



GATEWAYS TO OPPORTUNITY®
Illinois Professional Development System



Summer 2020 Newsletter

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Credential applications are FREE!

Through the Preschool Development Grant, most Gateways Credential applications are **FREE** for a limited time on a first-come, first-served basis for those seeking **new** Credentials or **level advancing** their current Credential.

Which Credentials are FREE?

- ECE Credential
- Infant Toddler Credential
- Illinois Director Credential
- Family Child Care Credential
- Technical Assistance Credential
- Family Specialist Credential

Please note: ALL Gateways Credential renewals and the Gateways SAYD Credential require a \$65 application fee. GOOD NEWS! Your local Child Care Resource and Referral Agency may have Professional Development Funds to help pay up to 80% of credential renewal fees or SAYD Credential application fees. Funds are on a first-come, first-served basis. Contact them today!

Reminder: Gateways Credentials must be renewed every 5 years!

This requires a \$65 application fee. Your local CCR&R may have Professional Development funds to support the majority of this cost.

- Keep your Registry membership current – including email, address, phone number, and employer
- Reminders to renew credentials are sent multiple times per year to the email address we have on file. Check your spam!
- Update your Professional Development Record regularly – clock hours of training are used to renew Credentials

For more information about credentials, visit our website at www.ilgateways.com/credentials.

If you have any questions, please email credentials@ilgateways.com

Great START has *Great NEWS!*

As of July 1, 2020, Great START has two exciting new features!

1. Individuals working at an ExceleRate Illinois Silver or Gold Circle of Quality licensed child care center and/or family child care/group home can access Great START after six months of employment.*
2. Gateways to Opportunity ECE Credential, Infant Toddler Credential, School-Age and Youth Development Credential, and/or Family Child Care Credential (all at level 2 or higher) are included on the wage supplement scale. To view the updated scale, visit www.ilgateways.com/financial-opportunities/great-start/wage-supplement-scale/file.*

To review all of the Great START Wage Supplement Program eligibility requirements, or to download an application, visit the Gateways website at www.ilgateways.com/financial-opportunities/great-start.

If you have any questions, please email gstart@inccra.org.

**All other eligibility requirements must also be met to receive a Great START wage supplement.*

Child Care Restoration Grants

Child Care Restoration Grants

The Governor and the Illinois General Assembly has directed at least \$270 million of the state's Coronavirus Urgent Remediation Emergency (CURE) Fund to support the economic health of child care providers as our economy reopens in the coming months.

More information about Child Care Restoration Grants including a frequently asked questions can be found at www.ilgateways.com/financial-opportunities/restoration-grants.



**Illinois
Department of Commerce
& Economic Opportunity**
JB Pritzker, Governor



Governor's Office of
Early Childhood Development





Offer Quality Early Learning to All Children in Illinois!

Many licensed programs in Illinois care for children on the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP). CCAP makes it possible for families and guardians who qualify to receive help paying for child care while they work, attend school or training. Families must meet the State of Illinois Department of Human Services CCAP guidelines.

Child Care providers can take three steps to become an approved CCAP provider:

STEP 1: Determine if you Qualify – You must be a legal child care provider:

- Licensed Child Care Center
- License-Exempt Child Care Center (before and after school program)
- Licensed Family Child Care/Group Home
- License-Exempt Family Child Care Home
- Child Care by Non-Relative-in the child's home
- Child Care by Relative-in the relatives or child's home.

STEP 2: Complete Required IDHS-CCAP Health & Safety Trainings – To begin, child care providers and center staff must become a Gateways Registry member, <https://registry.ilgateways.com/>. The Registry tracks the completion of the FREE required trainings. You can complete trainings online. The local Child Care Resource & Referral agency can help through the training process www.ilgateways.com/professional-development/ccap-providers.

Child care providers and center staff should complete the trainings below.

1. CPR/First Aid
2. Child Abuse Neglect/Mandated Reporter Training
3. What is CCAP? (applicable to family child care provider and Center Director)
4. Child Development, Health and Safety Basics

STEP 3: Complete and Submit Required Paperwork to the Child Care Assistance Program – The local Child Care Resource and Referral Agency administers the CCAP program for IDHS. Visit your local [CCR&R website](#) to find what paperwork is required to become an approved CCAP provider. Once approved and caring for CCAP children, you will receive monthly billing certificates to complete and submit for approved CCAP families.

It is important that all children have access to high quality early learning. Become a CCAP approved program today to offer this opportunity to your families!



Grab, Adapt and Go – COVID-19 Resources for Child Care Programs

During this time of great uncertainty, child care providers are reaching out to Child Care Aware® of America for support. [Child Care Aware® of America](#) has created a collection of resources that child care providers may use in this pronounced time of need. These resources are intended for use by child care program administrators and providers.

Plants and the Sun

Testing Photosynthesis

Here's what you need:

- small plants in pots
- chart paper and marker
- three identified growing areas
- 12-inch ruler

1. Use small plants to help children see how sunlight impacts plant growth.
2. Invite conversations about the soil, water needs, and the plant size. Children may want to draw or photograph the plants.
3. Prepare two charts. On the first, list children's names down the left side. Across the top, make three columns labeled Sunlight, Shade, and Dark. On the second chart list children's names down the left side. Across the top, write five dates, each about a week apart, starting with the date you introduce the activity. Use this chart to graph the height of the plants at four intervals.
4. Give each child a plant labeled with the child's name.
5. Poll the children on where they would like for their plants to live for the next five weeks—in the sunshine, in shade, or in the dark. Indicate children's choices on the chart. Note that wherever the plant is placed, it will need weekly watering (about $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of water in a 4-inch pot).
6. Before placing the pots, show the children how to take a preliminary measurement. Place the pot on a firm level surface and the ruler next to the pot. Make a note of the height of each plant in the first column for the growth chart.
7. Let the children place their pots in the chosen locations.
8. Return to the activity weekly to measure the growth of the plants.
9. At the end of the growing period, ask children to form a hypothesis about the plants and their growing locations. Plants grown in sunlight show evidence of photosynthesis—healthy growth and robust green leaves that result from the energy the sun provides.



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