



Sidewalk Chalk

Monthly e-newsletter

OUR VISION

All children in Randolph County enter kindergarten healthy & ready to succeed in school and life.

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"Children are apt to live up to what you believe of them."

—Lady Bird Johnson

Asheboro City Board of Education Recognizes Child Care Providers

Last Thursday, Asheboro City Board of Education recognized several area child care centers as their Community Partners for the month of February. The Board applauded child care teachers and staff for the tremendous care they shown preschoolers and school-age children, especially since the onset of the COVID-19 global pandemic.

"At the height of the pandemic, it was our child care workers who ensured frontline families could serve our communities. They have learned how to operate hotspots, support teachers in remote learning, and have taught themselves how to navigate a number of learning management systems.



Additionally, they have been the ones who have tirelessly cleaned their classrooms every day, welcomed anxious students, provided social and emotional support, fed hungry kids, and worked to accommodate different schedules from schools all across the county," said Leigh Anna Marbert, Public Information Officer for Asheboro City Schools. "Next to health care workers, child care teachers and staff are the real MVPs," she added.

Asheboro City Schools the thanked the following child care centers for their dedication and partnership:

Building Blocks Christian Academy
Creative Kids Preschool and Childcare Center
Flower's Daycare
Harmony Place
Precious Memories Preschool
Shepherd's Way Day School
Teddy Bear Childcare Center
The Children's Center of Asheboro
The Growing Place
The Kids of Hope, LLC.
Totally Awesome Kids Preschool, LLC.
Trogdon's Day Care
Beacon Child Development Center
Noah's Ark Preschool

Congratulations to all our amazing child care providers for never missing a beat throughout the pandemic as you provide high quality care for children!

Gift of Reading



When the pandemic made it impossible for us to walk along parade routes during the holidays and give out free books to children in our annual Gift of Reading campaign, we decided to pivot and adapt. Books are essential and early literacy is critical. So we've partnered with 9 agencies that serve Asheboro and Randolph County to facilitate a modified Gift of Reading campaign in February!

For the Asheboro agencies, books were purchased thanks to the generosity of

Right Photo: Captain J. Hanson, Officer G. Gonzalez, Officer T. Fisher, Lieutenant E. Howell, and Assistant Chief R. Brown of the Asheboro Police Department.

Starting at Zero Screening Events



STARTING AT ZERO is a new documentary that explores the power of investing in high-quality early childhood education so that all children and families have the opportunity to attain the American Dream. The pandemic thrust the essential and critical nature of high quality, affordable early care and education into the national spotlight.

Through special licensing for February provided by the NC Partnership for

Children, we planned three free screenings of the documentary. Each session will last about an hour. The documentary is 42 minutes and there will be guided discussion immediately following.

Each screening event was planned with a specific audience in mind, however, you are welcome to join us for any one that fits your schedule.

On Monday, February 22 at noon, we will present a Virtual Lunch & Learn Documentary Screening for Policymakers.

INFORMATION & REGISTRATION FOR FEB. 22 (Noon)

On Thursday, February 25 at noon, we will present a Virtual Lunch & Learn Documentary Screening for Business Owners & Leaders.

INFORMATION & REGISTRATION FOR FEB. 25 (Noon)

On Thursday, February 25 at 6:30 PM, we will present a Virtual Documentary Screening for Early Educators & Faith Leaders.

INFORMATION & REGISTRATION FOR FEB. 25 (6:30 PM)

Parenting Education Awareness Month



Amanda Ratliff, Parents as Teachers Parent Educator



Alex Chavez, Parents as Teachers Parent Educator

NC Governor Roy Cooper proclaimed February as **Parenting Education Awareness Month**. The proclamation recognizes those who work to support parents so they can give their children a strong foundation for a healthy, successful future. We'd like to introduce you to two parent educators who implement our Parents as Teachers program through the Randolph County

Public Library. Meet **Amanda Ratliff** and **Alex Chevez**. They answered a few questions so you can get to know them:

Why are you a parent educator?

Amanda: I'm a parent educator because I absolutely adore serving families and seeing them be supported and strengthened in their parenting as well as strengthening their relationship with their children. It is a complete honor to me to be able to serve the families and be invited into not just their homes, but also into their stories and parenting journey. It is a long-term process, but seeing the growth in the families as well as the overall success of the children we serve is the reason why I do what I do. Every family and caregiver needs encouragement to know what they're doing well and needs that "coach on the sidelines" to cheer them on through the challenges of parenting and providing care to our youngest children.

Alex: I have a strong belief that parents are the most important and influential teachers for their children. My goal is to partner with parents to promote learning in their home, while being respectful of their family dynamics and advocating for passing their culture, beliefs, and traditions onto their children. When parents have the necessary resources, tools, and knowledge, they can help their children reach their full potential by giving them the skills they need to be ready to succeed in school.

What do you love most about the work?

Amanda: What I love most about the work is watching my families become empowered to be their child's first and most important teacher! I also am given the gift of watching their children grow up and become not only successful academically, but also successful in pursuing their dreams! I've been in the field serving families now for almost 20 years and one of the biggest gifts in my life is watching the families see the results of their hard work and sacrifices when their children excel academically! I also love seeing the children we serve grow up and have brighter futures as a result of what their families did in their early years to lay that solid foundation for later success! I love what each family I serve teaches me because they are often my teachers as well! And I always definitely love helping teach families how to play and read with their child! I get to play with play doh during work! Haha! How many folks can say that?!?!

Alex: My favorite part of my job is seeing the parents play with and read to their children. It's rewarding to get to help parents in their journey, especially by promoting early reading, the importance of play, and showing them how babies learn through play. Guiding them as they reach personal and/or family goals that improve their family well-being is also a very rewarding part of my job. I love reflecting back on each family's strengths and brainstorming with parents to develop or achieve a goal. Overall, empowering the families to help their children and themselves reach their full potential while ensuring parents feel supported in their journey is something I really enjoy.

How do you think it's impacting Randolph County?

Amanda: I think it's impacting Randolph County by serving families who are otherwise very isolated and feel that they are alone in their parenting journey. Families are hopefully stronger as a result of this as well as children are being identified early on who are in need of services to help improve their

development and address any developmental concerns. Many children have been identified through the program who otherwise would never have received the services they need for their entry into the school system. They would have fallen behind very quickly had they not been identified prior to starting school. Families also know they have someone they can count on when they feel overwhelmed and frustrated, which directly impacts the rates of child abuse and neglect in the county. We work diligently in ensuring that our families have all of their needs met and do not feel stressed out. Also, more families know now about community resources that can help their families. Finally, more families are socially connected to other families in their community who share in the same parenting challenges and frustrations so the families know they are not alone.

Alex: Parents are encouraged and empowered to take an active role in their children's education. Because of this, they are more likely to become active participants once their kids enter school. Parents are teaching their children the skills that are needed for school success not only academically, but also in the social and emotional development of their children. Children are identified and referred for services if a developmental concern arises and they receive those services before they enter school. All of these things contribute to better preparation and greater success in their formal education.

Is there anything you want prospective parents to know about the Parents as Teachers program?

Amanda: I just want the families to know that we are here to help strengthen their relationship with their young child and to build awareness of the PAT program. Sometimes the families are leery of us and what we are about, which is very normal. I would be as well! We're entering the family homes (prior to the pandemic) and that gives us a unique opportunity to build long-term relationships with each family we have the honor of serving. We are here to encourage and just cheer you on through your parenting! We do challenge you to look at things in a different way and help you do things at home to prepare your child for school. We all get to do activities together as a family and who wouldn't want to do that?!?!?

Currently we are providing virtual home visits on Zoom as well as virtual family group meetings on Zoom. Families who enroll can look forward to having someone to talk to and to encourage them, if they can endure being on Zoom with me! Sometimes just listening is enough and we work hard on listening to the stories of the families we serve so that they can know they're not alone. Families can expect to have a listening ear as well as suggestions to help them look at things in a different way and supplies/materials provided to them to help facilitate activities at home to help their child's learning and development. Families are more isolated now during the pandemic than ever before, so we want to make sure each family knows they have someone they can count on as they forge ahead!

Alex: I'd like to also use this as a way to recruit families. How are you providing services during the pandemic? What can parents who enroll look forward to in regards to support, even if it is virtual?

Given this time of uncertainty, many current families have expressed the benefit of having someone to share the observations they have regarding their children thanks to the monthly family connect groups we host. They have been able to see the importance of self-care and they appreciate opportunities to talk to other parents who may have similar experiences or concerns. We offer

a place for parents to share ideas and also enjoy a social connection, even if it is virtual.

Virtual home visits provide the same components as visits we conducted in the home, such as promoting parent-child interaction, delivering activity materials to the homes, providing books for parents to increase early reading in the home, connection to resources in the community, child screening and referral for services if needed, parenting skills assessment, and goal-setting.

[LEARN MORE ABOUT PARENTS AS TEACHERS](#)

Read Across America

In celebration of Dr. Seuss' birthday, March 2 is **Read Across America** Day. Extending the celebration, Penguin House has created [Hats Off to Reading](#), an extended event from February 27 through March 6. Whether you pick up a Dr. Seuss book or another favorite (we have some excellent choices in our Little Free Library on Sunset Ave. in Asheboro), think of these Seussical events as a reminder to take a "reading time out" **every day** to open a book and enjoy story time with your little ones.



Valentine Deliveries

During the week of February 8, the Partnership's Child Care Services staff put together Valentine surprises for Randolph County's child care providers—essential workers and heroes through the pandemic. Deliveries were made in time for the holiday weekend.

Each month, our Child Care Services staff brainstorms ways to thank our child care providers and lift their spirits through these trying times. If you'd like to partner with them to provide surprise and donate money toward this effort, please contact Andee Edelson at aedelson@randolphkids.org.



Penciled In

- **Wed., Feb. 17, 11 AM:** Family Engagement & Leadership Coalition
- **Thurs., Feb. 18, 1 PM:** Sustainability Committee
- **Thurs., Feb. 18, 4 PM:** Randolph ChAMPS
- **Tues., March 2:** Read Across America Day
- **Tues., March 2, 1 PM:** Grant Review Committee
- **Mon., March 15, 1 PM:** NC Pre-K Committee
- **Tues., March 16, 8:15 AM:** Board of Directors
- **Wed., March 17, 11 AM:** Family Engagement & Leadership Coalition



[Visit our Calendar](#)

*Help us put kids first in
Randolph County!*

Donate

new & gently used books
new infant blankets
diapers

Shop

We're connected with [Amazon Smile](#), so when you shop and select Randolph County Partnership for Children, you're helping to raise money for literacy programs, parent support, early childhood professional development and NC Pre-K right here in Randolph County!



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