



• NEW HANOVER COUNTY •

EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION NEWS

Smart Start Early Care and Education Newsletter

January - March 2021

Wonderschool

for Family Child Care Homes and Centers in a Residence

What is Wonderschool?

Wonderschool is an online business software program that allows you to put nearly all your paperwork together in one place, such as parent payments and messages, enrollment forms, and licensing paperwork. You will also have access to curriculum resources and tools for advertising your program. There is even a mobile app that allows you to work from your phone! Thanks to the North Carolina Partnership for Children, this software program is free for the first year, with the possibility of future years. Support throughout the year is also provided to help you navigate the program.

If you were previously interested, or are learning about this for the first time, it's not too late to participate for 2021! Introductory learning sessions are available to learn more and help you get started.

If you have any questions or would like to learn more, please contact **Natalie Pond** at 910-815-3731 or natalie.pond@newhanoverkids.org no later than **Friday, January 29th, 2021.**

This is a great opportunity if you're looking to streamline your paperwork and market your program.

Dedication to Education Bonus*

Smart Start of New Hanover County is pleased to honor early childhood professionals who have achieved degrees or certifications toward their careers. Included in this newsletter are details and an application to apply for the bonus. Applications can also be printed from our website. (newhanoverkids.org— Services)

Eligibility requirements have changed considerably, so be sure to read details carefully.

Applications must be received or postmarked by Friday, January 15, 2021 at 5pm. Faxed applications will be accepted.

*Directors, please share with your staff and make copies as needed.

'Children are the living messages we send to a time we will not see.'

-JFK

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How often are you talking to your children?

Interaction plays a crucial role in brain development, especially for children ages 0-3. **LENA Grow** is a teacher-directed program that measures the amount of interactions along with the time of day they are occurring. Caregivers learn how to take advantage of each pocket during the day to ensure every child is receiving quality interactions.

We'd love to help you learn more about your interactions and how to improve daily amount. Infant and toddler teachers are eligible to participate in this program to continue to provide the best for the children in their care.

Join Krista for an informational Zoom session to learn more!

Centers: Tuesday, February 2: 6:30-7:30pm

FCCH: Thursday, February 4: 7:00-8:00pm

Register on our website. See details on our training calendar.



NC Rated License Assessment Program— Online Learning

Did you know that NCRLAP offers free webinars at least once a week?

A variety of webinars are available to help you learn more about the Environment Rating Scales. There are also a variety of free resources, including documents, videos, and recorded PowerPoints. Many of these are available in both English and Spanish. Also, if you are interested in earning a contact hour, be sure to go to their website and view their training opportunities for specific online training courses related to the Environment Rating Scales.

Some upcoming webinars:

January 11th: Stay and Play Outside All Day

Learn how to spend lots of time outdoors and still earn credit for children's access to materials for a substantial portion of the day on the Environment Rating Scales.

January 25th: Language and Interactions on the ECERS-R

Check out their website ncrlap.org to register for webinars on various topics.

Trauma-Informed Early Childhood Program

Learning how to cope with highly stressful or traumatic events is so important for adults and children.

Details coming soon about becoming a Trauma-

Informed

Early

Childhood

Program.



Directors: a private  Facebook group, **Smart Start of NHC: Early Childhood Directors**, was created for you. This page provides a place for administrators to network, ask questions of each other and coordinate efforts to better serve the children in their program. In addition, the Smart Start ECE team will share news and events, and help you with questions you may have about our services.

We hope you join to keep in touch! Find us on Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/ECEofNHC/>



Directors...

...Looking for a way to meet other directors, network, get ideas, or share frustrations?

We're still facilitating our Director Dialogues—*just via Zoom!*

Join other directors for the next meeting on **Tuesdays— January 19 and March 23 from 12-1pm.**

A Zoom link will be emailed prior to the meeting. No planned agenda, and no RSVP needed, log on to chat!

For more information or questions, contact Natalie Pond.

...share our newsletter and training calendar with your staff.

- * post them in the staff breakroom (do staff know if the newsletter and training calendar are posted and where?)
- * email them to staff
- * provide a copy to each classroom or teacher or provide them with our website address to view the training calendar
- * encourage staff to decide which training(s) he/she would like to register for
- * remember that classes fill quickly. It's important to register online early.

Be sure to always check your junk/spam email folder if you aren't seeing an email from us—then mark us as a 'Safe Sender'.

Kindergarten Registration Packets

We're gearing up to deliver Kindergarten Registration packets to all early childhood programs.

Packets include registration dates for NHC Schools, details on how to register the child, and other valuable resources.

Look for an email in early January inquiring about how many packets you'll need for rising kindergarteners.

Contact Dayla Mendez for pick up arrangements or questions.

910.815.3731 dayla.mendez@newhanoverkids.org

Indoor Physical Activity Ideas

As the weather cools you may find your class spending less time outdoors. Low temperatures and inclement weather shouldn't mean an end to active play though! Below are a couple activity ideas to keep building gross motor skills inside the classroom, provided by NAEYC:

Spiderwebs: Weave long lengths of yarn through sturdy furniture at different heights. (You can also use crepe paper streamers for younger children, as the streamers will break if a child gets tangled in them.) As children carefully navigate their way through the webs, encourage spatial awareness using words like over, under, between, and through.

The Big Haul: Using a very sturdy laundry basket, have one child sit in the basket while others pull or push the basket around the room. You can vary the weight and difficulty by adding or subtracting children or materials in the basket, like unit blocks, or anything else the children want to experiment with. Use language and questions that encourage high-level comparing and contrasting, like *more, less, heavier, lighter, faster, slower, easy, and difficult*. Children can work in pairs or small groups.

Looking for more activity ideas or help creating your own?

Check out the Smart Start Resource Room! Play materials are available for checkout such as our "Movement" theme box or our "Be Active Kids" kit. We also have various teacher resource books, such as "Moving and Learning Across the Curriculum" or "Active Learning for Fours".

You can contact **Dayla Mendez** for book suggestions and/or to set up a time to browse our library.



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Address Service Requested

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If you would like to receive our newsletter electronically, send us an email letting us know.

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