START EARLY™

Champions for Early Learning

OUR MISSION

Start Early advances quality early learning for families with children, before birth through their earliest years, to close the opportunity gap.

OUR VISION

Every child has equitable opportunity to reach their full potential to thrive in school and in life.

THE CURRENT STATE

Inequality starts at birth and the impact lasts a lifetime. A child's brain develops faster from birth to age 5 than at any other time.

Yet, this critical development is in jeopardy for many children whose families lack access to quality early learning and care services, especially those living in communities that are left under-resourced. The "opportunity gap" is created by the arbitrary circumstances into which babies are born — such as race, ethnicity, ZIP code and socioeconomic status. The impacts of this gap are measurable as early as 9 months.

Change the first five years and you change everything.

5M+

Number of children under age 5 living in under-resourced communities in the United States

1M+

Number of children that enter kindergarten unprepared to learn each year

WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE

Decades of research have proven that quality early learning programs have a high return on investment. Early childhood programs help address the long-standing injustices in our communities and can break the cycle of intergenerational poverty.

Parents do better. Children do better. And when those children become adults, their children also do better.

4X

Children are four times more likely to complete a bachelor's degree or higher after attending early learning and care programs.

QUALITY EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS WORK

For children...

- 25% more likely to **graduate** high school
- 4x more likely to have completed a **bachelor's degree** or higher
- Up to 25% more in earned **wages** as an adult

For communities...

- Better **education** outcomes and economic **productivity**
- Improved **health** and reduced **health care** costs
- Reduced **crime**

WE ENVISION A FUTURE WHERE...

- Every **child** has opportunities to thrive.
- Every **parent** is supported and empowered.
- Every **program leader** and all program staff consistently deliver quality services.
- Every **system** at local, state and federal levels prioritizes and equitably supports children and families.
- Every **community** demonstrates improved outcomes for its youngest children.

WHAT WE DO
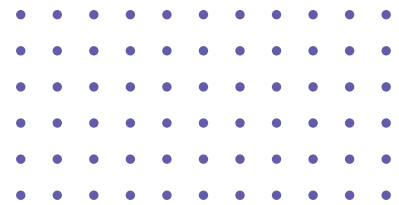
We provide **QUALITY EARLY LEARNING AND CARE** to children and families on-the-ground in Chicago and in rural Illinois, and we partner with others to bring our lessons learned to children and families nationwide.

Our **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OFFERINGS** help ensure early childhood professionals build practices that transform teaching and learning and deliver stronger outcomes for children.

We conduct **RESEARCH AND EVALUATION** to optimize and inform every aspect of our work, from the classroom to policy recommendations and training programs.

We promote **WIDE-RANGING POLICIES AND PROGRAMS** that put families first by helping policymakers understand the benefits of and the science behind early childhood development.

We foster **COLLABORATION TO ACCELERATE LEARNING AND IMPACT**, emphasizing the value and power of partnerships and recognizing we are stronger when we share and learn from one another.

OUR APPROACH

Start Early is leading the way. Since 1982, we have worked to close the opportunity gap by providing and championing early learning experiences for children and families from before birth through the first five years of life.

Our comprehensive approach to early learning and care applies our deep expertise in program, policy and research so that children, families and educators can thrive.

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INTRODUCTION

Purpose

This welcome packet is to serve as a comprehensive resource, fostering support and guidance for both new and existing programs in Illinois. It is designed with a commitment to excellence and continuous quality improvement. This packet aims to empower programs, technical assistance providers, funders, and Start Early staff by providing essential information, key contacts, and valuable insights into the vast landscape of work in the Professional Learning Network of Illinois.

Start Early's Core Values

Our Core Values lay the foundation for our identity and the way we do our work. They reflect our ongoing commitment to instilling a culture that supports Start Early's role as a catalyst for change.
- Empowerment
- Appreciation & Respect
- Learning
- Communication
- Diversity
- Excellence

Advancing Racial Equity: Applying a racial equity lens to our work is critical to ensuring we deliver on our mission and live out our core values.

Sign up to receive Start Early news, helpful tools and learn about how you can help our youngest learners.

The Professional Learning Network of Illinois at Start Early

For over 40 years, Start Early has provided statewide professional learning in Illinois to support professional growth that is essential for high-quality programs to achieve effective child and parent/caregiver outcomes. Our Professional Learning Network currently designs and provides professional learning services and program supports—through training, technical assistance (TA) and coaching—for more than 350 home visiting and center-based programs across the state of Illinois from multiple evidence-based models and multiple funders.

The Professional Learning Network is the official Illinois state office for the Parents as Teachers model and is the sole source entity in Illinois for model core and curriculum training for both Parents as Teachers and Healthy Families America.

In collaboration with our public partners, such as the Illinois State Board of Education and the Illinois Department of Human Services-Department of Early Childhood, the Professional Learning Network has created a series of classroom, webinar, and online courses that explore the content areas that are of greatest relevancy to professionals working with young children and their families through doula, home visiting and center-based services. These courses, when combined with individualized program technical assistant and coaching, provide a continuity of scaffolded learning that promotes the integration of knowledge into skills and practice.

Our Professional Learning Network's offerings are:

- Competency-based
- Informed by best practices in the field
- Designed from an early childhood development perspective
- Focused on the parent/caregiver-child relationship
- Supportive of multidisciplinary systems that promote early childhood development
- Grounded in reflective practice – essential for professional growth
- Based on continuous learning processes
- Developed and offered through a diversity, equity and inclusion lens
- Gateways Registry approved
- Relationship Oriented
- Available in English and Spanish

Mission: Support Early Childhood Education professionals in building powerful practices that transforms teaching and learning

Vision: Build practice and strong teams that transform early childhood education and learning for all children with our portfolio of training programs

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging

Start Early's Professional Learning Network (PLN) is committed to cultivating a learning environment built on the values of diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging. We are dedicated to strengthening and deepening our journey towards becoming an anti-racist organization that works in true partnership with staff and communities to ensure equitable access to high-quality early childhood experiences. We endeavor to foster an environment that honors diversity, examines and addresses privilege, actively works to dismantle structural and institutional racism, and embeds racial equity in our internal and external processes. We commit to co-creating a culture of inclusion where the presence, voices, and ideas of trainers, technical assistance specialists, operation staff, consultants, conference/training participants, and those who receive technical assistance are represented, heard, valued, and acted on. We value differences, including gender identity, language, sexual orientation, race, abilities, mental health, age, and religion.

PLN strives to co-create a welcoming environment. For those participating in conferences, technical assistance, and training events offered by the Professional Learning Network (PLN), we ask for these shared commitments from our trainers, technical assistance specialists, operation staff, consultants, conference/training participants, and those who receive technical assistance:

- To learn approaches and practices that support Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging.
- To unlearn approaches and practices that cause harm to others, especially those who have been historically marginalized.
- To bring a mindset of continuous learning, curiosity, and cultural humility.
- To fully participate and engage in learning events.
- To respect peers and the wisdom and life experience of others.
- To embrace inclusive language and acknowledge that language is always evolving and is a conduit for change.
- To become comfortable with uncomfortable conversations.
- To understand the difference between impact and intent.
- To initiate accountability and repair in relationships.
- To have an outlook of progress over perfection.

As always, PLN is proud to continue this DEIB journey in partnership with you. Reach out to us at PLNSupport@startearly.org with your thoughts and concerns. We in PLN benefit and learn from feedback.

Connect with Us

Professional Learning Network's General Enquiry and Customer Support
Contact PLN at PLNSupport@startearly.org

Center-Based & Family Center Child Care Homes
Contact Sr. Program Manager Ariel Chaidez at achaidez@startearly.org

Doula
Contact Sr. TA and Training Specialist Doula and Home Visiting Bridget Lally at
blally@startearly.org

Healthy Families America/Illinois
Contact Sr. Program Manager Dara Williamson at dwilliamson@startearly.org

Parents As Teachers
Contact PATIL@startearly.org or visit https://patillinois.org/

Essentials of Home Visiting
Contact the Essentials of Home Visiting at professionaldevelopment@startearly.org

Head Start
Contact TA and Training Specialist, Chevon Townsend-King ctownsend@startearly.org

Nurse Family Partnership
Contact TA and Training Specialist, Karen Williams kwilliams@startearly.org

Standards and Guidelines Alignment

The Professional Learning Network aligns courses to competencies developed for home visitors, doulas, family support workers, and their supervisors, as well as the following standards and guidelines:

Illinois Early Learning Guidelines:
https://illinoisearlylearning.org/ielg/

Illinois Birth to Five Program Standards:
https://www.isbe.net/documents/0-5-program-stds.pdf

Standards for Professional Learning:
https://standards.learningforward.org/standards-for-professional-learning/

Gateways Levels of Learning:
https://registry.ilgateways.com/images/documents/trainingresources/022818_Levels_of_Learning.pdf

Gateways to Opportunity

Gateways to Opportunity (Gateways) is a statewide organization that utilizes a registry system to track professional development events. Start Early partners with Gateways, a division of the Illinois Network of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (INCCRRA). The Professional Learning Network is an Authorized Entity, meaning all its professional development events are Registry-Approved. Registry-Approved professional development events meet or exceed a strict set of criteria for quality learning experiences.

The registry is easy to join and a great way to keep a record of all your professional development experiences in one place. Another benefit of the registry is that some events can help you earn points towards a Gateways credential. The current credentials are listed below, and more are in development:

- Early Childhood Education Levels 1-5
- Illinois Director
- Infant Toddler Levels 2-5
- School-Age and Youth Development Levels 1-5
- Family Child Care (FCC) Credential Levels 2-5
- Family Specialist Credential (FSC) Levels 2-5

To learn more about Gateways, visit www.ilgateways.com.

National Models

Baby TALK (Teaching Activities for Learning and Knowledge) is a community family support model which provides the framework to guide parent educators, teachers, social workers, family support specialists, nurses, physicians, librarians and city leaders in nurturing school readiness and optimal child development by supporting infants and toddlers and their parents/caregivers. Baby TALK maintains a professional organization of practitioners who meet periodically throughout the year for informative professional development conferences. Baby TALK has also developed an intricate child development curriculum which uses activities taken from multiple perspectives; parent/caregiver, child and family worker.

Early Head Start (EHS) programs serve infants and toddlers under the age of 3, and pregnant women. EHS programs provide intensive comprehensive child development and family support services to low-income infants and toddlers and their families, and to pregnant women and their families. EHS programs are designed to nurture healthy attachments between parent/caregiver and child (and child and caregiver). Services encompass the full range of a family's needs from pregnancy through a child's third birthday.

Healthy Families America (HFA) is a nationally recognized, evidence-based home visiting model using an infant mental health approach to support nurturing parent/caregiver-child relationships. The HFA key principles are: relationship and attachment, trauma-informed practice and reflective capacity. These key principles provide the overarching philosophy and engagement method of all components of the model, including relationship building with families, supporting program staff, and collaborating with community partners. Visits occur between a family and Family Support Specialist beginning prenatally or at birth and continuing until the child is 3-5 years old. Using reflective strategies and individualized activities, Family Support Specialists support parents/caregivers as they build a nurturing attachment relationship with their child and grow their family strengths. Reflective practice and supervision are vital in supporting and strengthening Family Support Specialists in their role. Affiliated and Accredited HFA programs follow the HFA Best Practice Standards and participate in the rigorous accreditation process every four years.

Nurse-Family Partnership (NFP) helps first-time moms with the support they need to become confident parents and strong women, and ultimately, give their babies the best possible start in life. NFP is staffed by nurses who meet with new parents in their homes, beginning prenatally and continuing for two years. Their focus is on health and safety, and of a high-quality parent/baby relationship. Their founder, Dr. David Olds, oversees a long-standing research project which involves all NFP sites. Training for NFP takes place exclusively in Denver, Colorado.

Parents as Teachers (PAT) is a resource organization providing a proven home visiting model for organizations and professionals who meet the evolving needs of families. Their work with the professional community helps young children grow up healthy, safe, and ready to learn. Their internationally recognized network of organizations and professionals supports hundreds of thousands of families in all 50 states as well as many other countries through a proven parent education model featuring intimate, in-home visits with parents/caregivers and children. Parents as Teachers has developed an intimate and relationship-based curriculum that is infused with information on early childhood brain development over the developmental phases.

Model Enhancements

Community-based Doulas are specialized home visitors who provide support to the birthing person in the months before and after the birth of their children, generally from the second or third trimester until the eighth week postnatal. Services provided include prenatal education to promote healthy pregnancies and birth outcomes and to offer a supportive presence throughout the labor and delivery process.

Infant Mental Health Consultants are practitioners who specialize in addressing the quality of the parent/caregiver-baby relationship. These practitioners are available to programs for reflective case consultation and collective staff processing regarding difficult and traumatic cases.

Funders and Partners

The following state agencies provide funding for Professional Learning Network's training, technical assistance, and coaching:

Illinois Department of Human Services – Department of Early Childhood

Illinois Board of Education - Early Childhood Block Grant Prevention Initiative

Maternal Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV)

The following entities partner with the Professional Learning Network:

Health and Home Visiting (HHV) Committee

The Health and Home Visiting (HHV) Committee advises on the development of systems that promote health and wellness, advance equitable access to early childhood programs and improve outcomes for families with young children. On a macro level, it facilitates seamless connections between services that offer support to families with children

prenatal through kindergarten, such as home visiting, healthcare, mental health, and early education. Serving as the advisory body to the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) program, its priorities include enhancing the home visiting workforce, expanding doula services, supporting early care and education programs, and improving access to healthcare and mental health services for children and caregivers.

For more HHV information or to be added to the mailing list contact Jean.davis@illinois.gov

Training, Technical Assistance, and Coaching

We Consider You Our Partner in Learning

Our courses are designed with adult learning theories in mind! Together with us, you'll have the opportunity to:

Emphasize integration of skills in practice, rather than just the mastery of concepts.

Share your experiences and collaborate with colleagues to solve the problems you face right now.

Connect with a network of peer support, which along with your supervisor, will help guide you through your growth as a professional.

Training begins with the foundations of your practice, shifts to program development and advanced practice, and then caps off with courses geared to supervisors and advanced learning groups.

Technical Assistance Specialists – Home visiting and center-based programs funded by one or more of the funders listed under Partners and Funders receive technical assistance directly from PLN or Baby TALK.

Every Technical Assistant Specialist partners with home visiting staff to advance the quality of the work through direct service and in support of Illinois' most vulnerable families with children prenatal to five.

PLN Core Competency Areas

- Dynamics of Family Relationships
- Early Child and Adolescent Development
- Family and Community Relationships
- Family Support and Parenting Education
- Health and Safety
- Learning Environments
- Professional Development

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING POLICIES

The first step towards engaging in PLN's professional learning offerings is to enroll with the Professional Learning Network through our professional learning portal.

To get started, learners are encouraged to follow the steps below:
1) Enroll
2) Log in
3) Register

If you need assistance, Spanish supports, or have questions, our highly skilled Operations Team is here to serve you. Please contact us at PLNSupport@startearly.org (best option) or call 312-922-3863.

Event Registration Policy (onsite events)

Learning events often require the completion of course materials before and after the events. All participants are required to register as early as possible, but no later than 72 hours prior to the event. Registration not only guarantees your participation but also ensures our dedicated staff can provide you with the best support and resources tailored for you.

Please see www.startearly.org/pln for more information and guidance on the specific event.

ADDITIONAL CONTEXT:

Registration 72 hours prior is important for the following reasons.
- You will receive pre & post event emails with pertinent course information. If you are not registered, you may limit the time available for completing or reviewing important course materials, and we may miss out on your valuable evaluation feedback.
- Evaluation emails are sent directly at the time the event closes and are only sent to pre-registered participants.
- For in-person courses, it's helpful for seating, printing of resources, etc. If a trainee isn't registered, they could miss out on resources.
- To avoid delays and disruptions in learning, we require registration prior to events at www.startearly.org/pln.

For any questions, please contact PLNSupport@startearly.org and our team will be happy to assist you.

Event Registration Policy (virtual events)

Learning events often require the completion of course materials before and after the events. All participants are required to register as early as possible, but no later than 24 hours prior to the event. Registration not only guarantees your participation but also ensures our dedicated staff can provide you with the best support and resources tailored for you.

Please see www.startearly.org/pln for more information and guidance on the specific event.

ADDITIONAL CONTEXT:

Registration 24 hours prior is important for the following reasons.
- You will receive pre & post event emails with pertinent course information. If you are not registered, you may limit the time available for completing or reviewing important course materials, and we may miss out on your valuable evaluation feedback.
- Evaluation emails are sent directly at the time the event closes and are only sent to pre-registered participants.
- To avoid delays and disruptions in learning, we require registration prior to events at www.startearly.org/pln.

For any questions, please contact PLNSupport@startearly.org and our team will be happy to assist you.

Event Cancelation Policy

If a training session has fewer than six registered attendees five days prior to the session date, or if registration drops below six less than five days prior to the session date, PLN will assess whether to cancel the event. In the event of a cancellation, all registered attendees and their supervisors will be contacted via email.

ADDITIONAL CONTEXT:

Please review our event registration policies.

Attendance & Registration Policy

Success in a learning event is dependent on active participation and engagement by the attendee throughout the course. Attendees must be registered to attend and participate in session activities, discussions, and be on time. Attendees will not be admitted into a session

if they are not registered. Participation is defined as greater than 90% attendance of the scheduled virtual session time as outlined below.

The Professional Learning Network has implemented attendance requirements to obtain credit for attending virtual sessions:

- 1 hour session (6-minute grace period)
- 1.5 hour session (9-minute grace period)
- 2 hour session (12-minute grace period)
- 2.5 hour session (15-minute grace period)
- 3+ hour session (18-minute grace period)

Attendees joining after the allotted grace period will not be admitted into the session.

The Professional Learning Network supports individuals in obtaining access to professional learning opportunities efficiently and effectively. Participants must be enrolled in the Professional Learning Portal before registering or attending sessions.

Participants must be on time for live and in-person professional learning opportunities. We encourage participants to follow the Add to Calendar steps to support timely attendance. Participants will not be allowed into the live session after a certain amount of time has passed. See the Attendance & Registration Policy for more information. We understand situations arise, if you know that you will not be able to join on time, please reach out to PLNSupport@startearly.org and consider scheduling yourself for another session through the Professional Learning Portal.

Contact PLNSupport@StartEarly.org or visit https://www.startearly.org/PLN if you have any questions.

Non-registered Participants (Virtual events)

The Professional Learning Network (PLN) at Start Early requires registration at least 24 hours prior to all events to ensure smooth admittance and avoid additional delays post event. See our Event Cancelation Policy for more information.

PLN's virtual events are held on Zoom. All participants are added to a waiting room prior to the event start time and will be admitted upon registration confirmation.

The facilitator(s) or PLN Support staff will verify that you are registered for the event prior to moving you out of the waiting room and into the learning environment. Registration not only guarantees your participation but also ensures our dedicated staff can provide you with the best support and resources tailored for you.

If an error in registration takes place or there are zoom link issues, PLN will follow these steps:

- Upon verification of registration, PLN Support staff will confirm if you are eligible to attend the training and ensure you are an active user of our Professional Learning Portal.
- Once confirmed, PLN Support staff will determine if you are eligible to attend the training.
  - For example, some events are for supervisors only. For admittance, your user profile must indicate a supervisory role.
- Once your account has been verified and you are eligible to attend, your information will be added to the sign in sheet.

ADDITIONAL CONTEXT:

- To avoid delays and disruptions in learning, register for events at www.startearly.org/pln.
- If you are not enrolled, you will be registered for the next available session and an enrollment form will be sent to you for completion.
  - Enrollment forms are processed within 2-3 business days.

For any questions, please contact PLNSupport@startearly.org and our team will be happy to assist you.

Participation Cancelation Policy

The Professional Learning Network is committed to providing and supporting all our trainees with quality professional development opportunities for both home visitors and center-based program staff.

When a participant cancels without giving enough notice, it prevents other participants from coming off the waitlist, registering, and/or attending. Please see our Event Cancelation Policy for further implications and information.

Please cancel your registration **no later than 14 days before** your scheduled session. To notify us of any changes or cancellations contact us at PLNSupport@startearly.org.

To cancel a session that falls on a Monday, please email PLNSupport@startearly.org by 2:00 p.m. the Friday before. If prior notification is not given, you will be marked as a "no-show".

Evaluations

Evaluations are a core component of our professional learning events. They are a pivotal role in the continuous quality improvement of our professional learning events. These assessments provide a structured framework for gauging the effectiveness, relevance, and

impact of the learning experiences we offer. By soliciting feedback from participants, we gain valuable insights into the strengths and areas for improvement in our training initiatives. Evaluations not only measure the attainment of learning objectives but also allow us to tailor future events to the specific needs and preferences of our audience. Additionally, they serve as a mechanism for assessing the efficacy of our instructional methods, facilitators, and content, fostering a culture of accountability, equity, and responsiveness. Ultimately, the data derived from these evaluations contribute to the enhancement of our professional learning events, ensuring they remain dynamic, engaging, and aligned with the evolving needs of our participants and recommendations from our funders.

The Professional Learning Network (PLN) at Start Early began utilizing Qualtrics in FY24. Qualtrics is web-based software that enables the Professional Learning Network to gather data by way of surveys, feedback and polls using a variety of distribution means. PLN evaluates data provided by learners to support the Continuous Quality improvement process and inform future professional learning opportunities. Data is also collected post events and through an annual Needs Assessment and Satisfaction Survey.

- Trainees are strongly encouraged to complete an event evaluation post training event.
- If you did not receive an evaluation link or have questions, please contact PLNSupport@startearly.org and our team will be happy to assist you.

Supports for Breastfeeding Parents (onsite events)

The Professional Learning Network of Illinois acknowledges your privacy and encourages you to reach out to PLNSupport@startearly.org prior to your scheduled onsite event at 33 W. or Springfield.

A Professional Learning Network Team Member will reach out to you regarding private lactation space onsite.

Video Library & Family Stipend Payments

The Professional Learning Network supports families contributing to our video library or training content. Participating families are eligible to receive compensation from The Professional Learning Network (PLN).
- Eligibility is determined internally between Start Early staff program supervisors.

The Professional Learning Network will manage communication between sites and families as part of the collection process, as follows:

- The program and family associated with the video collection will receive an email from a PLN Operations Coordinator with stipend and media release forms. We request:
  o Your PayPal email address
  o Full name
  o Request for forms to be completed and returned
- Once the OC receives your PayPal email confirmation and form documentation, payment will be sent.
- An email will be sent confirming receipt of the payment.

ADDITIONAL CONTEXT:

- PayPal is our preferred method of payment.
- Program staff are not eligible to receive stipends.

For any questions, please contact PLNSupport@startearly.org and our team will be happy to assist you.

Safety Guidelines (Onsite events)

Start Early is committed to the health and well-being of our employees, their families, and members of our community. Start Early has reviewed recommendations from organizations such as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices, and state and local health officials, and determined masks are optional for all Start Early and non-Start Early employees. In accordance with our duty to provide and maintain a safe and healthy workplace, all trainees will have access to masks and hand sanitizer, as needed.

We look forward to seeing you at upcoming in-person events at Start Early. If you have any questions, please reach out to PLNSupport@Startearly.org.

ADDITIONAL CONTEXT:

In the event of a potential outbreak, the Professional Learning Network will utilize the training roster to email all attendees who may have been in contact with the persons testing positive with COVID-19. Please see our Event Registration Policy(s) for important information.

Walk-In Participants (Onsite events)

The Professional Learning Network (PLN) at Start Early requires registration at least 72 hours prior to all events.

If an error in registration occurs, PLN will follow these steps:

- An Operations Coordinator will verify that you are enrolled in our Professional Learning Portal.
- Upon verification in enrollment, the OC will determine if you are eligible to attend the training.
  - For example, some events are for supervisors only. For admittance, your user profile must indicate a supervisory role.
- Once your account has been verified and you are eligible to attend, your information will be added to the sign in sheet.
- If you are not enrolled, you will be required to complete an online registration form.
  - The enrollment form will be processed within 2-3 business days.

ADDITIONAL CONTEXT:

- To avoid delays and disruptions in learning, we require registration prior to events at www.startearly.org/pln.
- For any questions, please contact PLNSupport@startearly.org and our team will be happy to assist you.

USER GUIDE & HOW-TO'S

Enrollment Process

New users are required to enroll in the Professional Learning Portal 1 week prior to attending their first scheduled session using this form:

- PLN Enrollment Form OR the Professional Learning Portal: www.startearly.org/PLN
- New users will be reviewed to determine appropriate funding and to obtain verification from their supervisor before their enrollment form is processed.
- Once the enrollment is confirmed and approved, the new hire will receive an email containing personal account login information.
- The participant will be able to register for professional learning opportunities via their account.
- Enrollments are processed every 3 business days.

The enrollment process consists of the following steps:
- Submit an enrollment form.
- The enrollment form is reviewed by Start Early staff depending on funding/program model.
- If approval is required from your supervisor, your supervisor will be contacted via email for review and approval of your enrollment.
- Upon receipt of approval from your supervisor, the PLN Support staff will process your enrollment form.

- A confirmation email will be sent to you via email notifying you that your account is ready.

ADDITIONAL CONTEXT:

Approval and confirmation times may vary depending on supervisors' response times, your program's funder, and observed holidays and staff capacity.

Please Note: If you previously had an account with the Professional Learning Network, either at another agency, you have a name change, please click here or contact PLNSupport@StartEarly.org to update your pre-existing account.

How to Register for Sessions

Below are steps on how to register for a session via the Catalog:

- Log into your [Professional Learning Portal](#) account.
- Go to the Professional Development tab.
- Scroll down to Browse Training Catalog and click.
- Events are listed in alphabetical order.
  - Scroll down and click on the title of the training.
- Click "Select a Session".
- Click "View Details".
- Click "Request".

Please Note: If a session's not available there is a 'Notify me of new session' option located in the drop-down menu under "Select a Session".

For any questions, please contact PLNSupport@startearly.org and our team will be happy to assist you.

En español

A continuación se muestran los pasos para registrarse en una sesión a través del Catálogo:

- Inicia sesión en tu cuenta del Portal de Aprendizaje Profesional ([Professional Learning Portal](#)).
- Dirígete a la pestaña de Desarrollo Profesional.
- Desplázate hacia abajo hasta encontrar el Catálogo de Capacitación y haz clic en él.
- Los eventos están listados en orden alfabético.
  - Desplázate hacia abajo y haz clic en el título de la capacitación.
- Haz clic en "Seleccionar una sesión".
- Haz clic en "Ver detalles".
- Haz clic en "Solicitar".

Ten en cuenta: Si una sesión no está disponible, hay una opción de 'Notificarme nuevas sesiones' ubicada en el menú desplegable bajo "Seleccionar una sesión".

Para cualquier pregunta, por favor contacta a PLNSupport@startearly.org y nuestro equipo estará encantado de ayudarte.

Set up Event Alerts

Participants can sign up to get an alert when a new session is posted.

Follow these steps to set an alert for a new session via the PLN Catalog:
- Log into the Professional Learning Portal: www.startearly.org/PLN.
- Go to the Professional Development tab, scroll, and click on "Browse Training Catalog".
- Events are listed in alphabetical order, scroll to find the title of the training.
- Click on the down arrow located on the "Select a Session" button.
- Click on the "Notify Me of New Sessions" link.
- Select your location or check the 'Notify me when sessions are scheduled at any location' box and click submit.

For any questions, please contact PLNSupport@startearly.org and our team will be happy to assist you.

Add Events to a Calendar

After registering for a PLN professional learning event, you will receive an e-mail confirming your registration. In addition to information about the event, the e-mail will also have attachments that will allow you to easily add the scheduled session(s) to your calendar.
The following information will guide you on how to add the attachments to your Outlook or Google calendar.

NOTE: To add the attachments to other electronic calendars please consult your calendar documentation or your IT professional.

OUTLOOK CALENDAR WITH OUTLOOK E-MAIL
- At the top of the e-mail locate the .ics files. *There will be one .ics file for each scheduled session of the event.*

Professional Learning Network session registration confirmation

PS PLNSupport@StartEarly.org
To

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982c2e51-508d-4021-9b3f-08679cded949.ics 9 KB
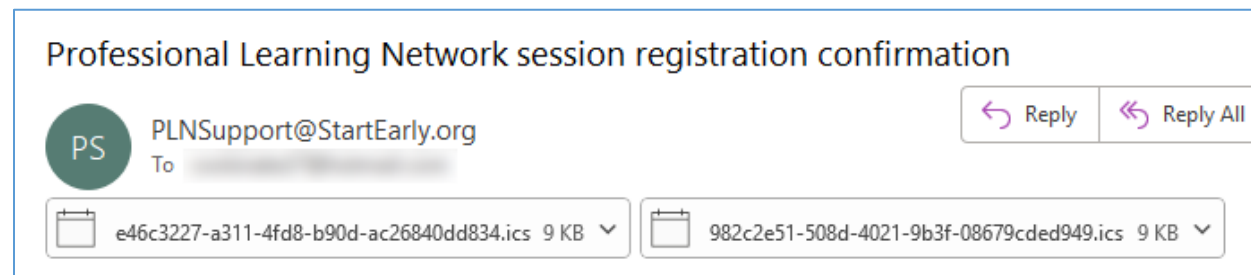
- Click on the down arrow to the right of the attachment and select Open.
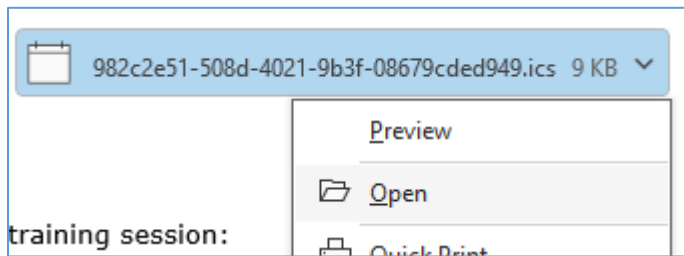
- In the prompt that appears, click on the 'Yes' button to add it to Outlook.
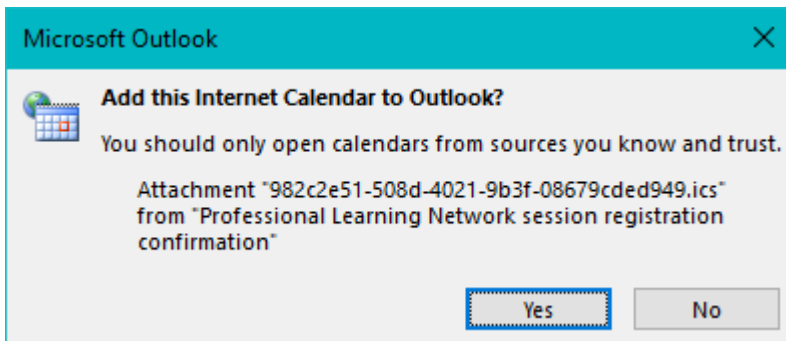
- A new window will appear with the event details. Press either of the 'Accept' buttons to add the session to your calendar.
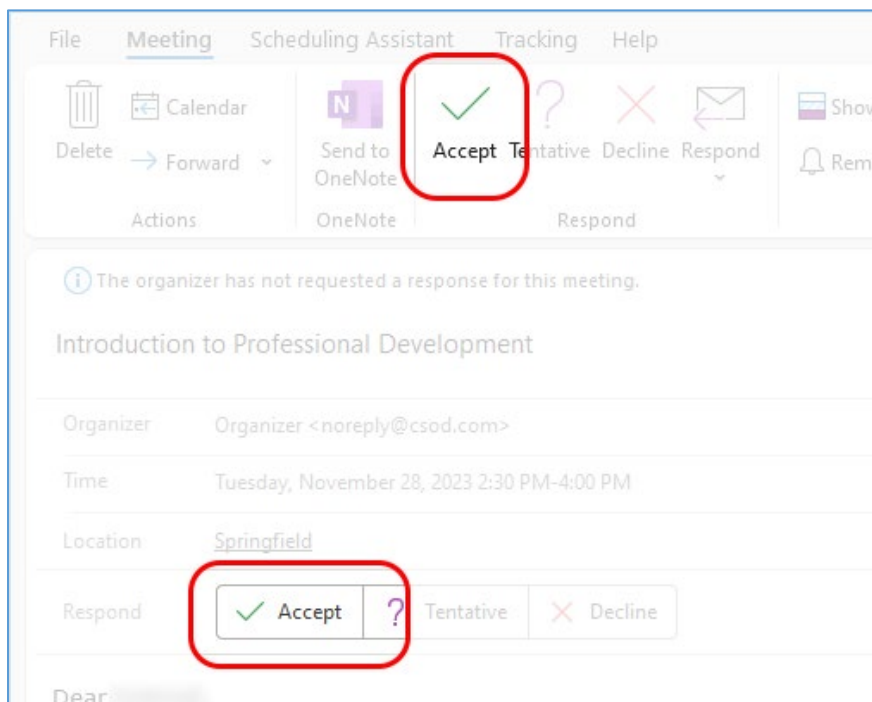
If the event has multiple sessions, you will need to repeat this process for each of the .ics attachments to add all of the event's sessions to your calendar.

G-MAIL CALENDAR WITH G-MAIL E-MAIL

- At the top of the e-mail, locate the 'Events in this message' area and click the 'Add to Google Calendar' button.
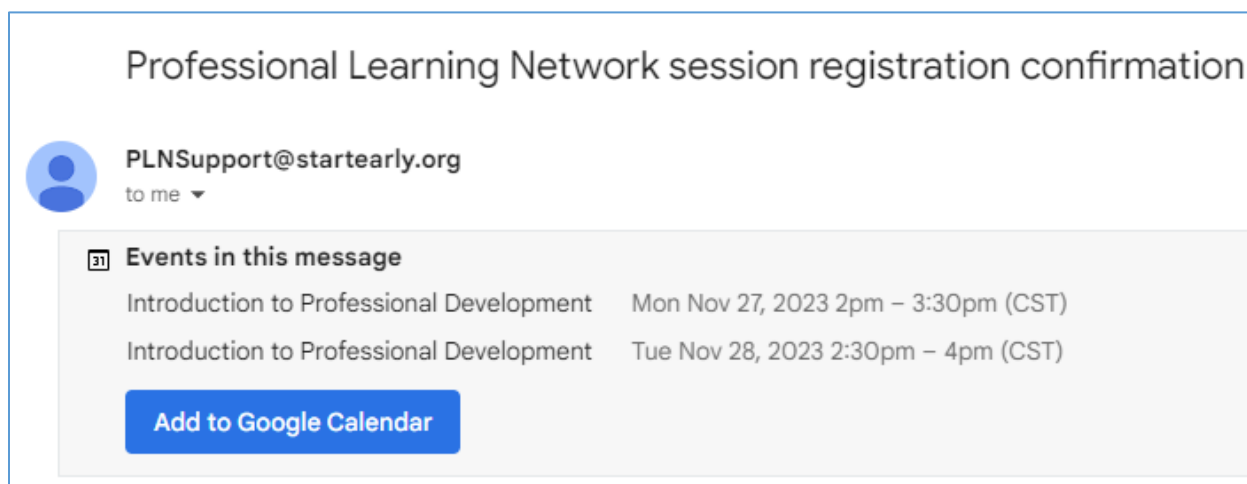
All of the sessions for the event will be added to your Google Calendar.
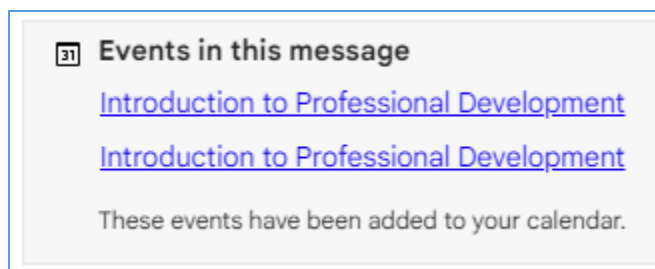
OTHER E-MAIL AND CALENDAR PROGRAMS
You may be using other programs or combinations of programs for e-mail and electronic calendaring, such as 'Yahoo! Mail' and 'iCloud Calendar'. For these programs the process will likely be like the steps previously detailed, but may involve a different set of steps, such as saving any/all .ics files to your computer first and then opening/adding them to your calendar application.

For any questions, please contact PLNSupport@startearly.org and our team will be happy to assist you.

Registration Verification

The Professional Learning Network supports individuals wanting to verify what they have registered for.

To review the status of an upcoming session on the Start Early: Professional Learning Portal, follow the steps below:

- Log into your account on the Professional Learning Portal.
- Hover over the *My Professional Development* in the purple ribbon, scroll down to *My transcript,* and click.
- You will be taken to your *My Professional Development* (PD) page.
- You will be on the Active part of your PD page; these are all the active sessions.
- Your status for the event sessions will be displayed under the title.
- To view the details of an event session, click on the title.
- Once you have clicked on the title and are viewing the session detail you can retrieve a map for the location of the session by locating the *view map* link located under the *Location* column.

Register from Calendar View

The Professional Learning Network supports participants needing to review their transcripts. To access transcripts,

- Log into your account on the Professional Learning Portal.
- Go to the Professional Development tab, scroll down, and click on Browse Training Catalog
- Events are listed in alphabetical order, scroll down, and click on the title of the training.
- Click on the down arrow located on the Select a Session button and click on the "Notify Me of New Sessions" link.
- Select your location or check the 'Notify me when sessions are scheduled at any location' box and click submit.

For any questions, please contact PLNSupport@startearly.org and our team will be happy to assist you.

Approved to Registered Steps

The Professional Learning Network supports supervisors in requesting registration for their teams.

To finalize registration, follow the steps below:

- Log into your account on the Professional Learning Portal.
- Locate the Professional Development tab in the purple ribbon.
- Scroll and click on View Professional Development (PD)

- Locate the "Approved" session on your Professional Development (PD) page.
- Click the "register" button to finalize registration.
- You will receive a registration confirmation email and your status will update to Registered.

For any questions, please contact PLNSupport@startearly.org and our team will be happy to assist you.

New Session Alerts

The Professional Learning Network supports participants needing to review their transcripts. To access transcripts,

- Log into your account on the Professional Learning Portal.
- Go to the Professional Development tab, scroll down, and click on Browse Training Catalog
- Events are listed in alphabetical order, scroll down, and click on the title of the training.
- Click on the down arrow located on the Select a Session button and click on the "Notify Me of New Sessions" link.
- Select your location or check the 'Notify me when sessions are scheduled at any location' box and click submit.

For any questions, please contact PLNSupport@startearly.org and our team will be happy to assist you.

Session Links

The Professional Learning Network supports individuals in obtaining links to professional learning opportunities.

Two emails with the Zoom link will be sent to your inbox the day before and the morning of a session participants are registered for.

Participants are encouraged to:

- Add PLNSupport@startearly.org to their contact list.

- Monitor their inboxes for up to 24 hours before the session start time to ensure they have received their session link. If you did not receive anything, please do the following immediately:
  - Email PLNSupport@startearly.org
  - Contact the Facilitator(s). To contact the facilitator(s) follow these steps:
    - Log into your account on the Professional Learning Portal.
    - Go to the Professional Development tab, scroll down, and click View Events Calendar.
    - Scroll to the month you wish to view and date.
    - Click on the date of the session you are registered for.
    - Click on the trainer/facilitator's name located in the Session Details.
    - Click on the trainer/facilitator's email.

Participants are:

- Required to be registered for the course before the session begins.
- Not permitted to share links with other colleagues.
- Not permitted to join sessions with other colleagues.

For any questions, please contact PLNSupport@startearly.org and our team will be happy to assist you.

Enroll New Hires in the Professional Learning Portal

Follow these links to access the PLN enrollment form, Professional Learning Portal, and the section on the learning portal for new hires to go to.

Professional Learning Portal: www.startearly.org/PLN

Enrollment Form: Click here to access the Enrollment Form

Once the enrollment is confirmed and approved, your new hire will receive an email containing their account login information. Then they will be able to register for professional learning opportunities via their account.

Please Note: If they previously had an account with the Professional Learning Network during their time at another agency or program, please click here or contact PLNSupport@StartEarly.org to update their pre-existing account.

General Training Information

This online training requires the following to provide the best experience.

- Use the most current version of web browsers Chrome, Firefox, or Microsoft Edge.
- Use a wired internet connection, when possible.
- Disconnect from any VPNs.
- Disable any pop-up blockers or allow pop-ups on https://startearly.csod.com.
- Have JavaScript, cookies, and third-party cookies enabled. (You can verify these settings by visiting www.whatismybrowser.com)
- Use an internet connection that has download speeds of at least 5 Mbps. (You can find out your connection speed by visiting www.speedtest.net and clicking the Go button.)

Please consult with your IT department for any questions you have regarding your browser, browser settings, or internet connection Not meeting these requirements can result in online sessions not retaining your progress and/or not correctly identifying when you have completed the training.

For any questions, please contact PLNSupport@startearly.org and our team will be happy to assist you.

Waitlists

This online training requires the following to provide the best experience.

Below are the steps on how to transition from the waist list to register for a session you are waitlisted in. If the spot is no longer available, the purple button will display, "View Training Details" (see as 'View Training D….') meaning the spot was taken by someone else. The waitlist is first come, first serve.

These are steps on how to register if you are on the waitlist and a spot becomes available.
- Log into the Professional Learning Portal account.
- Locate and hover over the "Professional Development" tab.
- Click on "My transcripts".
- Locate the session under your "Active" training.
- Click the purple "Register" button located to the right of the title.
  - If the spot is no longer available, the purple button will display "View Training Details"

A confirmation email will be sent to the email on your account and your status for the session will change from 'waitlisted' to 'registered'.

For any questions, please contact PLNSupport@startearly.org and our team will be happy to assist you.

Password Changes

The Professional Learning Network supports participants changing passwords as needed. To make password changes,

- Log into your account on the Professional Learning Portal.
- Hover above the gear icon in the screen's upper right-hand corner.
- Click "My Account".
- Click the "Options" down arrow button in the Preferences banner.
- Click "Change Password".
- Follow the directions on the screen and click "Save".

For any questions, please contact PLNSupport@startearly.org and our team will be happy to assist you.

Withdraw from a Session

The Professional Learning Network supports participants needing to withdraw from a session. To withdraw from in-person or virtual sessions,

- Log into your account on the Professional Learning Portal.
- Hover above the gear icon in the screen's upper right-hand corner.
- Click "My Account".
- Click the "Options" down arrow button in the Preferences banner.
- Click "Change Password".
- Follow the directions on the screen and click "Save".

For any questions, please contact PLNSupport@startearly.org and our team will be happy to assist you.

![Start Early Professional Learning Network - Illinois logo]

Request Evaluation & Evidence of Completion Form

The Professional Learning Network supports individuals who request CPDU's, an Evaluation & Evidence of Completion Form (ISBE 77-21).

To request an Evaluation and Evidence of Completion form (ISBE 77-21) please download, complete, save, and return the **ISBE Evaluation for Workshop, Conference, Seminar, etc.** (77-21A) form via email to **PLNSupport@startearly.org**.

Please make sure to complete the form in its entirety. The form must contain correct information. To obtain the information required for the Evidence of Completion Form (ISBE 77-21B), you'll need to access your transcripts. Below are information and steps to locate your transcripts in your Professional Learning Portal (www.startearly.org/PLN) account:

Evaluation Information Required:
- Title of Professional Development Activity
- Training Date
- Location (Facility, City, State)
- Name of Provider: Start Early: Professional Learning Network

Here are steps on how to access your transcripts:
- Log into your account on the Professional Learning Network portal www.startearly.org/PLN
- Go to the Professional Development tab and scroll down to *My Transcripts*.
- Locate the Active button on the page and click on the arrow pointing down.
- Change it to Completed.
- Click on the title of the event.

Evaluation Form: https://www.isbe.net/Documents/77-21A_evaluation.pdf

Please provide your Illinois Educator Identification Number (IEIN) and your ISBE 77-21A Evaluation form.

Submit the completed evaluation to PLNSupport@startearly.org.

For any questions, please contact PLNSupport@startearly.org and our team will be happy to assist you.

Continuing Education Units and Educator Professional Development Credits

Start Early is an approved provider of Social Work & Nurse CEUs through the Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation.

Start Early is also an Illinois state-approved professional development provider authorized to issue professional development credit to Illinois licensed educators (https://www.isbe.net/Documents/prof-dev-provider-list.pdf).

- Educators requesting professional development credits from the Professional Learning Network are to complete the evaluation and email it to PLNSupport@Startearly.org.
- The Professional Learning Network will review the Educators transcripts via the Professional Learning Portal.
- Once the document has been approved, an electronic Evidence of Completion copy will be emailed.
- Participants requesting credits are encouraged to save final copies for your records and follow any additional guidance from https://isbe.net/.

For any questions, please contact PLNSupport@startearly.org and our team will be happy to assist you.

Certificates of Completion/CEUs

The Professional Learning Network supports participants needing to print certificates and recommends printing and saving a digital copy of your certificate of completion as soon as you complete your session. Participants may need copies if applying for a certification and/or for Continuing Education (CEUs). As an individual, you can print your course completion certificate. To print your certificate, follow these steps.

- Log into your account on the Professional Learning Portal.
- Go to the "Professional Development" tab and scroll down to "My transcript".
- Locate the "Active" button under "Filter by Training Status" and change it to "Completed" from the drop-down menu.
- Select the title of the event(s).
- On the right, find the purple "Inactive" button.
- Click the down arrow to expand and "View Certificate".
- Save and/or print your certificate.

ADDITIONAL CONTEXT:

If your program recommends you for certification or you need to provide evidence of completion, this will assist in the verification process.

For any questions, please contact PLNSupport@startearly.org and our team will be happy to assist you.

Print Transcripts

The Professional Learning Network offers transcripts for individual reporting and record-keeping purposes. You may also need transcripts for certifications. As an individual, you can print your own transcript.

Follow these steps to obtain transcripts:
- Log into your account on the Professional Learning Portal.
- Go to the "Professional Development" tab and scroll down to "My transcript".
- Locate the "Active" button under "Filter by Training Status".
- Change it to "Completed" from the drop-down menu.
- To print your transcripts, click on the "Options" button and select "Print Transcripts".
- Click "Print".
- To print proof for a specific training session, click on the title of the training and hit the print button on your internet browser.

NOTE: For transcripts prior to March 1, 2014, contact PLNSupport@startearly.org

For Supervisors to access their staff transcripts - My Team: Accessing Transcripts

To access your staff member's transcripts, follow these steps:
- Log into your account on the Professional Learning Portal.
- Click the My Team tab.
- On the left, you will see your ID card as well as the ID cards of your direct reports Click the ID card of the appropriate direct report.
- In the module on the right, select the Profile tab and then click the Transcript sub-link. The active transcript displays by default.
- To change the view, select the Active, Completed, Archived, or Removed radio buttons. These views mirror the available tabs of the user's transcript.
- To see more details, click the title of the learning object. The transcript details page displays.

For any questions, please contact PLNSupport@startearly.org and our team will be happy to assist you.

Establish My Team (for Supervisors)

The Professional Learning Network offers "My Team", a feature allowing supervisors to access all information, development activities, and action items for their staff. My Team is designed to give supervisors greater visibility into all their staff's learning and performance activities, all from a single easy-to-use tab.

Supervisors can view and do the following:
- View Tasks - Assigned Training.
- View Profile - User Profile, Transcript, Certificates.
- View Registration Status for a Session.
- Assign or Register Staff into Training.
- Add External Training to Staff Transcripts.
- Print Transcript/Certificates.
- Print My Team content.

For any questions, please contact PLNSupport@startearly.org and our team will be happy to assist you.

Obtain Access to My Team (for Supervisors)

To access the My Team page:
- Log into your account on the Professional Learning Portal.
- Locate My Team in the purple bar and click.
- Locate the staff member you wish to review on the left-hand side of the screen and click.

For any questions, please contact PLNSupport@startearly.org and our team will be happy to assist you.

Access Online Courses from "View Professional Development"

To access your online course(s), follow the instructions below:

- Log into your account on the Professional Learning Portal.
- Locate Professional Development in the purple ribbon at the top.
- Click on "My Transcript".
- Locate the title of the online course, click on Open Curriculum.

- Click "Launch".

For any questions, please contact PLNSupport@startearly.org and our team will be happy to assist you.

Access Online Courses from "Welcome Page"

To access your online course(s), follow the instructions below:

- Log into your account on the Professional Learning Portal.
- Go to the Online Training in Progress box on your welcome page.
- Locate the title of the online course and click "Launch".

For any questions, please contact PLNSupport@startearly.org and our team will be happy to assist you.

Gateways & the Professional Learning Network

The Professional Learning Network can verify attendance in the Gateways System for participants who have provided their Gateways Registry Number. Participants can provide their Gateways Registry number in their account profile in the Professional Learning Portal.

Access Gateways website here: http://www.ilgateways.com/

- Gateways Registry: https://registry.ilgateways.com/
- 800-649-1884 and ask to speak with a Professional Development Advisor
- You can also fill out this form online and he will be in touch with you https://www.research.net/r/RequestforPDA

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE & COACHING

What is Technical Assistance & Coaching?

Technical assistance and coaching supports (hereafter listed as TA) from the Professional Learning Network (PLN) at Start Early aims to provide professional development opportunities with home visiting and center-based professionals that build on formal training and practical experiences in model fidelity, reflective practice, family engagement, and supervision. Our Technical Assistance approach is relationship-focused and strength-based. Technical Assistance is voluntary and offered to all center-based, home-based, and doula programs funded by ISBE-PI, IDHS-DEC, and MIECHV. Technical Assistance support is grounded in continuous quality improvement, is offered individually and in group settings, and includes a variety of supports to program supervisors and staff, such as:

- Preparing for funder monitoring and CQIP/CAP process.
- Supporting preparation for and participation in PAT Quality Endorsement, HFA Accreditation, doula accreditation, Classroom Environmental Scales, and/or DCFS Licensure for Centers & Family Child Care Homes.
- Skill building around reflective practice, reflective supervision, family engagement, doula best practices, and home visiting best practices.
- Supporting parent/caregiver-child interactions.
- Strengthening continuous quality improvement process.

We accomplish these activities by fostering relationships with program staff through site visits, observations, phone calls, and other forms of communication. PLN's Technical Assistance Team provides TA that is individualized and culturally responsive to each program, as well as based on mutual trust, collaborative planning, and a consultative stance in working with supervisors and program staff. We believe in the power of parallel processes in adult learning; we strive to create technical assistance experiences in which the program supervisor and staff feel that their growth is nurtured, and, in turn, they are more able to nurture the growth of families and colleagues with whom they work. We value a welcoming learning environment that enables supervisors and staff to feel comfortable discussing their work, posing questions, and sharing their perspectives. Finally, we employ a reflective, process-oriented approach to professional development in both the creation and implementation of our training, technical assistance, coaching, consultation, and group learning experiences.

Level System for Program Support

Technical assistance support is offered to all home visiting, doula, and center-based programs funded by DHS-DEC, MIECHV, and ISBE-PI. Through partnership and collaboration, the Technical Assistant Specialist and program supervisor/manager work together to identify program strengths and explore opportunities for growth. Technical assistance and coaching are designed to be viewed as an opportunity for programs to receive support and assistance in their work with children and families from culturally responsive, relationship-oriented, and trauma-informed Technical Assistants.

A Technical Assistance leveling system has been designed to be viewed through that lens—an opportunity for programs to receive support in the manner that best aligns with the program's needs and desire for support. **Programs maintain the final decision as to whether they are interested in engaging with their Technical Assistant providers in any of the ways described in the three levels.** The Level System for Program Support described below is model and funder neutral.

Universal Technical Assistance:
100% of all programs eligible for technical assistance through PLN or subcontractors
- At least 1 Site Visit Annually is offered.
- All programs are invited to the Learning Communities and Communities of Practice.
- Programs receive general information through e-mails and newsletters.
- TAs will respond to email and phone requests from programs as needed.

Targeted Technical Assistance - Levels 1 or 2:
In addition to all the support offered through Universal technical assistance, this level of technical assistance typically focuses on a targeted area of program quality or an area of desired improvement, such as model fidelity. It may closely resemble the current level of support many programs are accustomed to receiving. Technical Assistant specialists will:
- Continue to be available to offer support through site visits, e-mail, and phone.
- Support programs using Zoom when another option is needed.
- Meet with the program on average between 6-12 times per year through a combination of face-to-face and video conferencing.

Intensive Technical Assistance - Level 3 (Coaching) The Intensive level will be provided to programs that desire collaboration on systemic areas of focus impacting quality based on several possibilities. These include monitoring results, new program start-ups, or changes in program leadership. The difference between Targeted and Intensive technical assistance is the intensity and frequency of contact. Programs opting for Intensive technical assistance will be provided support at a minimum of twice monthly for the entire program year through face-to-face, Zoom, or video conferencing.

Technical Assistance Guidance

It is the intention and priority of the Technical Assistance team to offer technical assistance support in a manner that centers equity, provides choice, and ensures safety. With this in mind, and as plans for technical assistance in FY23 were being discussed, it was decided to seek input from program supervisors and Technical Assistance Specialists about what activities would be preferred to be in person if it was available. This input has contributed to this guidance.

GUIDANCE
- Virtual technical assistance will be the primary mode of technical assistant support.
- Programs are not required to meet in person with their Technical Assistant.
- The Program Supervisor and Technical Assistance Specialist will decide together the frequency and mode of technical assistant visits based on the program's identified needs, established program goals, and the Technical Assistant's capacity. When needed PLN Leadership will be consulted to support the decision-making process.
  - The following information can be used as a determinant to assist the technical assistant and Supervisor in making decisions about the mode of technical assistance visit. Recent survey responses indicate that the most preferred in-person topics are:
    - Whole team in-service around a focused topic
    - Home visiting model quality endorsement or accreditation process.
    - Preparing for the monitoring process
- Health and safety:
  - It is the responsibility of the Technical Assistance Specialist and Program Supervisor/staff to check in with each other before an in-person visit to assess health and safety measures.
  - When the Technical Assistance Specialist is meeting program staff at their agency, the Technical Assistance Specialist will follow the agency's health and safety protocols.
  - If anyone who is planning on being a part of the technical assistance visit is feeling ill, the visit will be rescheduled or changed to a virtual visit.

Connect with a Technical Assistant Provider

If you have questions about Technical Assistance, please reach out to the Quality & Systems Manager Jessica Wilkin at jwilkin@startearly.org.

CENTER-BASED & FAMILY CHILD CARE HOMES

Start Early supports and partners with center-based agencies and Family Child Care Homes across Illinois to promote the development and well-being of children and families.

Center-Based Mission and Philosophies

The Start Early Center-Based Team provides technical assistance (TA) to Center-Based programs funded by the Illinois State Board of Education. We work alongside center leaders, supervisors, family support specialists, and center-based & family child care home staff with the support of funders, consultants, and other stakeholders to support best practices in family engagement. We accomplish these activities by fostering relationships with program staff through individualized on-site/virtual connections and learning groups. We believe in the power of parallel processes in adult learning. We strive to create technical assistance experiences in which the Center-based and Family Child Care Homes leaders and staff feel that their growth is nurtured. In turn, they are more able to nurture the growth of families and colleagues with whom they work. Technical Assistance Specialists accompany center-based leaders in their efforts to support the implementation of quality programming.

What is a center-based professional?

A center-based professional provides families and children with a range of high-quality services within Centers and Family Child Care Homes. Each center-based program uses an evidence-based family-centered curriculum, such as Parents as Teachers or Baby TALK to support home visits, parent meetings, workshops, and parent groups. In addition, center-based programs implement a research-based, classroom-child-centered curriculum, foster a positive classroom environment, and support the home-school connection. Through strengthened engagement, center-based professionals also partner with families to collect pertinent information regarding enrollment, health, engagement, attendance, and discharge from the program. Center-based professionals implement a research-based assessment to determine the educational strengths and areas of opportunity for each child/family.

Center-based services must adhere to the requirements of the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) licensure.

Connect with the center-based team

For more information on center-based or Family Child Care Homes please contact achaidez@startearly.org

DOULA & HOME VISITING

Start Early supports and partners with community agencies across Illinois to deliver home visiting and doula services to children and their families.

Rooted in the belief that a child's earliest experiences and relationships lay the foundation for future success in school and life. The goal of home visiting and doula services is to improve developmental trajectories and ensure children can reach their full potential by supporting parent/caregiver-child relationships as early as possible. Learn more about what doulas and home visitors do.

Each home visiting program uses an evidence-based model, such as: Healthy Families America, Parents as Teachers, Baby TALK, or Nurse-Family Partnership. There is a substantial body of research on these models demonstrating their effectiveness in improving outcomes for children and parents/caregivers. We focus on providing technical assistance that is individualized, and culturally sensitive to each program and based on mutual trust, collaborative planning, and a consultative stance in working with directors, supervisors, and program staff to support programs implementing the models correctly and effectively. Start Early Technical Assistance is designed to be reflective, interactive, and ongoing to support programs and their monitoring results to ensure growing opportunities to build a working knowledge of the required elements to provide the best support for families.

What is a Doula?

A doula is a trained non-medical professional who provides continuous support before, during, and after childbirth. The goal of a doula is for the birthing person to feel safe, empowered, informed, respected, and heard throughout their pregnancy, labor, and delivery.

A doula educates families about the different medical interventions, comfort measures, patient rights, and other topics related to childbirth and post-partum education. Through relationship building and understanding of the family's needs and wants, a doula can provide both emotional and physical support.

Studies have found that the impact of continuous support from doulas included decreased incidence of adverse maternal health outcomes, cesarean, premature labor, and low birth weight along with an increase in overall birth satisfaction.

What is a home visitor?

A home visitor helps parents/caregivers continue to build a strong relationship with their baby, create a safe and stimulating home environment, develop healthy eating routines for the family, and connect families to health care resources. Parents and caregivers learn activities and habits that will stimulate their child's brain development to help them thrive.

Connect with the Professional Learning Network of Illinois

Professional Learning Network's General Enquiry and Customer Support
Contact PLN at PLNSupport@startearly.org

Center-Based
Contact Sr. Program Manager Ariel Chaidez at achaidez@startearly.org

Doula
Contact Sr. TA and Training Specialist Doula and Home Visiting Bridget Lally at blally@startearly.org

Healthy Families America/Illinois
Contact Sr. Program Manager Dara Williamson at dwilliamson@startearly.org

Parents As Teachers
Contact PATIL@startearly.org or visit https://patillinois.org/

Technical Assistance
Contact Jessica Wilkin at jwilkin@startearly.org

ESSENTIALS OF HOME VISITING

What is the Essentials of Home Visiting?

Home visitors, doulas and family support professionals are an essential part of family wellbeing and strong program outcomes. That's why Start Early launched The Essentials of Home Visiting (EHV), a high-quality, online training platform designed to create confident, competent home visitors and supervisors within any home visiting model.

The Essentials of Home Visiting closes the gap in home visitor education with relevant topics and a flexible, accredited training experience. Learners earn early childhood CEUs that support the acquisition and maintenance of professional credentials across multiple fields and state and professional registries.

EHV's comprehensive catalog of self-paced courses and live webinars is competency-based and rooted in decades of home visiting expertise from Start Early. Programs in Illinois receiving funding through IDHS-DEC, MIECHV, and ISBE-PI can access EHV courses at no cost through the Professional Learning Network of Illinois.

What does the Essentials of Home Visiting Include?

The Essentials of Home Visiting offers research-based learning experiences that can be mixed and matched to create custom training solutions for family professionals. This includes:

- Self-paced Online Courses
- Live Webinars

Connect with Essentials of Home Visiting (EHV)

For more information on Essentials of Home Visiting contact
professionaldevelopment@startearly.org

Suggested EHV Sequencing for New Home Visitors

THE ESSENTIALS OF HOME VISITING COURSES BY CONTENT AREA	First 6 mos.	6-12 mos.	12-24 mos.
Foundations of Practice for Home Visitors			
Basics of Home Visiting	X		
Being Present with Families (English and Spanish)	X		
Home Visiting Boundaries	X		
Home Visiting Safety	X		
Promoting Effective Parenting with Motivational Interviewing	X		
Ages and Stages Questionnaie – 3(ASQ™) Overview and Best Practices	X		
Building Engaging and Collaborative Relationships with Families	X		
Observing the Parent-Child Relationship: What You See, Feel & Think	X		
The Cultural Iceberg: A Deeper Dive into What's Below the Surface	X		
Infant Mental Health in Home Visiting			
Foundations of Infant Mental Health Practice in Home Visiting		X	
Exploring Values and Beliefs Around Parenting (English and Spanish)		X	
Matching Family Needs to Resources		X	
Home Visiting: Trauma-Informed Practice			
The Impact of Trauma in Home Visiting		X	
Trauma in Families and Communities		X	

Foundations of Practice for Home Visitors			
Domestic Violence in Home Visiting			
Domestic Violence in Home Visiting		X	
Domestic Violence: Safety Planning		X	
The Impact of Domestic Violence on Children		X	
Prenatal Families			
Home Visiting with Families During Pregnancy			X
Substance Abuse in Home Visiting			
Challenges in Home Visiting: Substance Abuse			X
Understanding Substance Abuse through the Family's Lens			X
Partnering for Change: Having the Conversation			X

KEY: Self-Paced Course | Webinar

3/2022

PARENTS AS TEACHERS

PAT Illinois State Office

The Parents as Teachers (PAT) Illinois State Office at Start Early provides support to about 100 PAT affiliate programs throughout Illinois. These affiliate programs use the Parents as Teachers evidence-based home visiting model providing comprehensive home visiting and parent education services to families from before birth through kindergarten. Affiliate programs follow the essential requirements of the model, which provide minimum expectations for program design, infrastructure, and service delivery. The role of the PAT Illinois State Office at Start Early is to provide support for affiliates in Illinois to meet those requirements as well as additional quality standards that represent best practices in the field.

The PAT Illinois State Office also supports 500+ curriculum subscribers and curriculum partners that use the PAT curriculum in their direct service with families.

Connect with PAT Illinois

For more information on Parents as Teachers and training registration, please reach out to PATIL@startearly.org or visit our PAT IL State Office website: https://patillinois.org/

DOULAS OF NORTH AMERICA (DONA)

Accessing DONA 3-Day Workshop Training

New doula supervisors/doulas must reach out to their PLN Technical Assistance Provider (TA) or HV&DN Program Advisor to assist with identifying a DONA 3-Day training.

- DONA training must be approved by TAs/PAs **before** registering for DONA training.
- Once DONA training has been approved, new doula supervisors/doulas will be able to register.
- If funding for the DONA 3-Day Workshop is being provided by Start Early:
  - Start Early will **only** pay for the DONA 3-Day training.
  - Start Early will not pay for any additional or add-ons to the DONA 3-Day training, such as Childbirth education, Breastfeeding, etc.
  - Approved DONA Trainings costs vary between $550-$850. Anything over $850 is the Doula program's fiscal responsibility.
- All invoices must be sent to the Programs TA, Quality & Systems Manager Jessica Wilkin jwilkin@startearly.org and Operations Coordinator Jennifer Frazier jfrazier@startearly.org prior to requesting payment or attending training.

For more information about DONA Training and DONA Memberships please reach out to Bridget Lally, Sr. Technical Assistance and Training Specialist – Doula and Home Visiting at blally@startearly.org.

If your Doula program is funded through Start Early's Home Visiting and Doula Network, please reach out to your HV&DN Program Advisor:
  - Elaine Duensing eduensing@startearly.org
  - Iris Gonzalez igonzalez@startearly.org
 - Mary Towers mtowers@startearly.org

ADDITIONAL CONTEXT:

- Established DONA 3-Day Workshop Trainers:
  - Pam Love peacefulbirthprac@gmail.com
  - Lisa Upham lisa@ababynaturally.com
  - Rachel Dolan-Wickersham Rachel jiandra@aol.com
  - Ann Grauer annidoula@gmail.com
  - Robin Elise Weiss robin.e.weiss@gmail.com

OUR REACH

We work in **nearly every state across the country** to build more equitable early learning and care systems. Taking our programs and services from coast-to-coast allowed us to directly serve **more than 13,000 children** through early learning and care services and reach **300,000 professionals** through our professional development opportunities.

And through intensive policy and advocacy consultation, we supported the building of more equitable early childhood systems for **6.5 million young children.**

Start Early Washington State
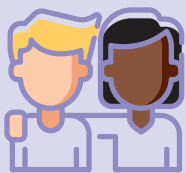
Early Learning Lab

2.3M

Number of children between the ages 0-5 in seven states who have benefitted from more equitable systems due to our intensive policy and advocacy consultation

13%

The annual return on investment that quality early learning programs deliver through better outcomes in education, health, employment and social behavior.
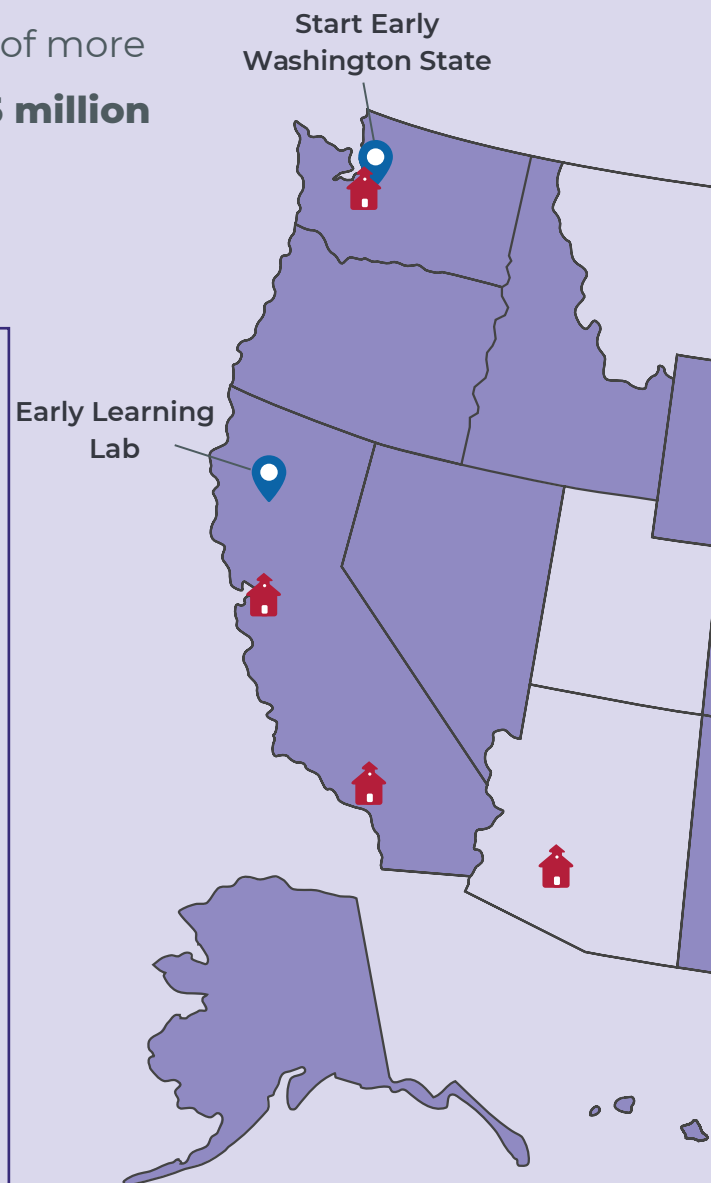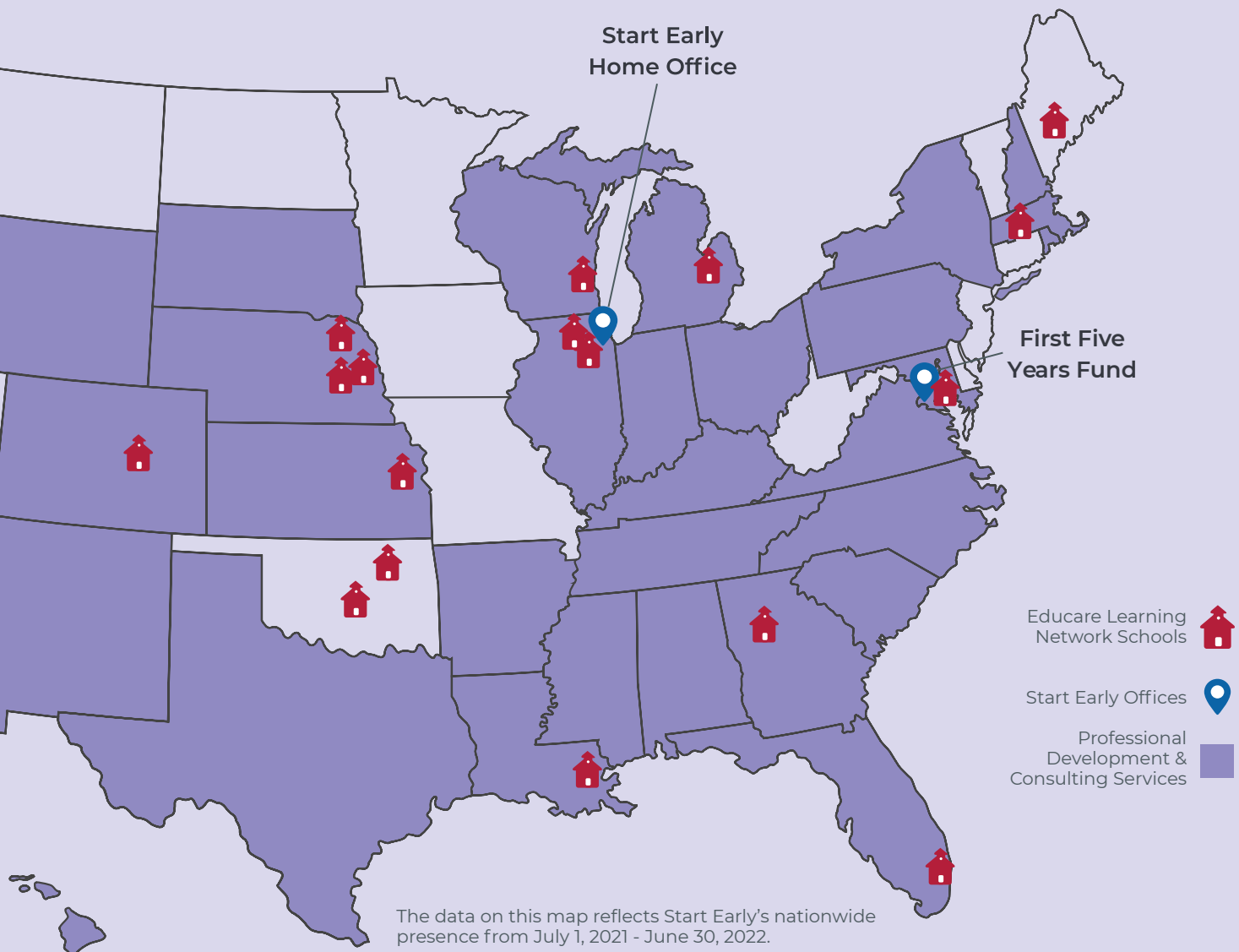
HOW WE DO IT

Start Early is a national nonprofit with 40+ years of experience making impact at local, state and federal levels.

No other organization works as deeply across early childhood program, policy and research fields.

We work with communities and experts to scale innovation in program delivery, research and evaluation, professional development and policy.

As a public-private partnership, we use private investment to create positive outcomes for young children, and scale our work with public funding.

Start Early has a track record of steady growth. Our annual revenue totals more than $70 million.

Start Early Home Office

First Five Years Fund

Educare Learning Network Schools

Start Early Offices

Professional Development & Consulting Services

The data on this map reflects Start Early's nationwide presence from July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022.

STARTᵀᴹ
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