



## [January 2023 ECI Monthly Musings](#)

01/12/2023

### **New Features from Playground!**

Playground recently announced the release of two exciting new features: expense tracking and spend management.

[Expense tracking](#) allows you to easily track and manage all your childcare expenses (like diapers, food, and supplies) in one place. With this feature, you can easily see where your money is going, and make your tax preparation a breeze.

Spend management takes things a step further by automatically tracking and categorizing expenses as they happen. This means you no longer have to manually input each expense, saving you time and reducing the risk of error. Give teachers their own spend cards, set limits, and see exactly how they are spending their budget.

If you're interested in learning more, schedule a demo to get a closer look at these new features. You can [book time here](#).



# playground

### **Demonstrations from brightwheel**

Want to learn of the benefits you'll receive from Child Care Collaborative of Iowa? **\*\*Special opportunity to hear from Katy, our State Partnerships Lead about how brightwheel can positively impact your early childhood program!\*\***

[Book your individualized demo here!](#)

Brightwheel is the complete center and home-based childcare management software that integrates everything you need to easily run your program in one place. Quick to set-up and even easier to use, brightwheel's #1 rated app enables you to save time, get paid faster, and build quality connections with families and staff.

Key features include automatic billing and payments, real-time messaging, activity tracking including sleep checks, admissions and waitlist management, check-in and attendance tracking, lesson plans, and more. Trusted by millions of educators and families across North America, Brightwheel is committed to elevating the early learning experience for every child.



*Funding for up to 12 months of a license to use brightwheel or Playground in Iowa are made possible through the federal American Rescue Plan Act.*

## Preschool Program Partnerships

A [recent report](#) using Iowa's Integrated Data System for Decision-Making (I2D2) showed that over half of Iowa Head Start children simultaneously enrolled in Iowa's Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program. Children in Head Start programs with strong partnerships in their school district were 48 times more likely to also be enrolled in the Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program. Previous work demonstrated that children enrolled full-time scored significantly better on academic and social-emotional skills at the end of their preschool year. A new [data brief](#) is now available.

## Program Wide EC-PBIS 2023-2024 Application

The PW-PBIS 2023-24 Cohort Application is open. You may access it at the ECI website: <https://earlychildhood.iowa.gov/mental-health>

Here is a [direct link to the Program Wide Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports Application Process](#) that outlines all steps necessary to apply as well as cohort dates for next year.

Please share with interested programs the importance of reviewing and reflecting on the Readiness Checklist and watching the PW PBIS video before applying.

Contact Melanie Reese at [melanie.reese@iowa.gov](mailto:melanie.reese@iowa.gov) with any questions.

## January 3, 2023 What's Happening in Early Childhood in Iowa? Presentations and Recording

Early childhood system partners met on January 3, 2023 via Zoom to learn more about current initiatives that are supporting Iowa's children, families, and early childhood workforce. Topics included the 2023-2026 'We are ECI' Strategic Plan, evidence-based family support service programming models, early childhood mental health, new child care center growth in Jefferson, Early ACCESS, and workforce support from IowaAEYC's T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood IOWA and Child Care WAGES IOWA. These presentations are [available for your reference](#), along with a recording of that morning.

---

### More from Early Childhood Iowa:

[Recent News](#) • [Upcoming Events](#) • [New/Updated Products](#)

[Manage Subscriptions](#) | [Unsubscribe](#)