

CCR&R Parent/Provider

Newsletter

-August 2021-



In this month's issue:

New Beginnings at Craven Smart Start!

Craven Smart Start is happy to announce that we will be opening our office and all staff will be back on August 2nd! After working from home for a year, we are all excited to be back in the office. We have cleaned and sanitized our Lending Library and Play Area, as well as reorganized items in our Lending Library to make it easier to find items.

The pandemic has impacted many businesses and agencies including ours and will continue to impact us. We have placed hand sanitizing stations throughout the office for your use. Masks and temperature checks are also required prior to entering. These policies have been put in place to ensure the safety of the families and providers that use our services, as well as the safety of our staff.

Families and providers will be able to come into the office and use the services that we provide by appointment only. Please call our office at 252-672-5921 to make an appointment. We are open 8 AM-5 PM, Monday-Friday.

We look forward to seeing you!



Craven Smart Start Office Updates

Program Assistant- Venus Miller



Lending Library Updates

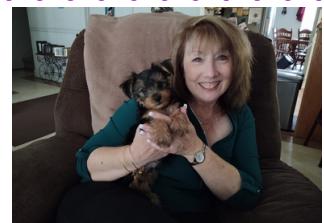
Craven Smart Start's Lending Library will re-open to the public within the next few weeks. Due to Covid -19, our office will continue to support the Health and Safety requirements set by DCDEE and the CDC. It is important that Craven Smart Start keeps all providers, children, and families safe during their visits to our Lending Library.

The new procedures will include, but not be limited to, calling to make an appointment before arrival to the office, temperature checks, wearing facemasks, and following all social distancing requirements.

You could renew your Library Membership Card for free if you had a current card prior to the beginning of the pandemic. Please call me to get the process started!

We are excited to welcome back our providers, children, and their families to our play area. Please reach out to me if you have any questions about the Lending Library. I can be reached at 252-672-5921 EXT 32 or venus@cravensmartstart.org.

CCR&R Director- Bonnie Gould



Face to Face TA Resumes!

Our Craven Smart Start Technical Assistant team has been released to provide face-to-face TA in our Child Care Centers and Family Child Care Homes. Our TA team will call your facility in advance to set up an appointment with the Director, or the Family Child Care Home Provider. Remember that our staff must be invited into your facility and will follow the Health and Safety requirements set by DCDEE and the CDC. Our staff will undergo a Health Self-Assessment Check daily in our facility before heading out to Child Care Centers and Family Child Care Homes. Craven Smart Start TA staff will wear a face mask and follow the toolkit guidelines while in your facility.

Coming Soon! Face to Face Trainings

Craven Smart Start will resume face-to-face trainings as soon as we have our Health and Safety procedures in place for our training room. Watch your email for additional information, We will also continue to offer our online Thinkific platform and virtual trainings as we move forward. Craven Smart Start would like to thank you for your patience during the transition. Please contact me should you have any questions. I can be reached at 252-672-5921 EXT 24, or email me at bonnie@cravensmartstart.org.

Craven Smart Start Office Updates (continued)

- Distributing Kindergarten Registration Signs

- Craven Smart Start employees helped Craven County Schools with distributing signs to promote Kindergarten registration. You can find more information on Kindergarten registration [here](#)



- Personal Protective Equipment Donations from TJ Maxx

- Craven Smart Start recently received a very generous donation from TJ Maxx. We received several boxes filled with numerous personal protective equipment including face masks, liquid hand sanitizer, and hand sanitizer wipes. We will be using these items to help our Child Care Centers and Family Child Care Home providers.



TA Quick Quality Tips From Craven Smart Start/CCR&R Staff

**Quality Enhancement Specialist/Professional Development Coordinator -
Kelly Shaw**



WAGE\$ Are You Claiming Your Benefits Yet?

We would like to provide ongoing information on different professional development opportunities that our office has to offer. Have you heard of WAGE\$? The Child Care WAGE\$ Program provides education-based salary supplements to low-paid teachers, directors, and family child care educators working with children ages birth to 5 years old. The program is designed to increase retention, education, and compensation. The Child Care WAGE\$ Program is fully funded by Craven Smart Start.

Any child care professional earning at or below the income cap, \$16/hour may qualify after six months of employment at the professional's current facility. Bonuses received from the employer will be included in calculations to determine the hourly rate. The supplement recipient must work with children ages birth to 5 at least 10 hours per week in a licensed child care program and must have a level of education appearing on the Child Care WAGE\$ supplement scale. Participants must be working in a qualified facility that is rated 3 stars or higher. Salary supplements are tied to the recipient's level of education, with teachers and family child care providers awarded on a different scale than directors. Craven Smart Start currently has our program funding at Tier 2.

Interested child care professionals must complete an application and provide verification of (1) current employment in a participating child care program, (2) current wages, and (3) education earned, as verified by an official transcript or through Early Educator Certification (EEC). If an official transcript has been submitted to EEC, it may be used to determine the WAGE\$ award. Please note that it is that professional's responsibility to fill out the application, send it, and follow up on the application's status. More information including the salary scale is available at <https://www.childcareservices.org/wages-nc/>

TA Quick Quality Tips

From Craven Smart Start/CCR&R Staff

Quality Enhancement Specialist – Courtney Cartwright

Self Care

Caring for and educating young children can be extremely rewarding and at times, stressful. Juggling children, parents, staff, equipment, and meetings can create stress. However, stress is not always bad. If you have an event which you are looking forward to coming up, then this stress can be joyful. It is uncontrolled or unmanaged stress which can affect your mental and physical health. Take a look at some ways to handle stress:

Eat healthy food. Stay physically active. Get enough sleep.

Start each day by taking a few relaxing minutes of private time.

Take short breaks when possible.

Protect free time by saying “NO” to extra projects when asked.

Create a peaceful environment.

Build relationships.

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Quality Enhancement Specialist & School Age Specialist- Tammy Cullom (252-635-8242)

Summer Reading is Critical to School Year Success



Learning happens every day, and learning is FUN! Many parents give their children a break from the learning schedule that happens during the school year. It is fine to take a summer break; however, it is never a good idea to skip reading altogether. Reading is a part of life, so look for ways to make reading and writing a part of the summer fun.

1-Going on vacation? Look for online brochures that you and your child can read together. Write a list of the activities your child would like to do at the vacation spot.

2-You and your child can write a letter to friends or family members telling them about a summer activity. Ask your child to draw a picture to include with the letter. A child’s drawing is priceless, no matter what their age is.

3-Summer sports bring the family together. There are many books about how to play sports and about famous sports players. This would be a fun family reading event. Baseball cards can be a fun way to learn new words!

4-Plan a fun family activity such as a game night, obstacle course adventure, or nature walk. Ask your child to make a flyer for the family that includes important information, such as the date, time, and what each person needs to bring.

5-Plan a Summer Reading Report challenge. Each family member or pair of family members will read a book and prepare a short report. You might suggest a summer theme, such as a book about sharks or I

The report is simply telling about the book in the reporter’s own words. Those sharing the information could bring show and tell items that fit in with the book or draw a poster similar to those for movies. This shouldn’t feel like regular school work but a fun time to share as a family.

There are so many ways to incorporate reading into summer activities. Whatever you do with your child during the summer months, keep reading as part of the fun!

TA Quick Quality Tips

From Craven Smart Start/CCR&R Staff



Healthy Social Behavior Specialist- Sonia Sumner (252-876-1645)

How is Your Relationship?

What are positive teacher-child relationships? Each moment that teachers and children have together is an opportunity to develop or strengthen positive relationships. Teachers can use a variety of strategies to build positive relationships with children such as listening, making eye contact, and engaging in one-to-one, face-to-face interactions. It is important to use strategies that take into account the different needs, interests, styles, and abilities of the children in the class. Teachers can let the children know they are each a valued, important member of the classroom community through warm, responsive interactions and physical contacts such as a hug or a pat on the back.

Children who have a positive relationship with their teachers are less likely to misbehave! Why is it important to build positive teacher-child relationships? Research suggests that teacher-child relationships play a large role in influencing young children's social and emotional development. Children who have a secure relationship with their teachers tend to get along well with classmates and have positive relationships with teachers.

On the other hand, children who have an insecure relationship with their teachers have more difficulty playing with other children and engage in more conflict with their teachers. In other words, the use of affectionate words, smiles, and hugs help promote children's positive relationships with teachers...and with the other children. Children who have secure, loving relationships with their teachers use fewer challenging behaviors to get their needs met.

Adapted by Promoting Healthy Social Behaviors from CSEFEL What Works Brief #12
<https://www.challengingbehavior.org>

Infant-Toddler Specialist- Sandra Arasim (914-589-1886)

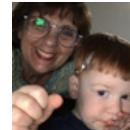
Just a few months ago, we at Craven Smart Start organized an in-house Advocacy Committee. Our initiatives are currently neighborhood and community-focused. In just a few months we have developed an educational video focusing on the shortage of quality infant-toddler care and subsidy funds in Craven County. This video has been viewed regionally and statewide. Eventually, it will be adapted for other counties.

We have had two successful viewings of "No Small Matter" and have taken the first steps towards educating our elected officials. Last night, we presented before the New Bern Aldermen and Mayor; and have plans to work with the Havelock elected officials as well. At this time we are ready to invite educators to join the Advocacy Committee. If you are interested in joining, please contact bianca@cravensmartstart.onmicrosoft.com. You can also feel free to call our office to speak with Ms. Bianca.

Here is the link to our "Social Justice Begins in the Infant Room" video. It is three minutes long. Please take a moment to watch it and feel free to pass it on to colleagues and families.

<https://youtu.be/3KoyqP7Nigc>

We look forward to hearing from you soon. In order to initiate real change, we need the help of all early childhood stakeholders with all hands on deck.



Training Information Craven Smart Start

Training Reminders

*Remember that our Thinkific platform is available for you to do online trainings at your own pace. To access our Thinkific platform, you can go to www.cravensmartstart.org and click on the e-learning tab; or, you can access the platform at <https://cravensmartstart.thinkific.com/>. Please reach out to the Quality Enhancement Team if you have any questions! (Kelly Shaw, Quality Enhancement Coordinator/Professional Development)

*We are now charging for our online trainings (starting July 1, 2021). We accept cash, checks, and credit cards. Please call our office at 252-672-5921 if you have any questions.



To register for a training, please RSVP to venus@cravensmartstart.onmicrosoft.com and more information will be sent regarding the online training.
All trainings list below are \$8.00 for lending library members and \$10 for non-members

Online Zoom Training's in August

*Behavioral Intervention Strategies: You want me to try what?

Presenter: Sonia Sumner

Thursday, August 5th, 2021

6:30 PM to 8:30 PM

*All About the Family: Building Lasting Partnerships in your Facilities and Classrooms

Presenter: Kelly Shaw

Tuesday, August 10th, 2021

6:30 PM-8:30 PM

*Getting Started Improving Quality with the ECERS-R

Presenter: Courtney Cartwright

Wednesday, August 18th, 2021

6:30 PM-8:30 PM

*Early Childhood Trauma: A Teacher's Toolkit

Presenter: Tammy Cullom

Tuesday, August 24th, 2021

6:30 PM-8:30 PM

*IT'S SIDS

Presenter: Sandra Arasim

Thursday, August 26th, 2021

6:30 PM-8:30 PM



From the Desk of the Parent/Provider Specialist Bianca Salinas

August is
Children's Eye Health
and Safety
Month



August is Children's Eye Health & Safety Month

As children grow, their eyes change quickly. It is important to pay close attention to your child's eye health and paying attention early can help catch any eye problems while their eyes are still developing. Catching any eye problems early on can sometimes be easier to treat. There are many ways to help make sure your child's eye health is on the right track.

Increase Visual Engagement

- You can help engage your child visually as a newborn and toddler with high-contrast colors and patterns in toys and different decorations.
- Playing games like peekaboo and patty cake can help stimulate hand-eye coordination for babies the same way a game of catch can do with your toddler or school-aged child.

Protect Their Eyes

- Limit their use of screen time; continuously looking at screens can cause eye strain which can lead to blurred vision and dry eye.
- Encourage your child to use the 20-20-20 rule; look up from the screen every 20 minutes and look at something at least 20 feet away for 20 seconds.

Warning Signs of Possible Eye Problems

- Squinting, head tilting, holding objects very close to the eyes, eye rubbing, sensitivity to light, poor hand-eye coordination

(Bianca Salinas)

Food Can Help Improve Eye Health

- Fruits with vitamins C and E, such as oranges, strawberries, and mangos, can help restore tissues and prevent infections.
- The omega-3 fatty acids found in fish can prevent dry eye and reduce future risk of cataracts and AMD.
- Leafy greens containing Vitamin A such as spinach and kale can help fight dry eye as well as night blindness.
- Non-meat proteins such as eggs and nuts also help balance your child's diet.

(<https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/wellness-and-prevention/6-ways-to-be-proactive-about-your-childs-eye-health>)

Looking for Child Care? We Can Help!

- If you are looking for child care, our Parent/Provider Specialist can help! Please feel free to call Bianca Salinas at 252-672-5921 (Craven Smart Start office) or 1-888-600-1685 (Find Child Care NC Hotline). The specialist is available Monday- Friday from 8 AM-5 PM and also speaks Spanish and is available to help Spanish-speaking families in need of child care.



Upcoming Local Events

- National Night Out- Havelock
 - Date: Tuesday, August 3, 2021
 - At: Walter B Jones Park, Havelock
 - 4 PM-7 PM



- 10th Annual Fly-In: Havelock
 - Learn about Engineering, Weather, Aerodynamics, and much more!
 - Date: Friday, August 13, 2021
 - At: Havelock Tourist & Event Center, Havelock
 - 5 PM-9 PM
 - For more information call 252-444-4348
 - www.ecaviationheritage.com



- Stuff The Bus
 - PIE (Partners in Education) will have a bright yellow school bus parked in front of Staples in New Bern on Saturday, August 14, 2021, from 10:00 am - 2:00 pm. Generous shoppers can donate school supplies for students who have been identified as in need by their school counselors and principals. The supplies collected will be disbursed once school starts by the school principals.
 - For more information and for a list of supplies needed please click [here](#)



- Faith in Action Vision Clinic- Free Eye Exams & Health Checks for Adults and Children
 - At Garber Church - 4202 Country Club Rd, New Bern
 - Must pick up bracelet for yourself on Friday, September 17th from 5 PM-10 PM
 - Exams will be given on Saturday, September 18th from 8 AM-5 PM
 - If you have any questions please call 637-4022



Child Care Resource & Referral

2111 Neuse Blvd.
Suite F.
New Bern, NC 28560

Phone: 252- 672-5921
Fax: 252-672-5922
Email: bianca@cravensmartstart.onmicrosoft.com



Child Care Resource and Referral is here for you. FREE referrals to fit your child care needs with a licensed, regulated, or legally exempt childcare program.

Looking for:

- *Full-Time/Part-Time Care**
- *Before/After School Care**
- *Part-Time Preschool**
- *Weekend Care**
- *Drop-In Care**
- *Hourly Care**

Mission Statement

To enhance the quality and quantity of child care services in Craven County by providing a wide range of information, referrals, advocacy and training services to families, providers, and the community in general.