

Early Childhood Network News

for Community Members, Childcare Partners, and Families

Fall 2024 Edition

✦ Our Fall Edition includes:

1. In case you missed it...
2. Curriculum and Professional Learning Updates
3. Director Spotlights
4. Upcoming Events and Deadlines
5. Information for Families

In case you missed it...

Vermilion Baby Bundle has arrived!

August 15, 2024- Abbeville, Louisiana: The Vermilion Early Childhood Network has announced the Vermilion Baby Bundle is officially available to families in Vermilion Parish. This project is funded through grant dollars provided by the Louisiana Department of Education to improve child wellness and support approaches to learning.

The bundle is packaged in a diaper bag and includes:

- infant and child friendly books to promote literacy,
- a child safe swaddle to promote safe sleeping,

- baby blanket and knit cap provided by Steps to Heaven
- infant toy and teething ring to inspire curiosity and promote problem solving,
- durable plastic document folder for the child's birth certificate and other vital records,
- informational pamphlets and flyers on: developmental milestones, quality childcare and early learning centers, Abbeville General Hospital services, and Early Steps services for children falling behind on developmental milestones,
- toddler sized T-shirt,
- and a custom mother's bracelet set.

The Vermilion Baby Bundle will be available through Abbeville General Hospital as an incentive for expectant mothers who complete the hospital's educational class at the halfway mark through their pregnancy. Expectant mothers can also complete an educational class with the Vermilion Women's Resource Center to receive a bundle.

The Vermilion Early Childhood Network is encouraging families to post pictures with their bundle and tag the network. Follow and like the Vermilion Early Childhood Network's social media page at <https://www.facebook.com/VPECN>. Learn more about the bundle at <https://www.vermilionchildhoodnetwork.com/resources>. Interested families can also contact Abbeville General Hospital at 337-893-5466 or the Vermilion Women's Resource Center at 337-283-0400 for more information.



The Vermilion Early Childhood Network has partnered with Abbeville General Hospital to offer the Vermilion Baby Bundle as an incentive for expectant mothers who complete the hospital's educational class at the halfway mark through their pregnancy. Expectant mothers can also complete an educational class to get a bundle from the Vermilion Women's Resource Center.



**Abbeville General
Hospital**



**Vermilion Women's
Resource Center**



Vermilion Baby Bundle

New Addition to the Bundle!

The non-profit, *Steps to Heaven*, has generously donated a baby blanket and knit cap for EVERY Vermilion Baby Bundle! We want to thank this organization for providing these additional items for the bundles. Learn more below about the importance of these items for infants.

Knit Caps

Newborns are tiny and have difficulty regulating their body temperatures since the head is a significant source of heat retention or heat loss. By covering the top of an infant's head with a lightweight cap or beanie, hospital nurses help prevent sudden drops in the baby's body temperature. This keeps the baby healthy and comfortable. Additionally, infants in the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) might need to wear hats with constant supervision to keep their body temperature warm.

Comfort Blankets

Studies have shown that babies who have a comfort blanket are more likely to feel a sense of security and attachment to their caregiver. This attachment is important for a baby's emotional development and can have an impact on their ability to form healthy relationships later in life. Studies have also shown that babies who have a comfort object are more likely to adapt to new environments and situations, and are more likely to be able to self-soothe when they are upset or anxious. This is because the object provides them with a sense of familiarity and comfort, which helps to reduce stress and anxiety.



VERMILION BABY BUNDLE UPDATE

Steps to Heaven has graciously donated infant blankets and knit caps for each Vermilion Baby Bundle! We appreciate this wonderful non-profit organization for their generous contribution to this bundle!



LEARN MORE AT: VERMILIONCHILDHOODNETWORK.COM/RESOURCES

Take a Tour of the Vermilion Baby Bundle!

Baby Bundle Contents Video



Abbeville General Health Fair

Early Childhood staff participated in the Abbeville General Health Fair on October 8th. Staff were able to provide participants information about developmental milestones and care and education



of young children aged birth to five years old. The turnout for the event was great and we are looking forward to participating in future events with Abbeville General!

VPSS College and Career Fair

Staff from the Vermilion Early Childhood Network, Mrs. Tiffany Comeaux Simon from UWA Early Head Start, and Owner/Director, Sarah Thibodeaux of Bright Beginnings Learning Center participated in the VPSS College and Career Fair on October 9th at Kaplan High School. The team was able to give information to prospective early learning educators working in childcare centers or public school PreK.



Curriculum and Professional Learning Updates

VPSS District Professional Learning

This year, PreK teachers will participate in four half day Professional Learning opportunities over the course of the 2024-2025 school year.

- September 25th
- January 29th
- February 19th
- March 26th

The focus of these meetings will be Creative Curriculum, Early Childhood Objectives for Development and Learning, CLASS Evaluations, and ASQ3 Developmental Screenings. We are looking forward to some amazing learning opportunities this year!

Childcare Education Institute Professional Learning Platform



Family childcare owners, childcare directors, and CCR&R personnel were given login credentials to access professional learning content for Frog Street curriculum. The link to the login page will be added to the VPECN Resource Hub and also accessed [here](#).

2024 LDOE Early Childhood Conference: Shaping Louisiana's Future

On Saturday, October 5th, our early childhood staff members, Michelle Hunt and Delia Girouard, will be presenting two sessions: "How to Elevate our Childcare Business in a Digital World", and "How to Recruit and Retain Childcare Staff Using Digital Resources." To support our childcare partners who are unable to attend, we have linked the presentations below.

How to Elevate Your Childcare Business in a Digital World

How to Recruit and Retain Your Childcare Staff Using Digital Resources

Director Spotlights

Spotlight Director

Little Scholars Learning Center




About Me

I have been married to my wonderful husband, Chad Turner, for 25 years. We have 3 amazing children. I love God, my family, and my community. I have been in education for over 20 years. I have a degree in Child and Family Studies, Elementary Education, and a masters in Curriculum and Instruction. I serve on the Advisory Board for SLCC and Vermilion Parish Early Childhood Network. I volunteer as the director of the Vermilion Women's Resource Center. I enjoy yoga, reading, and shopping.

What inspired you to open a child care center?


My love for children and education inspired me to open a high quality child care center.





How long have you owned your business?

8 years



What age groups and how many sections of each do you currently offer?

1 infant classroom
3 toddler classrooms
2 PreK classrooms



Any future hopes/dreams for your childcare site?

My dreams for Little Scholars is to continue to provide high quality care and education for generations to come.



September, 2024



September Director Spotlight

TONIA BOLDEN

ABOUT TONIA!

I am a licensed Family Childcare home/ owner of More To Love Learning Center LLC, where all of our littles call me Nonie. I have been married to Jeremiah Bolden for 29 years. We have 3 children, Trevail, Samorae and Javen, a bonus Harlow (Ladybug) and a Granddaughter Capri. I love all aspects of being creative. Painting and drawing are my favorite. At 5 years old, my talent was recognized by the then principal and published in a magazine, which stained my heart with sparkles.

HOW LONG HAVE YOU WORKED IN CHILDCARE?

I have worked in childcare for about 32 years. The first 5 years, I worked from home as a childcare provider. I later branched out as a kindergarten teacher at a small private christian school, where I taught for 27 years before covid. Unfortunately, during this time lots of families were forced to homeschool their children due to school closures. I then chose to return home and keep the doors open for anyone needing childcare services.

Part Two!
September
Director Spotlight
TONIA BOLDEN

WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO WORK IN CHILDCARE?

I truly believe childcare found me. Raised in a single parent home, my mom Josephine had a full load of raising her 4 children but always took out the time to mentor more. I was privileged to obtain my first real job as a Junior Youth leader at a housing project in Port Arthur, Tx. There I realized hope was the start of greatness. A little time, a few kind words and a smile was all it took to break barriers.

WHAT AGE GROUPS DO YOU CURRENTLY OFFER?

MTLLC service children ages 6 weeks to 13 years (Before & after school) We currently offer summer and holiday care for all ages. We accept B-3 funding, CCAP, and private pay.

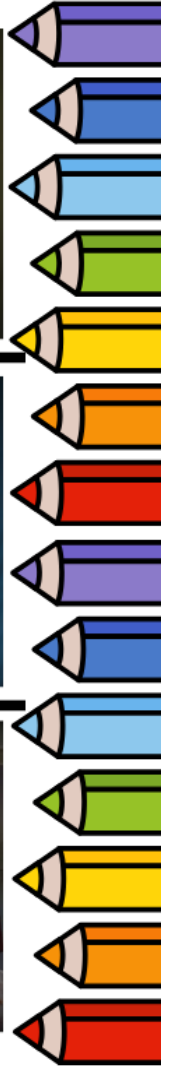
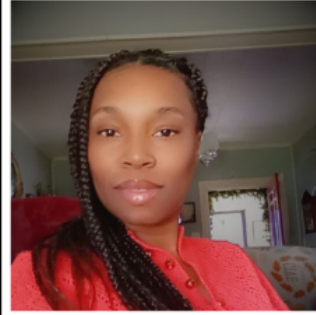
ANY FUTURE HOPES/DREAMS FOR YOUR SITE?

My hope for More To Love is that we will continue to serve our community with pride as we grow. I want our center to be that place that excites, nurtures growing minds and warms the hearts of all who enter our doors. More To Love is our excuse to get you here. So come on over, we'll be waiting on YOU!

Meet our Early Childhood Leaders!

Learn more about our Childcare Partners and Head Start Directors! Click [here](#) to visit our partners page on our website.

Meet our Childcare Leaders!



Meet our Head Start Leaders!



Early Childhood Leader of the Year Finalist, Mrs. Tiffany Comeaux-Simon!

We are so proud of Mrs. Tiffany Comeaux-Simon, who was invited to speak to the Vermilion Early Childhood Network partners during the September Network Meeting. She shared how the nomination and finalist status has positively impacted her professional career and shared lessons learned as a finalist for the 2024 Early Childhood Leader of the Year. Thank you for your inspiring words to future participants of this great recognition program!

2025 EARLY CHILDHOOD LEADER OF THE YEAR FINALISTS



Ashley Beal
East Baton Rouge Parish



Tiffany Comeaux
Vermillion Parish



Michelle Queen
Rapides Parish



Ava Hingle
Iberville Parish



Join our Network!

Vermilion Early Childhood Network Partners



*Upcoming Events and Deadlines for
Childcare Partners*

Vermilion Early Childhood Advisory Council

Our Vermilion Early Childhood Advisory Council members have been selected for the 2024-2025 school year. At the final meeting to close out last school year, the council voted and approved the calendar of meeting dates. The council will meet in the Early Childhood office at 4:30 on the second Thursday of every other month beginning in September. The meeting dates are as follows:

- September 12th- *rescheduled to September 19th due to Hurricane Francine*
- November 14th
- January 16th
- March 13th
- May 8th



SANDRA BROUSSARD



FELICIA BUSHNELL



ANGELA GAYNEAUX

VERMILION EARLY CHILDHOOD ADVISORY COUNCIL



ANNETTE VICTOR



LENITA TURNER



MELISSA GUIDRY

LDOE Upcoming Webinars

NEW: Office Hours for New Directors

The LDOE team conducts webinars on various topics related to early childhood quality and improving the administrative and operational functions of child care sites. Through engaging sessions and monthly guest speakers, the office hours are designed to support directors seeking professional development training to facilitate effective ECE leadership development.

This month's topic is "An Introduction to the Tulane Mental Health Consultation Services (T-MHCS) Program." Participants will learn the purpose and methods of Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation (ECMHC), including promoting healthy development, supporting caregivers in fostering this development, and addressing challenging behaviors or mental health concerns of young children.

Office Hours for New Directors

Click [HERE](#) for webinar link!

Meeting ID: 922 9857 8944

When?

Friday, Oct 25, 2024, 12:00 PM

NEW: Early Childhood Provider Update Webinar

The LDOE hosts monthly webinars for early childhood providers. These webinars include essential reminders and updates for all provider types. Providers can access the upcoming November Provider Update Webinar using the information below:

Event Information

Provider Update Webinar

Click [HERE](#) for webinar link!

Meeting ID: 915 3298 2014

Passcode: 519100

When?

Thursday, Nov 7, 2024, 01:00 PM

Information for Families



Vermilion Parish
Special Education Department

CHILD FIND SERVICES

If you live in Vermilion Parish and you suspect your child, ages 3-5, may have a disability, contact the Early Childhood Child Find Coordinator, Mrs. Deanne Binion.



[Learn More](#)



337-898-5721



vpsb.net/page/special-education





earlySteps.

Louisiana's early intervention system

EarlySteps provides services to families with infants & toddlers aged birth to three (36 months) who have a medical condition likely to result in a developmental delay, or who have developmental delays.

REGIONAL COORDINATOR

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COMMUNITY OUTREACH SPECIALIST

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LENA-Early Talk Matters!!!

LENA Start classes coming this FALL!

Make sure you like and follow our Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/VPECN/>) for announcements regarding the upcoming LENA Start family engagement program! We had great feedback from families regarding last year's program and are excited to enroll new families this FALL!!!



LENA Start

LENA Start is an evidence-based community program for groups of families that uses regular feedback from LENA technology to help increase interactive talk between adult caregivers and young children...

🌐 lena.org

Your child's brain needs talk!



The research is clear, and it's reassuring: Talk builds babies' brains, but it's not something you have to do nonstop.

Make time for talk

Try to find 25-minute blocks during the day when you can focus on talking with your child.



Talk about what you're doing and thinking. Turn daily routines and activities into opportunities for talk.

Avoid too much screen time when your child isn't interacting with anyone, or use TV time as an opportunity to talk about what's happening in the story they're watching.



Build more back-and-forth

Double down: each time you get one back-and-forth exchange with your child, try to make it two!



Tune in and respond to what they look at, do, and say. Notice what your child is interested in and engage with them on that topic.

Avoid interrupting or appearing disinterested when your child tries to talk back to you or to get your attention.



LENA[®]

Early talk shapes a child's life. LENA shapes early talk.

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Talking About Emotions

Language and interactions are key to **noticing**, **expressing**, and **managing** feelings and emotions, and are an important part of developing social-emotional skills.

Infants

are **noticing** how everything makes them feel.



- Respond to their emotions and feelings.
- Talk about what you are feeling.
- Model appropriate responses to emotions.

Toddlers

are beginning to **understand** and **express** their feelings and emotions.

- Identify and label emotions for you and them.
- Validate their feelings.
- Supply descriptive words to help children solve challenges and resolve conflict.



Preschoolers

are learning to **manage** their feelings and emotions.




- Model healthy ways to cope with strong feelings and emotions.
- Support peer interactions.
- Regularly practice vocabulary and calming strategies.

Download more resources at:

[LENA.org/resources](https://lena.org/resources)

LENA[®]

For more information, contact:
303-441-9085 | info@lena.org | www.LENA.org
 @LENAEarlyTalk

v.20240716

Did you know we have resources for families?

Learning Games and Activities

Visit our resources page to learn more!



<https://www.vermilionchildhoodnetwork.com/resources>

What are Developmental Milestones?

Milestones Matter for Families!



Help your child grow and thrive

Download CDC's free Milestone Tracker app



Learn more at cdc.gov/MilestoneTracker



CDC's Milestone Tracker Mobile App

Download CDC's free Milestone Tracker app to complete a milestone checklist for your child. Available for iOS and Android in English and Spanish.

cdc.gov

Concerned about your Child's Development? Click here!



Early Steps | La Dept. of Health

The Louisiana Department of Health protects and promotes health and ensures access to medical, preventive and rehabilitative services for all citizens of the State of Louisiana.

ldh.la.gov

Baby Brain: Growth and Development

PHYSICAL

LANGUAGE



EMOTIONAL

THINKING

VERMILION PARISH
EARLY CHILDHOOD
network

PROVIDING CARE AND EDUCATION FOR VERMILION'S FUTURE

Like our newsletter?

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Vermilion Early Childhood Network

<https://www.vermilionchildhoodnetwork.com/>

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