

# **Allison Cassens Early Childhood Development Center receives Bronze Circle of Quality honor**

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**GLEN CARBON - The Allison Cassens Early Childhood Development Center** received the **Bronze Circle of Quality** designation from **ExceleRate Illinois**, the **state's new quality recognition** and improvement system for early learning and development providers.

"Every early learning and development provider who participates in ExceleRate Illinois makes quality a priority," said **Theresa Hawley**, executive director, Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development. "The higher the designation, the higher the program's demonstrated quality and comprehensiveness in meeting children's early learning needs," she said.

"We are proud to receive the Bronze Circle of Quality," said **Crystal Andres**, director of the center. "Providing quality in early learning and development will help our

children in our community be better prepared for success in school and in life." Andres added, "This is just the first step as we continue on the path of continual quality improvement at the center."

ExceleRate Illinois helps families make more informed choices about their children's early learning. It establishes standards to help infants, toddlers and preschoolers develop intellectually, physically, socially and emotionally. Additionally, it provides a framework for early learning and development professionals to identify opportunities to enhance their knowledge and skills.

Research in science and brain development shows that children who are more meaningfully engaged in early learning experiences from infancy through the first five years of life are more likely to be successful in school and in life. With the right engagement, children can form a healthy foundation of neural pathways in the brain, which impact their ability to think, react, process and grow.

ExceleRate Illinois is a comprehensive system that includes Licensed Child Care Centers, Licensed Family Child Care, Preschool for All and Center-Based Prevention Initiative Programs, Head Start and Early Head Start Programs. For more information or to find a Child Care Resource & Referral Agency in your area, visit:

[www.ExceleRateIllinois.com](http://www.ExceleRateIllinois.com). ExceleRate Illinois is administered through INCCRRA under the joint direction of the Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development, the Illinois Department of Human Services, and the Illinois State Board of Education.

2016 will be a year of progress not only in quality but also in the amount of children the center can help grow. The center offers quality child care from infants 6 weeks to kids 5 years old. There are currently openings available in both the Toddler (15 – 24 months) and the 2 year old rooms. If you would like to learn more or visit the center, please call 618.288.3232 or visit the website at [www.edwardsvillemca.com](http://www.edwardsvillemca.com).