

# CCR&R Parent/Provider Newsletter -September 2021-



## In this month's issue:

- Getting Back To Normal *page 1*
- Words from a Local Family Child Care Home Provider *page 2*
- Craven Smart Start Updates *page 3*
- Quick Tips from Craven Smart Start/CCR&R Staff *pages 4, 5 & 6*
- September Trainings *page 7*
- Information from our Parent/Provider Specialist *page 8*
- Upcoming Local Events *page 9*

## Getting Back To Normal

Now that our staff are back in the office and getting back in the groove of things, we have been trying to come up with ways to keep helping our child care providers and stay safe in the process. Our office is following the CDC Guidelines regarding health and safety practices. We have made travel PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) bags for all of our TA staff, and staff members who go out in the community (to outreach events, other libraries, etc). These bags contain supplies for our staff to use throughout the year; including disposable masks, hand sanitizer, and antibacterial wipes. We are doing everything we can to stay safe while visiting our providers, we ask that you, our child care providers, also help us (as well as you, your staff, and children) stay safe. Ways to do that would be to please let us know if you have a covid exposure situation at your facility (if our TA staff is scheduled to visit you) and to also wear a mask and keep your hands sanitized.

For families that would like to use our Lending Library, Play Area, or other services we offer, we ask that you call our office and make an appointment to come in. This is to ensure a safe space for you and your little one(s) to enjoy our play area and provide enough time to properly sanitize everything for the next family.

We thank you for your cooperation!



# Local Family Child Care Home Provider Donates Items to Craven Smart Start

Kathy Sheffield, a former Craven County Family Child Care Home (FCCH) Provider, shared with us the tough decision to close her Family Child Care Home and retire due to an unfortunate accident that happened earlier this year. Kathy Sheffield decided to donate her classroom materials to Craven Smart Start, knowing that the toys, books, and play materials would be given to facilities and children in our area who were in need. This was her way to give back to our community. We are pleased to share Kathy's story below:

***"My name is Kathy Sheffield; I am a former FCCH provider here in Craven County. In 2004, I began my journey, with guidance from Craven Smart Start, to open Kathy's Childcare. Craven Smart Start has been there for me since 2004 when I started my college experience at Craven Community College. Craven Smart Start donated college books to me as well as training supplies, and their support. It was a no-brainer to donate my classroom materials to Craven Smart Start. I knew the materials would be donated to childcare facilities in Craven County. I wanted the classroom toys, books, and materials to go to the children in our community."***

***"February 20, 2021, I took a fall and broke my hip which threw me into retirement and I could not take care of my children any longer. This has been a difficult process having to retire from doing the thing I love the most, which is taking care of children. God bless you all who carry on this wonderful, satisfying, and fulfilling never-ending journey."***

**THANK YOU ALL FOR ALL THAT YOU DO FOR OUR FUTURE CHILDREN!!!!!!**

***-Kathy Sheffield***



# Craven Smart Start Office Updates

## **Program Assistant- Venus Miller**



National Bunny Day, September 25th

National Bunny Day highlights the value and contributions that pet rabbits bring to their owners. Held on the fourth Saturday or Sunday each September, National Bunny Day also focuses on the well-being of rabbits and promoting healthy environments for those raised as pets.



The Lending Library offers various reading materials for children to read about Bunnies: Bunny's Bedtime; Fluffy Bunnies; Bunny My Honey; Bunny Bakes a Cake; The Tale of Benjamin Bunny, and much more. Parents, bring your children out and enjoy!!!

International Literacy Day, September 8th

The goal of International Literacy Day, celebrated September 8th, is to highlight the importance of literacy to individuals, communities, and societies. The day is observed so that awareness is spread about literacy, which promotes good quality education and developmental skills in people that make them educated and employable in the world that we live in.



***Great reading leads to a great education!***

## **CCR&R Director- Bonnie Gould**



Self-Care for Directors

How are you feeling? Do you find yourself, staff, and families feeling once again stressed about the status of the Covid-19 Variant? It is very important that you take care of yourself, your staff, and the families you serve in our community. Below are some ways that staff and families can experience self-care and wellness during these trying times. Please reach out to me at Craven Smart Start if you and your staff are experiencing any needs during this difficult time. I can be reached at 252-672-5921 Ext. 24 or [bonnie@cravensmartstart.org](mailto:bonnie@cravensmartstart.org).

### Self-Care & Wellness Ideas for Staff

- General Wellness: encourage activities like yoga, meditation, and exercise.
- Provide trainings on the importance of self-care and wellness.
- Meet with staff one-on-one for a weekly "check-in".
- Allow flexibility in staff schedule.
- Provide a coffee and tea station with snacks available to staff while on break.

### Encourage staff to do the following after hours:

- Go for a nature walk
- Take a hot bubble bath w/ candle
- Eat chocolate!
- Laugh with a friend
- Walk the beach
- Write a letter to a friend
- Listen to soft music
- Go for a bike ride
- Go for a swim / jacuzzi
- Eat more chocolate!
- Exercise at the gym

### Helping Families Through Trauma

- Maintain an open-door policy to talk with the Director
- Listen, and be sympathetic to their needs.
- Provide community resources to families experiencing trauma
- Be familiar with situations that families are facing during this difficult time.
- Provide strategies for recovery from family / child trauma.
- Provide information from [www.savethechildren.org](http://www.savethechildren.org)

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



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

This September the CRAVEN SMART START ADVOCACY COMMITTEE is inviting early childhood professionals to join our ranks.

Since our inception just six months ago, we have paved the road for meaningful discussion and recognition among our elected officials in Craven County. We have created an educational video, "Social Justice Begins in the Infant Room". If you have not yet seen this video, please visit our website or Facebook page.

We are currently engaged in conversations with our representatives from the State and Federal governments discussing the largest nationwide issues.

In the meantime, we are laser-focused on our Craven County Communities. We have had a Drive-In Movie and a Zoom presentation of "No Small Matter" which were well attended. "No Small Matter" is an award-winning documentary about the importance of early brain development and the support our educators, children, and families need to become successful citizens.

We have opened the door to understanding Early Childhood Education by presenting our "Social Justice" video and discussing the Craven Smart Start mission with the Craven County Board of Commissioners, The City Board of New Bern, and the Havelock City Council. We are planning another presentation of "Social Justice Begins in the Infant Room" for the elected officials of the smaller cities and towns in Craven County @ 2:00 PM, on September 8th.

For this fall, our intent is to bring together representatives of these bodies, to form a strategic working group. The success of every initiative is directly connected to the buy-in of its participants. Your participation as educators is vital to our progress as we work together with community stakeholders to bring about meaningful, lasting changes to the early childhood field.

Our Committee is opening our doors to educators on September 28th for an introductory and orientation meeting. We need your voices to be heard and your expertise to be shared as we shape local policy. The time is now! And our elected officials are listening! Please join us on September 28, by clicking on this link <https://forms.gle/QTnb9g7uzhSoBuYq5> or copy and paste it to register for the September Advocacy Committee Orientation Meeting.

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## **Quality Enhancement Specialist - Courtney Cartwright**

### When and How should I wash my hands?

Everyone should practice proper handwashing to keep from getting and spreading germs. We should all monitor and reinforce these behaviors.

### When should I wash my hands?

When you first arrive somewhere and prior to leaving.

After going to the Bathroom.

Before and after changing a diaper.

Before and after eating.

After blowing or wiping your nose, after coughing, and after bandaging a cut or scrape.

Any time hands are visibly dirty!

### How should I wash my hands?

Turn on warm water, wet hands, apply liquid soap, rub all surfaces of hands and wrists for 20 seconds (top, palm, under nails, wrists, between fingers, under jewelry), rinse hands for at least 10 seconds to remove all soap, avoid touching sink or faucet (leave the water running), dry hands with a paper towel, turn off the faucet with a paper towel, open bathroom door with a paper towel, throw away paper towel in the trash.



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

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



## The ABCs of Getting Ready for the School Year

As summer break winds down, the new school year is just around the corner. School has not been “normal” these past two years. Although this upcoming school year won’t be quite normal, children are heading back to the classroom. There are so many things to think about and prepare. You can help your child have a successful start to a new school year. Here are the ABCs of school readiness...

### **A is for Adjust**

Start at least one week prior to the first day of school and adjust the family schedule. Set the school bedtime and have the family begin the routine. Decide where the homework station will be and stock it with what your child will need. It is a good idea to have your child pick out clothes for the next day the night before and make sure everything is ready for the morning. Adjusting early will make for a much smoother start.

### **B is for Be Involved**

You know your child better than everyone. Give the teacher any information about your child that may be needed. You and the teacher have the same goal—for your child to have a good school year. Be active by attending PTO programs and volunteering in the classroom or for events such as field trips or field day. It means so much to your child when you are involved in the school.

### **C is for Calm**

Your child will know how to react by watching you. If you calm about this new school year, your child will be too. In a relaxed setting, ask your child if there are any questions about school. Go ahead and explain what will happen before and after school each day. By discussing what the school day will look like, your child will feel prepared. In all of your conversations, you can show excitement but with a calm reassurance that this year will be a great one.

School is important for learning, making friends and learning social skills. Start early with routines, get involved in your child’s school and keep your cool when your child’s nervous jitters show. You are the most important people in your child’s life. Help make this school year the best ever!



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

## **Healthy Social Behavior Specialist– Sonia Sumner (252–876–1645)**

### Support Coping and Resilience in Children Amidst Covid 19



How can early educators help children work through big emotions in the classroom?

- Communicate openly to children and families about policy and program changes. Everyone is experiencing Covid 19; let's include children in our conversations and encourage them to talk about how they are feeling. Talking about changes helps to reduce anxiety for children.
- Continue to promote wellness by promoting healthy eating habits, physical activity, prioritizing sleep, rest and relaxation, and connecting safely with peers and families.
- Incorporate stress reduction strategies into large and small group opportunities throughout the school day. Introduce mindfulness practices, deep breathing, and increased time outside or with nature.
- Frequently provide children's families with information about mental health support services available in their community.

These and additional resources are available on the Centers for Disease Control website:  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/guidance>

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## **Quality Enhancement Specialist/Professional Development Coordinator – Kelly Shaw**



### Conversations= Development

It may seem silly or “too easy”, but did you know that talking to and having conversations with young children is one of the best ways to enhance their development? This is because conversations can happen everywhere and about any topic. Conversations are usually seen as something that helps with language development. This is true.

However, think about the different types of conversations that you may have. It could be about cooking or gardening or even what happens if you do not stop at a stop sign. Cooking conversations can lead to reading recipes or measuring the foods. Gardening can lead to topics about soil and nutrients or can help children begin thinking about making hypotheses. Talking about rules and stop signs can lead to the development of self-care and safety.

The wonderful thing about conversations is that they can happen anywhere at any time. As an adult, you can make them meaningful and enriching to help with a child's development. The best part? Conversations are free. They help build bonds and relationships. And guess what? Building relationships with adults is also a part of child development.

So when you have a moment, sit down and have a conversation with the children in your care. Keep having the conversations, even if it seems to be at a silly time. You never know what a child may ask and you never know what they may be learning...

# 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](http://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](mailto:venus@cravensmartstart.onmicrosoft.com) and more information will be sent regarding the online training.**

**All trainings listed below are \$8.00 for lending library members and \$10 for non-members unless otherwise stated.**

## Online Zoom Training's in September

\*Creating Outdoor Learning Environments for Infants and Toddlers: It's Not Called a "Playground" Anymore

Presenter: Sandra Arasim

Wednesday, September 8th, 2021

6:30 PM-8:30 PM

\*Beyond Band-Aids

Presenter: Courtney Cartwright

Thursday, September 9th, 2021

6:30 PM-8:30 PM

\*Fire Safety

Presenter: New Bern Fire Department

Tuesday, September 14th, 2021

6:30 PM-8:00 PM

**AT NEW BERN FIRE DEPARTMENT, 1401 NEUSE BLVD**

\*Deep Breathing: A Connection to Calm

Presenter: Sonia Sumner

Thursday, September 16th, 2021

6:30 PM-8:30 PM

\*Helping Children Cope with Crisis & Helping Caregivers Recover: Self-Care

Presenter: Tammy Cullom & Kelly Shaw

Saturday, September 25th, 2021

8:00 AM-1:00 PM

**\*FREE\***

# From the Desk of the Parent/Provider Specialist

## Bianca Salinas



## **September is National Family Meals Month**

Nowadays more and more families are spending less time together; whether it's because children are on their phones or tablets, or they are watching tv. There are many benefits that come from families eating meals together and also just spending more time together in general. Below are some benefits from spending time together and also ideas of things to do together.

### Benefits of Eating Meals Together:

- helps promote positive social skills
- builds stronger family connections
- a good way to show examples of healthy eating, which in turn helps promote healthy eating habits

### Ways to Do Family Meals Together

- let your children help with meal prepping; maybe by helping wash some fruits or vegetables
- let your child(ren) help set the table; they can help put plates or napkins on the table
- let your child(ren) help make the grocery list; they might want to have a specific meal or maybe try a new fruit or vegetable

\*We have a great variety of items in our Lending Library that you can check out to create a family meal together with toy foods and plates. Please call our office at 252-672-5921 and set up an appointment to see what items we have!



## **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

- 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

 

The Essilor Vision Foundation & Garber Church present:

# FAITH IN ACTION

**VISION CLINIC**

**FREE EYE EXAMS & HEALTH CHECKS FOR  
ADULTS & CHILDREN**

**EACH PATIENT MUST PICK UP  
A BRACELET FOR THEMSELVES**  
(Parents may pick up for their children)

**FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 17TH  
FROM 5PM-10PM**  
(DRIVE BY THE MINISTRY CENTER PARKING LOT)

**EXAMS WILL BE GIVEN FROM 8AM-5PM  
ON SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 18TH**

**Garber Church Ministry Center**  
**4202 Country Club Road, New Bern, NC**

Free Eyeglasses Available for Qualifying Patients  
Questions? 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



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**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.