

DELAWARE INSTITUTE FOR  
*Excellence in*  
Early Childhood

**Gratitude: The Wright Choice**

In this season of giving thanks, Carmen Wright of The Wright Choice, a family child care program in Claymont, Del., is practicing gratitude with her children, even during the most challenging times.

Carmen operated as an emergency child care site during the quarantine and continues to evolve to serve students' needs with remote learning. She recalls those early days of the state of emergency.

"It was stressful at the moment, but I was happy to support my essential parents and families," said Carmen. "I went ahead and purchased a mask for each of my children for safety precautions. The children love their masks."

Carmen didn't let the challenges of all the new safety and health requirements stand in the way of teaching a fundamental lesson of gratitude: feeling grateful is directly linked to giving back.

During the state of emergency, her students made cards for the first responders. "Carmen took the time to have her students write notes and then mailed them to health care providers," said Meghan Pallante, Stars technical assistant. "And the kids were thrilled when they received notes back."

Through this activity, Carmen was not only teaching her students about gratitude, but the importance of community. Whenever she can, she invests in supporting her students and their families, as reflected in her work with school-age students.

"Carmen has gone above and beyond supporting the families with virtual learning," adds Meghan. "She purchased headphones for the kids and helped them decorate tri-fold boards to create individual workspaces."

She's also participating in another community, DIEEC's Communities of Practice. She cites this as greatly supportive in providing her with new tools and ideas.