





2025 Annual Report





South Dakota Early Childhood Enrichment

SOUTH DAKOTA EARLY CHILDHOOD ENRICHMENT

ANNUAL REPORT 2025

About Us 04
- Who We Are
- Locations

Credential Opportunities 05
- Child Development Associate
- School-Age Care Credential

Coaching & Technical Assistance 06
- Coaching & Technical Assistance
- Director 360 Program

Educational Opportunities 07
- Regional Trainings
- Statewide On-Demand Training
- Level I Orientation
- Level II Orientation

Social Wellness & Emotional Wellness 08
- Temperament Program
- Social Wellness & Emotional Wellness Program

Child Care & School-Age Care Provider Resources 09
- Pathways to Professional Development
- ECE Resource Hub
- Quality Care South Dakota



Parenting Resources 10
- Car Seat Distribution
- Birth to Three Parenting Classes

Accomplishments & Growth 11
- Statewide Accomplishments
- Future Growth

Partnerships 12

Contact Us 13



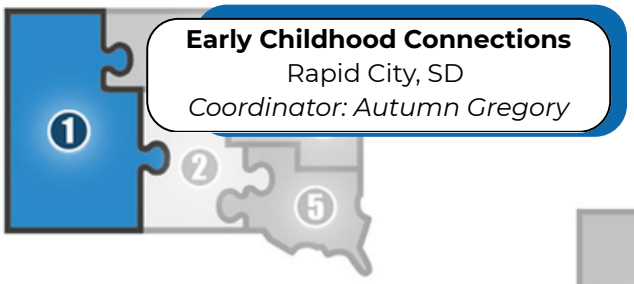
ABOUT US

Who We Are

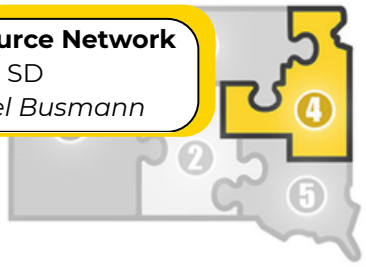
The Early Childhood Enrichment (ECE) System was established by the South Dakota Department of Social Services, Child Care Services (CCS) to meet the growing demand for early childhood and school-age training, to help recruit and retain quality child care providers, as well as to encourage and support program quality across the state of South Dakota. The ECE System is supported through five regional offices located throughout the state.

The ECE System offers a systematic approach to providing early childhood and school-age education services and technical assistance. Services are offered to all child care and school age professionals, parents, and others involved in the day-to-day care of children.

Locations



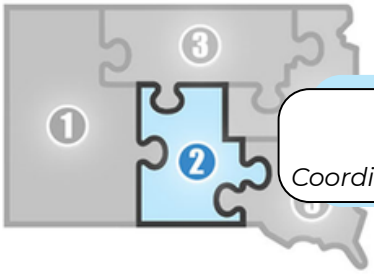
Early Childhood Connections
Rapid City, SD
Coordinator: Autumn Gregory



Child & Family Resource Network
Brookings, SD
Coordinator: Rachel Busmann



Sanford CHILD Services
Aberdeen, SD
Coordinator: Nikki McLaughlin



The Right Turn, Inc
Pierre, SD
Coordinator: Brittany Westergren



Sanford CHILD Services
Sioux Falls, SD
Coordinator: Nikki McLaughlin

Our Mission

We believe that every child in South Dakota deserves safe and responsive care. Every adult who impacts children should have the necessary resources, training and support to provide exceptional care in enriching environments.

Child Development Associate

Preparing individuals to meet the developmental, emotional and educational needs of young children.

The Child Development Associate (CDA) credential is a nationally recognized early childhood professional credential administered by the Council for Professional Recognition. Providers who pursue the CDA credential learn to demonstrate their ability to nurture young children's physical, social, emotional and intellectual growth.

The South Dakota CDA training program supports educators interested in earning the National CDA Credential by increasing the availability of early childhood professional training and mentorship across South Dakota to increase competencies and skills to impact South Dakota's youngest citizens.

365
Training Hours

163
Providers Served

School-Age Care Credential

This opportunity empowers School-Age Professionals across South Dakota who support youth in summer programs and before and after-school programs to advance their careers. This newly launched opportunity is available in two options, which include the South Dakota School-Age Care (SAC) Certificate or full Credential.

The SD SAC Certificate is a state-recognized professional development award for 38 hours of youth-specific training, which includes on-demand accessible training. This certificate is a pathway to the SD SAC Credential, which includes 120 hours of youth-specific training, and signifies you have demonstrated competence in caring for school-age children that aligns with the South Dakota Core Knowledge and Competencies for Early Childhood and School-Age Educators.



Coaching & Technical Assistance

All Technical Assistance (TA) is focused on increasing the knowledge and confidence of the provider to promote and support optimal development for every child. Social wellness and emotional wellness development is critical for optimal development and is a major component of all Technical Assistance programs.

TA is offered through consultation and coaching, which provides support, education and resources. TA can support a provider's challenge or an opportunity for strengthening skills through support, education, and resources. Through coaching or technical assistance, providers can increase their confidence in implementing quality care practices.

> *This is exactly what we needed for the staff to see where to go next as a team.*
>
> *Thank you for all your work with us! We have utilized your tips with success. Your work is appreciated!*
>
> *I feel so much better and more confident! This healed a part of me.*

1292	50	353	141
TA Visits	Consultations	Providers Served	Programs Served

Director 360 Program



The 360 Support Program is a professionally guided program that provides tools, technical assistance, education and support to child care directors.

Throughout the 360 Support Program, directors will receive individualized, customized support, along with resources and tools, from their local ECE office and/or SD DSS Office of Licensing and Accreditation.

> *I felt confident in open and honest conversation, I appreciate the level of knowledge and experience.*

24	102
Directors Served	Visits

Regional Trainings

The Early Childhood Enrichment (ECE) System offers a variety of evidence and research-based professional development opportunities. Trainings are accessible to child care providers across the state through in-person, online and on-site delivery. Trainings are offered to not only meet licensing and registration requirements, but to also improve the quality of care.

> *This is the best training that I have ever been to and I have been doing daycare for over 10 years.*

Classes are available for caregivers working in Infant/Toddler, Preschool and School-Age settings. Each year, the ECE system develops new trainings to support ongoing professional development for child care and youth development professionals.

- **998** • Trainings conducted
- **3862** • Providers Trained
- **2479** • Training hours
- **785** • Programs served

Statewide On-Demand Trainings

These on-demand training opportunities are available to child care professionals and school-age professionals in South Dakota. Through these opportunities, professionals can access them 24/7 and at their own pace with coaching supports offered after the training completion to help strengthen confidence in the newly learned information.

64 Programs Served

295 Providers Trained

- ☑ Infant Toddler Focused
- ☑ Out of School Time Focused
- ☑ Preschool Focused
- ☑ Family Child Care Focused
- ☑ Management/Leadership Focused

Level I Orientation

All new child care providers working in a registered or licensed child care or school-age program are required to complete Level I orientation training within 90 days of hire.

3036 Providers trained

Level II Orientation

Level II training is an on-demand series for staff working in a registered or licensed child care or school-age programs. Must be taken within the first 5 years of employment.

616 Providers trained

Temperament Program

The Temperament Program is a collaborative approach between parent(s), child care providers and the educator to understand a child's temperament. When a child's temperament is understood, it is easier to meet the child's needs in order to encourage the child's development. The temperament Program is available in Region 3 & 5.



Program Provides:

- Parent and Provider Support
- Staff Education
- Resources

Social Wellness + Emotional Wellness Program

The SD Early Childhood Enrichment (ECE) System offers the Social Wellness & Emotional Wellness program child care providers and parents involving children who exhibit challenging behaviors or developmental concerns. This program is currently offered in Regions 1, 3 & 5.

Supports available include:

- Developmental Milestones and Screenings
- Onsite Observations
- Identifying Community Resources

ECE provides education, resources and technical assistance for the prevention of suspension and expulsion practices in early childhood programs.

440 Visits

692 Observations

155 Children Served

143 Providers Served

Thank you so much for your support during my child's preschool year. He enjoyed it and has made such growth as well.



The work you have done with me has made me feel so much better and healed a part of me. I have so much more confidence on dealing with behaviors in my classroom.

CHILDCARE PROVIDER RESOURCES

Pathways to Professional Development



South Dakota Pathways to Professional Development Career Ladder is the a career ladder for early childhood and school-age care educators. Pathways identifies opportunities for professional growth so that every educator can create their own professional path.

The program recognizes each educator's professional development, education, and ongoing growth. Through certificates, welcome kits, and engagement opportunities like the Literacy Challenge, it also celebrates educators' professional development achievements.

For more information, visit https://sdece.org/pathways/

593 Members representing 128 Programs

ECE Resource Hub

SD ECE Resources is a free resource hub that offers a new way for child care and school-age care providers in South Dakota to find information to support their businesses and classrooms.

SD ECE Resources is a go-to resource for a wide range of programs, policies, and forms designed to help providers effectively manage the operations of their child care program.

All educators working in registered or licensed programs can request a membership at www.sdeceresources.org

Quality Care South Dakota

Quality Care South Dakota (QCSD) is the state's Quality Recognition and Information System (QRIS). It recognizes and promotes quality in state licensed and registered early care and school-age programs. The program empowers educators to create safe, nurturing, and educational environments while elevating the importance of quality care to parents and communities.

For more information, visit https://sdece.org/quality-care-south-dakota/



Car Seat Distribution Program

The Child Safety Seat Distribution Program focuses on keeping children safe by providing child safety seats at no cost to families that meet income eligibility requirements.

The 5 ECE offices oversee and coordinate car seat distributions with 62 community partner agencies in 45 counties across the state.



ECE Offices

- 1286 Seat Distributed
- 947 Families Served

Community Partners

- 1303 Seat Distributed
- 1201 Families Served

> *I am so grateful for your support and services. I had no idea my child was in the wrong carseat!*



Birth to Three Parenting Classes

Free 4- or 6-week parent education series that helps parents to understand the world from a child's perspective in order to respond in ways that encourage and enhance a child's development.

For upcoming classes, visit https://dss.sd.gov/childcare/educationalopportunities/

Responsive Parenting (Six Week Class Series)

- The Parent Child Relationship
- The Unique Child Temperament
- Responding to Your Child's Needs
- How and What Your Child Learns
- Parenting is Stressful
- Encouraging Your Child

Understanding Me Up to Age 3 (Four Week Class Series)

- Why I Do What I Do
- Keep Me Safe
- How I Learn
- Help Me Manage My Feelings

> *These classes make me want to be a better parent!*

101	225	133
Classes	Class Hours	Parents Served

Statewide Accomplishments

- Aligned professional development offerings to South Dakota's Core Knowledge and Competencies
- Collaborated to create a state-specific landing page in the resource hub, SD ECE Resources
- Completed Harmony Academy Training for Trainers to support emotional well-being, healthy relationship skills, and social supports for child care and school-age care programs
- Completed multiple Environment Rating Scales in collaboration with Quality Care South Dakota
- Expanded reach in rural communities through direct outreach efforts and community-focused training opportunities
- Finished Practice-Based Coaching Training for coaches and educators
- Held SD ECE System and Quality Care South Dakota 2025 All-Staff Meeting
- Hosted Leadership Summit for over 45 childcare professionals and leaders
- Increased coaches and educator's knowledge and confidence on Environmental Rating Scales
- Offered 17 professional development sessions for "Using Books to Promote Relationship Skills" that included the distribution of more than 90 classroom book sets
- Offered the statewide training series, Strengthening Business Practices for Family Child Care
- Provided CDA scholarships for training and renewal costs
- Provided professional representation at statewide conferences - presentations on emotional wellness, child guidance, and professionalism
- Provided representation in the State CDA Navigator discussions
- Relaunch of Level II Health and Safety Training
- Revamped CDA Articulation to Credit for Prior Learning
- Revised the SD School-Age Care Certificate & Credential
- Supported the distribution of SD Early Learning Guidelines Activity calendars for children ages 0-5
- Supported the distribution of the Pathways to Professional Development membership kits



Future Growth

- Continue collaborations with the DSS Office of Licensing and Accreditation
- Continue content review for online on-demand focused area classes
- Continue promoting Pathways to Professional Development, South Dakota's Core Knowledge and Competencies for Early Childhood and School-age Educators, and SD ECE Resource
- Continue to support community work regarding child care access
- Continue developing and offering professional development for all skill levels
- Level III Health and Safety Training launch for educators in the field for 10+ years
- Offer a statewide training series, "Strengthening Business Practices for Center-Based Programs"
- Online, on-demand training access for fitCare
- Training for training specialists to support Strengthening Business Practices

PARTNERSHIPS

Thank you to our industry partners for supporting the efforts of the SD ECE System in making an impact to South Dakota's youngest citizens. The impact is greater because of you!

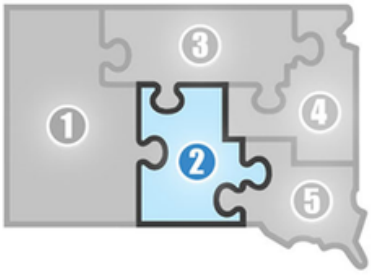
- Boys and Girls Club
- Brookings Area CPR Training Center
- Brookings High School
- Campaign for Grade Level Reading
- Capital Area United Way
- Capital City Campus
- Chamber
- City of Sioux Falls, Department of Health
- Codington County Child Care Action Team
- Department of Education Child & Adult Nutrition Services, Child and Adult Care Food Program
- Department of Health
- Department of Social Services – Child Protection Services
- Department of Social Services - Office of Licensing and Accreditation
- Discovery Center of Pierre
- Early Learner Rapid City
- Family Child Care Professionals of South Dakota
- Growing Up Together
- Helpline 211
- Hughes and Stanley County
- Inter-lakes Community Action Partnership – Head Start/Early Head Start
- John T Vucurevich Foundation
- Lake Area Technical College
- Lifesight
- Missouri Shores
- Oahe Child Development Center
- Oahe YMCA
- Prosperity Initiative
- Quality Care South Dakota
- Rapid City Area School District
- Rapid City Catholic Schools
- Rapid City Christian Schools
- Rapid City Collective Impact
- Rawlins Library
- Rotary Club
- Sanford Health, fit Initiative
- Sanford Health, Parenting Newborns Program
- Sanford Health, Parenting Program
- SD Services for the Deaf
- SDSU Extension
- SDSU's Early Childhood Education and Human Development and Family Science Programs
- SoDakSACA Conference
- SoDakSACA Leadership Retreat
- South Dakota Community Foundation of Hughes County
- South Dakota Early Childhood Education Conference
- Statewide Family Engagement Center
- T.F. Riggs High School
- United Way - Brookings Area
- United Way of Sioux Empire
- United Way of the Black Hills
- Voc. Rehab
- YMCA's
- Walgreens
- West River Mental Health
- Zonta



CONTACT US



REGION 1: EARLY CHILDHOOD CONNECTIONS
3645 Sturgis Rd, Suite 110
Rapid City, SD 57702
(605) 342-6464
www.earlychildhoodconnections.com



REGION 2: THE RIGHT TURN, INC
115 E Sioux Ave
Pierre, SD 57501
(605) 773-4755
www.therightturn.net



REGION 3: SANFORD CHILDREN'S CHILD SERVICES
2905 3rd Ave SE
Aberdeen, SD 57401
(605) 226-5675
www.sanfordhealth.org/resources/child-services



REGION 4: CHILD AND FAMILY RESOURCE NEWORK
South Dakota State University, Box 2218
Brookings, SD 57007
(605) 688-5730
www.sdstate.edu/child-family-resource-network



REGION 5: SANFORD CHILDREN'S CHILD SERVICES
5015 S Western Ave, Suite 120
Sioux Falls, SD 57108
(605) 312-8390
www.sanfordhealth.org/resources/child-services