

EARLY CHILDHOOD NETWORK NEWS

for Community Members, Partners, and Families

2024 Spring Edition

VERMILION PARISH
EARLY CHILDHOOD
network

PROVIDING CARE AND EDUCATION FOR VERMILION'S FUTURE

From the Supervisor: Lola Vallaire-Thomas

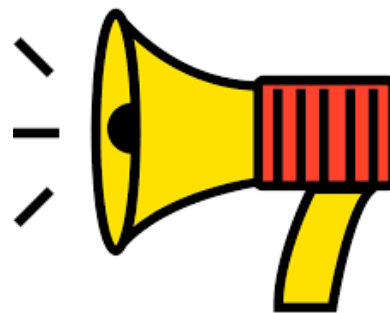
We have been busy with our Coordinated Enrollment for the 2024-2025 school year. This year our network held the community informational fair at St. Theresa Hall in Abbeville. In addition, we provided enrollment support in the elementary schools across the parish. We received positive feedback about the events and had a great turnout for both the parent support meetings and enrollment appointments. As we move forward with working through processing the applications, we are looking to placing students in classrooms and preparing families to begin enrolling for the childcare assistance program, CCAP B3 for the upcoming school year.

Lola Vallaire-Thomas
Vermilion Parish Ready Start Network
Early Childhood Supervisor

PreK Updates-Delia Girouard

We are currently working to process all Public School PreK applications. Any application with missing documents as of April 29th will not be placed on a roster. Placement notifications will be

emailed to families prior to May 15th. Make sure to check both your inbox and SPAM folder. The late application window for the remaining PreK seats will open May 1st. During the late application window, the early childhood office focus shifts to other tasks and duties. This will delay processing times of applications to 7-14 business days for processing. Make sure you keep a current email address that does not have a full inbox in order to receive notifications in a timely manner. While families are waiting, they can review the skills to prepare your child for PreK. This list was created by our PreK teachers and includes the skills that will help each child have a successful transition from home or daycare to public schools.



We are looking forward to having your child with us next year! Here are some skills that you can work on over the summer to help your child be more prepared for PreK.

SOCIAL SKILLS

- How to wait and take turns
- How to share and compromise
- How to listen and follow 2 step directions (Ex. First take off your jacket, then put it on a hanger)
- How to patiently wait their turn to speak

SELF HELP SKILLS

- How to un-velcro/velcro shoes independently
- How to open and close containers (specific ones they will be using)
- How to pinch and tear packages (ex. Ketchup)
- How to put a straw into a juice pouch
- How to put on a jacket
- How to zip and snap clothing

PERSONAL CARE SKILLS

- How to use the toilet and toilet paper
- How to pump soap
- How to wash and dry hands properly
- How to wipe and clean themselves in the bathroom

LANGUAGE SKILLS

- Talk to your child to build vocabulary
- Make them ask for what they need specifically (ex. Can I please have a glass of water?)
- Let them solve problems when appropriate. Ask for solutions.

COPING SKILLS

- Discuss emotions and how they are feeling
- Develop strategies to help deal with specific emotions, such as being scared or sad
- Limit daily use of screen time
- Work on self-control

CCAP-B3 Updates-Michelle Hunt

In 23-24, we provided child care assistance for 235 children! Per directives from the LDOE, we stopped processing CCAP B3 applications for the current school year on April 26th, 2024. In the next few weeks be on the lookout for more information about the 24-25 CCAP B3 program.

Our 23-24 audit results came back with no findings! HUGE thank you to all site directors for their assistance with enrollments!

1st time ever- Vermilion Parish Early Childhood Network's Billboard Advertising!



We are proud of our network's billboards. We currently have 4 billboards located in Abbeville, Erath, and Maurice.

Director Spotlights January-April

DIRECTOR SPOTLIGHT

SARAH THIBODEAUX OWNER/DIRECTOR OF BRIGHT BEGINNINGS LEARNING CENTER



Tell us about yourself:

I am the Owner and Director of Bright Beginnings Learning Center on Charity St. in Abbeville. I was born and raised in Abbeville. I graduated from UL with a Bachelor's Degree in Child and Family Studies. I am married to my wonderful husband, Rosco and we have 2 beautiful girls, Denim (8) and Paisley (4). I mostly eat, sleep, breathe all things BBLC :) but when I get the chance to relax, I really enjoy traveling and spending time outdoors with my family!

DIRECTOR SPOTLIGHT

What inspired you to open a child care facility?

I LOVE all things early childhood! I have always been super interested in child development and wanted to offer a safe learning environment to Vermilion Parish. I feel like Abbeville has so much potential and I love being a part of our community.

How long have you owned your business? 12 years

What age groups and how many sections of each do you currently offer at your child care site?

BBLC has 6 classrooms: Infants, Tweens, Waddlers, Toddlers, Tikes, and Prek

Any future hopes/dreams for your child care site?

My hope for the future is continued growth for my team. That we may continuously reach higher levels of expectations with the same heart and dedication, year after year.

Bright Beginnings
LEARNING CENTER
Reaching For A Brighter Future!

192 Charity Street, Abbeville, LA
937-993-2323



DIRECTOR SPOTLIGHT

Samantha January

**OWNER/DIRECTOR OF SAM'S KIDS SAFARI
PRESCHOOL & AFTER CARE**



Tell us about yourself:

I am originally from Delcambre, but have called Abbeville home for over 30 years. I am married to Kenneth January Sr. and together we have 5 children. We are certified foster parents for Louisiana. Last year we adopted our now 3 year old, who we had been fostering since birth. Although my career and love for children keep me very busy, I look forward to spending quality time with my family as much as I can. In my free time I love to camp, read, and travel to new places.

How long have you owned your business?

18 years

What inspired you to open a childcare facility?

I always had a love for children as far as I can remember. I was always drawn to activities that were geared towards children. Over the years, I have coached, mentored, volunteered, hosted foreign exchange students, fostered, and taught young children. In 2006, I decided to leave the corporate world behind and open my own in-home childcare center. After 7 years in my home, the need for childcare in my area was overwhelming and I could not take in any more children. With support from my current parents as well as parents in the community, I decided to open a childcare facility. It's definitely been an adventure but I wouldn't change it.

What age groups and how many sections of each do you currently offer at your child care site?

At our center we currently have 3 infant rooms, 4 toddler rooms, 2 three year old rooms, 1 pre-k4 room, & 1 afterschool room

Any future hopes/dreams for your child care site?

For the future I look forward to us continuing to be a positive beacon in the community for our most vulnerable children and families. We are proud to provide quality childcare services for our parents so that they can pursue their dreams and careers. We also plan to make our new center more functional for our staff, students, and parents by adding more parking, and an SKS Family Center.



DIRECTOR SPOTLIGHT



MRS. PHYLLIS JOHNSON

OWNER/DIRECTOR

A+ & A+ TOO DAYCARE AND LEARNING CENTER

Tell us a little bit about yourself:

Born and raised in Maurice. Graduate of North Vermilion HS. Graduated from USL. Married to Eric Johnson (33 yrs). Mother of 3 young men and grandmother of 4.

What inspired you to open a child care facility?

My sister and her husband were expecting their 1st child and was searching for a childcare facility close to home. My siblings and I held a meeting and decided it was time for the Village of Maurice to have a childcare center. A+ Daycare & Learning Center was established in 2003. In 2006, we built A+ Too which is 20 feet away from A+ Daycare.

How long have you owned your business?

20 Years

What age groups and how many sections of each do you currently offer at your child care site?

A+ Daycare:

1 Infant, 5 Toddlers and 1 Pre-K 3

A+ Too:

2 Infants, 1 Toddler and 1 Pre-K 4

Before/Afterschool Section in each center



Director Spotlight

Mrs. Holly Trahan



Tell us about yourself!

I am the owner/director of Kiddie Land Learning Center. I was born in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, but my parents moved to Louisiana in 1982. I graduated from Erath High School in 1993 and attended Nicholls State University in Early Childhood. I married my high school sweetheart, Blaine in 1996 and we will celebrate our 28th anniversary in June. I enjoy spending time with my family and traveling as I am always ready for an adventure!!

How long have you owned your business?

Kiddie Land has been in operation for 42 years. I have been the owner of Kiddie Land/Next Generation for 9 years.

What inspired you to open a child care facility?

My parents, Kathy & Wayne Smith opened Kiddie Land in August of 1982. I have literally been in early childhood all my life. My parents retired in 2015 and with my husband, Blaine we took over Kiddie Land & Next Generation . It is an honor & privilege to serve the great people of Vermilion Parish and for entrusting us with your most prized possession.

What age groups and how many sections of each do you currently offer at your child care site?

Infant: 2 classrooms; Toddler: 3 classrooms; PreK 3 & 4: 2 classrooms.

Next Generation has PreK 4&5 & after schoolers

Any future hopes/dreams for your child care site?

I am truly thankful for God's guidance & direction as the field of Early Childhood has changed in the last 30 years. My prayer is for our centers to continue grow and meet the needs of our community. It is so rewarding to see a child in our care excel and become lifelong learners.

Childcare Site Upcoming Dates

Little Scholars

May 21st- Graduation

June 3rd-July 26th- Summer Camp- Includes Outdoor Games, Water Days, Dress Up Days, Field Trips, Culinary Days, DIY Science Experiment Days

L'il Bucks and Does

May 2nd- Spring Pictures

May 6th-10th- Teacher's Appreciation Week

May 10th - Muffins with mom

May 24th-Pre-K Graduation

June 3rd - First Day of Summer Camp

June 12th Kona Ice

June 17th Doughnuts with Dad

June 25th- Teddy Bear Mobile

KiddieLand Learning Center/Next Generation

May 15th- Pre-k Graduation

May- Our theme will be "Creepy Crawly Creatures." We will have fun with math, science & hands on projects. We will be making Mother's Day projects.

June: "Sailing into Summer"

July: "Traveling." We will have fun talking our favorite places to travel with Show & Tell and many hands on learning projects.

A+ & A+ TOO Learning Center

May 6th -10th Caregiver/Teacher Appreciation Week

May 10th- Muffins for Mom

May 17th- Daycare Closed due to Caregiver/Teacher In-Service

May 27th-Daycare closed for Memorial Day

May 28- July 31st Summer Camp

Mommy's Helping Hands Too, Inc.

June- Enrollment Fun Day

Country Bears

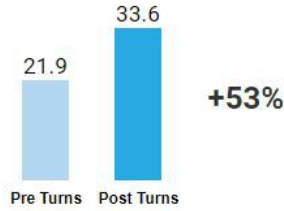
May 17th- Fun Day (games, petting zoo, snow cones and BBQ burgers)

May 22nd- Graduation

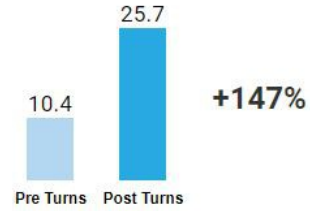
LENA GROW

Child Equity

LENA Grow is designed to encourage more equitable talk environments. Two segments of children measure this impact:



Children who started out experiencing **less talk than their peers in the same classroom** (in the bottom third) had an average increase of **+11.7 turns per hour**.



Children who started out experiencing **less talk than the national median of 15 turns per hour** had an average increase of **+15.3 turns per hour**.

Teachers

At the end of a 5-week sequence, teachers complete a survey reporting on the impact of the LENA Grow program.



Recommend LENA Grow to other teachers
(n=13)



Now feel **more confident** in teaching abilities
(n=13)



Increased overall **job satisfaction**
(n=13)



Increased **communication with families**
(n=13)



Saw changes in **children's language development**
(n=13)

LENA START

Our first LENA Start family group graduated on May 6th. All families received \$1000 for meeting program requirements. The group averaged a growth change of +22% in conversational turns. Families that answered the course evaluation strongly agree that all families should participate in the LENA Start family program.



Family Talk: Shared Reading

Shared Reading is a great time to support language skills and build vocabulary!

- Storytelling is important to reading, too. Look at pictures or photographs and tell stories about your own family, pets, or community. Ask your child to fill in details.



Infant

Choose baby-friendly books with bright and bold or high-contrast illustrations. These are easier for your child to see, and they may hold her interest longer.

Pay attention to how your baby reacts during reading time. If he isn't enjoying the story, try another book or try reading another time.

Toddler

Read wordless books. Encourage your child to just look at the pictures, make up a story, or talk about what they see in the illustrations.

- "What happens next? Who is this character?"

Take turns holding the book and flipping pages. Respond to your child when she points or reacts to the story.

- "I see the cat! She is wearing a polka dot bow. What do you think the cat is going to do?"

Preschool

Make reading part of your daily routine! Read together with your child, but also encourage him to "read" on his own. Ask questions such as:

- "What do you notice?"
- "Tell me about this picture..."

Ask your child to sort favorite stories into beginning, middle, and end.

- "Tell me about this story — what happened at the beginning? How did it end?"

Advisory Council- New Member Alert!!



We would like to extend a warm welcome to our Advisory Council's newest member, Mrs. Annette Victor.

Annette Harrison-Victor is a graduate from the University of Louisiana @Lafayette, earning a bachelor's degree in general studies with a concentration in Behavioral Sciences. Annette also attended South University obtaining her master's degree in leadership. She also received her associate degree in early childhood education from South Louisiana Community College.

Annette has worked for Lafayette Parish School System where she served as Parent Resource Liaison for the Title 1 program. She later worked for Head Start where she served as a Teacher Associate then was promoted to Center Manager, However, she then received employment through United Way of Acadiana as a Family Service Worker for eleven months where she was then promoted to Center Director where she worked as Center Director for ten years. Annette was promoted to Director of Programming in 2021. Working with children and families is her passion and she strives to be the best advocate for them.

Ultimately, Annette would like to further her education in Leadership with her doctorate in Educational Leadership within the next five years. Annette is passionate about furthering her education and strives to assist others in achieving their own personal goals.

Her hobbies are spending time with her family and shopping. Annette's greatest accomplishments are her three daughters, who are her best friends. Annette is affiliated with both Vermilion and Lafayette parish school systems and serves as a CLASS observer in both parishes. She also sits

on both Vermilion and Lafayette Early Childhood Advisory Boards hoping to make a difference in early childhood education.

Annette Harrison-Victor is a resident of Lafayette, Louisiana. She is the oldest of two children. She is married to her husband of over thirty years and has a set of twin daughters and a younger daughter.

www.vermilionchildhoodnetwork.com

Vermilion Early Childhood Upcoming Dates

May

May 1st- Vermilion Childhood Network Meeting

May 27- Memorial Day - Office Closed

May 28th-30th- Teacher Leader Summit

June

June 5th- Vermilion Childhood Network Meeting

June 19th- Juneteenth- Office Closed

[Check us out on Facebook!](#)



Vermilion Parish Early Childhood Network

Vermilion is using Smore to create beautiful newsletters

