

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## Local child care center hosts congressional visits

**ASHEBORO, N.C. (January 22, 2020)** — Two US congressional offices experienced early education in Asheboro firsthand by touring The Growing Place Child Care Center, a 5-Star facility, on Friday, January 17.

Keifer Wynn, field representative for US Congressman Mark Walker (US R-6), began his day at the center, arriving shortly after 9 a.m. The center's director, Katherine Davis, hosted the tour along with Randolph Partnership for Children's Executive Director Lisa Hayworth and Director of Early Care and Education Andee Edelson.

Wynn began his tour with an introduction to project work and art displays. Inside classrooms for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers, he observed the influence of Reggio Emilia philosophy, such as natural and soft lighting, hanging plants, a variety of materials for exploration, and multiple ways for parents to interact with and stay informed about classroom activities.

Davis explained the use of sign language in the center, which enables infants and toddlers who haven't developed speech skills to communicate with teachers, caretakers, and parents.

Outside, Wynn toured the toddler and preschool playgrounds, which were both enhanced through the ShapeNC initiative.

ShapeNC is a multi-phase health and wellness initiative in which the Partnership provides support to child care centers to create or enhance outdoor learning environments and incorporate physical activity and fresh, often locally-sourced, foods into the center's plans and programs. Each phase provides support to three cohorts of centers over a three-year period. The Partnership is completing phase three, the last funded phase of the initiative, in the fall of 2020.

"We go outside every day," said Davis. "We tell parents there's never bad weather, only bad clothing. So, dress for the weather!"



*Keifer Wynn, field representative for US Congressman Mark Walker (US R-6), left, and Katherine Davis visit a classroom at The Growing Place Child Care Center.*

Davis pointed out the sensory gardens, mud play, dramatic play areas, and music wall, noting that everything teachers do inside, they can do outside in regards to the curriculum.

“I enjoyed watching the kids play and seeing what they were doing,” Wynn said. “I noticed the level of planning and care that goes into helping a child learn. The work they’re doing is important.”



*US Congressman Ted Budd (US R-13), left, and Katherine Davis observe outdoor play at The Growing Place Child Care Center, with Randolph County Republican Party Chairman Dave Craven, back left, and Randolph Partnership for Children Executive Director Lisa Hayworth close behind.*

Two hours later, the center hosted a second visit, this time for US Congressman Ted Budd (US R-13). Representative Budd was accompanied by Randolph County Republican Party Chairman Dave Craven.

Budd began with the preschool playground, where he had the opportunity to interact with children and observe them learning through physical activity and exploration. Davis explained the ShapeNC influence on the outdoor learning spaces.

“I love the outdoors. Anytime you can get dirt under your nails, it’s good,” Budd said. “It reminds me of when I

was growing up in Winston-Salem.”

He was also able to visit one of the preschool classrooms, where Davis explained project work, introduced him to Blondie and Rose—the class pets—and pointed out examples of Reggio Emilia influence.

Hayworth shared that she enjoyed watching Congressman Budd and Field Representative Keifer react to the high-quality learning environment and the smiling faces of the children at The Growing Place. Hayworth stated, “Seeing happy, engaged, playing children had to have been a highlight of our esteemed visitors’ week. Because 85% of brain growth and development happens in the first five years of life, it was a privilege for us to share information about the impacts of high quality early learning environments on brain architecture and children’s future abilities and successes.

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## PRESS RELEASE

**About the Randolph Partnership for Children:** Since 1999, the Randolph Partnership for Children (RPC), a non-profit organization, has been the community's lead organization for young children and their families. RPC brings together diverse agencies, individuals, organizations and communities to ensure all children enter school ready to succeed. RPC is a United Way agency. For more information, visit [www.randolphkids.org](http://www.randolphkids.org).

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