pincer grasp ideas. An additional idea to work on eye-hand coordination would be to tear holes out of the construction paper that the children are going to use to paint or color on so they have to avoid the holes in the paper and manipulate around them. Using a cotton ball as a painting tool promotes the pincer grasp.



You may have noticed that children who are on devices a lot do not have a strong pincer grasp - the use of their fingers for devices is a totally different muscle movement. That makes practicing a pincer grasp all the more important. I would not belabor having children hold a pencil correctly before having a strong pincer grasp - they are not ready.

Submitted by: Beth Tepper, CESA 9

## HELPING PARENTS WITH WHAT THEY NEED RESPONDING TO CHALLENGING BEHAVIORS OF CHILDREN

Sometimes what we see as challenging behaviors can be typical for young children who have not yet developed executive functioning. If you are unsure how to respond you are not alone. Consider these tips:

**YOUR REACTION** • Simple things like counting to 10 before you respond and taking a deep breath may help you keep yourself in check and calm.

**FOCUSING ON THE CHILD** • Find a new activity or change environment (take a walk, go to park, get physical exercise). Here are some resources:

- [What Can I do When my Child Misbehaves?](#) (Parenting Network)
- [Tips for Responding to Challenging Behavior in Young Children](#) (Pyramid Equity Project)
- [Managing Problem Behavior at Home](#) - A guide to more confident, consistent, and effective parenting (Child Mind Institute)
- [Challenging Behaviors](#) (Zero to Three)
- [Parent Education](#) - Child Abuse & Neglect Prevention Board

**SETTING ROUTINES** • Routines may help prevent challenging behaviors before they start. Here are some resource guides to help build routines for children with challenging behaviors:

- [Family Routine Based Support Guide for Children with Challenging Behavior - ages 4-8](#) (Tennessee CSEFEL Pyramid Model Partnership)
- [Positive Solutions for Families](#) (NCPMI)

**WRITE YOUR OWN CARD** • List the top 3 things you want to remember when your child is demonstrating a challenging behavior.

WHAT I SHOULD DO WHEN MY CHILD IS DEMONSTRATING CHALLENGING BEHAVIORS:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

children.wi.gov

FILL OUT • CUT-OUT • KEEP IT CLOSE

Can I help you?

**ASK FOR HELP** • It's OK to ask for help. We all need it at certain times. [Five for Families](#) offers ideas.

**LOOK FOR ADVICE** • Have a go-to list already written of people you trust to ask for advice or help.



## Enroll in Ready4K Today and Build Stronger Relationships with your Young Children

Ready4K is an evidence-based family engagement curriculum delivered via text messages through DCF's partner, ParentPowered. Each week, caregivers of children ages birth to 11 receive short text messages with fun facts and easy tips on how to promote a child's development by building on existing family routines. Ready4K empowers parents and family members as early learning partners

by sparking everyday teachable moments. It is currently available in several languages, including: English, Spanish, Hmong, Arabic, Russian, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Potawatomi. Burmese texting will also be available soon!

If you have children ages birth to 11, you can sign up online today!

Please contact [wipdg@wisconsin.gov](mailto:wipdg@wisconsin.gov) with any questions, including how to mass enroll program participants in Ready4K. Ready4K Wisconsin is managed by the Department of Children and Families (DCF) and funded by the Preschool Development Grant.



## Thank You Early Childhood Professionals Card Project

Are you looking for a fun way to volunteer? Do you need to earn volunteer hours? Do you enjoy being artsy? This volunteer opportunity is a great way to help put a smile on someone's face. Childcaring is collecting homemade thank you cards throughout the year as a thank you to early childhood professionals. We hope to gather over 300 thank you cards for regulated early childhood professionals in our service area by or before April 1. Volunteer groups, families, and children of all ages are encouraged to participate!

View all the card making project details:  
<https://childcaring.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Childcaringcardproject.pdf>

Contact Childcaring : 715-841-9490; [info@childcaring.org](mailto:info@childcaring.org) for more details and to be added to the volunteer list.

Childcaring is supported in part by:



Xav tau kev pab pes/txhais daim ntawv xovxwm  
no thov hu tuaj rau  
Kao Lai Xiong 715-841-9490  
Hnub Monday-Friday 8:30 txog 4:30.

## Vision

For all Central Wisconsin children to benefit from the best child care possible.

## 2022 Childcaring Board of Directors

Brad Gast, President  
Barry West, Vice President  
Michelle Rantala, Treasurer  
Joan Krohn, Secretary  
Annett Mooney  
Jeffrey Raymond  
Tammy Schreiber  
Tina Smith  
Nancy Vance

## Staff Spotlight

Hello! I'm Audrey Bittner, and I work as an Early Childhood Consultant and Trainer for Childcaring. I've been with Childcaring for 3.5 years. I have a B.A. in Human Development, and have worked in many roles with the ECE field including teaching in preschool classrooms, 4K/Head Start, and Center Director of a group child care center.

I was born and raised in the Wausau area; I lived in Green Bay for six years as a young adult, and moved back to the area in 2016. My husband and I have three kids together. Our twin boys will be four on January 5, and our little girl is nine months—they keep us very busy! We also have two big dogs, both rescue mutts. Our house is never quiet! We love spending time with family and friends, watching football (Go Pack Go!) and spending time outdoors during the warmer months. My role at Childcaring as a Quality Coach and Trainer has taught me so much over the years, and as I work with providers they continue to amaze me with their strength, resiliency, and passion for working with children and families. I am so grateful for all that they do every single day!

**What did you enjoy playing most as a child?** As a child, I loved creative and pretend play. I have so many memories of creating all sorts of scenarios with my best friend and my little brother, often extending over multiple rooms in the house and we'd play through these ideas for days at a time!

