

PRESS RELEASE

Over \$950,000 in Early Childhood Education Grants Announced in York County, PA

by Katie Caples

The ECHO (Every Child Has Opportunities) Initiative was launched in early 2024 and exists to increase access to high quality, affordable childcare throughout York County. ECHO is proud to announce almost \$1 million in grant awards to early childhood education providers in York County, PA. The funds were awarded through two new grant programs, and cumulatively project that approximately 500 additional York County children will be served with a high-quality early childhood education and 75 new early childhood educators hired. Both programs conducted application outreach, in person and virtual, in English and Spanish, and had the applications and guidelines available in both languages.

ECHO BLOOM Start Up Home-Based Provider Grant

Available through the BLOOM Business Empowerment Center, an extension of the YCEA, seven start up entrepreneurs have been selected to receive a total of \$140,000, funded by private dollars through the ECHO Initiative, for new PA Department of Human Services (DHS) Certified home-based early childhood education businesses across York County.

Babydumplings - West Manchester Township

BluePrint to Success Daycare and Learning Center LLC - Manchester Township

The God Answer - City of York

Happy Faces by Noelia - City of York

Marisela's Garden Babysitting Service - Springettsbury Township

Miss Jess Minis - Jackson Township

The Aunt Daycare LLC - City of York

For program details, visit <https://bloomyork.org/grants/>.

ECHO Innovation Grants

Available through Community Connections for Children, 19 early childhood providers have been selected to receive a total of \$818,000 in grants, funded by



private dollars through the ECHO Initiative, for innovative projects that expand the number of children and families served and increase the quality of care and education provided.

This pilot program awarded grants ranging from \$25,000 to \$50,000 to DHS Certified family, group, and center providers, and Pre-K Counts grantees located in York County, PA.

Creative Kids Daycare II - Dover Township

Crispus Attucks Association - City of York

Daisy Hill Daycare - Windsor Township

First Church of the Brethren Child Development Center - Springettsbury Township

Hanover Area YMCA - Hanover Boro

Inspiring Imaginations Home Child Care - Goldsboro Boro

Jack and Jill Nursery Inc - Spring Garden Township

Kidsville Junction - Fawn Township

Lisa Strong's Family Daycare - Chanceford Township

New Creation Station - Dover Township

Small Steps Day Care School Inc - Springettsbury Township

The School District of the City of York - City of York

Tyniquea Smith Family Home Daycare - City of York

Valerie Davis Family Daycare - City of York

WeeConnect - Early Learning Center - Spring Garden Township

York Day Early Learning - City of York and Windsor Township

York Jewish Community Center - York Township

YWCA of Hanover Day Care - Hanover Boro

YWCA York - City of York and West Manchester Township

For program details, visit <https://echoyork.org/>.

The BLOOM and Innovation grantees project approximately 500 additional York County Children will be served with a high-quality early childhood education and 75 new early childhood educators hired. The projects spread across York County, with ten unique zip codes represented, from Hanover to Fawn Grove, Spring Grove to the City of York.

“The ECHO Initiative and this inaugural round of BLOOM and Innovation grant awards will have a historic impact in York County. Access to high quality early childhood education is essential for the health of our local economy. These awards will have a direct impact on children, families, and early childhood

educators here in our community, along with our colleagues, neighbors, and York County employers,” said Katie Caples, ECHO Director.

ECHO was created in direct response to the crisis in early childhood education faced in York County, our Commonwealth, and our nation. In 2020, pre-pandemic, York County had 221 early childhood education providers. In three years, that number dropped to 170. Those that survived the pandemic are operating on average at 85% of typical enrollment due to teacher and workforce shortages. Early childhood education program waitlists average 50-75 children, and many have stopped adding to their lists.

Pennsylvania suffers a \$3.47 billion impact due to childcare issues in lost tax revenue and employer costs. Over half of employers in PA said one of the most significant reasons they lost employees was due to childcare issues. According to American Progress, in Pennsylvania, 57 percent of all residents live in a childcare desert, defined as an area where there are more than three times as many children as licensed childcare slots.

ECHO is administered by **Community Connections for Children (CCC)** and the **York County Economic Alliance (YCEA)** with philanthropic support from J. William Warehime Foundation, Powder Mill Foundation, WellSpan Health, United Way of York County, York County Community Foundation, and the Kinsley Foundation.

For more information about ECHO, visit www.echoyork.org, or contact Katie Caples at kcaples@cccforpa.org or (717) 714-8561.

