

Early Years Are Learning Years



Celebrating the Week of **THE YOUNG CHILD** April 6-12, 2024

Featuring content provided by the Columbus County Partnership for Children.



In celebration of the Week of the Young Child and to bring attention to April as Child Abuse Prevention Month, Smart Start is pleased to present this special section focusing on the care, health and development of young children.





Week of the Young Child: CCPC Events

Join Columbus County Partnership for Children as we welcome spring with our Annual Week of the Young Child Kickoff Event, Spring Fling: Planting the seeds for our children's minds to bloom.

Entry to the festivities is free and will be located outside of the Partnership at 109 W. Main St. in Whiteville on Saturday, April 6, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Rain date is Saturday, April 13, at the same time.

We will have story time, story book characters, dancing, games, prizes, Kakes for Kids silent auction, face painting, special guest performances, food and resource/information booths.

Monday, April 8: Music & Movement in the Park
Join CCPC at Columbus County Fitness Park from 11 a.m.-noon for story walk and exercise.

Tuesday, April 9: Tasty Tuesday
Enjoy a virtual presentation by two of CCPC's staff on growing your own healthy foods.

Wednesday, April 10: Work Together Wednesday
Join us in the Early Learning & Family Resource Center for Story Time and an activity as we learn about the importance of working together.

Thursday, April 11: Artsy Thursday
Enjoy a virtual art gallery created by children who attended CCPC's Spring Fling, as well as other community children.

Friday, April 12: Family Fun Friday
Join CCPC at Whiteville Fun Factory at 5 p.m. for a bouncing good time!

For additional information about Week of the Young Child, call 910-642-8226. Visit the office at 109 W. Main St. in Whiteville or online at www.columbusmartstart.com. "Like" ColumbusSmartStart on Facebook.



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Early childhood teachers receive Education Awards

The Columbus County Partnership for Children (Smart Start) Quality Enhancement Education Award offers qualified early childhood educators financial support for the completion of early childhood education classes.

"For a number of years, the Partnership has offered this incentive to child care professionals working in licensed centers and homes and are pursuing degrees in early childhood education," stated Dr. Selena Rowell, Partnership executive director. "Of course, the awards don't cover the entire cost of the tuition for the courses, but we like to think that they are helpful to these dedicated professionals who take care of children during the day, may be parents themselves and then take on the task of pursuing or continuing their college education."

This year, 14 individuals received education awards totaling \$5,550 for courses completed during the summer and fall semesters of 2023. Between the two semesters, the recipients earned a total of 113 course credits.

Three of the recipients are from East Coast Migrant Head Start—Whiteville Educational Campus; two from Faulk Kidland Childcare Center and KidKare Academy, respectively; and one from Williams Elementary School, Williams Township School Pre-K, Opening Doors Preschool & Opening Doors Preschool II, Beverly's Day Care, Edu-Care Preschool, and Bri's Caring Heart Childcare, respectively.

Two of these recipients are working toward their bachelor's degree. The rest are working toward an associate degree. The financial support the award provides serves to diminish the financial barrier that

Continued on page 4



Contributed photo

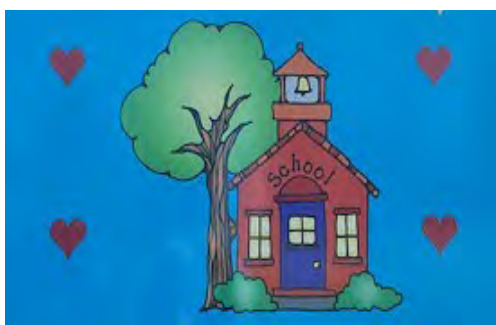
Early childhood educators receive their Smart Start Educational Awards. (Pictured left to right) Carson Faulk, Faulk Kidland Childcare Center; Victoria Carteret, Williams Elementary School; Oretha Kinlaw, Beverly's Day Care; Janet Palmer, Opening Doors Preschool; Sophia Guzman, East Coast Migrant Head Start - Whiteville Educational Campus; and Norberta Lopez Guzman, East Coast Migrant Head Start - Whiteville Educational Campus.

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Megan McCrae from Kid Kare Academy received her Smart Start Educational Award for classes she completed at Southeastern Community College.

AWARDS

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often delays or prevents the completion of an educational program.

With the help of this award, one of the recipients, Oretha Kinlaw of Beverly's Daycare, earned an Associate in Applied Science in Early Childhood Education.

“It supplements some income that I need for me and my kids,” she said. “It helped me receive my degree. I started this degree about 18 years ago and life, kids, working deterred me. With the help of this award, I’ve graduated. I’m very proud and thankful.”

The Smart Start Education Award also benefits the child care programs where the recipients are employed - and the children they service.

Education is always changing, Kinlaw said.

“There’s always different ways to learn; there’s always different ways to teach children how to learn,” she said. “You’re coming across different types of children, some with disabilities; you’re seeing more of that in the school systems. You want to be able to have these new, innovative ways to help everybody, so everybody can learn the way they need to learn.”



Working Together for Their Future

At Trinity Baptist Child Care, teachers and families work closely in partnership to ensure high-quality care and education for children. Parents feel supported and welcomed as observers and contributors to the program.

The program is staffed by adults who understand child and family development and who recognize and meet the developmental and learning needs of children and families. The program is efficiently and effectively administered with attention to the needs and desires of children, families and staff.

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Supported by the N.C. Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities and Substance Abuse Services, with funding from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (Project #2015-0001-0001) and the N.C. Department of Health and Human Services (Project #1400-0001-0001).

Did You Know?

- Columbus County Partnership for Children (Smart Start) has served local families for more than 25 years. The Partnership convenes community stakeholders and families to discuss and resolve issues that impact the education, health, literacy and well-being of young children and their families.

- The Partnership administers Smart Start funds appropriated from the North Carolina legislature to support local programs that benefit children ages birth to 5 and their families living in Columbus County.

- Over the years the Partnership has offered evidence-based programs such as Dolly Parton's Imagination Library, Quality Enhancement for child-care providers, Raising A Reader, the Smart Start Early Learning & Family Resource Center (ELF) lending library, Smart Start Subsidy for child care, transportation for expectant mothers and children ages birth to 5 without Medicaid, WAGE\$ supplement for teachers, and the Early Parenthood Program for teen parents.

- Columbus County Partnership for Children (CCPC) is continuing the following grant-funded program:

- **Ready and Resilient Families and Communities**, funded by Kate B. Reynolds Charitable Trust, is a program focused on building awareness of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), toxic stress and resilience in an effort to decrease incidence of child abuse and neglect.

The Columbus County Partnership for Children seeks to provide the options and resources necessary for children and their families to lead healthy,

happy and productive lives, and we could not do that without the support we receive from our funders.

Columbus County Partnership for Children



Resilient Columbus Task Force

Resilient Columbus is a coalition of community stakeholders and family leaders who discuss and address the issues of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and building resiliency in Columbus County by educating within the community. Flyers and brochures are being circulated and informational sessions are being provided to the faith community, school systems, and local agencies. The coalition also offers virtual and in-person screenings of the film, Resilience - The Biology of Stress and The Science of Hope as well as training in the Strengthening Families Five Protec-

tive Factors, Community Resiliency Model (CRM), Connections Matter and other skills for building resilience. The goal of

Resilient Columbus is that all families, businesses, service organizations and faith communities in Columbus County are trauma informed and resilient. For more information

about the coalition or how to register for a film screening, information session or training for yourself, your agency or your business, contact Sherry Baldwin at 910-642-8226 Ext. 109. Follow Resilient Columbus on Facebook at Columbus County Resiliency Task Force.



Need a FREE ride to a medical appointment?

Children ages birth to five and expectant mothers who do not have Medicaid reimbursable transportation can ride FREE of charge to medical appointments by scheduling a ride with Columbus County Transportation. This service, which is free to qualified families, is funded through Columbus County Partnership for Children (Smart Start). To check eligibility or to schedule a ride, call Columbus County Transportation at 910-642-7201.



**Children are like seeds...
they need help to
grow up well.**

Being specialists in agriculture for Columbus County farmers, we feel a real investment in the future. We believe in investing in our children as well. Programs like Smart Start give Columbus County children a definite edge in reaching their full potential.

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Smart Start parent leaders advocate for children

The Columbus County Partnership for Children (Smart Start) has launched a parent advisory committee to help parents and guardians advocate for their children as well as other children in Columbus County.

The committee is comprised of local stakeholders and parents/guardians (referred to as Parent Leaders) of children from birth to age 5.

Although the committee is new, it is a continuation of the Family Engagement and Leadership Coalition (FELC), which was active through 2020-2023 and created through funding from the North Carolina Partnership for Children who received funding from the Division of Child Development and Early Education through the Preschool Development Grant (PDG).

Every parent has a story, an experience or issue their family faced that was the catalyst of their desire for change.

For Jennifer Stringfield, one of the FELC's original members who now serves as a stakeholder in the committee, it was a desire to help her children and grandchildren that inspired her to join.

"My family had been through some really traumatic stuff in the past six years," she said, "[I wanted to] take some of my pain and learn how to use it to get the help and the assistance my family needs."

The experiences of Stringfield and the other committee parents are echoed in the survey of parents and guardians in all Columbus County zip codes that the FELC had completed.

Andrea Jacobs-Rofail was another FELC parent leader who is now part of the committee. She would like to address bullying in schools, which is an issue one of the committee parents has dealt with personally.

"I feel like this is something that needs to be addressed early on; as we're teaching our children the fundamentals of education, we have to also teach them how to love and work with one another in society," Jacobs-Rofail said. "My heart goes out to children that come home and they don't want to go back,

This work that [we're] doing is changing people's lives. It's making a difference, and you cannot put a price on that," said Jacobs-Rofail.

[to school], and I feel like that is something that we can change."

The committee provides parents with not just resources to help their families, but a chance to make a difference in the lives of all children in Columbus County.

"If we don't make our children top priority, who will? Columbus County children are my top priority because we don't have the resources in this county that we need," Jacobs-Rofail said. "We're not going to keep saying, 'We want, we want, we want.' [In] 2024, our kids are going to have more. [In] 2025, our kids will have more. That's [the committee's] goal. We're going to be making changes."

Equally as important, it has given its parents, including Jacobs-Rofail and Stringfield, a voice and the skills to use it to become leaders.

"When we first started – I've always had a big mouth but – I was kind of quiet and reserved ... I couldn't really organize my thoughts to be effective then, and I think that through that process ... I've been able to share my story with several different places and I'm definitely not done with that yet," Stringfield said. "I have learned that my voice has value, my voice has meaning, and my family and my community are worth it."

The parents of the FELC have gone on to become leaders in their communities. Alyssa Lewis, one of the original participants in the FELC, is now Columbus County Partnership for Children's Early Learning & Family Resource Center coordinator. Jacobs-Rofail is now a member of the CCPC Board of Directors and is a Starting Strong trainer. Stringfield now serves as a stakeholder on the committee.

The committee is still in its infancy, so its six members are recruiting. They're looking to build a diverse coalition of parents and guardians – fathers and mothers, custodial grandparents, people from all demographics and backgrounds – so that they can better meet the needs of all families in the county.

If you're interested in becoming a member, you must be a parent or guardian of a child from ages

Continued on page 7

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ADVOCATE

Continued from 6

birth to 5, complete an application, and commit to attending two meetings a month.

To accommodate parents, refreshments are provided during these meetings, and Parent Leaders are welcome to bring their children. Incentives may also be available to qualifying members.

"Us parents didn't come to FELC for a check," Jacobs-Rofail said. "We came because we really wanted to make a difference in where we were working, where we were

living, where we were thriving, to make a better life for our families. This work that [we're] doing is changing people's lives. It's making a difference, and you cannot put a price on that."

For more information on how you can join the committee and become a Parent Leader, contact Sherry Baldwin at 910-642-8226 or sherry.baldwin@columbusmartstart.org.

For additional information about Columbus County Partnership for Children, call 910-642-8226. Visit the office at 109 W. Main St. in Whiteville or online at www.columbusmartstart.com. "Like" ColumbusSmartStart on Facebook.

April 2024 is Child Abuse Prevention (CAP) Month

You can help advance child maltreatment prevention programs and policies by taking action.

- **Wear blue on Friday, April 5** to show support for promoting positive childhood experiences and preventing adversity. Share photos on social media with the hashtags #WearBlueDay2024 and #NC in your post.

- **Plant a pinwheel garden**, a visual reminder of the world we want for all children to grow up happy, healthy, and prepared to succeed. You can also plant one digitally at pinwheels.preventchildabuse.org.

- **Participate in National Digital Advocacy Day** on Tuesday, April 16. Contact your member of Congress to advocate for increased investments for Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention programming, family-strengthening policies and economic supports that give families access to the resources they need.

- **Make a donation:** Throughout the month, you can make a tax-deductible gift to Positive Childhood Alliance NC (donate by visiting www.PositiveChildhoodAllianceNC.org).



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Andrea Jacobs Rofail, a member of the Columbus County Partnership for Children Parent Advisory Council (PAC), reads her suggestion for the group's new mission statement.



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APRIL 6-12, 2024



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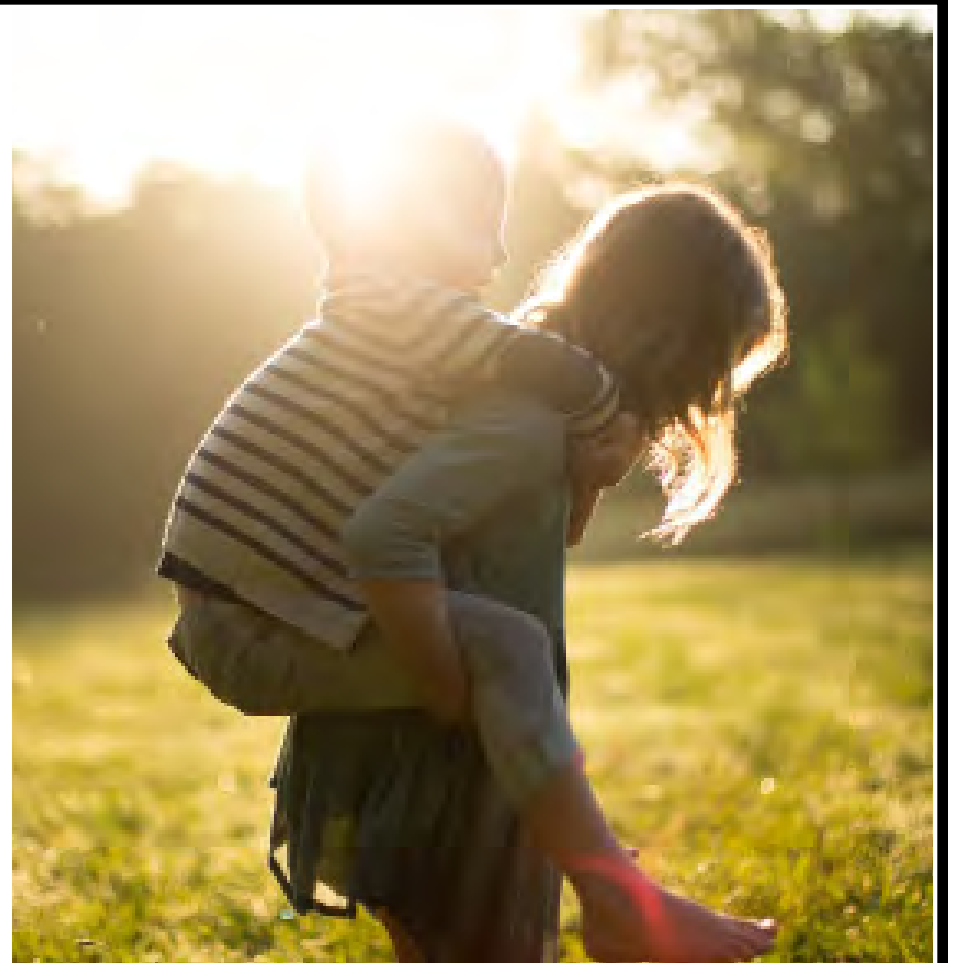
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ELF provides resources for parents, educators of young children

The Smart Start Early Learning & Family Resource Center (ELF) provides resources that parents and educators can use to enhance the care and education of young children from birth to age 5.

Resources available for children and their families include books, hands-on centers and learning areas, parent resources for early childhood education and development, games, puzzles, and prop boxes. We have materials in English, Spanish and Braille.

The books are on various topics like potty training and sign language, and other learning materials include a fake shoe with laces that the children can use to practice tying shoes.

Resources available for teachers and childcare providers include quality play materials, curriculum help boxes, theme boxes, quarterly training workshops, and a work room with die cut machines, laminator, book-binding machine, paper cutter, and arts and crafts materials. Parents can use these resources as well, with assistance from ELF staff.

Resources can be used in the center for free, but only members can check out materials. Items are available for a two-week loan period and can be delivered to facilities.

ELF also hosts various activities including story time every Wednesday at 10 a.m. Stop by and you might just get to meet community members like North Carolina Strawberry Festival Princess Mia Soles, American Idol contestant Dustin Chapman or members of the East Columbus girls varsity basketball team.

Trained staff are available to assist in making

games, developing curriculum ideas, and providing materials and ideas that help to facilitate the early learning experience.

Gloria Parker-Barr is the Dolly Parton Imagination Library and ELF coordinator.

"My favorite part of working in the ELF is interacting with the children during story time," she said. "You've got to be silly with children. I'm always enthusiastic and animated when I read, and we dress up according to the day's theme. I love seeing the smiles on their faces as they engage with the story."

Alyssa Lewis is also an ELF coordinator.

"In addition to story time, I like coordinating the events and seeing the kids enjoy the crafts I've planned for them," she said. "Engaging with the kids and their families is rewarding, and I enjoy helping parents discover and learn how to use new resources to teach their kids. I also like working with childcare providers

and pulling together materials to facilitate learning in their classrooms."

Lewis is currently a student at Southeastern Community College, where she is pursuing a degree in early childhood education.

For additional information on ELF, contact Alyssa Lewis, ELF Activity Coordinator, at 910-212-6352.



Contributed photo

Alyssa Lewis, Smart Start Early Learning & Family Resource Center (ELF) coordinator, hands a child a fork made of pipe cleaners for the ELF's Dr. Seuss story time activity.



Contributed photo

Gloria Parker-Barr, Dolly Parton Imagination Library and Smart Start Early Learning & Family Resource Center coordinator, reads "Green Eggs and Ham" by Dr. Seuss to community children during ELF's Dr. Seuss-themed story time.

Local stakeholders discuss importance of early literacy

According to the National Assessment of Adult Literacy, two-thirds of students who cannot read proficiently by the end of the fourth grade will end up in jail or on welfare. A study by the One World Literacy Foundation showed if kids can't read by the 4th grade proficiently, they have a 78% chance of not catching up.

These are facts often shared by Let's Read Columbus, a local effort started by Columbus County Partnership for Children that aims to raise awareness of literacy opportunities in the community and the importance of early literacy.

Beverly Turner, director of Federal Programs and Human Resources for Whiteville City Schools, is also part of Let's Read Columbus.

When Turner taught second grade, she wrote a thesis examining why some kindergarten students struggled more than others to learn to read, and she found commonalities in the students who struggled.

"It stemmed back to what happens in a child's life between birth and the time they start school," Turner said. "It has to do with what kind of vocabulary is being used in the home. In many of our homes, parents aren't even speaking in complete sentences, so how can children understand sentence structure if they're not exposed to that early on?"

Turner notes that children who are struggling to read often don't have parents who read to them or model reading.

Tammy Patrick, instructional coach at Whiteville Primary School Preschool, has noticed this in her classroom as well.

"With the babies that we have, you can tell the babies that are coming from environments where they don't get that interaction, where they don't get read to," she said.

Both Patrick and Turner encourage parents and guardians to read to their children, even in infancy.

"When you read to a child, it helps their brain to develop the literacy foundational skills that are needed for them to begin to read when they do start school," Turner said.

CCPC also has programs to promote early literacy such as Raising a Reader, ELF Storytime, and the Dolly Parton Imagination Library.

For additional information about Columbus County Partnership for Children, call 910-642-8226. Visit the office at 109 W. Main St. in Whiteville or online at www.columbusmartstart.com. "Like" ColumbusSmartStart on Facebook.



Contributed photo

Jessica Ballard reads to her son in the Smart Start Early Learning & Family Resource Center.

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columbusco.org/health-department/women-infants-and-children

Columbus County Health Department

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YWCA Lower Cape Fear empowers teen moms and their babies in Columbus County

Within Columbus County, the YWCA of Lower Cape Fear's Early Parenthood Program (EPP) stands as a beacon of support for young women aged 12-19 who are either expecting or already parenting one child. This program works in collaboration with Columbus County Partnership for Children, located at 109 W. Main St. in Whiteville.

The mission of EPP is clear: to equip young mothers with the necessary tools not only to remain enrolled in their educa-

tion and graduate but also to access vital prenatal and community resources, minimize repeat pregnancies, and help parents develop skills essential for nurturing healthy, school-ready children. Kathy Robson is our dedicated Early Parenthood Program Coordinator for EPP, who passionately guides these young women through their journey.

"[The program is about] working individually with the girls to figure out what is going on with them, how can we support them - whether it's connecting them to some resources, or giving them information about their child's development and what to expect at certain stages," explains Robson.

Central to EPP's approach are home visits led by a Parent Educator, both during pregnancy and after childbirth. These visits ensure mothers receive comprehensive support, from prenatal preparations to postpartum guidance on parenting and developmental milestones. The EPP Program has already completed 724 visits, a testament to the YWCA's commitment to supporting young families.

EPP goes further than just

providing guidance. EPP also ensures mothers have essential supplies such as car seats, bassinets, diapers, and books, nurturing both practical and intellectual development in their children.

The most invaluable aspect of EPP lies in its establishment of a supportive commu-

Since its inception, 63 young mothers and their babies in Columbus County have reaped the benefits of EPP's unwavering support and resources. Most importantly, the program is free to those who meet eligibility criteria.

For further information or to refer a young mom who might benefit from the YWCA's Early Parenthood Program, please reach out to Kathy Robson, Early Parenthood Program Coordinator, at epp@ywca-lowercapefear.org or 910-520-4819."

The YWCA Lower Cape Fear is dedicated to eliminating racism, empowering women and promoting peace, justice, freedom and dignity for all. The YWCA is the oldest and largest women's movement, providing services that positively impact women and their families. YWCA fosters resiliency and self-sufficiency through its empowerment programs, aquatics center and child-care center. Through our community outreach programs, we provide safe spaces for women and girls and build strong female leaders.



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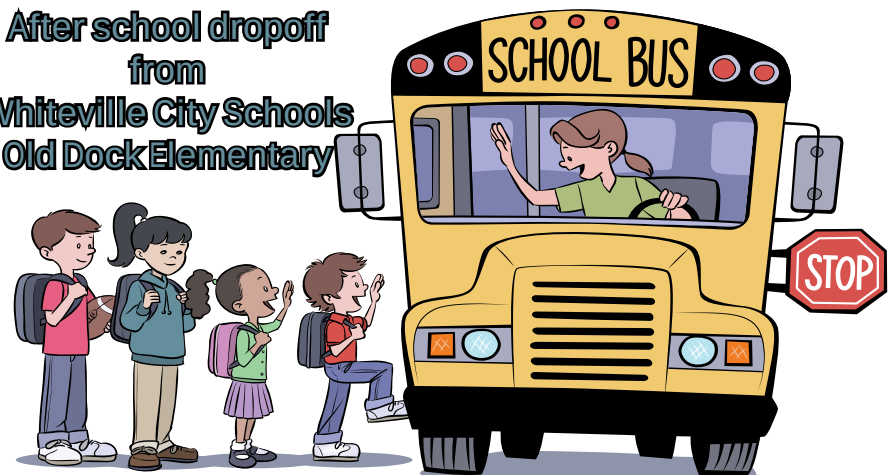


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POEMS grant provides play equipment to local child care centers

Fifteen child care centers and six family child care homes received Quality Enhancement non-cash grants for participating in the Preschool Outdoor



A child at Trinity Baptist Church Child-care Center plays in the center's new mud kitchen, which was acquired through the POEMS grant from Columbus County Partnership for Children.

Environment Measurement Scale (POEMS). The grants came in the form of play equipment and other materials to increase the value of the outdoor learning environment.

The equipment received is worth nearly \$55,000.

Bethel's Child Care, a family child care home that services children from age 0 to 12 years, received a sandbox, climber, push car, balls, hula hoops, and jump ropes.

"The parents were excited when they first came because I think it brightened up the color of my playground. The kids, they love it," said Owner Paula Richardson.

She said it gives the children more opportunities to express themselves, a variety of experiences, and helps develop their gross motor skills.

Trinity Baptist Day Care received a mud kitchen and wooden blocks for building.

"They're very high-priced items that we wouldn't have been able to afford otherwise, as well as some miscellaneous items like trucks, hula hoops and balls," said Director Eva Watts.

Watts described the blocks.

"They're building blocks that are almost the size of real [building materials], so they can go out there and actually

build huge outdoor structures with them. They'll make little bridges, and they'll walk across them and try to make castles out of them," she said.

Other facilities that received grants

include Child Care Professionals, Edu-Care Preschool Center, Edu-Care Preschool #102, Bri's Caring Heart, Bri's School Age Pre-K, Enchanting Tree Learning Center, East Coast Migrant Head Start - Whiteville Educational Campus, Kid Kare Academy, Opening Doors Preschool II, All Annie's Children, Precious Minds Learn N Play Academy, Faulk Kidland Child Care, Beverly's Day Care, and Farmer's Union Day Care.

Other family child care homes that received grants include Daisy's Good Beginnings, Best Day Care, Mary Kelly Day Care, and Pam's Day Care Home.

For additional information about Columbus

County Partnership for Children, call 910-642-8226. Visit the office at 109 W. Main St. in Whiteville or online at www.columbussmartstart.com. "Like" ColumbusSmartStart on Facebook.



Two children at Bethel's Childcare play with a new sandbox received via the POEMS grant, awarded by Columbus County Partnership for Children.

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NC DEPARTMENT OF
**HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES**



Columbus County Partnership for Children Activities 2023-2024

Dolly Parton's Imagination Library

Dolly Parton's Imagination Library provides books to children living in Columbus County. Each month, children ages birth to 5, who are registered for the program receive a brand new book mailed directly to their homes. The books are free of charge to the family. For more information, call 910-212-6352.

Quality Enhancement Project

This project helps licensed child care programs increase the level of star rated licensure and the level of provider education. Professional Development services are also available for facilities that complete an Educational Facility Plan. Teachers in these facilities who are attending school may be eligible for Educational Awards. For assistance, call 910-499-4547.

Raising A Reader

Raising A Reader helps child care providers work with families to build and maintain the home-based language and literacy experiences young children need for later school success. By rotating high quality children's literature into homes each week, Raising A Reader's research-based program helps children and parents develop the habit of "book cuddling." Families also build the connections to libraries that result in lasting family

literacy habits and improved outcomes for children. For assistance, call 910-642-8226.

Smart Start Early Learning Facility (ELF)

The Early Learning Facility provides child development resources which parents and providers can use to enhance the early care and education of young children. A variety of children's books, videos, topic resource books, resource kits and toys, a computer with Internet access and other resources are available to library members at a nominal fee. Training and workshops are offered as well as consumer materials in Spanish. For assistance, call 910-212-6352.

Smart Start Subsidy

This scholarship program provides assistance with the cost of child care to qualified parents with children ages birth to five. For assistance, call 910-642-3178.

Transportation

Expectant mothers and children ages birth to 5 who are not eligible for Medicaid reimbursable transportation can be transported to and from medical appointments. For assistance, call Joy Jacobs at 910-642-7201.

WAGES

This project provides child care professionals with education-based salary supplements

and addresses teacher turnover and increased teacher educational levels. For assistance, call Allison Miller at 919-967-3272.

Biblioteca de imaginación de Dolly Parton

La Biblioteca de Imaginación de Dolly Parton ofrece libros para niños que viven en el Condado de Columbus. Cada mes, los niños de entre nacimiento y 5 años de edad, que están registrados en el programa, reciben un libro nuevo enviado directamente a su hogar. Los libros son gratuitos para la familia. Para más información, llame al 910-212-6352.

Proyecto del realce de calidad

Este proyecto ayuda a los programas de cuidado infantil certificados a incrementar el nivel de rendimiento y el nivel de educación proveída. Servicios profesionales del desarrollo están disponibles para facilidades que completen un Plan Educativo. Maestros en estas facilidades que asisten a las escuelas pueden ser elegibles para recibir un Premio Educativo. Llame 910-642-8226.

Creando un lector

Esta actividad con los centros de cuidado infantil o guarderías con licencias promueve el intercambio diario de libros entre los padres y sus hijos. Cada niño recibirá una brillante bolsa roja llena

de libros de alta calidad, libros apropiados para su edad que se rotarán semanalmente. Llame 910-642-8226.

Smart Start Centro de Aprendizaje Temprano

La centro de aprendizaje temprano provee recursos de desarrollo infantil que padres y proveedores pueden usar para el crecimiento del cuidado y la educación temprana para los bebés y niños. La variedad de libros para niños, videos, libros con temas de recursos, artículos y juguetes, computadora con acceso al internet y otros recursos están disponibles para los miembros de la centro a un minimo pago. Entrenamientos y cursos como también materiales en español. Llame 910-212-6352.

Smart Start Subsidio

Este programa de becas pro-

vee asistencia con los costos para el cuidado de niños para calificar padres con niños desde la edad del nacimiento hasta los cinco años. Llame 910-642-3178.

Transportacion

Madres embarazadas y con niños recién nacidos hasta la edad de 5 años que no son elegibles para el reembolso del Medicaid también pueden ser transportadas, y para sus citas medicas. Llame a Joy Jacobs en 910-640-7201.

Pagos

Este proyecto provee a profesionales del cuidado infantil suplementos del sueldo. Aumenta los niveles de entrenamiento de los maestros en centros de cuidado infantil. Llame a Allison Miller en 919-967-3272.

CCPC Staff and Telephone Numbers

Dr. Selena Rowell – Executive Director	910-499-4548
Charmaine Blue-Singletary – Program Coordinator	910-499-4545
Shawnquel “Shaq” Davis – Outreach Coordinator	910-212-4689
Latrinda Pierce-Ready & Resilient Families & Communities	910-642-8226
Brittany Jernigan- Administrative Officer	910-499-4549
Kathy Robson - Early Parenthood Program	910-212-4010
Kayla Henson- Quality Enhancement, Outreach Support	910-499-4547
Alyssa Lewis- ELF Activity Coordinator	910-212-6352
Gloria Parker-Barr - Dolly Parton Imagination Library	910-642-8226
Latoya Beatty - Ready & Resilient Families & Communities	910-499-4546
Sherry Baldwin - Resilient Columbus, PAC	910-642-8226
Jenny Arache Javier- Outreach Support, Bilingual	910-642-8226

Columbus County Partnership for Children
109 W. Main St., Whiteville, N.C. 28472

Autism Support Group:

Bladen/Columbus County Support Group of the Autism Society of NC (ASNC) provides a place for children and adults with autism and their families to meet, share, and learn about autism. The ASNC support groups provide a place for families who face similar challenges to feel understood as they offer each other encouragement. Meetings are announced on the Facebook page.

Email bladencolumbussupportgroup@autismsociety-nc.org
Facebook facebook.com/groups/asnc.bladen.columbus

Childcare Provider Appreciation Event:

Columbus County Partnership for Children's annual Childcare Provider Appreciation Event will be Thursday, May 16, at Trinity Baptist Church at 6:30 p.m. More details to follow.



COLUMBUS COUNTY PARTNERSHIP FOR CHILDREN

SPRING FLING

JOIN US FOR A FAMILY FUN DAY, PLANTING THE
SEEDS FOR OUR CHILDREN'S MINDS TO BLOOM!

Saturday, April 6th
10 AM to 1 PM

109 W. MAIN ST. WHITEVILLE, NC

Rain Date
Saturday, April 13th

FREE ENTRY

Story Time, Dancing, Games, Story Book Characters, Prizes,
Resource/Informational Booths, Face Painting, Special Guest &
Performances, Food & MORE!!

For Questions Call:
910-642-8226 or 910-212-6352



*For information about
early literacy programs offered by
Columbus County Partnership for Children
(Smart Start), call 910-642-8226.
www.columbusmartstart.com*



Early Literacy Facts

- According to the NC Child 2023 Data Card for Columbus County, just 39.5% of 3rd grade students scored proficient in reading.
- Early literacy is a mix of experiences that involves the senses.
- The brain grows through sound, sight, touch and talk.
- Brains are built, not born. The cells are there but the connections are not.
- What a child experiences in the world determines how connections are formed.
- Early literacy tactics focus on a child's developmental abilities and preparedness to acquire literacy skills.
- The home is the child's first school, and the parent is the child's first teacher.
- The more you read and speak to your child, the better he or she will do in school.