



# ECCS

**Early Childhood Collaborative of Southington**

*Presents*

**“The State of Early Childhood in Southington”**

**May 29, 2024**

**Joanne Kelleher, Executive Director**  
**[www.southingtonearlychildhood.org](http://www.southingtonearlychildhood.org)**

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1

## Agenda

- Welcome and Introductions
- Statistics
- Changes:
  - Kindergarten Start Age
  - Childcare Availability
  - Legislative Impacts
- ECCS and community initiatives
- Community Conversation

2



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## Welcome and Introductions

3



# ECCCS

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**Vision Statement:**

That all children are healthy and prepared to learn.

**Mission Statement:**

Collaborating to ensure Southington's children are healthy and prepared to learn through advocacy, programs, resources, and support.

4

## Thank You to ECCS Board

- Rachel Wardwell - Chair
- Lisa Chaplinsky
- Shannon Fitzsimons
- Amanda Gilbert-Largent
- Pat Johnson
- Tony Mastroianni
- Shaun Slight
- Brian Williams
- Molly Virello

5

## Thanks to 2023-2024 ECCS Funders



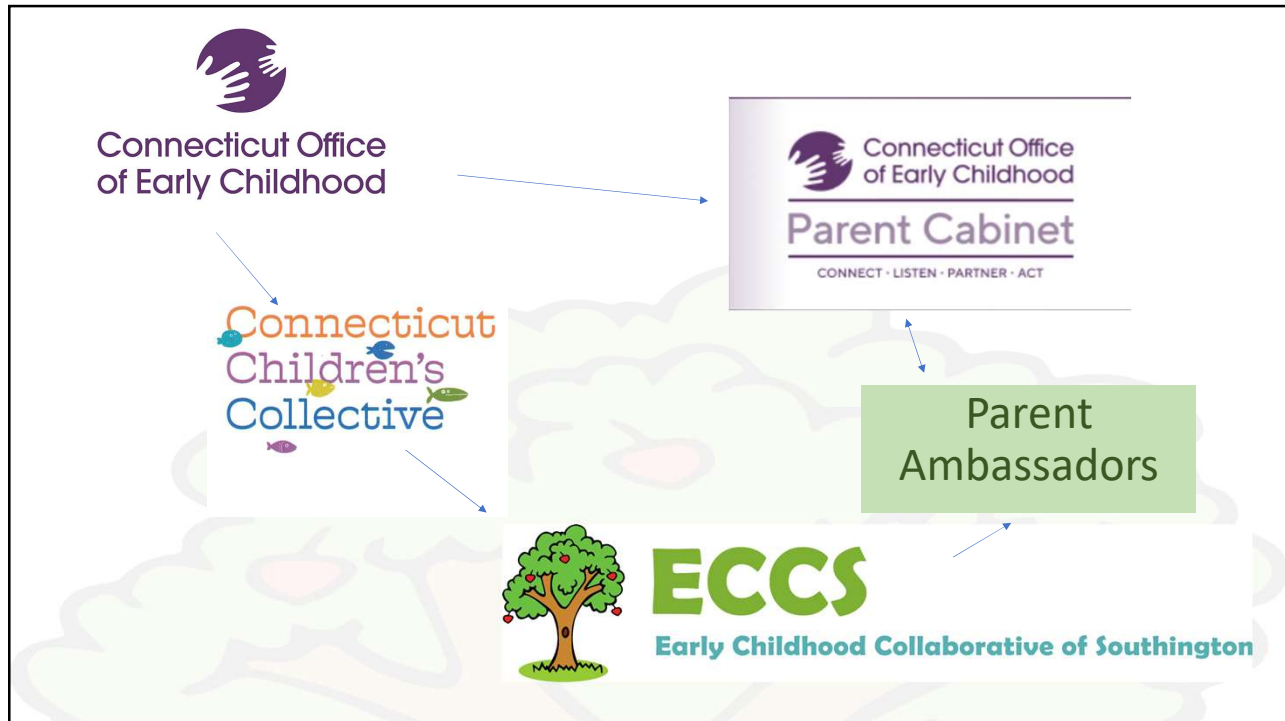
Connecticut Office  
of Early Childhood



Donations Puerto Vallarta, the ECCS  
Board and members of the  
community.



6

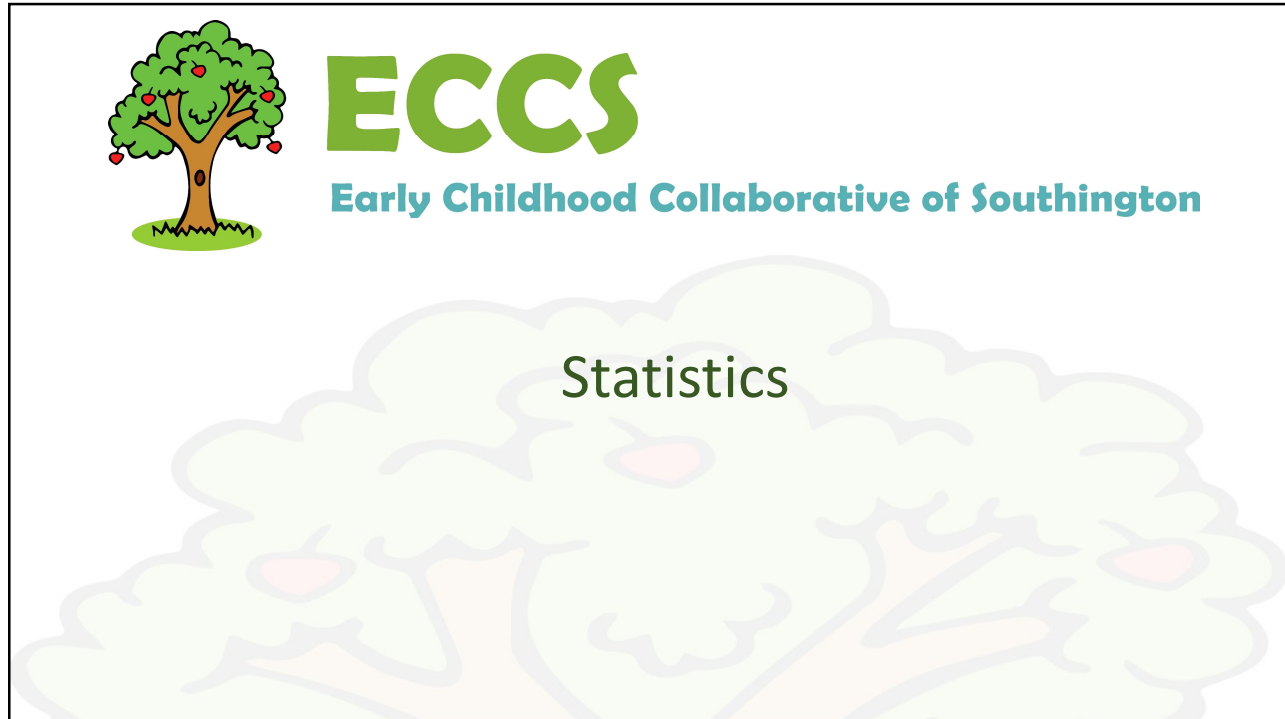


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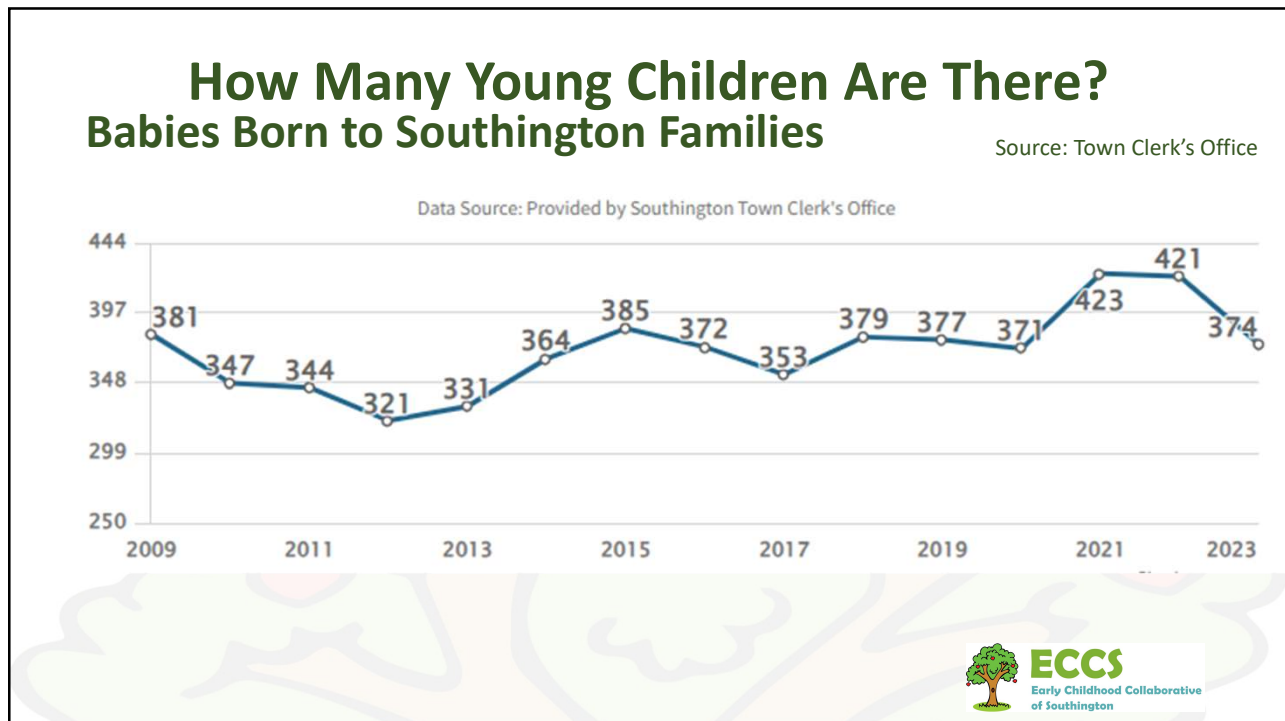
## ECCS Parent Ambassadors

- Betsy Mintz
- Jessica Springer-Cap

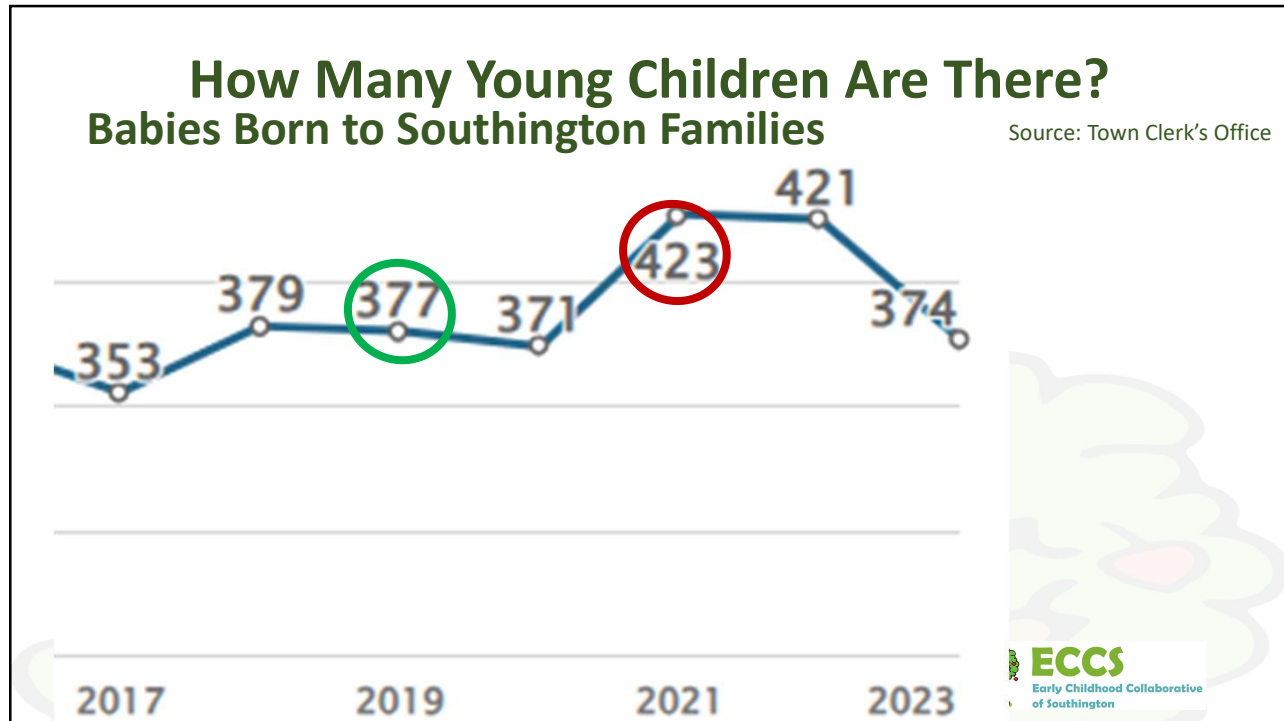
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9



10



11

## Racial/Ethnicity of SPS Students

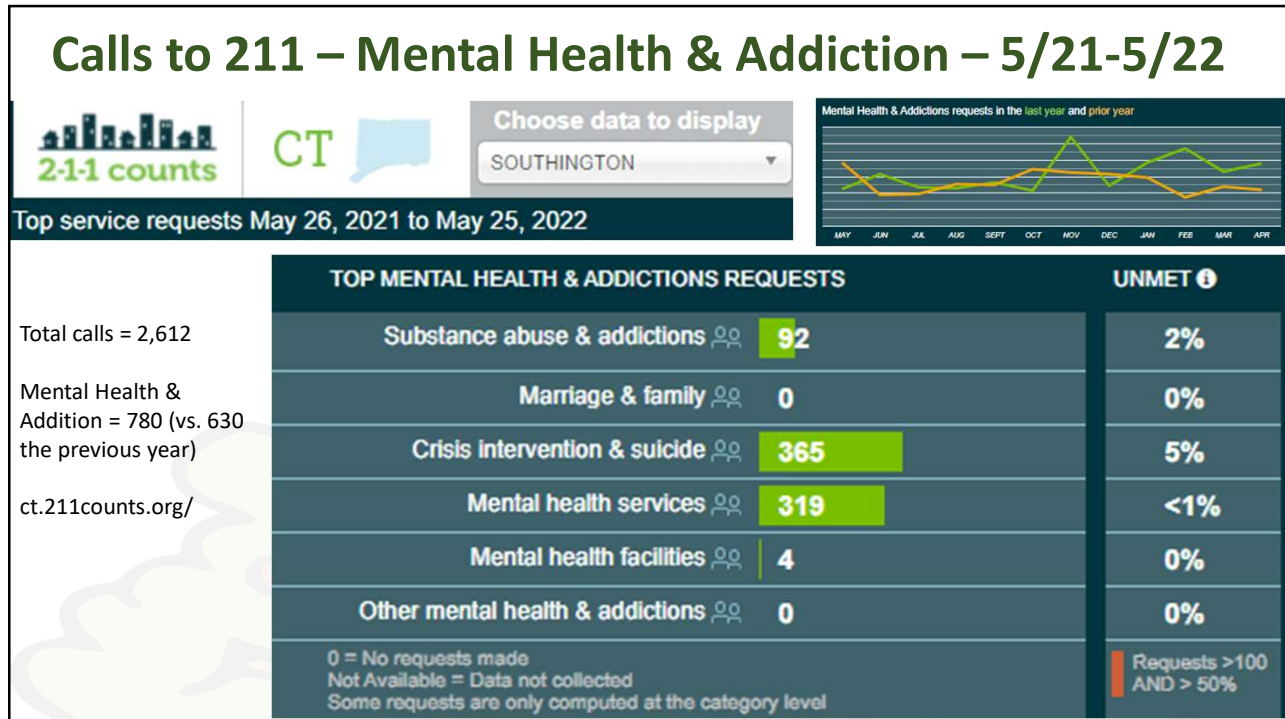
Percentage by Race/Ethnicity	10/1/22	10/1/19	10/1/16	10/1/13	10/1/10	10/1/07
American Indian or Alaska Native	*	*	0.1	*	0.1	0.3
Asian	4.4	3.6	3.4	3.3	3.2	3.3
Black or African American	2.5	2.4	2.1	1.9	1.6	2.2
Hispanic or Latino of any race	12	9.8	7.7	6.3	5.3	3.9
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	*	*	0.1	*	0	
Two or More Races	4.9	4.4	3.3	2.6	2.4	
White	76	79.8	83.2	85.7	87.4	90.4
<b>Total Enrollment</b>	<b>6284</b>	<b>6336</b>	<b>6582</b>	<b>6704</b>	<b>6790</b>	<b>6893</b>
<b>Number Non-white</b>	<b>1508</b>	<b>1280</b>	<b>1106</b>	<b>959</b>	<b>856</b>	<b>662</b>

Source: EdSight annual reports

87% of Southington is white per CTData Town Profile 2023

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12



13



14

## ECCS Tracks Community Data

### Demographics Community Snapshot

	Time Period	Current Actual Value	Current Trend	Baseline % Change
Demographics Total Population	2021	43,474	↓ 3	9% ↗
Households Total Households with children	2021	4,757	↗ 1	388% ↗
Population Total Child Population	2021	9,746	↗ 1	20% ↗
Demographics Southington Births Per Year	2023	374	↓ 2	-1% ↓
Demographics # of K-5 Public School Children	2021	2,634	↗ 1	-15% ↓
Demographics Total Capacity of Licensed Childcare Settings	2022	1,255#	→ 0	0% →
Demographics Number of Licensed Childcare Settings (Centers and Homes)	2022	45	→ 0	0% →

Demographic, health and educational data at

[www.southingtonearlychildhood.org/strategies/community-plan/](http://www.southingtonearlychildhood.org/strategies/community-plan/)



15

15



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## Changes Kindergarten Start Age

16



## Impact on Families – Part 1

- Children must be age 5 by September 1 to start Kindergarten (previously by January 1).
- Can request a screening to receive waiver.
- Estimated 120 Southington students impacted.

17



17

## Impact on School District

- Steve Madancy, Superintendent of Southington Public Schools
- Frank Pepe, Assistant Superintendent of Southington Public Schools

18



18

## Impact on Preschool Programs

- Cut off age to start PreK not changed by OEC but programs could change their own cut-off.
- What to do with children returning for third year?
- YMCA – Opened additional classroom for Jumpstart
- Zion – Offers a PreK 5 class




19

## Impact on Families – Part 2

- Families who did not get waiver or decided not to send their child face decision of what to do for third year of PreK.
- Families with younger children with fall birthdays need to decide when to start PreK.



20



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## Changes Childcare Availability

21

### PreK and Childcare Issues: Parents

- High Cost
- Space Availability
- Waiting lists
- Staff turnover – impact's child's attachment



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22

## PreK and Childcare Issues: Providers

- Staffing shortage
- Pay - long hours, low wages, minimal benefits
- Increased Financial pressure
- Change in children's behavior – getting support



23

## Licensed Childcare Centers

	# Centers	Total capacity	Under 3
May 2022	11 (9 for under 3)	1006	438
June 2024	12 (9 for under 3)	+52 Cub Academy/ My Little Rascals	
Fall 2024	12 (9 for under 3)		+? Toddler ratio changing
UPDATED: August 2024	13 (9 for under 3)	+? (130-150) The Learning Experience	

Year-round, full day programs.



24

## Family Childcare Providers – May 2024

	Age	#	Cap
Infant	0-18 months	23	46
Preschool	19 months-5 years	23	138
School Age	5-12 years	23	69

Women-owned small businesses owned run out of their homes.  
 Licensed, registered and inspected. Must meet training requirements.  
 Limited to 2 infants and up to 6 pre-school age, plus school age.



25

## PreK/Nursery Schools

- Village Green Nursery School
- Zion Lutheran Nursery School
- YMCA Nursery School
- Southington Catholic
- Southington Public School Integrated Preschool
  - Special Education students (CT requirement)
  - Community peers



26

## Other Pre-School Experiences - Free

- Family Resource Center of Southington
  - Classes for children ages 1 to 5 with an adult
  - Six-week sessions, year round
  - Currently smaller classes
  - Fills to capacity within hours
- Southington Library
  - Variety of children's programs – online and in-person
  - Children's Department needs more space – Building project



27

## Summer and Before/After School

Summer: 6 licensed youth camps.

- |                       |                         |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| • Arts at Angeloria's | Camp Sloper             |
| • Camp Korp           | Fast Camp               |
| • Camp Naciwonki      | Leadership Martial Arts |

School age: Licensed YMCA before/after sites plus LMA, some family childcare providers

List at <http://www.southingtonearlychildhood.org/resources>



28



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## Changes Legislative Impacts

29



**Barbara Vita**  
Early Childhood Network Specialist

[ctchildrenscollective.org](http://ctchildrenscollective.org)

30

## S.B. 14 – Sections 24-38

### What is Early Start CT?

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Early Start CT is Connecticut's new state-funded early care and education program, combining three funding streams (Child Day Care, School Readiness, and State Head Start Supplement) into a single state-funded program. (Sec. 24 & 25)

#### What does this accomplish?

- Streamline the system
- Reduce burden on providers
- Simplify programs available for families
- Center family and community needs

## How?

### Streamline the system

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- **Simplify staff requirements:** Simplified "Qualified Staff Member" language that moves CT's 15-step career ladder to a 3-step career ladder. (Sec. 31)
- **Create clear accreditation standards:** All Early Start CT programs need to be accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC); or the National Association for Family Child Care (NAFCC); or have Early Head Start or Head Start approval within 3 years of entering into a contract with OEC. (Sec. 30)
- **Standardize fee scale across subsidies:** Early Start CT will utilize a sliding fee scale for families that is based on income and is aligned with the sliding fee scale used in the Care 4 Kids state subsidy. (Sec. 28)
- **Maintain designated State Head Start funds:** Maintains \$5 million in state funds to supplement programs that are federal Head Start grantees to help them meet family needs. (Sec. 32)



## How?

### Reduce burden on providers and make payment system less variable and more reliable

- **Allow for flexible payment units:** OEC can pay providers up front and quarterly at a per child or equivalent per classroom rate. (Sec. 26, 35-38)
  - **Reduces revenue fluctuations for programs**
- **Streamline contracts:** Providers can now directly contract with OEC or a third-party intermediary, like a municipality, to manage the contract. (Sec. 26)
- **Adhere to funding obligations for CHEFA-funded programs:** Providers whose facilities are funded WITH CHEFA bonds are exempt from the RFP process. (Sec. 26)
- **Prioritizes existing OEC state funded programs in RFP process.** (Sec. 26)
- **Consolidate application and reporting requirements:** the number of reports providers will need to complete will be reduced. (Sec. 26)



33

## How?

### Center family and community needs

- **Expand Access:** Early Start CT eliminates family work requirements previously included in former state-funded programs. (Sec. 26)
- **Embed socio-economic diversity:** At least 60% of eligible children participating in Early Start CT will be members of families at or below 75% of State Median Income (SMI). (Sec. 26)
- **Create & support governance bodies:** Local Governance Partners, the new governance body that will represent each community receiving Early Start CT, will:
  - Provide technical assistance and professional development opportunities for providers.
  - Engage families and other community stakeholders.
  - Conduct local needs assessments.
  - Local community plans will guide RFP local funding allotments. (Sec. 27)
- The local needs assessment will be developed by the OEC with input from partners and communities, and used to create a more efficient and effective mixed delivery system by accurately and equitably allocating child care spaces. Local Governance Partners may be funded at 10% of a town or region's Early Start CT allocation, up to \$150,000 with a \$50,000 local match and supported by a staff liaison. (Sec. 26)



34

## What else is in S.B 14?

- **Incubator Model:** Increases access by expanding the licensed Family Child Care Incubator model statewide, allows for more than one facility in a community, removes the sunset date, and caps the total number of facilities statewide to 20. The incubator model was included in the recommendations of the Blue Ribbon Panel on Child Care. (Sec. 39)
- **Licensing Ratios:** Allows the Commissioner to implement policies and procedures to change licensing ratios while in the process of adopting licensing regulations. (Sec. 33)
  - Ratios for toddlers over 2-year-olds increase from 1:4 to 1:5
  - School-age ratios increase from 1:10 to 1:15
- **Authority to Allocate Funds to RESCS:** Allows the Commissioner to allocate funds to the regional educational service centers for professional development, technical assistance, and evaluation and program planning for early care and education programs. (Sec. 34)
- **Smart Start:** Removes the \$300,000 per community cap for the Smart Start program. (Sec. 40)

## H.B. 5002 – OEC Agency Bill – Sections 7-12


- Removes requirement for school-age programs to post development milestones for children birth to age 5. (Sec. 7)
  - Allows OEC to follow and adhere to federal CCDF requirements in lieu of state Care 4 Kids regulations. Care 4 Kids regulations repealed effective July 1, 2024. (Secs. 8, 11, 12)
  - Adds “subsidized guardianship” to the Care 4 Kids protective services category. (Sec. 9)
  - Requires licensed child care settings to allow Birth to Three providers to provide services on-site. (Sec. 10)
- Also:**
- Adds the OEC to the list of agencies that must notify the OPM Secretary if certain surplus state property can be used to provide early childhood care and early childhood education programs. (Sec. 5)
  - Requires the OEC to develop a document explaining the benefits of liability insurance to be distributed to family child care homes, group child care homes, and child care centers. (Sec. 6)



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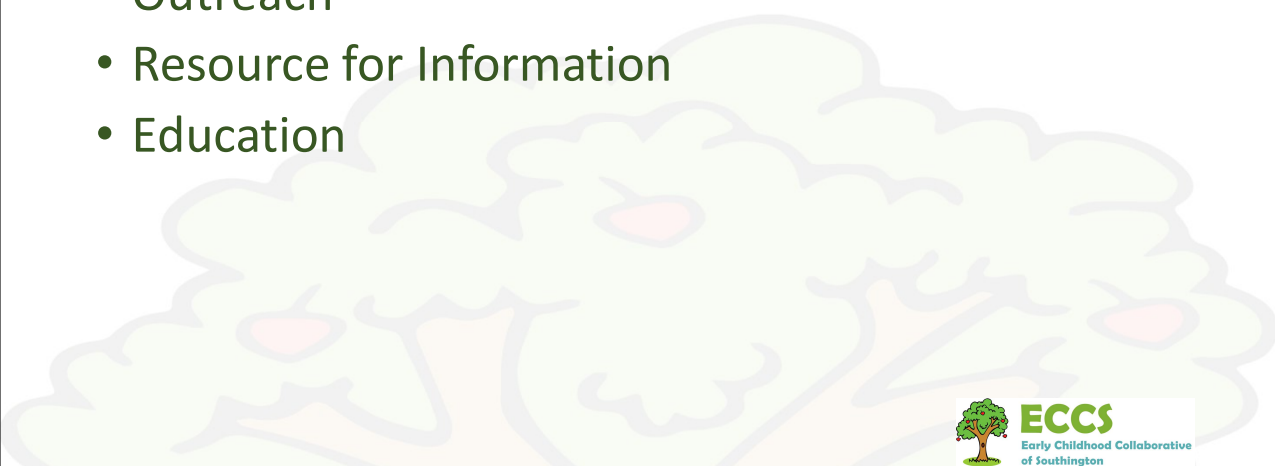
## ECCS Initiatives



37

## What is ECCS Doing?

- Advocacy
- Outreach
- Resource for Information
- Education



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38


**RAPID-CONNECTICUT  
COMMUNITY VOICES PROJECT**

## MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD

**Are you the parent of a child  
younger than 6 years old and  
live in Connecticut?**

**We want to hear from you!**

Scan the QR code  
to take the 15-minute  
survey and receive a \$10  
gift card



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[southingtonearlychildhood.org/rapid/](http://southingtonearlychildhood.org/rapid/)

**CT RAPID Survey Project**

- For families with children younger than 6
- 8 surveys from May 2024 to December 2025
- #1 on childcare closes 5/31
- \$10 gift card for each completed survey.

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**SEL4CT** **CONNECTICUT NETWORK** **CT data** **THE CONNECTICUT PROJECT** **R**

39

# sparkler

Free mobile app for CT families, prenatal, with children 0-5, and programs serving those families.

- **Know:** Ages & Stages Questionnaires® (ASQ)
- **Play:** Fun, off-screen activities and tips
- **Grow:** Follow progress in scrapbook
- **Connect:** Get tips and answers from experts at 211 Child Development or your school/provider

Links to the app and the registration codes for Southington are at  
<http://www.southingtonearlychildhood.org/sparkler/>

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40

## Community Cafes

- Special Needs and Screening – November 2023
- Impact of Screen Usage – May 2024



41

## Support the ECCS

- Tell a young family or make referral
- Make a Donation
- Volunteer
- Join Board
- Follow, Like, Share Us on Social Media
- Attend Workshops, Events or Fundraisers - [www.southingtonearlychildhood.org/events/](http://www.southingtonearlychildhood.org/events/)



42

**JUNE 17TH - AUG 9TH**

**KIDS**

**SUMMER**

**READING**

**PRE-K TO 5TH**

REGISTER IN-PERSON  
OR ONLINE  
STARTING 6.10.

ACTIVITIES:

- ANIMALS
- MUSIC
- SPECIAL EFFECTS MAKEUP
- & SO MUCH MORE!

**LIBRARY COMIC CON:**  
SCI-FI EDITION  
6.8.2024  
@ THE DRIVE-IN

255 MAIN STREET  
SOUTHINGTON

## Summer Reading @ the Southington Library

**Summer Reading sign ups**

Starting June 10th, join the Summer Reading Program at the Library. You can sign up in-person or online at [southingtonlibrary.beanstack.org](http://southingtonlibrary.beanstack.org).

**Mark your reading!**

Starting June 17th, mark every day that you read 20+ minutes on the paper log or in the reading app.

**Enter to win!**

For every 5 days that you read, and show a librarian, you will receive one (1) raffle ticket for our Grand Prize Drawing!


**Don't Forget about Our Programs!**

Join us for live-animals, LEGO, movie showings, music, slime-making, and SO MUCH MORE!

255 Main St. 860-628-0947 x3 [southingtonlibrary.beanstack.org](http://southingtonlibrary.beanstack.org)

43

## Summer Lunch Program



So no one goes hungry.

### 2024 Southington Summer Lunch Program


Bread for Life will be providing healthy lunches and fun, at no cost, for kids and teens in their neighborhoods in town this summer beginning June 24, 2023.

**No registration needed!**

**Grab and Go Lunches**  
**DePaolo Middle School**  
 Monday/Wednesday/Friday • 11:45am–12:30pm  
**Bread for Life**  
 Monday through Friday • 11:45am–12:15pm

**Lunch and Activities**  
**Summerbrook Apartments**  
 Monday/Wednesday/Friday  
 12:00pm–1:00pm

**FRIENDS!  
FOOD!  
FUN!**

  
 860.276.8389  
[southingtonbreadforlife.org](http://southingtonbreadforlife.org)

44

## Community Conversation

- What are your thoughts?
- What other needs are there in the community?
- What else can the ECCS do?

All comments are welcome.

45

## Questions?

Joanne C. Kelleher  
Executive Director

Early Childhood Collaborative of Southington  
P.O. Box 210, Southington, CT 06489

[www.southingtonearlychildhood.org](http://www.southingtonearlychildhood.org)

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<https://instagram.com/eccsouthington>

C: 860-877-4049



46