



Early

Childhood Connections



6th Annual Early Education Summit

On January 29th, 2019 the Partnership celebrated its 20th Anniversary at the Annual Early Education Summit. We had a record turnout of community partners, child care providers, elected officials, and citizens eagerly wanting to learn more about early childhood in our county. We were fortunate to have two of the founding members in attendance—Kathy Hykes and Carole Tarry.



The Summit also offered an opportunity to honor Board Chair, Ron Waters, who passed away last fall. The Partnership named their individual service award after Ron and his daughter



Sophie was on hand to make the presentation. Davina Woods was the recipient and she very eloquently remarked about the commitment and dedication Ron had made to the Partnership over his many years of service. Ms. Woods was honored for

her work with the Partnership as well as with the NC Pre-Kindergarten program. She has been a steadfast member of the early childhood community as the director of Excel Christian Academy.

Our Community Partner Award went to Burlington Pediatrics for their work with the Reach Out and Read program. Because of their investment in childhood literacy, thousands of children and parents have been offered books along with the encouragement to share them together.



Our speaker, Keith Pentz did a wonderful job showing how far we've come in the early childhood field as well as what challenges stay lay before us.



Upcoming Partnership Events

- **Day of Training**—Saturday, April 6th @ ACC 7am-2pm
- **Easter Egg Hunt**—Saturday, April 13th @ the Outdoor Learning Environment time **TBD**
 - **Healthy Kids Day**—Saturday, April 27th @ City Park 10am-2pm
- **Smart Start Conference**—Tuesday, April 30, 2019 through Thursday, May 2nd @ The Koury Convention Center, Greensboro



FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR - CARRIE THEALL

Here at the Partnership we have taken an interest in the nutrition habits of young children and how they affect healthy development. It can be overwhelming at times to keep up with busy schedules while making sure we are getting our kids fed. Lots of times our meals are on the run between work, school, and extracurricular activities. It's important however to stop every now and then and really examine what's become of family meal times together.

According to *The Family Dinner Project*, the "magic" of family dinners is grounded in research on the physical, mental and emotional benefits of regular family meals. Some of the specific benefits of family dinners are:

- Better academic performance
- Higher self-esteem
- Greater sense of resilience
- Lower risk of substance abuse
- Lower risk of teen pregnancy
- Lower risk of depression
- Lower likelihood of developing eating disorders
- Lower rates of obesity

Keep in mind, some of these benefits apply to adults as well. For instance, lower rates of obesity occur most likely due to the fact that home cooking is healthier than restaurant meals, which

boast larger portion sizes and higher calorie counts. There is also the cost savings to consider - eating home-cooked meals is cheaper. A sample estimate finds that a family of four could **save nearly \$40 a week, per person**, by simply shifting meals into the house. In addition, families that eat together, make better food choices.

But the best part about getting together for dinner is that it becomes ingrained in a family's tradition if the habit is started early. One of most important benefits not listed above is the bonding that occurs within families and there is no substitute for that.

Check out The Family Dinner Project website for more information <https://thefamilydinnerproject.org/>



Looking for child care? Call Referral Central toll free at 855-327-5933 or visit www.childcareservices.org/fs/finding.html.

Program Updates:

The Incredible Years

Our spring parenting classes are in full swing. This semester we are hosting a pre-school class at Lifespan Circle School, an English school-age class at Newlin Elementary School, and a bilingual school-age class at Eastlawn Elementary School. Our bilingual class has brought together diverse parents and caregivers in our community to strengthen their parenting skills and build positive family relationships. We are so grateful for our bilingual facilitators who make this class flourish.

The English school-age class is our biggest class this semester. Parents begin the night with a delicious meal from Delancey's and catch up with each other about how their week was. They then transition to the library to begin class and participate in role play scenarios to practice their new

parenting skills. Caregivers in the pre-school class at Lifespan have quickly become a family and love doing their buddy calls each week. They share with each other successes they experience at home with their new knowledge of parenting. Such strong bonds have formed in just seven weeks.

Incredible Years is funded by the Department of Health & Human Services, United Way of Alamance County, and Smart Start. If you are interested in attending an Incredible Years class, please call Jessica Reedy at (336) 513-0063 or email incredibleyears@alamancechildren.org.



Parents as Teachers

PAT is currently serving 67 families and 85 children ages birth to five with bi-monthly home visits, annual developmental screenings, resource connections, and group meetings.

Monthly group meetings are a chance for families to connect with one another and participate in parent-child activities in a group setting. PAT Group meetings are FREE of charge. Upcoming Group Meetings include:

- EGG Hunting in the Outdoor Learning Environment - Saturday April 13th at 10:00am
 - Strawberry Picking at Isley Farms
 - End of Year Celebration at Aquatic Center

Resources for Young Children

Tips for Reading Dolly Parton's Imagination Library Books with Your Preschooler

Alamance Partnership for Children (APC) helps provide books to the young children of Alamance County, from birth to their fifth birthday, through the Dolly Parton's Imagination Library (DPIL). The goal is to encourage parents to read to their children daily in the early years of life and to help foster a love of books and reading. APC currently serves over 5,000 children with monthly books at no cost to families.

Use your DPIL books to foster a love of books and reading with your preschooler:

- **Read together every day**—Read with your child daily. Make it a warm and loving time to cuddle close.
- **Give everything a name**—Build your child's vocabulary by talking about interesting words and objects in the book.
- **Read with fun in your voice**—Read to your child with humor and expression. Use different voices. Encourage them to join in the fun.
- **Be interactive and ask questions**—Discuss what's happening in the book. Encourage them to tell you what they think. Listen and respond to their answers – it builds language skills.
- **Point out print everywhere**—Talk about the written words you see in the world around you. Ask your child to find new words on each outing.
- **Read it again and again**— Go ahead and re-read your child's favorite book—even if it is the 100th time!



Visit the [Partnership's website](#) to register your child for DPIL. You may also contact Penny Scott, Literacy Specialist, for more information about Dolly Parton's Imagination Library at 336.513.0063 Ext 103 or psscott@alamancechildren.org

OUTDOOR LEARNING ENVIRONMENT



The regularly scheduled playgroups in the Outdoor Learning Environment are currently on hold. Check back with us soon for a revised schedule.

Kaleidoscope Play and Learn Groups

Messy free painting is an easy way for children as young as infants to participate in a fine motor and sensory activity. We had so much fun trying it out at our Kaleidoscope Play & Learn Group. All that is needed is to put a piece of paper (we made shamrocks for St. Patrick's Day) inside a plastic bag. Put some dabs of paint on top of the piece of paper, and zip the bag up. Let your child "paint" over the bag with their fingers or a paint brush. Take the paper out of the bag to let it dry and hang your masterpiece up.

Kaleidoscope Play & Learn meets every Wednesday morning from 10:30 am-12:00 pm at the City Gate Dream Center (1423 N Church St, Burlington NC 27217). For more information contact Jessica Reedy at jreedy@alamancechildren.org



Links to Success: Interesting things to read.

For more information on the importance of sensory play with children go to

<https://www.goodstart.org.au/news-and-advice/october-2016/exploring-the-benefits-of-sensory-play>

Nap Time Boosts Learning, Studies Say

<https://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2018/12/12/nap-time-boosts-learning-studies-say.html>

Don't be Afraid of the Mess! Bringing Collage, Paint, and Clay into the Classroom

http://www.earlychildhoodnews.com/earlychildhood/article_view.aspx?ArticleID=549

Play-based learning can set your child up for success at school and beyond.

<http://theconversation.com/play-based-learning-can-set-your-child-up-for-success-at-school-and-beyond-91393>

Fourth Quarter Training Calendar
Contact the Alamance Partnership for Children– 336-513-0063 or info@alamancechildren.org



The Alamance Partnership for Children
Presents 2019 Day of Training



Saturday, April 6th, 2019
8:00a.m. – 3:15 p.m. (5.5 credit hours)
Alamance Community College
1247 Jimmie Kerr Road • Graham, NC 27253

Schedule for the Day

8:00 – 8:30 Registration

8:30 – 10:15 Welcome /Morning Keynote/ Resilience Video

10:30 – 12:00 Morning Session

12:00 – 1:00 Lunch

1:00 – 2:30 Afternoon Session

2:30 – 3:00 Closing

Questions? Call Toni Gross at Alamance Partnership for Children at 336.513.0063





The North Carolina Pre-Kindergarten (NC Pre-K) Committee is pleased to announce that two NC Pre-K child care centers were chosen to receive Outdoor Learning Environment grants. Child Care Network #78 and Janice S. Scarborough Head Start submitted proposals that were selected by the Committee to create natural learning areas at their centers. The Alamance Partnership for Children will be partnering with the centers to develop plans and to create a dynamic space for NC Pre-K students. We look forward to seeing the progress at the two sites over the next few months and to sharing more on the completion of the Outdoor Learning Environments.



NC Pre-Kindergarten Applications 2019-2020

NC Pre-K applications are now being accepted for the 2019-2020 school year. Parents only need to fill out one application to be considered for all Pre-k programs, including NC Pre-K, Alamance Burlington School System, and Head Start. A child must be four years of age on or before August 31, 2019 to qualify.

Applications are available on our website: www.alamancechildren.org

Please contact Kristie Coffey at kcoffer@alamancechildren.org or (336) 513-0063 ext. 105 for more information.



Alamance Partnership for Children

MISSION: To help every child grow, learn, and thrive.

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Contact us:

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Board Meetings are held on the second Wednesday of every month at noon. These meetings are open to the public. Should you have an interest in attending, please contact the Partnership at 336.513.0063.