



Fall 2020

Please post newsletter and training calendar!

Child Care Resource Network wants to reach **EVERYONE** in our early childhood community!

To receive our mailings contact CCRN at CCRN@soesd.k12.or.us or call (541) 776-8590 x 1126 to be added to our distribution list.

Be sure to add CCRN's email to your contacts!

We want to stay in touch!

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Greetings from All of Us at Child Care Resource Network

In the beginning of September, with Fall just around the corner, we were thinking about how we could best support our early learning community to welcome children and stay positive and focused while dealing with Covid-19 requirements and restrictions.

Then, on September 8th, wildfires tore through Phoenix and Talent, destroying over 2,300 homes and many businesses, damaging neighborhoods and forcing evacuations of surrounding areas.

At Child Care Resource Network our hearts go out to all those who have suffered devastating losses. Southern Oregon Education Service District (SOESD), CCRN's lead agency, has eight employees who lost their homes and the SOESD Phoenix campus was completely destroyed.

In our area, we know of at least ten center staff who suffered the loss of their home. Many programs in evacuation zones had to close until it was safe to return; one center in Talent has temporarily relocated.

Spanish Speaking Early Learning Community Most Affected

While so many were affected, the child care providers who were hardest hit by this disaster are those in our Spanish speaking community. Six family providers had their homes completely destroyed in the fire that swept through their mobile home park and four others have been displaced and unable to return.

CCRN hosted a Zoom "Support Circle" as an opportunity for providers to come together, share their experiences, and grieve. This was a moving and wrenching meeting with many tears, but also showed the tremendous support they are giving to each other. We hosted a second meeting to share information and resources, which was attended by Miriam Calderon, Early Learning Systems Director; Henry Oliva, OCC Licensing Regional Manager; Alfredo Gallegos, Child Care Licensor; DHS; and Gema McSoto, USDA.

We are sharing stories from two providers in this issue. What this community is experiencing is heart-breaking. We are filled with admiration and respect for their courage, determination, and resilient spirit.

Cande, Devon, Jill, Katrina, Lorena, Martha, Mary, Molly



Talent mobile home park in flames



The Reyes family looks at the destruction of their home at Coleman Creek Estates.



A bean pot, tortilla press, and molcajete (for making salsa) salvaged from the fire sit on top

Personal Stories

Several family providers had to flee their homes with children in care, one with an infant. Jill Ramirez, Spanish Speaking Focused Child Care Network Specialist and Coordinator, translated two of their stories, which are posted on the CCRN webpage, www.ccrnso.org. The actions of these providers are truly heroic. They managed to get the children in their care out safely along with their own children, some taking neighborhood children with them as well. Everyone who cares for children knows that the ultimate responsibility is to keep them safe, and these providers did that, under extreme circumstances.

Here is part of what Hercilia (Cesi) Nufio Torres recounted to Jill:

“It is horrible as I had kids in care. The flames were high and I had to evacuate. On September 8th I was caring for children in my mobile home in Medford-Phoenix. I was working. I had gathered the kids when suddenly I heard a loud noise and a loss of power. I thought it might just be a crash. But a neighbor called to get out as there was a fire near.

I grabbed the kids to get out, with my children and husband and all were saved. We were able to get all of them out. I didn’t get anything of my own out. Not even any ID. I lost everything. My children didn’t even have shoes, as we are barefoot inside our home. I went by my mobile home park. There is nothing left of my home except ash. I have nothing, but I have my family.”

Read Hercilia’s and Alba Martinez’s stories on the CCRN website. Alba’s account ends with this: *“Since Wednesday, September 9, I have been in a hotel. I told the parents I would not be able to care for their children because I didn’t have a place to live, and to forgive me. I feel bad to not be able to help them.*

What I really need is a home so I can continue providing care. Not just a home for me, but for all of the providers who are displaced so we can continue doing what we love. And also for families who work in restaurants, hotels, agriculture. Even through this, my own children haven’t missed school.

I thank God for all of their work helping to make sure we were all able to evacuate.”

The Early Learning Division and Office of Child Care Licensers are aware of the huge challenges this group of providers is facing. They have acted swiftly to make temporary exemptions to some rules so that providers can continue offering care, and are working with providers individually to best support them. At CCRN we are doing all we can to offer encouragement and tangible assistance, but know this will be a long road. We also know the incredible fortitude and resilience these providers have demonstrated, and how much this community is doing to care for and support one another.

If you would like information on how to help or make a donation, the Rogue Valley Preparedness and Recovery Hub website, <https://roguevalley.recovers.org/>, is a clearinghouse of resources and services. The Phoenix Talent schools have created a [Phoenix Talent Families Fire Relief Fund](#) to help those displaced. Over 50% of students in the Phoenix Talent school district lost their homes.



Heather Marshall at Coleman Creek Estates



Photos courtesy Billings Gazette



Dora Negrete is consoled by her son Hector Rocha

How CCRN is Communicating



This is a stressful time for many of us in our early learning community. Providers are struggling to stay afloat, to stay on top of health and safety requirements, to support parents who are juggling work and distance learning, and trying to find time for their own work/life balance—and then, the fires.

Our CCRN team is grappling with these same issues. We ask for your understanding that the CCRN team is continuing to work remotely, with all trainings and classes held online, and are doing our utmost to maintain our services, respond promptly to questions and requests, and to assist you in any way we can.

weekly
UPDATE

With so much going on it's been a challenge to keep up and keep you informed. With that in mind, CCRN is continuing to email regular **Weekly Updates**, usually on Tuesdays, to share new guidance from ELD, training opportunities, licensing updates, resources, and other relevant information. If you are not getting these updates and would like to, please contact CCRN to be added to our list: email ccrn@soesd.k12.or.us or call 541-301-7760.

What You Do Matters!

We know that now, more than ever, children need havens where they can play, laugh, learn, be with friends, be active and joyful, feel safe to express their full range of emotions, and where they can build trusting relationships with their teachers, the most important element.



Early educators strive to bring their best selves to work every day, despite coping with their own stresses and responsibilities. They know that their mood, how they feel and respond, has the most powerful impact on how children feel and respond. This effect teachers have has been described as like a tuning fork - setting the tone for the group, or as a mirror - because children reflect their teachers' responses in the way they act.

One teacher summed up her role in creating the classroom climate very succinctly, **"I am the weather."** That is a powerful position to have.

What you do matters for children and for our community. Parents and employers rely on the child care workforce and could not function without this support. This work needs to be recognized and valued as the essential service it is. **We thank you for all you do.**

Spark Update

Still not participating in Spark? Might be time to get started (or pick up where you left off). CCRN is ready and able to assist providers who are interested in learning more about Spark or who may have stalled along the way and want to re-engage. There have been changes that have streamlined the process, so finishing your portfolio may be much easier than you think. Remember, Spark participation has many benefits, including support and incentive funds, and for programs serving DHS families, higher reimbursements. Participation in Spark is a way you can demonstrate to parents and the community your commitment to high quality care.

For more information about Spark and about Focused Child Care Networks, contact Devon Finley by email or phone at CCRN@soesd.k12.or.us or 541-944-5207.

News from the Early Learning Division



Covid-19 Health and Safety Plan to Share with Families

One of the Emergency Child Care Health and Safety requirements is for providers to develop a COVID-19 Health and Safety Plan. A template for providers to use is now available on the ELD Covid-19 webpage. Click to download: [English Template](#) | [Spanish Template](#)

The plan must be provided to families in a manner they can understand by **Friday, November 9, 2020**. You do not need to send the plan to ELD unless requested.

If you choose not to use ELD's template, your plan must include all of the required elements that are identified in ELD's template. The ELD has posted several videos on understanding and following the updated Emergency Child Care Health and Safety Guidelines and has just **added an 8-minute video** in English and Spanish **on using and completing the Covid-19 Health and Safety Plan template**.

CCRN will be holding a Zoom meeting to go over the template and how to develop your plan; the date will be included in the next Weekly Update. Please contact CCRN with any questions on the Health and Safety Plan requirements or with questions on completing your plan.

Register to receive the latest news from ELD at <https://oregonearlylearning.com/>, and also visit the ELD's COVID-19 webpage where Frequently Asked Questions about emergency child care are updated regularly, <https://oregonearlylearning.com/COVID-19-Resources>.

Emergency Supplies/Care Packages

The Early Learning Division wants to help ensure child care providers have the personal protective equipment (PPE) they need for safe operations during the COVID-19 pandemic. You can now receive a **free order of supplies** by applying through the [state's website](#).

These supplies are designed to assist providers to meet the new [Health and Safety Guidelines for Child Care and Early Education Operating During COVID-19](#) outlined by the Office of Child Care. Child care providers should follow proper PPE use and avoid unnecessary stockpiling of supplies.

Click here: [Supply Order Form](#)



Oregon Cost of Quality Study Coming Soon - Please Participate!

The ELD has commissioned a team of national experts to conduct a **Cost of Child Care Quality** study, and provider participation is essential to getting a true picture of the actual cost of child care.

Unlike the market rate survey which collects data on tuition rates, the cost of quality study seeks information about **actual expenses** to better understand what it takes to provide high-quality child care.

The results of this study can be used to set the Employment Related Day Care (ERDC) child care subsidy rate and to understand what investments are needed to support a robust early childhood system in the state of Oregon. We need policymakers to understand what it really costs to provide high-quality child care to make the case for increased public investment to support providers and increase compensation for the early childhood workforce.

Please watch for more information on the study and respond to the request for information.

Confidentiality will be maintained for all information provided..

Benefits of ERDC!

ERDC (Employment Related Day Care) assists income eligible families with the cost of child care, a huge benefit for many families who struggle to cover this expense.

ERDC also benefits child care providers by giving them a reliable source of payment and making their program affordable to a larger number of families. The more providers who accept ERDC payment, the more options there are for families who may be in the most need of quality care for their children.

There has never been a better time to get on board with ERDC and become DHS listed. Currently the **income eligibility level has been raised** and **parents who register by the end of December have \$0 co-pay**. That means providers can count on receiving the full amount without relying of families for the co-pay. If a provider charges more than the DHS reimbursement rate, it also makes it easier for families to pay the difference.

If you need more information about accepting ERDC payment contact CCRN at ccrn@soesd.k12.or.us or call 541-301-7760. And please let families know that the income limit has been raised and they might be eligible. This support can mean so much to families who want their child to attend but are struggling with the cost.

ERDC Income Limits

<u>Number in Family/ Household</u>	<u>Gross Monthly Income Limit</u>
2	\$4,012
3	\$4,956
4	\$5,899
5	\$6,843
6	\$7,787
7	\$8,259
8 or more	\$9,192

Fun Fall Activities



- ◆ Dissect a giant sunflower! Learn about parts of a plant - pluck the petals, pull apart the head, examine and use tweezers to get out the sunflower seeds, use scissors to cut open the thick stem. Count seeds, measure leaves, and then plant the seeds - they will often grow to do it again next year.



- ◆ Make Fall scented playdough - maple, cloves, cinnamon, pumpkin spice, nutmeg, hazelnut
- ◆ Enjoy hot spiced cider for snack outside
- ◆ Collect leaves and make leaf rubbings and prints

- ◆ Seal leaves in contact paper and make window art or a mobile
- ◆ Collect rocks, wash them, paint them and give them as gifts
- ◆ Make a nature picture using only things children have found outside
- ◆ Make a thankful tree, with everyone writing one thing they're thankful for on a leaf
- ◆ And of course, **PUMPKINS**—investigating, carving, painting, measuring, cooking, roasting seeds, smashing, and leaving outside to decompose

Child Care Resource Network

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