

CRAVEN SMART START NEWS

Craven Smart Start Newsletter

Second Issue FY 2021 2022

A Season of Transition

Greetings and Happy Spring. We hope this finds our friends and supporters getting out of their pandemic pre-occupation and focused on the future, during this season of transition. We have learned first-hand that many community members are “zoomed out” and ready to get back to in-person conferences, meetings and visits. This includes local child care providers who have been requesting technical assistance visits from CCR&R staff, as providers prepare for upcoming state licensing inspections. Likewise, community outreach events, which were non-existent during the pandemic, are now popping up on community calendars and our outreach staff are busy once again in the community, meeting families and sharing information about our services.

For Craven Smart Start, this is very much a season of transition, as we are experiencing a change in leadership. On April 29th, our Executive Director Pat Morrow will be retiring from Craven Smart Start after 21 years of employment with the agency. During these years, Pat has worked as a Parent/Provider Specialist, a Quality Enhancement Coordinator, the Child Care Resource and Referral Director and the Executive Director since 2010. Pat recently share these comments, “Being part of this agency has been humbling and I have been honored to work with Craven Smart Start. I have loved every minute of my career with Craven Smart Start. It has not been just a job, but a journey for me, coming from an early childhood background as a childcare home provider and child care teacher. It has given me an avenue to lead by example and to encourage this hard-working, underpaid workforce to seek professional development by attending college, while working in child care.”

This issue is dedicated to Pat Morrow for her many years of leadership with Craven Smart Start and her service to the child care providers in our county and region and to the families and young children of our community.



Children in the NC Pre-K class at Excel 6 in Havelock learn about human anatomy, using the Bosch STEM materials, during a Raising a Reader activity

Mission of Craven Smart Start:

Building Brighter Futures for Young Children

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Our Executive Director Pat Morrow is hard at work going through books for Reach Out and Read that will go to the Craven County Health Department.

Our Executive Director Pat Morrow Is Retiring

As Pat Morrow retires from Craven Smart Start, she says she has many special memories and program accomplishments during her tenure. Recently, she shared some with us:

- Guiding the early childhood workforce from an A to AA rated license to Star rated licensing in 2000 to a highly educated workforce today.
- Relocating Craven Smart Start’s office from Trent Road to Neuse Boulevard and reorganizing the interior space to make it a colorful kid-friendly environment with lots of learning opportunities and resource and educational materials to check out
- Creating an annual professional early childhood conference for early educators in Craven County.
- Helping Craven Smart Start take on the role of Lead Agency for Region 2 Child Care Resource and Referral for a six-county region
- Overseeing the implementation of the \$200,000 Save the Children grant, enabling Craven Smart Start to assist child care providers who sustained severe damage from Hurricane Florence by replacing educational materials and essential materials that were destroyed
- Pursuing a childcare economic impact study conducted by the East Carolina University Center for Survey Research through a grant from the Harold H. Bate Foundation
- “ Pat has always said “the staff at Craven Smart Start are like my family” and so her work family would like to extend our love, our heartfelt thanks and our very best wishes to Pat in her retirement.

NC Pre-K Registration for 2022– 2023 School Year

Craven County Schools announces the return of the in-person Pre-K Registration. It will be held on Friday, May 6th from 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. at the West New Bern Recreation Center, located at 1225 Pine Tree Drive in New Bern. This is **not** a first-come, first-serve event and children do not need to be present. Parents need to bring their child’s birth certificate and proof of family income for this event.

Families may choose to apply online, by using the online application. The Pre-K application may be accessed using the Student Registration button at the bottom of the page at <https://www.cravenk12.org/Page/18238>. The child’s birth certificate and proof of family income will need to be uploaded.

To be eligible, children must be 4 years old on or before August 31st of the current year and children may have an Individual Education Plan (IEP). For information, visit: <https://www.cravenk12.org/Page/1479>.



NC Pre-K Registration for the 2022-2023 School Year– this year in-person or on-line

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Pinkie Moore –Community
Outreach Coordinator /Newsletter
Writer/Editor



Bianca Salinas and Pinkie Moore shared information about Craven Smart Start services with job seekers at the NC Works Job Fair at the New Bern Convention Center in March

Collaboration Through Community Outreach

Community Outreach is one of the activities funded by Craven Smart Start. The Community Outreach activity not only works to increase the community's awareness and support of Craven Smart Start services, but it also forges alliances in the community to develop the communication and collaboration skills for educators, families, and community members to come together. In addition, Community Outreach facilitates community planning to improve systems and alignment across programs and/or agencies.

Community Outreach Coordinator, Pinkie Moore, represents Craven Smart Start on a number of local non-profits. She also facilitates the Craven Early Learning Network, a collaborative that focuses on local early childhood issues, that she organized in 2016. The group is currently working to re-organize the Local Interagency Coordinating Council (LIACC) with collaborative support from the West New Bern Recreation Center.

Craven Smart Start was recently invited by Abundant Life Community Services to serve as a community partner for the Resource Hub, located in the Greater Duffyfield community. The purpose of the Resource Hub is to provide a centralized location for community partners to more easily identify families in need of intensive support and allow a more efficient environment to work together to stabilize and empower families. Craven Smart Start looks forward to this new opportunity for collaboration in the Duffyfield community.

Children's Observances in April

April is a special month for early childhood programs like Craven Smart Start, as the month has three significant children's observances. April is National Child Abuse Prevention Month; the Month of the Military Child and the Week of the Young Child was observed between April 2nd and April 8th. Craven Smart Start staff has taken part in activities to celebrate these special observances.

For the Week of the Young Child, Craven Smart Start staff painted rocks with the tag #cravensmartstart and hid them in various locations in Craven County, for children to find them. When they are found, parents and children are encouraged to tag us on Facebook. We will be hiding them throughout April, so keep looking!

For Child Abuse Prevention Month, our staff took part in the Pinwheel Parade in Downtown New Bern and provided pinwheels to the New Bern and Havelock Police Departments for their displays.

April has been designated as the Month of the Military Child and Craven Smart Start staff joined other child advocates in our county to recognize the sacrifices that military children make by wearing purple on April 8th for Purple Up Day.

Contact Us

Give us a call for more information or questions about our services and programs.

Craven Smart Start, Inc.
2111F Neuse Boulevard
New Bern, NC 28560

(252) 671-0689 (Mobile)

pmoore@cravensmartstart.org

Visit us on the web at
www.cravensmartstart.org

Craven Smart Start is a 501(c)3. Donations are tax-deductible.

About photos on page 5.

- **Top Left: and Top Right:** Nadia Lowe, Raising A Reader (RAR) reports that the NC Pre-K classrooms that participate in RAR have been sharing and rotating books. Most sites have held their workshop for parents and each child received a free book. Some of the classrooms have been learning about the solar system, while others are sharing books and STEM activities focusing on weather. Children in the NC Pre-K classes at Excel 7 in New Bern that participate in Raising A Reader try out STEM materials provided through the Bosch Community Fund.
- **Bottom Left** Tammy Cullom, CCR&R School-age Specialist, on left, presents Linder Ervin, an administrator with Child Care Network # 77, with N95 masks for staff at Child Care Network. In February, our CCR&R staff delivered 2,820 N95 masks, provided by the NC Department of Health and Human Services, to all of the state licensed child care facilities in Region 2. Many thanks to the NC Department of Health and Human Services for providing the N95 masks.
- **Bottom Right** Savannah Lowe, Craven Smart Start's Literacy Coordinator, and Nikki McCombs, with the Craven County Health Department, recently met with our Executive Director Pat Morrow for an orientation about the Reach Out and Read program, that is funded by Craven Smart Start and operated out of the Health Department in New Bern and the Health Clinic in Havelock. Savannah (on the left) and Nikki are pictured here at Craven Smart Start, after the meeting.

