Rocky Mountain
EARLY CHILDHOOD COUNCIL

PROVIDER RESOURCE GUIDE

FOR LAKE, PITKIN & GARFIELD COUNTIES

REV 10-2026

Whether you have been in business a while or are brand new to the field...

We wanted to take this opportunity to share information about the Rocky Mountain Early Childhood Council, what we do, and let you know about the resources and supports we provide to childcare providers! The Council (RMECC) was established "for the purpose of developing and ultimately implementing a comprehensive system of early childhood services to ensure the school readiness of children five years of age or younger in the community." RMECC is one of 36 councils in Colorado, and we are here to help connect you with resources, professional development, and funding. We also help connect families to childcare, resources, and screenings.

This page is to help you become familiar with all if the wonderful tools and resources the Council can offer as well as important contacts, links, and information. We look forward to working together!

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We look forward to working with you!!!

Stacy, Kristin & Cindy

RMECC Staff



Stacy Petty, Director

spetty@mtnvalley.org
719-486-7273

Stacy has been the Director of the RMECC for 11 years. She is your go-to for general Council questions, RMECC Committee participation, policy and advocacy efforts, data and media requests, funding and grant questions as well as meeting information.



Kristin Sparkman, Quality Initiatives Coordinator

ksparkman@mtnvalley.org
719-293-2378

Kristin coordinates all of our quality initiatives including Colorado Shines, Lena Grow, Expanding Quality for Infants and toddlers and capital improvement projects. She also supports families in finding childcare throughout our region and connecting them with resources at the local, regional and state levels If you need help with any of these including applying for funding, she is the one to ask!



Cindy Rivas, Early Learning Navigation Coordinator

crivas@mtnvalley.org
970-404-9896

Cindy is the Council's bilingual Early Learning Navigation Coordinator, helping families connect with childcare, early learning programs, developmental resources, and community services. She also supports early childhood providers by sharing resources, identifying community needs, and strengthening connections between families, providers, and local services.

Get to know us! Read our staff bios at www.rmecc.org/staff-members



Wondering where to start?

Resources are available through a multitude of resources through the Council, local organizations and through the state. While we have worked to list all of the most common resources, there are new things coming available regularly. We will update this list as we find additional resources, but please do not hesitate to reach out to us with questions. We are happy to point you in the right direction.

Council Resources:

RMECC website: www.rmecc.org

Website Navigation:

- Home page ~ you will see the most commonly used links for providers and families in a easy to navigate dashboard.
- About ~ Basic information about the Council, our partners, staff and how to contact us.
- Providers & Leaders ~ Find all information about Council initiatives for providers including funding opportunities, professional development and more.
- For Families ~ Find information about how to find childcare, Universal Preschool and family resources.
- Impact Tab ~ Contains information about our advocacy efforts, data and reports we use to inform our work and recent media and news stories.

Learn about the FREE resources we have available on our website here!

Instructional Resources:

The Guidelines and Framework are guiding documents for our approach to high quality early childhood education. Physical copies will be mailed to you. Lena Grow! is a literacy and cognition program that is used as a foundational tool when providers begin coaching.

Early Learning Development Guidelines & The PLAYbook
The Colorado Early Learning and Development Guidelines describe the path of children's learning and development from birth to eight years old. They're designed so that everyone who cares for young children can play an important part in giving Colorado's kids a healthy start. The PLAYbook showcases activities that support healthy child development. These fun ideas set the child up for a lifelong love of learning.

Colorado's Early Childhood Framework
This Framework is a shared vision for Colorado's young children and their families. It guides planning and mobilizes action to ensure all children are valued, healthy, and thriving. The Framework is led by the Early Childhood Leadership Commission and embraced by families, providers, foundations, state agencies, nonprofits, and other early childhood partners across Colorado.

LENA Grow! Backed by 20+ years of research, LENA Grow focuses on the key marker of quality in early childhood education: teacher-child interactions. Imagine equipping yourself with data-driven professional development that improves outcomes for both teachers and children AND it documents its own impact. Licensed providers who are working with a Quality Improvement Coach can participate. Contact Kristin to see if funding is available and what is involved.

Vroom and My Lantern are useful parent engagement resources. They are free and accessible through their respective apps.

VROOM
Vroom provides science-based tips and tools to inspire families to turn shared, everyday moments into Brain Building Moments®. Vroom helps parents boost their child's learning during the time they already spend together. Vroom meets parents where they are, through the people they already trust and the places they already go.

My Lantern (formerly know as Bright-by-Text)

- Lantern is a national nonprofit specializing in delivering childhood development resources to parents through an innovative text messaging platform.

Rocky Mountain Childcare Connect
https://providers.rockymtnchildcare.org/welcome
Rocky Mountain Childcare Connect is a free platform that can be used to market and promote your business and connect families to childcare openings at your program as well as track families on your waitlist.

An account has been created for you and you can login to complete state required annual updates, update your programs, childcare openings, program specific information, as well as pictures. RMCConnect Provider Portal Handbook.

The Scoop Newsletter:
Sent twice a month, this is how we share information with providers, partners and key stakeholders across our 3-county region. Through this newsletter you will receive information regarding Early Childhood events, licensing updates, as well as Professional Development and funding opportunities, and more!

To sign up for The Scoop!, follow this **link**

Looking for Professional Development?
There are a lot of free trainings through the PDIS system (SEE LINK under State Resources) and the Council also offers robust professional development opportunities during each school year. Check out our EVENT CALENDAR.

Licensing Specialists & Colorado Childcare Assistance Program Contacts:
www.rmecc.org/otherregionalpartners

For more information about coaching supports and the coaching agencies in our region, check out **Coaching Resources** on our website.

Other Online Resources:

- Colorado Food Program Flyer (CFP)
  - The Colorado Food Program reimburses participating childcare centers for serving nutritious meals and snacks to children in their care.
- Colorado Childcare Assistance Program Information (CCAP)
  - The Colorado Child Care Assistance Program (CCCAP) works with licensed child care providers by making payments directly to them, while the parent pays a portion of the cost on a sliding scale based on their income and family size.
- Business Guides
  - Family CC Homes
  - Centers
- Colorado Association for the Education of Young Children (COAEYC)
- Family Childcare Association (FCCA)
- Raising Colorado Kids Raising Colorado Kids Guide is brought to you by the Colorado Department of Early Childhood. This website has information to help you and your family find the support you need, all in one place.

State Resources:

Pro tip: You can access PDIS, QRIS and ATS through the **Provider Hub** link!

Professional Development Information System (PDIS)

https://www.coloradoshinespdis.com/s/pdislogin

On the Colorado Shines PDIS, you can complete trainings, apply for credentials and qualifications, and more. If you haven't already, set up your PDIS account!

- Make sure to use your *personal* email account when signing up.
- If you are working for a licensed center, home or school district, make sure to find and add your employer including your start date. This will connect you to that employer.
- Apply for an Early Childhood Credential 3.0.
- PDIS provides **FREE** professional development on a variety of topics including several required annual trainings.
- **PDIS Help Desk:** cdhs_pdishelp@state.co.us **844-447-4441 (option 2)**

Quality Rating & Improvement System (QRIS)

www.coloradoshines.com

The QRIS allows all licensed providers to submit for ratings, apply for/spend QI funding, and connects with PDIS.

- Log in to the Provider Hub and navigate to the QRIS tab to access your QRIS account and populate your portal.
- The Program Guide contains an overview of the rating system and is a good resource to help you understand what is involved with a rating.
- Interested in Colorado Shines funding?! Applications typically open each July and are accepted until funding runs out (which is typically Sept/Oct). Priority is given to providers who have an upcoming rating or particular needs that have been identified by the provider's assigned coach. Talk with Kristin about when you can apply for funding and what is involved.
- **QRIS Help Desk: cdhs_coshines@state.co.us 844-447-4441 (option 1)**

Colorado Department of Early Childhood:

Here you will find any and all resources pertaining to UPK, Child Care Licensing and Administration, Background Checks, CCCAP, Health & Safety Requirements, Qualifications, Early Childhood Mental Health, Quality Initiatives, Rules and Regulations, and more. Go to: https://cdec.colorado.gov/