



Community Connection

December 2018

Message from a Parent

For the last year, I have been on Policy Council and the Executive Policy Council as the Washington State Association Alternate for Head Start. That is only one part of why I am so grateful for Head Start/EHS/ECEAP. My two children have gone through ECEAP and Head Start over the past two years and these programs have meant everything to my family.

First, with my oldest going through ECEAP, it not only taught her vital skills but caught a slight cognitive delay. Due to that early intervention, she is now on track with her peers and is a successful first grader.

With my youngest daughter, she went through Teacher Crystal's integrated Head Start class with students from the Longview School District. In that class she not only became Kindergarten ready, she also learned empathy and support. She was taught very strong social emotional skills.

These programs and the staff within them are essential not only to the children and families in the program but our entire community as well. Because of the support and encouragement from my daughters' teachers and the various administrators that I have worked with the past two years, I am working towards my Associate in Arts and Sciences degree in Early Childhood Education. Without this support and encouragement and the early intervention for my oldest, my children and family would not be as successful as we are today.

I cannot state my gratitude enough. I am beyond grateful for what these programs have done for my family and many others as well!

Thank you,
Trisha Reynolds



We Wish You Well!

Director, Suzanne Boursaw

It is with mixed emotion that I say "goodbye" to Lower Columbia College Head Start/EHS/ECEAP. I began my career with Head Start in 1990 as an Assistant Teacher and 28 years later leaving as Director. I have taken a position out of state and moving out of the area. It was a very difficult decision but am looking forward to new adventures. I will miss this community and have loved my years spent here. I will treasure every one of them. The staff and families we serve are incredible. Cowlitz County is a wonderful community with many resources. I wish you all well!



Health Specialist, Carleen Wolgamott



I am very grateful to have been a part of the LCC Head Start/EHS/ECEAP family over these past 26 years. Working for an organization supporting and working with young children and their families has been a dream come true for me. I wish continued success to all those carrying on the important mission of Head Start and give my heartfelt thanks to my co-workers and the staff of the community agencies Head Start partners with.

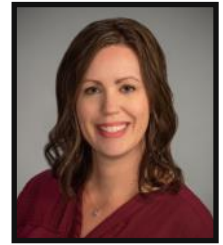
- Lower Columbia College
President
Chris Bailey
- Vice-President of Instruction
Brendan Glaser
- Program Director
Mindy Leasure
- Policy Council
Executive Officers
 - President
Josh Carter
 - Vice-President
Jessica Solinger
 - Secretary
Katelyn Blaylock
 - Treasurer
Cassie Buxton
- Head Start State
Representative
Marissa McClain
- ECEAP State Representative
Constance Cnota
- Early Head Start State
Representative
Domenica Tello
- Contributing Writers
Head Start/EHS/ECEAP Staff
- Contributing Editor
Karla Spromberg
- Head Start/EHS/ECEAP Office
1720—20th Avenue
PO Box 3010
Longview, WA 98632
Phone: 360-442-2800
Fax: 360-442-2819
Facebook:
facebook.com/LCC-Head-Start



Message from Director, Mindy Leasure

Hello,

I am honored to be able to serve our Lower Columbia College Head Start/EHS/ECEAP children, families, staff, and community partners as Director. Since 2007, I have served as an Area Manager and Assistant Director. This high quality program provides early learning and comprehensive services to the most vulnerable young children, families, and pregnant mothers in our community. My passion for early learning began 18 years ago when I began home visiting kindergarten children and their parents while at Youth & Family Link and has grown over my time here at Head Start.



I am a graduate of Kelso High School, University of Washington (B.A. in Psychology), and Warner Pacific College (M.S. in Management and Organizational Leadership). In addition, I have earned many credits in LCC's own Early Childhood Education Department. The development of young children will always be our communities' wisest investment. I look forward to working with you to sustain and grow learning opportunities for young children and families in our communities.

Welcome to our New Health Specialist, Lily Terry

Lily is a Los Angeles native who graduated from California State University, Long Beach where she obtained a B.S. in Health Science with a focus in Public Health as well as a B.A. in Human Development. Lily has worked in Early Intervention providing developmental therapy for special needs children, as a Health Specialist and a Family Services Specialist for Head Start, an Elementary School Teacher, and most recently for the state as a case manager for adult wards of the state living with physical/mental disabilities.



Lily has lived in Illinois, Hawaii, Nevada and is a brand new resident of Washington. Some of her interests include traveling, kayaking, snowboarding, hiking, reading and volunteering. Lily is passionate about animal welfare as well as homeless and veteran causes. She truly enjoys working in the education setting and is looking forward to what life will bring in Southwest Washington.



Policy Council Elects 2018-19 Executive Committee Officers

The Head Start Policy Council has elected their ten officers and representatives for the 2018-19 program year. Representatives from each of the 27 classrooms are elected out of the 528 parents to serve on the Policy Council. Parent, Josh Carter, was elected President and Jessica Solinger as Vice-President. Serving as Secretary is Katelyn Blaylock and Cassie Buxton as Treasurer. The officers and Executive Committee for the Head Start Policy Council provide leadership for meetings, represent the programs to the community, and make policy recommendations when needed. Each program also elects parents to the Washington State Head Start Association (WSA). They serve as advocates for young children and families across the state. Representing the LCC Head Start parents is Marissa McClain. ECEAP parents will be represented by Constance Cnota. Domenica Tello will be representing Early Head Start.



The Policy Council also elects six community representatives who can add their experience and knowledge to the decision making with parents. Serving this year is Valerie Fatcher, Columbia Wellness; Cowlitz County Sheriff Mark Nelson; Wallace School Principal Ray Cattin; Steven Taylor, Kelso City Manager; Broadway Learning Center Principal Megan Shea-Bates, and Miriam Swartout from PeaceHealth. We appreciate our Community Representatives and the time they dedicate to our program leadership.

During the year, the Policy Council is responsible for approving grant applications, hiring, criteria for the selection of children, strategic planning, and community assessment.

United Way Day of Caring

United Way's Day of Caring was held on September 12, 2018. We were so fortunate to have teams volunteering at our centers! Thank you to Altrusa, Community Home Health and Hospice, Kelso Longview Chamber, and Servpro. These teams helped complete projects at our Teen, Memorial Park and LCC West Centers. The Altrusa group made hundreds of valuable activities for many of our children to enjoy. We appreciate your time and support of our program!



Conscious Discipline

In October, parents joined staff for dinner and had an exciting night of exploring parenting education philosophy of Conscious Discipline, with one of its National Speakers, Jessica Flowers.

Parents and staff were engaged, taking notes and asking questions during the evening. They talked about their children, the joys of parenting, the struggles with behaviors, and learned other techniques to employ in the future.

During the evening, we learned about the different brain states, and how children are responding to adults when they are in each state:

- The brain stem houses the **Survival State** which represents the base level of Brain State and asks the question, "Am I Safe?" The only way to sooth the Survival Sate is through the creation of Safety.
- The Limbic system houses the **Emotional State** and represents mid-level functionality and asks the question, "Am I loved?" The only way to sooth an upset emotional state is through connection.
- The Prefrontal lobes house the **Executive State** which, according to Conscious Discipline represents the optimal state for problem-solving and learning. This Brain State asks the question, "What can I learn from this?"

As a school family, Jessica trained staff on how to make connections with children using Conscious Discipline. Bus Drivers talked about how they could use Conscious Discipline and smooth connections to greet children as they boarded the bus and facilitate a transition for families to school each day. Office staff talked about how they could use Conscious Discipline techniques to greet children when they come into the office and all staff felt renewed by the sense of positive intent we held for one another.

Reference:

Bailey, Becky. (n.d.) Conscious Discipline. <https://consciousdiscipline.com/>



New Barnes Center Coming Soon!

Our new Head Start Performance Standards, which were released in November 2016, had new requirements of classrooms converting from a 3 1/2 hour day to a 6-hour day model. As of September 2017, we converted three of our 14 Head Start classrooms to the 6-hour model. We currently have 6-hour classrooms located at LCC, Barnes and Memorial Park. We will be adding more as time goes on.

We are finding this model to be very beneficial for families and it is our most requested. We are working to secure funds to transition more classrooms to this model.

We received funding for a new modular building which we are planning to build at Barnes Elementary School. It will be adjacent to our current facility. The modular unit has been ordered and permits have been submitted to the city of Kelso. Our hope is to break ground after the new year.



Cowlitz County Early Learning Conference



We had a fantastic “Getting to Know You—Building Relationships with Children and Families” Infant-Kindergarten Conference on October 13, 2018. This year we had over 180 Early Learning professionals come together. Ray Soriano was our keynote speaker discussing “Making Connections”.

Workshops included Engaging Families, Conscious Discipline, Science, Literacy, Trauma Informed Care, Celebration of Boys, DNA is not Destiny, Observations/ Assessments, Classroom Environments, and MERIT/Understanding WAC Codes.

Participants were able to receive STARS hours as well as Clock hours for attending this event.

The Early Learning Conference is hosted in partnership with Longview School District, Kelso School District, LCC Early Learning Center, Progress Center, Parents Place, and ESD 112. This annual event is a wonderful opportunity for Early Learning professionals in our community!

Early Head Start Teen Center

It is not a popular topic to discuss, but one that is happening regardless. Teenage pregnancy in Cowlitz County contributes to a decline in graduation rates. Our Early Head Start program, in partnership with the Longview School District, provides services to Teen parents to ensure education is continuing for both parent and child.



LCC Early Head Start program provides full-day **QUALITY** care for infants-age 3 as the parent completes their GED or High School diploma. Support and resources are also provided to ensure parents are connected and will be more likely to graduate. For more information contact 360-442-2800 or 360-575-7148 . Applications can also be completed online at <https://lowercolumbia.edu/head-start/index.php>.

Serving Children with Disabilities

At least 10% of Head Start’s enrollment must be made up of children with disabilities. Our program serves a large number of children with disabilities which range from speech and language impairment, developmental delays, social emotional problems, learning disabilities, and autism. These services are provided in partnership with the local school districts and Progress Center. Head Start serves all children providing individually tailored services to help all children succeed.’

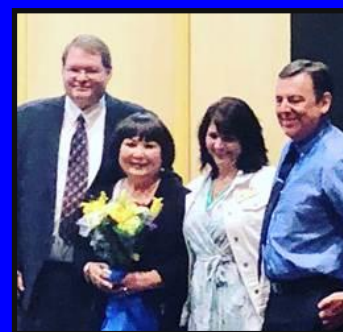
Head Start works!

National research shows sizeable short and long term outcomes of high quality pre-school, but what about our own program? ECEAP and Head Start serves our state’s most at-risk children—families below 100% of the federal poverty line, homeless, children with disabilities, and/or involvement in the child welfare system. Head Start/ECEAP staff work with children in the classroom to get them school-ready and work with parents to ensure the child’s health, strengthen parenting skills, and help families to do what is needed to move out of poverty and support their child’s health and education. The results are impressive, and they last.

<http://www.wsipp.wa.gov/Reports/14-01-22011>

Teachers Celebrate 40 and 35 years with Head Start/ECEAP

Teacher Anh Nguyen celebrates 40 years with LCC Head Start/ ECEAP! Teacher Anh truly exemplifies the Head Start/ ECEAP commitment—making a difference in the lives of **THOUSANDS** of children and families in our community.



Teacher Pam Smith celebrates 35 years with Head Start/ ECEAP! We congratulate Teacher Pam on her upcoming retirement in June! The volume of children and families she has positively impacted in our community is truly commendable.

