

CHILDHOOD CONNECTIONS

WINTER 2023

Roll and Read, an annual literacy-focused event at The Partnership, brought together a wonderful group of participants this year. Readers from the Burlington Police Department, Young Musicians of Alamance County, ABSS, Faucette Fire Department, Alamance Public Library, and more joined in, creating a vibrant community celebration of the joy of reading.

Families enjoyed strolling through the neighborhood, stopping at each book station to hear a book or enjoy some music and movement with each of our volunteer readers. Every child that attended left with a free book.

The event featured storytelling by Jon Sundell, a professional storyteller from Winston Salem, adding an extra layer of engagement and entertainment. The presence of community partners, including Crossroads and Arms of Grace, highlighted the collaborative effort to promote family wellness in the community.

To enhance the experience, food trucks from Sunset Slush and Super Taco provided refreshments, creating a festive atmosphere after a long walk.

A heartfelt thank you goes out to all who participated, making it a memorable occasion.



From the Desk of the Executive Director, Cass Wolfe

Happy New Year to all.

I have talked to many people who anticipated the holiday season as a time to renew and refresh themselves, their living spaces, and perhaps their mindsets. We can all benefit from such reflection, and a renewed commitment to being more organized, healthier, and happier. This includes young children as well. Children benefit from consistency, clear communication, the chance to think creatively, to try new things, make mistakes, and accept change.

As educators and parents, we can provide these opportunities (and many more) to help young children grow and develop into healthy, capable adults. For example, if your classroom or living room needs a change, (possibly decluttering like mine), include the children in the process. Talk about what you are doing, why you are doing it, and let them help make decisions. This demonstrates that their voice matters and that they can think about familiar things in different ways. In early childhood this is known as supporting Executive Functioning skills. Development of these skills takes time and practice, but Executive Functioning includes building one's memory, controlling impulses, and developing flexibility in thinking skills. All skills that support strong development. And coincidentally relate to our New Year's resolutions. How about that!

Please enjoy this edition of the Alamance Partnership for Children's newsletter. We had a wonderful fall literacy event, complete with a bi-lingual story teller. In addition, we have had several story hours at our office and you will find a list of upcoming story times on page 8.

As you read this, consider what programming might be of interest to you and your child. Consider joining us as part of your commitment to your child and to yourself this new year!

Warm wishes,

Cass



Outdoor Learning Environment

The OLE is open 7 days a week and free for the whole community to use.

Playing outside is wonderful in all weather! Research has shown that spending time outdoors can boost a child's immune system. Playing outside can also help children develop a consistent sleep pattern. Exposure to new sights, smells, textures, and sounds can help stimulate brain development and enhance sensory perception. Additionally, outdoor play encourages imaginative thinking and the development of gross motor skills. See you at the OLE!



Please join us to learn about rocks, birds, frogs, toads, and much more.

January 2nd, 2024 January 9th, 2024	Rocks
February 6th, 2024 February 13th, 2024	Birds
March 5th, 2024 March 12th, 2024	Frogs and Toads
April 2nd, 2024 April 9th, 2024	Garden. What do plants need?
May 7th, 2024 May 14th, 2024	Wonderful Worms
June 4th, 2024 June 11th, 2024	Butterflies/Bees



The Nature Explorers' group has had a great time exploring, discovering, and learning about nature's wonders, but most importantly, they have enjoyed playing outside, making friends and having fun.



Quality Child Care

Upcoming Trainings Alamance County Providers Only

1/17/2024

The Basics of Supporting Dual Language Learners

2/6/2024

Professionalism In the Workplace

2/21/2024

IT SIDS

2/22/2024

Outdoor Playtime Reduces Unwanted Behaviors in the Classroom

3/12/2024

Creating Storyboards for Teaching Language, Math, & Social-Emotional Skills

3/20/2024

Hoop It Up!

3/21/2024

Teaching Healthy Habits Inside and Out

Professional Development is a way for teachers to increase their knowledge, learn new strategies and skills to better support the children in their care, and to feel confident in their careers as an Early Childhood educator. Training provides information on policy changes and also increases one's knowledge of best practices in the classroom.

The Quality Child Care team offers **free** in person professional development monthly. All trainings are listed on the Child Care Services Professional Development calendar.

Recently, child care providers participated in the training "Using Puppets to Increase Language and Communication Skills. Attendees gained knowledge on how puppets can be used to support each developmental domain and created puppets to use in their classrooms.

LENA continues to be offered through Alamance Partnership for Children. If you want to increase the language and interaction in your classroom this is a great opportunity to do so. If you are planning to participate in the North Carolina Rated License Assessment Program, LENA can help with Listening and Talking, Interaction, and the Activities subscales. For more information please contact Angela Lowery-Taylor, Child Care Services Manager at alowery-taylor@alamancechildren.org and/or 336.513.0063 ext. 120



Lisa Rettie, Early Learning Specialist at Alamance Partnership for Children will be presenting the Professional Development training, "Biting Hurts" at the A.S.K. Conference. Please check the Child Care Services Professional Development calendar for further information about the A.S.K Conference.

Angela Lowery Taylor, Child Care Services Manager alowery-taylor@alamancechildren.org

Lisa Rettie, Early Childhood Specialist lrettie@alamancechildren.org

NC Pre-K

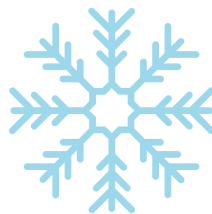


The NC Pre-K program is currently enrolled at 99%. Applications are accepted year-round, and children are placed as space becomes available. We have a current wait list of 225 children.

NC Pre-K site monitoring is underway. Site monitoring is conducted annually for both public schools and private NC Pre-K programs. The NC NC Pre-K manager and NC Pre-K Family Support Specialist visit each classroom using the monitoring tools provided by the state's NC Pre-K program office. These visits allow teachers and directors the opportunity to demonstrate their commitment to quality programming for the enrolled four-year olds. The Partnership staff assess the program implementation and provide feedback as needed.

- **So far, 19 NC Pre-K sites have been monitored with 3 more sites to go**
- **31 classrooms have already been monitored with 8 more classrooms to go**

2024-2025 NC Pre-K applications will be available in January 2024.



Ms. Burke, from EM Yoder, leads a group of students in decorating the first letter of their name.

N. Graham students are serving Janay, our NC Pre-K Manager, some delicious brownies they made!

Parents As Teachers



Parents as Teachers

All children's needs are unique and all deserve the best possible start in life. Your child was born ready to learn.

ENROLLMENT IS OPEN

Benefits of our FREE Parents as Teachers program:

- We are a no cost family program serving Alamance County families throughout pregnancy until the age of 5.
- We support parents increasing their knowledge of their child's development.
- We connect parents with other families, resources in our community, and free activities for their children.
- We help parents understand their children's learning process to be ready for Pre-K and kindergarten.

FUN FAMILY WINTER ACTIVITIES:

- Build a fort with blankets and pillows to read stories together.
- Have an indoor hot cocoa picnic.
- Make a snowman with play dough.
- Dance together to your favorite songs.
- Bake some gingerbread cookies together.
- Enjoy a family outdoor walk with your winter clothes and boots.

UPCOMING GROUP MEETINGS:

January - Health

February - Free Tax Preparation

October Group Meeting
Roll and Read

November Group Meeting
Traditions

December Group Meeting
Holiday Celebration



Incredible Years



The Incredible Years classes are designed for parents and caregivers of children ages 3-12. We provide weekly classes, led by trained Incredible Years Facilitators. Topics include monitoring your child(ren), positive discipline, and boosting your child's confidence.

We will be offering 3 IY classes in Spring 2024

Upcoming classes (Spring 2024) start dates are:

- February 13th for ages 3-5 (preschool) at Like My Own #2
- February 14th for ages 6-12 (school-age) at the YMCA
- February 14th Spanish language for ages 3-12 at Eastlawn Elementary School

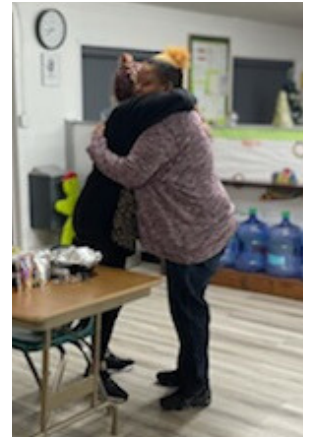
Congratulations to the seven families who graduated in December!

A \$50 incentive will be paid to participants who complete 11 of 14 classes for the first time.



Parent quote from a parent who took both the 3-5 and 6-12 classes

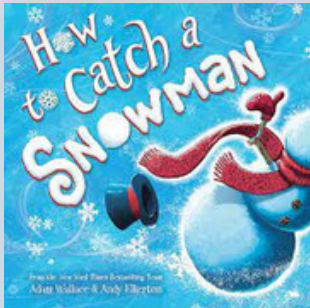
"The Incredible Years parenting program has been an invaluable resource in raising my daughter! It has been so helpful in giving me an understanding of child psychology and also teaching me concrete tactics to handle challenging behavior. One of the best takeaways from the program was my connection to other, like-minded moms. Our class has ended over a year ago and we are still hanging out and supporting each other! I 100% recommend this class to any and everyone looking to create a deeper connection and a more fulfilling relationship with the children in their lives!"



Literacy

Sign up for free book for your child birth to five.

Michelle's Winter Pick



A fantastic read for cozy Story Times and family gatherings, just right for the winter vibes! Plus, it's loaded with cool ideas to spark your creativity and build some awesome snowman traps through fun S.T.E.A.M. activities!



Register your child for free books!

Registration is easy:

*Visit: www.AlamanceChildren.org

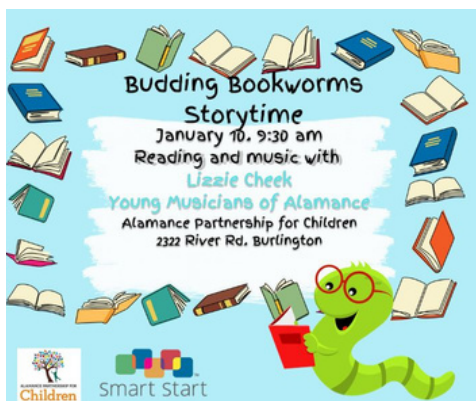
*Call: 336.513.0063

*Email: mhowe@AlamanceChildren.org

*Scan: QR Code for registration form



January's Storytime



November's Storytime with Emily Ennis of Kidstunes



Kaleidoscope Play and Learn



Kaleidoscope Play & Learn (KPL) is a free weekly facilitated parent and child playgroup offered to caregivers with children birth to five years old. Playgroups offer caregivers a space to connect with one another and build community.

Winter Curriculum:

- January- Everyday Activities
- February - Creativity
- March- Literacy

Kaleidoscope Play and Learn, on Wednesdays, at our Outdoor Learning Environment requires pre-registration through [EventBrite](#).



During each session, parents and children read books and complete activities that focus on the topic for the month.



NEW

We will be adding a new location starting January 23rd at the YMCA located at 1346 S. Main St. Burlington, NC 27215. Playgroups will be held monthly on the third and fourth Tuesdays from 10:00am-11:30am.

We will continue at CrossRoads on the first and second Tuesdays of each month.



STAFF NEWS

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

Staff members celebrating work anniversaries this quarter are:

Janay Powell - October

Carina Hoover - October

Di'Quasia Champ - November

Cass Wolfe - November



In November, the Partnership added our newest staff member, Douglas Gentry, MBA.

With over 20 years of non-profit financial experience, Doug reports that he came out of retirement to be our Accounting Director. We welcome him and appreciate his expertise.

Doug lives in Greensboro with his wife Marybeth and his dog Ruffles. His two sons live in the area as well. Please join us in welcoming Doug.



Our Executive Director, Cass Wolfe, was one of the panel members at the Alamance Chamber of Commerce's annual Community Leaders Retreat.

Cass focused her remarks on the child care crisis, locally, and nationally. Parents, early childhood educators, businesses, and communities are straining under the costs, staffing shortages, wages and lack of access to care.

If you have an event you would like us to attend, please contact Michelle Howe at mhowe@alamancechildren.org or 336.513.0063

Community Awareness

Handling tantrums can be challenging, whether you're at home or in the midst of a bustling playground. If you've tried talking calmly or ignoring the behavior with no success, here are a few phrases that might help your child step back and start the journey back to their usual behavior. Check out [Gozen.com](https://gozen.com) for their programs and ideas to help with social and emotional wellness.



Local Food Pantries

Grace and Peace Tabernacle
Contact Information

600 East Washington Street
Mebane, NC - 27302
Phone: 919-563-0873

The Healing Station
Contact Information

802 Chapel Hill Rd
Burlington, NC - 27215
Phone: (336) 350-9045

More people are eligible for
Medicaid beginning December 1st.
See if you qualify!

Tantrum Tool #1: Name the Emotion and Empathize.

Phrasing: Acknowledge their emotion with empathy. "I see that you're feeling frustrated. It's tough, isn't it? I feel that way sometimes too."

Tantrum Tool #2: Tune into Physical Feelings.

Phrasing: Direct their focus to physical sensations. "Can you tell me how your body feels right now?"

Tantrum Tool #3: Reassure Your Child that Expressing Emotions is Normal.

Phrasing: Provide assurance about expressing feelings. "It's completely okay to let your feelings out. It's a normal way to feel better, especially when you're angry."

Tantrum Tool #4: Offer Alternatives.

Phrasing: Suggest a safer outlet for their emotions. "I understand you're upset, but we can't hurt others. Let's go to our calm down area, where we can find a better way to handle these feelings."

Tantrum Tool #5: Match Your Child's Level of Emotion.

Phrasing: Connect with them on an emotional level. "I can see you're really upset. Sometimes I feel that way too. Let's figure this out together."





Our Staff

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Reagan Gural - Alamance County Chamber of Commerce

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Patricia Jones - Patty Cakes Child Care Center

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