



Joan Ellis has served the Round Lake Area Park District for 37 years, including 18 years as Preschool Director following earlier roles as a preschool teacher and School Age Manager. She holds a degree in Early Childhood Education and is dedicated to providing young children with a nurturing, safe, and high-quality learning environment.

Joan has shaped the early development of thousands of children, with many former students returning as parents, volunteers, and even Park District employees. Her leadership has strengthened the Child Development Center through grant-funded scholarships, enhanced classroom resources, and support for competitive teacher wages. She also leads the program's continuous improvement efforts through the ExceleRate Illinois Circles of Quality and is guiding the pursuit of the Silver Circle of Quality designation.

Joan has built strong community partnerships with local school districts, education centers, and organizations such as the Birth to 5 Program, the Early Childhood Coalition, and Mono A Mono. She also organizes the annual Early Childhood Summit.

Joan and her husband, Curt, have been married for 40 years and have two children, Eric and Kelsi.