

# **CCR&R Parent/Provider Newsletter**

## **\*Special Edition\***

### **-March 2022-**

Child Care Resource & Referral



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## Saying Goodbye...

It is impossible to believe that 21 years have passed since I began my journey with Craven Smart Start. I am still in awe of the opportunity to collaborate with remarkable folks who have a passion and drive for our precious children. As I reflect on the experiences, I am sure, without a doubt, that it was divine intervention that brought me to this work and Craven Smart Start.

So many wonderful things have happened since December 2000. A few of the special memories that I will carry with me always:

### **Guiding the early childhood workforce from A and AA rated license to Start Rated licensing:**

I chuckle as I recall the resistance after all change is hard. There were times Family Childcare Home Providers would peek out the window to see who was at the door and choose not to answer. I would hear comments such as, "my parents are happy with things the way they are I don't need to go back to school." "I have a Masters in experience." Seasoned childcare center staff shared the same sentiments. And they were right!

### **The Late Bloomer:**

Spending 43 + years in the early childhood field as a Family Child Care Home Provider, Child Care Center Director, Child Care Center Teacher; Craven Community College and University of Mount Olive Early Childhood Education Instructor and lastly... an employee of Craven Smart Start, I understand where they were coming from.

I knew from my own past experiences that support and a balcony person to cheer them on was the key to empowerment. The challenge to seek out ways to help with access to higher education for this underpaid workforce began. Grant opportunities were located through TEACH Scholarships, WAGE\$ Project, and Harold H. Bate Foundation. These resources would help with the expense of registration cost, textbooks, and fees, etc. The ability to provide monetary awards and recognition for goals met along the way provided encouragement for them to keep going... and they did.

It was during that time I made the decision to return to school for a Bachelor of Science Degree in Early Childhood Education. In my way of thinking...if I could lead by example, just maybe, these hardworking professionals would follow. This ignited a desire to earn my Master of Science in Education so I could teach, guide, and lift these determined professionals not only through my work with Craven Smart Start, but in the classrooms as well. I wanted to be their cheerleader in every sense of the word. What an amazing experience; I will treasure it...

### **Building Brighter Futures Conference:**

I think about my own accomplishments and wonder what impact I might leave behind from my work with Craven Smart Start, if any. Bringing to life The Building Brighter Futures Conference (2006) is by far the one thing I am most pleased with. Providing an outlet for those caring for the children an opportunity to gather, learn, grow, and celebrate with each other is priceless...professional development at its best.

There are so many things I would like to say but the most important is... I am so proud of our early childhood workforce, our unsung heroes. As former Governor Hunt used to say, "Remember, you are doing the Lord's work."

### **My wish for you:**

- \*Peace that surpasses understanding
- \*Grace to see you through the challenging times
- \*Joy unimaginable

I want to share with you that after 56 years in the workforce, I have made the decision to retire on April 29, 2022. It is difficult to find the words to say goodbye. Instead, I will choose to say... *"see you around the county."*

Fondly,  
Pat Morrow



## FCCH Provider Paula Jones Retires

Congratulations to Paula Jones, the owner of A Touch of Love Family Child Care Home in New Bern, who recently announced her retirement as a licensed family child care operator. Paula, who opened her child care facility in August 2001, had been working in a factory in New Bern but decided she needed to do “something that she was passionate about”, which in her case was caring for children. Paula, the mother of three, said she not only had her three children but always had a house full of neighborhood children drinking up all the Kool-Aid and eating everything that I could cook and she decided, “If I’m going to do this, I am going to put something into them. So here I am”.

Paula admits that when she opened her family child care home, she was “green behind the ears”, not knowing where to begin, but a call from Smart Start changed all of that. The Smart Start staff introduced themselves and advised her to register with them and, according to Paula, “from there, they have been in my life ever since. Smart Start has been a pillow to rest my head on when things were stressed. This was particularly true when I was going through the Environmental Rating Scale. Smart Start’s CCR&R staff provided me with the knowledge and how to use it to be successful”. After several years of operating her family child care home, Paula was invited to become a member of Craven Smart Start’s Board of Directors. She says she was a little apprehensive at first but decided that she could share her perspective as a child care provider. “I sat on the board, I served and felt comfortable. I was treated just as if was an executive and not a child care provider. It was nice!”

In September 2018, Paula’s home and family child care operation was completely flooded by Hurricane Florence. She had to move out of her home and relocate her child care operation in the home of her widowed sister-in-law who was working two jobs. The state (NCDCE-EE) inspected her sister-in-law’s home and granted her a temporary license to operate there. It took a lot of praying and patience while waiting for the insurance company to come through. “But when everything else in my life seemed as if it was falling apart, my Smart Start family again was right there.” Once her daycare was ready to re-open, Craven Smart Start provided her with learning materials through the Save the Children grant they received to reimburse Craven County child care providers for child care items that were destroyed from the flooding. Also, Craven Smart Start helped to facilitate a financial donation from a charitable organization out of Sandy Hook, New York. The group, who had experienced devastation from Hurricane Sandy years earlier, wanted to help a child care facility in Craven County that received extensive damage from the hurricane and they selected Paula’s family child care home.

As an experienced family child care home provider, Paula has several pieces of advice for anyone who is considering opening an FCCH. “I would tell them that they must have a love for children and be passionate about what it is that they want to do. Secondly, they shouldn’t be afraid to reach out and ask for help. Get in touch with Smart Start, as they will be instrumental in providing you with all necessary enhancements. Be true to yourself and be true to others. It’s a quality that everyone wins with.”

By: Pinkie S. Moore, Community Outreach Coordinator



# Craven Smart Start/CCR&R Updates

## **16th Annual Building Brighter Futures Conference Update**

We regret to inform everyone that the 16th Annual Building Brighter Futures Conference scheduled for Saturday, March 19th will be canceled this year. Unfortunately, we have not had the enrollment that we were hoping for. From speaking with multiple providers, it seems that many participants are looking for a live conference rather than virtual. We are looking forward to a time to be able to host a face-to-face conference again. Please feel free to reach out if you have any questions or concerns.



## **CCR&R Staff Delivers Masks to Child Care Facilities**

Recently, The North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (NCDHHS) sent our office N95 masks for us to distribute out to all our licensed child care facilities for Craven County, as well as the other counties in our Region (Beaufort, Hyde, Pamlico, Tyrrell & Washington counties). Our TA staff and Parent/Provider Specialist went out and delivered the masks. We are very grateful that our child care providers were able to receive these masks, as they are and have been on the front lines during this ongoing pandemic.



# From the Desk of the Parent/Provider Specialist Bianca Salinas



## **St. Patrick's Day is Thursday, March 17th.**

With St Patrick's Day coming up this month, there are many ways to celebrate it with your child(ren). For example, you can wear something green (socks, shirt, pants, etc.), or you can do some activities and crafts that also help with their development. Below are two activities you can do together!

### \*Pom Pom Rainbow

This craft is perfect for practicing fine motor skills and/or recognizing colors and matching skills. You will need a printed-out template of a rainbow (or you can draw one!) and some crayons and/or glue and different colored pom-poms.



### \*St. Patrick's Day Salt Tray

This activity is great for sensory play and also can help with fine motor skills. For this, you will need a big plastic tray, salt, green food coloring, and a plastic ziplock bag. If you want to make some green salt for this salt tray, you can put table salt and some green food coloring into a plastic zipper seal bag; then shake the bag until the salt is evenly colored.



For more fine motor and sensory activities, please visit:

<https://www.growinghandsonkids.com/20-st-patricks-day-activities-for-kids.html>

## **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 speaks Spanish and is available to help Spanish-speaking families in need of child care.



# CCR&R Director Updates- Bonnie Gould



## Donation of Books from a Child In Our Community

This month Craven Smart Start / Child Care Resource & Referral was blessed to receive children's books donated by the Giardino family. The books were donated to us in celebration of their son Anthony's second birthday! For his birthday party this year, the guests brought children's books instead of gifts or toys to Anthony, knowing that these books would be donated to Craven Smart Start. These books will be available for all children who visit Craven Smart Start Lending Library to enjoy!

This was a wonderful gift of Literacy and love given from the heart of a child and his family in honor of his special day! Please stop by our Craven Smart Start office and spend time reading some of these books to your children. Your child will be able to see the pictures of Anthony showing our staff all the wonderful books he was donating for other children to enjoy! We want to thank Mr. and Mrs. Giardino and their son Anthony for such a generous gift of Literacy and Love. Happy Birthday, Anthony!!!

Sincerely,  
Bonnie Gould  
CCR&R Director



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

## **Quality Enhancement Specialist – Courtney Cartwright**



### Emergency Preparedness Plans and First Aid Kits

As we are now settled into our new year, it is a great time to review and update both Emergency Preparedness Plans and First Aid Kits. EPR plans must be reviewed, updated, and signed off on each year. When reviewing your plan, remember to also review it with your staff. The Emergency Preparedness Portal has an area where you sign off on the review for each year. If you are unsure how to do this, or are having trouble with your plan please don't hesitate to contact Courtney Cartwright at [courtney@cravensmartstart.org](mailto:courtney@cravensmartstart.org).

Now is also a good time to update and refill all First Aid Kits in your facility. This should be done as needed, but having a set time when these are checked is a good idea. Create a policy of who will check the First Aid Kits and when will they be checked. Make sure to let the person responsible know what should be in the kit along with how to go about refilling it (where the extra supplies are held) and when it should be checked. Below you will find a list of items that should be in each of your kits.

- Adhesive strip bandages
- Bandage tape
- Eye dressing or pad
- Non-stick gauze
- Rolled flexible or stretch gauze
- Disposable gloves
- Face mask (for rescue breathing)
- Triangle bandages
- **\*\*Emergency Contact Information\*\***

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



Fine motor skills are not just for small muscle control. Working on fine motor skills can also help with hand-eye coordination. Working on fine motor skills begins in infancy. It continues on to help children gain self-care skills, writing skills, using small pieces and so much more... On top of that, developing fine motor skills can be learned in such fun ways!

Fine motor skills go beyond drawing. Fine motor skills can be developed by lacing, holding tools (play dough, shovels, clothespins, etc.). Fine motor skills require strength, control, and dexterity of small muscles.

At home or at school, fine motor skills can be developed with basic household items. Beads or fruit loops can be laced on spaghetti. Pipe cleaners can be pushed into a colander. Holes to lace can be made in various materials. Buttons can be buttoned on a shirt. Games and activities can make fine motor so much fun for the entire group!



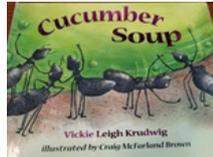
# TA Quick Quality Tips From Craven Smart Start/CCR&R Staff

## **Program Assistant- Venus Miller**



### Fantastic Books for March

**Cucumber Soup**- All the insects in the garden, from ten little black ants down to one tiny flea, get involved in moving a fallen cucumber. Includes a recipe for cucumber soup and factual information about the insects in the story.



**Periwinkle Smith and the Twirly, Whirly Tutu**-Periwinkle Smith loves to jump, twirl, and pirouette, but then the unthinkable happens - she spills paint on her favorite tutu! And who could dance with paint on her tutu? From scaring the spot away to turning her tutu into a kite, children will love the creative ways in which Periwinkle tries first to remove and then to make the best of the stain.



**Abbie Against The Storm**-This fictionalized account of a young girl's triumph over a savage storm as well as her own fears, is based on an actual incident that took place in the winter of 1856. Gorgeously illustrated with powerful oil paintings, young Abbie will inspire readers to face all storms as bravely.



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

### What Did You Learn in School Today?



You know when your child goes to school that math and reading will be taught. You can't imagine a day without math or reading instruction. There are other subjects, such as science and social studies, that are taught, but have you heard about SEL?

SEL stands for Social-Emotional Learning and it is a part of daily instruction. Sometimes it is in direct instruction from the teacher and sometimes it is learned just by being around others. Some children pick up on social and emotional skills simply by being around others. They learn what actions are acceptable in the place they are. Other children do not pick up on the social cues and need to be taught directly.

When your family is at home, there is lots of talking and moving around freely. When your child goes to school, there are rules and people other than family members there. We all act differently at school than in our homes. At school we talk with an "indoor voice" and we must wait our turn to talk. In school, we aren't free to just get up and walk outside. Why do our actions change when one enters a school? It is because we learned the social expectations for being in school.

If the teacher says your child is having trouble with social interactions, talk to your child. You and your child can role-play the situation. Role-playing or acting out what really happened gives your child a chance to think through each part of the situation. Ask your child to act out other ways that the same situation could have been handled. This is a simple but great way to help children understand how social expectations change based on the place that they are.

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



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

### Put those babies on the floor.

There are so many devices, containers, and seemingly comforting items on the market these days it's hard to resist buying them, even knowing that these are not beneficial for infants. In fact, often these swings, bouncy, jumping, hanging, rocking devices are quite dangerous. In some cases, families have lost their babies.

Much more common than the tragedies are the developmental challenges and delays that overuse of containers poses. A container, in an early childhood setting: is any piece of equipment that restricts the movement of a child; places a child in a position that he cannot get into or out of on his own; or places a child in a position where his center of gravity is not in natural alignment.

While each of these devices has its own set of negative outcomes, the overall problem is that when infants and young children are not allowed to move their own bodies in space all areas of development can be negatively impacted. Infants must have enough tummy time, to build core strength which is essential to all gross motor and then fine motor skills. The human body develops from the core out. When infants don't have the opportunity to strengthen their necks and trunks, the development of arms and legs are affected. Similarly, when arms and legs - gross motor - movements are restricted, fine motor development in fingers and toes can be delayed.

You can find information on specific devices at the US Consumer Product Safety Commission website, <https://www.cpsc.gov>.

When a child is in an early childhood education setting in North Carolina, the use of any container is limited to fifteen minutes at a time. Regulations also require that every child is encouraged to and provided the opportunity to participate in tummy time every day.

If you need help with tummy time strategies, at home or at school, please feel free to reach out to me at our office in New Bern, at 252-672-5921 or email [sandra@cravensmartstart.org](mailto:sandra@cravensmartstart.org).



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



**Healthy Social Behavior Specialist– Sonia Sumner (252–876–1645)**  
Building Friendship Skills in the Classroom

Strong social skills are an important part of everyday life and the earlier a child begins to learn these skills, the better. Early in their lives, the children in your classroom will develop friendships with other children of different cultures, lifestyles, and abilities. It's up to you to teach and model kindness and friendship.

**Empathy** is a key ingredient in positive friendships and relationships. It reduces conflict and misunderstandings and leads to helping behavior, kindness, and even greater success in life in general. Like any skill, empathy can be taught and developed in children. Using concrete examples, modeling, social stories, and activities that provide instances of these social skills can be powerful in teaching these skills. There are many ways to embed friendship skills in your daily schedule. It is important for children to be able to recognize the qualities of a good friend. Young children need to learn how a good friend acts and behaves and what is the right and wrong way to treat a friend. Facilitating friendships between children can occur throughout the day when you focus on the opportunities provided by the class schedule and class activities. Examples include: **Circle Time** - Teachers can provide an opportunity for children to "pick a buddy" to dance with to music and movement. Children can also read books about friends and discuss what friendship skills are being displayed by the characters in the books.

**Transitions** - Teachers can ask a child to select a friend to help "clean up" or "line up". Friendship activities for preschoolers are important to their social growth as well as learning how to share and get along with others. Friendship activities for preschoolers are the building blocks of friendships and will strengthen the social skills the children will need throughout their lifetime.

This article came from the February 2022 OH Behave! Newsletter from HSB Specialists. To read the rest of the newsletter or to look at previous ones please visit: [Tuckers NC Nest - LiveBinders Shelf](#)

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**Healthy Social Behavior Specialist– Dr. J. Joshua Byrd, Ph. D.**



Responsive Caregiving

Children learn best when they are engaged in back-and-forth interactions with others. In the early childhood classroom, sometimes we think of learning happening in circle time and during activities, but it is important we understand there are learning opportunities throughout the day. When young children have consistent, responsive teachers who they trust to meet their needs, they are more open to the information we share with them. As adults, we can think about past experiences with our own teachers or work supervisors. You can probably recall how you felt to depend on unresponsive others when you needed help or information. If we think about our experience from the perspective of a preschooler with fewer trusted adults available to them, we quickly realize that qualities of those caregiver-child relationships are of the utmost importance. Strong early relationships build children's resilience, aid in knowledge uptake and memory skills, and language and social-emotional development. Being a responsive caregiver is a big deal, but what does it look like? A responsive caregiver talks to the child a lot and pays attention to what they are interested in and lets the conversation follow the child's lead. Back-and-forth conversation is deeper than simple acknowledgment; it is about asking follow-up questions and relating them to things the child has previously experienced at home or in the classroom. Children are excited to share what is meaningful to them with attentive adults and it validates their feelings when these interactions are caring and consistent. You do not have to respond immediately to a child's every utterance, but it is important to stay consistent in your responses over time.

For more information on responsive caregiving, visit <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/publication/youre-best-teacher-responsive-interactions-young-children>

# 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)



**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 March

\*It's SIDS: Infant/Toddler Safe Sleep and SIDS Reduction in Child Care

Presenter: Sandra Arasim  
Tuesday, March 1st, 2022  
6:30 PM-8:30 PM

\*Early Childhood Trauma: A Teacher's Toolkit

Presenter: Tammy Cullom  
Tuesday, March 8th, 2022  
6:30 PM-8:30 PM

\*Causes of Misbehavior: Why do they act that way?

Presenter: Sonia Sumner  
Thursday, March 10th, 2022  
6:30 PM-8:30 PM

\*Building Brighter Futures Conference

Saturday, March 19th, 2022

**CANCELLED**

\*Sanitation and Disease Prevention

Presenter: Courtney Cartwright  
Tuesday, March 22nd, 2022  
6:30 PM-8:30 PM

\*Supporting Breastfeeding Families: A Guide for Early Care Providers

Presenter: Sandra Arasim  
Tuesday, March 29th, 2022  
6:30 PM-8:30 PM

# Child Care Resource & Referral

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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.