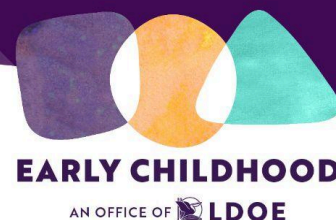




Early Childhood Newsletter



July 11, 2024

Water Play Activities

With Louisiana well into the summer months, child care sites may be engaging in more water play activities. Did you know that water play has sensory benefits? Water play is a great way to stimulate children's minds because it provides them with continuous sensory feedback. This frequently results in focused play for children. Water-related activities, like splashing or jumping in, can be exciting and soothing for children. As child care sites use water play to "cool off" in these sweltering summer months, remember to refer to [Bulletin 137 §1913](#) for safe water play instructions.



[Bulletin 137 §1913](#) gives instructions on how providers can plan water activities while keeping everyone's safety in mind. The following guidance outlines what providers should do while planning water play activities:

- The center shall obtain written parental authorization for a child to participate in any water activities or water play activities as those activities are defined in §103.
- Children under age three shall not engage in water activities due to the risk of contamination and disease.
- The use of saunas, spas, or hot tubs is prohibited.
- Swimming, wading, and boating are prohibited in lakes, ponds, and other similar bodies of water.
- The center shall have written procedures describing the method staff shall use to account for children and ensure their safety while engaged in water activities.
- When children use a pool or other body of water with a depth of more than 2 feet, a certified lifeguard shall be present and supervise the children who may be counted in the child-to-staff ratio.
 1. For on-site water activities, the center shall have documentation of the current certification of the lifeguard.
 2. For off-site water activities, the center shall have documentation of the lifeguard's current certification, such as a letter of documentation that the lifeguard has current certification whether the lifeguard is furnished by the center or the off-site water location.
- A center shall have at least two staff members who are responsible for supervising children in swimming or wading pools or in other water activities, whether on-site or off-site, who are certified in infant, child, and adult CPR and pediatric first aid and shall maintain documentation of such certification.

Licensed centers, please contact your [licensing consultant](#) with questions. Home-based providers, please contact providercertification@la.gov with questions.

Upcoming Deadlines

- July 1-26: Early Childhood Conference [Regular Registration - Shreveport](#)
- July 1-26: Early Childhood Conference [Regular Registration - Baton Rouge](#)

Upcoming Events

- July 17: [Early Childhood Care and Education Commission and Advisory Council Meetings](#)
- July 18: Teaching Strategies GOLD® SmartTeach™ [LDOE Office Hours Webinar](#)
- July 25: Teaching Strategies GOLD® SmartTeach™ [LDOE Office Hours Webinar](#)
- August 15: [Early Childhood Provider Update Webinar](#)
- September 7: 2024 Early Childhood Conference (ECC) - Shreveport, Shreveport Convention Center
- October 5: 2024 Early Childhood Conference (ECC) - Baton Rouge, Crowne Plaza

More Important Dates

Please see the [LDOE School System Support Calendar](#).

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UPCOMING EVENTS

NEW: Office Hours for New Directors

The LDOE team holds webinars focusing on early childhood quality or operations while also helping expand Early Childhood directors' network of peers. Office hours are targeted towards new directors.

This month's topic is "An Overview of Louisiana Pathways." Participants will gain an understanding of the Louisiana Pathways program and how it offers support by providing scholarships for training and education, tracking training received by child care professionals, and recognizing child care professionals' achievements.

Webinar Date/Time:	July 26 at 12 p.m.
Webinar Link:	https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/92298578944
Webinar Phone Number:	1 346 248 7799
Meeting ID:	922 9857 8944

Please contact careneisha.williams@la.gov with questions.

NEW: Early Childhood Provider Update Webinar

The LDOE hosts monthly webinars for early childhood providers. These webinars include essential reminders and updates for all provider types. Providers can access the upcoming August Provider Update Webinar using the information below:

Webinar Date/Time:	August 15 at 1 p.m.
Webinar Link:	https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/93597745872
Phone Number:	1 312 626 6799
Meeting ID:	935 9774 5872
Passcode:	641464

The July 11 webinar presentation slides are available in the [Quality Providers Library](#) on the [Louisiana Believes](#) website. Please note: There will be no August 1 webinar.

Reminder: Early Childhood Conference (ECC) 2024 Registration

Registration is now open for the 2024 [Early Childhood Conference](#). Tickets are available on a first-come, first-served basis and will close on July 17 or at sellout.

The 2024 Early Childhood Conference will take place at two locations and will be held on Saturday to make it easier for providers from across the state to be able to attend:

September 7	Shreveport Convention Center 400 Caddo Street ECC 2024 Registration
October 5	Baton Rouge Crowne Plaza 4728 Constitution Avenue ECC 2024 Registration

Please contact events@emergentmethod.com with questions.

NEW: Launching this Summer: Teaching Strategies GOLD® SmartTeach™

On July 14, 2024, SmartTeach™ will be launched by MyTeachingStrategies® (MyTS®) in an attempt to improve user engagement and enjoyment. These new features will be distributed gradually through the platform. Users won't notice any changes to the *Teach* and *Access* landing pages as a result of this launch. The Department is hosting optional office hours for those in need of assistance as a result of these changes.

LDOE Office Hour Webinar information for *SmartTeach™ for all Teaching Strategies GOLD®* users can be found below:

Office Hour Date/Time: July 18 and 25 at 3 p.m.- 3:30 p.m.
Webinar Link: [SmartTeach™ LDOE Office Hours Webinar](#)

Please contact ECAssessment@la.gov with questions.

UPDATES FOR FUNDING AND ENROLLMENT

NEW: Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) Helpful Resources

In an effort to assist families and providers with the application process, the Department has added some helpful resources and instructional videos to the [website](#). These resources were developed to address common application errors and to assist families with completing the application more effectively.

On the CCAP [web page](#), under the Hot Topics section, you can view the Case Not Certified Guide [pdf](#) and [instructional videos](#) and the Things to Remember Guide [pdf](#) and [instructional videos](#). Additional resources include the [Application How-to Guide](#) and [Income Guidebook](#), which can be located on the CCAP [web page](#) under For Your Information section.

For more information, contact the LDOE Provider Help Desk at 225-250-7635 or 225-614-5917 or email CCAPPHD@la.gov.

REMINDER: Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) Electronic Remittance Advice

In an effort to ensure that providers have timely access to information and can conduct timely reviews of CCAP payments, the LDOE is pleased to announce that providers now have access to the “Remittance” screen in KinderConnect. The remittance advice is proof of payment sent from the Louisiana Department of Education to child care providers and details all payments included in each deposit.

This Remittance screen in KinderConnect contains data regarding payments, payment corrections, refunds, and recoupments made for each provider. Payment data will be updated nightly, and providers can search for and display data based on a date range. As the LDOE transitions our payment systems, this screen will replace the paper remittance advice that providers are currently receiving via mail.

For more instructions on how to locate the Remittance screen and to see an example of the information shared on the Remittance screen, please see the [KinderConnect –Remittance Detail QRC](#).

For more information, contact the LDOE Provider Help Desk at 225-250-7635 or 225-614-5917 or email CCAPPHD@la.gov.

REMINDER: Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) Families Experiencing Homelessness

To support all families in accessing high-quality child care, it is important for families experiencing homelessness or participating in a transitional living program to indicate that on their CCAP application. This indication will ensure the application is appropriately reviewed.

While services will begin upon receipt of the application, eligible parents or caregivers experiencing homelessness must submit all requested documentation within 90 days of the application date. The employment and training requirement may be waived for participants who demonstrate they are seeking employment by registering for a [HiRE account](#) through the Louisiana Workforce Commission or by participating in a transitional living program.

Once these families have applied for Child Care Assistance, a Local Education Agency (LEA) liaison will contact the family to review their housing status. The LEA is a separate program from CCAP and is federally-responsible for identifying and assessing the needs of children experiencing homelessness in the state. It is important that families respond to and cooperate with the LEA so the LEA may timely finalize their review of the family's living situation and so that families experiencing homelessness do not experience any loss of services.

Please contact TLCCAP@la.gov with questions regarding families experiencing homelessness.

REMINDER: Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) Summer Care

Summer is here! If there are any part-time children at your site that will need full-time care during the summer, please have their parent/guardian complete a [Report of Change Form](#) (CCAP-10) indicating the summer care timeframe on the form and submit the form back to the Department as soon as possible for updates.

Change Reports can be completed through the Café Customer Portal, printed and submitted to LDECCAP@la.gov, or printed and faxed to 225-376-6060.

Children who are no longer enrolled or attending the site should be reported to the Provider Help Desk via the [Provider Ticket System](#). Please select “No Longer Attending” as the help topic.

Please contact the Provider Help Desk at 225-250-7635 or 225-614-5917 with questions.

REMINDER: Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) Attendance Submission

As the LDOE begins transitioning to a new payment and processing system, the Department acknowledges that there have been some technical issues related to KinderConnect. KinderConnect has provided a fix to the overlapping problem when submitting attendance. Attendance should now be submitted each week for CCAP-enrolled children via the KinderConnect portal.

Instructions for Weekly Attendance Upload:

- The following instructions detail how a site is to upload attendance: [KinderConnect-Submit Attendance QRC](#)
- In addition to the written instructions, the Department has also provided a recorded video (less than 3 minutes) for review: [KinderConnect Attendance Video Instructions](#).

Tips for Submitting:

- Please note that there are still instances in which incomplete attendance cannot be submitted. Clicking on the correct link will bring the provider to the attendance cell(s) with incomplete attendance. Providers will need to work with sponsors to correct attendance. Please know that the best practice is to regularly review attendance for corrections to be made (and that corrections must be made within 6 calendar days).
- For any specific issues with using the Kinder Connect software, contact the Kinder Systems Support Center, which is open from 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.
 - Phone: 888-829-9258
 - E-mail: SupportLA@kindersystems.com

Please contact the LDOE Provider Help Desk at 225-250-7635 or 225-614-5917 or email CCAPPHD@la.gov with any questions.

UPDATES FOR LICENSED CENTERS

NEW: Data Certification

Data Certification is a critical process that allows Community Network Lead Agencies (CNLAs) to ensure informational metrics are accurately captured and reflected in the final Performance Profiles.

Data Certification allows CNLAs to work with programs/sites to verify the following information for each classroom at each site as of October 1, 2023:

- Ages served by the site
- Number of children assessed at each site using TS GOLD®
- Infant/Toddler and/or Pre-K curriculum used in each classroom
- Highest degree earned for one lead teacher per each classroom
- Louisiana certification number for one lead teacher per each classroom (including Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate)

CNLAs will contact sites to verify informational metrics. All site and classroom data must be certified by CNLAS in the Louisiana Data Review System and will be reported in the 2023-2024 Performance Profiles. The data certification window opens on July 15, 2024, and will close on August 5, 2024. After this date, CNLAs will no longer have access to the system to make edits.

Please contact your [Community Network Lead Agency](#) for support.

UPDATES FOR FAMILY CHILD CARE AND IN-HOME PROVIDERS

NEW: Cumulative File

There must be a cumulative file maintained for each child. The file must include the following:

- an information form
- written authorization for emergency medical treatment
- individuals to whom the child may be released
- special dietary requirements

The information form must be signed and dated by the parent as changes occur and contain the following:

- the name of the child
- date of birth
- sex
- date of admission
- the name of parents
- the home address of both child and parents
- the phone numbers where parents may be reached while the child is in care
- the name and phone number of the person to contact in an emergency if parents cannot be located promptly
- any special concerns including but not limited to allergies, chronic illnesses
- any special needs of the child, if applicable
- any special dietary needs, restrictions, food allergies, or intolerances, if applicable.

Please contact providercertification@la.gov with questions.

UPDATES FOR LICENSED CENTERS, FAMILY CHILD CARE, AND IN-HOME PROVIDERS

NEW: Emergency Preparedness

In preparation for possible emergency situations and in compliance with federal regulations the Department has updated the [Statewide Child Care Emergency Plan](#). This plan and these resources are designed to support providers in their emergency preparedness, response, and recovery.

For more information, please [review the plan](#) and additional resources found on the LDOE website, linked [here](#).

As a reminder, providers are required to develop, practice, train on, and follow a written multi-hazard emergency and evacuation plan to protect children in the event of emergencies.

The plan, at a minimum, has to address the following types of emergency situations:

- Any potential disaster related to the area in which the center is located
- Procedures for sheltering in place
- Lockdown
- Evacuation to a predetermined site for potential threats to the safety, health, and well-being of children in care
- Communication and reunification with families

Licensed centers with questions should contact your [licensing consultant](#).

Home-based providers with questions should contact providercertification@la.gov.

NEW: Child Care Criminal Background Check (CCCBC) Fingerprinting

To prevent delays with scheduling fingerprints, pay close attention to all information entered into [Idemia fingerprint enrollment](#). The following must match the applicant's government-issued identification and [CCCBC application](#):

- the spelling of the applicant's name—please omit any spaces or apostrophes in the applicant's name
- the applicant's Date of Birth
- the applicant's Social Security Number

Before submitting an application, please review the information entered to ensure accuracy. If a correction is needed, please email LDECCBCprocessing@la.gov. Be sure to include the application ID and the required correction in the subject line of the email. Please include a callback number so the department can reach out if clarification is needed.

Only electronic digital fingerprinting submissions are accepted unless otherwise stated by the LDOE. If an applicant has a condition that may cause fingerprinting issues, please inform the CCCBC Section prior to the appointment by emailing LDECCBCprocessing@la.gov.

NEW: North Carolina Child Abuse and Neglect Processing Guidelines

North Carolina has updated processing guidelines for out-of-state child abuse and neglect (CAN) requests. Updated detailed instructions will be found in the "Attachments" section of the [CCCBC application](#) when completing applications for former North Carolina residents. North Carolina's revised guidelines require the applicant or provider to email CAN results to LDECCBCprocessing@la.gov. CAN results may also be mailed to:

Louisiana Department of Education
Attention: Child Care Criminal Background Check
1201 North Third St.
Baton Rouge, LA 70802

Failure to return CAN results received from North Carolina to the Department will cause the application to remain in "Provisional" status, resulting in the application expiring after 45 days.

Please contact LDECCBCprocessing@la.gov with questions.

CONTACT US



- For questions regarding licensing or child health and safety, please contact LDElicensing@la.gov.
- For all questions regarding Child Care Criminal Background Check processing, please contact LDEccbcprocessing@la.gov.
- For all other questions regarding early childhood, please contact earlychildhood@la.gov.
- Subscribe to our monthly newsletter by completing this [form](#).