

First Steps

A PDG Parent and Provider Quarterly
Newsletter



Collaborate, Learn, Support, Lead

Fall 2022 Issue

Welcome to *First Steps*, a parent and childcare provider quarterly newsletter funded by the preschool development grant and supported by the organizations and initiatives that work to create a better early childhood system for all Nebraska families.

First Steps offers connections to resources important to the families of young children, information about upcoming events, articles on changemakers in Nebraska, opportunities for leadership and further education/training, and much more. We hope you'll share this with other families, providers in your network, and childcare colleagues.

If you'd like to sign up to receive *First Steps* by email, visit our [sign up page](#).

Join us!

Conference for Families and Parents of Small Children

Saturday, October 22, 2022
9:00 am - 12:30 pm

[Learn More or Register](#)

Nebraska's First Family Engagement Conference

The Conference for Families and Parents of Small Children, held on Saturday, October 22, from 9:00 a.m.-12:30, offers families the opportunity to join in sessions on:

- Activities to do with your children
- How to engage your local community
- Resources available: Learning Begins at Birth
- Keynote speaker – Portia Kennel

The first 500 registrants are eligible to receive a free gift card.

Healthy Brain Development for Young Children

Families and childcare providers work in partnership to provide the best possible environment for children's emotional, mental, and intellectual health. If you have questions about brain health or development, the Center for Disease Control provides important information and resources on the first 8 years of a child's brain development. Learn more about:

- The impact of positive and negative experiences
- Extreme chronic stress
- Developmental milestones
- Nutrition
- Age-appropriate recommendations
- Other resources that support brain health

[Visit the website.](#)



We Care for Kids Week Coming in Late September

We Care for Kids Week (September 26-October 2) is a statewide celebration connecting partners and community leaders to families and resources in their community to build support for quality early childhood education in Nebraska. This is a week to inform, motivate, and engage Nebraskans across the state. It's a fun, flexible, community-centered week to help every organization and individual spread the word.

[Register here.](#)

Family Resources



Childcare Referral Network (CCRN)

Finding the right provider for you can be difficult, but you'll find it easier with CCRN. A searchable web application that provides parents an easy way to find childcare near them that have the features they need.

[Visit](#)

- Ability to input address and to set search distances to find available providers.
- Advanced search functions that allow filtering by type of facility, type of financial assistance accepted, and ages of children accepted.
- Ability to search for Spanish speaking providers or staff, special needs providers, and facilities that offer transportation options.
- Provider profiles with operating hours, full contact information, availability, and more.

Help Me Grow

When You have questions about your child's development, Help Me Grow, based in Lincoln, is there. Designed to promote "the early identification of developmental, behavioral, or educational concerns." Through a 211 call in program and a web-based question form, Help Me Grow is able to connect children and families to the community-based services and supports they need at no cost to parents or caregivers.

[Visit](#)

Eat Family Style @ Home

Looking to spice up your family dinners? Eat Family Style @ Home is a website promoting the benefits of family-style meals that offers "quick, easy, and fun ways to make mealtimes healthy, enjoyable and less stressful for everyone. The site provides recipes, tips for cooking with kids, fun ideas for meal-time conversations, age-appropriate activities, and other meal-time resources.

[Visit](#)

Provider Resources



Step Up Quality

Providers who enroll in SUTQ benefit from coaching and resources that develop quality programs. Initial enrollment only requires a free orientation that gives an overview of the program and the process. You can benefit from:

[Visit](#)

- Free coaching
 - Professional development and training at little or no cost
 - Childcare subsidy reimbursement
 - Incentive bonuses
-

Circle of Security Classroom

Childcare providers can be a part of the Circle of Security Classroom, which offers as a professional learning series to encourage the meaningful bonds between providers and children that will help them thrive as they grow.

[Visit](#)

- Examines the central role teachers and the learning relationship play in a child's life.
- Explores methods for coping with challenging behaviors that enhance a child's sense of security.
- Encourages childcare professionals to hone observational and reflective skills.
- Teaches Circle of Security techniques and other behavioral strategies.
- Applies Circle of Security strategies to build strong bonds and to address children's attachment needs.
- Teaches classroom methods that build relationship friendly spaces.



All Our Kin Business Training

Starting a childcare business or looking to enhance an exiting program? All Our Kin provides a business training series to help your business thrive. The program offers:

[Visit](#)

- A 10-week series that assists in building capacity as business owners, improving financial practices, recruiting new families, increasing earnings, and enhancing program sustainability.
- Licensing toolkits: This program provides materials, one-on-one mentorship, and support to help unlicensed providers meet health and safety standards, fulfill state licensing requirements, and become part of a professional community.
- Additional opportunities for peer support, business networking, and community building are available.

Interested in learning more about early childhood services available to you?

The Preschool Development Grant provides information on the state's plan for developing early childhood care and education, on initiatives partnering with communities to build a better system, and on resources that assist both families and childcare professionals.

Learn More at the Preschool Development Grant Website



Our Contact Information

Nebraska Children & Families Foundation

215 Centennial Mall South

Suite 200

Lincoln, NE 68508

402-476-9401

<http://www.NebraskaChildren.org>

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