



JANUARY 2026

HCPC CONNECTIONS

HARNETT COUNTY PARTNERSHIP FOR CHILDREN



HELLO, HARNETT COUNTY FAMILIES - HAPPY 2026! ❄️

As we welcome a brand-new year, we're excited to kick off 2026 with cozy connections, playful learning, and plenty of winter wonder. The Harnett County Partnership for Children has a month full of activities designed to help your little ones learn, grow, and thrive—even on the chilliest days!

This January, our **Ready to Grow Playgroups** are back and bustling in Cameron, Erwin, and Lillington, offering hands-on exploration, early learning fun, and a warm space to make new friends. Parents looking for community and support can join our **Circle of Parents** groups in Erwin and Lillington, where conversation, encouragement, and shared experiences take center stage.

We're also dancing our way through winter with **Zumbini**, blending music, movement, and bonding time for caregivers and children. And don't miss one of our most magical events of the season—our **Winter Wonderland Sensory Play Day**! From icy textures to snowy surprises, this special day is sure to delight little explorers of all ages.

So grab your mittens and your biggest winter smiles—January is about to be snow much fun! From musical wiggles to frosty sensory adventures, we're ready to laugh, explore, and make cozy memories together. Let's jump into the joy of winter and start the year with a flurry of fun!



HCPC MISSION:

Our mission is to improve the quality of life for young children and families in Harnett County through community based programs focusing on health, education, and family support.

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@HarnettCountyPartnershipForChildren



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on YouTube @harnettcountypartnershipfo9443



LOCATIONS

Cameron RTG Group:

107 Carletta Cagle Dr, Cameron

Erwin COP & RTG Groups (YMCA):

494 Antioch Church Rd, Dunn

Lillington COP & RTG Groups:

170 Pine State St, Lillington

let it snow



HCPC STAFF:

Tara Fish, Executive Director

Janine Bogwicz, Community Outreach Coordinator

Jordan Ellis, Family Support Specialist

Debbie Fann, Fiscal Specialist

Ashleigh Goss, Early Childhood Program Specialist

Whitney Heath, Family Support Specialist

Melanie Jacobson, Early Childhood Program Specialist

Carmen Martell, Lead Family Support Specialist

Kim Polinski, NC Pre-K Program Support Specialist

Lynda Turlington, Early Childhood Program Coordinator

Lena West, NC Pre-K Program Support Specialist

Katie Willoughby, Family Support Specialist



170 Pine State St, Lillington, NC 27546 / 910-893-2344 / www.harnettsmartstart.org



-  - Cameron Ready to Grow Playgroup (RTG)
-  - Erwin Ready to Grow Playgroup (RTG)
-  - Lillington Ready to Grow Playgroup (RTG)
-  - REGISTRATION REQUIRED
-  - Open Play  - Zumbini
-  - Circle of Parents (COP)

SUN. MONDAY TUESDAY WEDNESDAY THURSDAY FRIDAY SAT.

				1 HCPC CLOSED		2 NO GROUPS	3
4 NO GROUPS	5 NO GROUPS	6 NO GROUPS	7 NO GROUPS 	8 NO GROUPS	9 NO GROUPS	10	
11	12 9am - 10:30am: RTG w/ Zumbini (Lillington)  11am - 12:30pm: RTG w/ Zumbini (Lillington)  10am - 11:30am: RTG (Erwin)	13 9:30am- COP (Lillington) 1:30pm – 3pm: RTG (YMCA) 	14 9:30am- COP (Erwin) 10am - 11:30am: RTG (Lillington)	15 9:30am- COP (Lillington)	16 9am - 10:30am: Open Play (Lillington) 11am - 12:30pm: Open Play (Lillington)	17	
18 HCPC CLOSED  	19	20 9:30am- COP (Lillington) 1:30pm – 3pm: GOTG (YMCA)	21 9:30am- COP (Erwin) 10am - 11:30am: RTG (Lillington) 	22 9:30am- COP (Lillington)	23 9am - 10:30am: Winter Wonderland Sensory Play Day (Lillington)  11am - 12:30pm: Winter Wonderland Sensory Play Day (Lillington) 	24	
25 9am - 10:30am: RTG (Lillington) 11am - 12:30pm: RTG (Lillington) 10am - 11:30am: RTG (Erwin)	26 9:30am- COP (Lillington) 1:30pm – 3pm GOTG (YMCA) 	27 9:30am- COP (Erwin) 10am - 11:30am: RTG (Lillington)	28 9:30am- COP (Lillington)	29	30 9am - 10:30am: Open Play (Lillington) 11am - 12:30pm: Open Play (Lillington)	31 	





FAMILY SPOTLIGHT: BOOZER FAMILY

What are some of the most valuable things you've learned from other parents/caregivers in Circle of Parents (COP)?

"One of the most valuable lessons I have learned from people at COP are that all children and all families are different and have different needs, and that is ok and that it is ok to ask for help. Children and parents all learn and grow at their own pace, and that is ok too! Being able to ask a peer how they would handle a situation with their community or their child has been such a great resource to me."

How does Circle of Parents help you cope with the challenges of parenting?

"The people I have met through COP have become some of my closest friends. I can ask them any question I may have about parenting. I can also lean on them as pillars of support when I am having a hard day, need help, or just want to "vent" frustrations and celebrate my victories. I don't have to pretend to be anyone but myself with the individuals I have met here. Having a community of people who truly accept who I am, and who my children are is truly special. Going to COP has helped me cope with some medical challenges with my children and find them a community where they are understood and supported in their learning and growth."

Has being a part of Circle of Parents helped you feel less isolated as a parent? How so?

"Yes, COP has shown me that there are other people out there going through similar challenges as me. I started COP feeling a bit lost as a parent. My world felt crazy and hectic and was only getting more so as I became pregnant for the 3rd time in 4 years. COP gave me a safe place to relax and confide in my peers about how I felt. I often told other parents that COP was my "me time" in the chaos. I was able to come in, trust that my children would be engaged and cared for and lean on my peers to help guide me through any questions or concerns I had about my children."



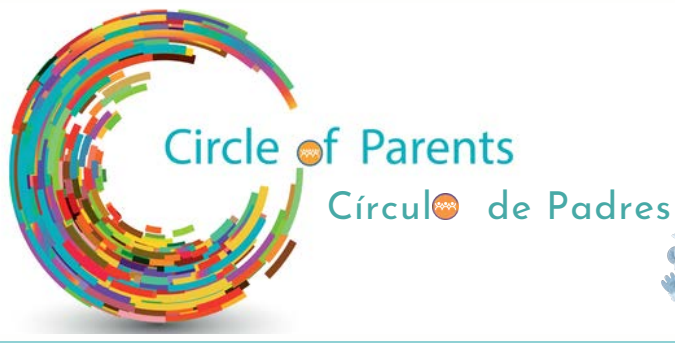
What would you say to someone who's considering joining a parent support group?

"DO IT! You will find a caring support group who you can talk to about anything and everything. Even if you don't want to talk, you can listen and learn from others. Parenting is hard. It's easier with support around you. I have met two of my best friends through the group. While our children range in age and gender, and we vary in age, we chat daily about our struggles and our victories, and it is great to have found them."

What do your children enjoy most about the Kid's Circle portion of Circle of Parents and Ready to Grow Playgroups?

"My oldest son likes that there are always new toys to play with and enjoys playing with the facilitators. Watching him let his guard down and be authentically himself in that space is so much fun. My daughter likes to go to playgroup with her family and friends to play. She likes to read books with her friends and dance with Ms. Jordan, Mrs. Katie and Ms. Whitney. My youngest can't speak for himself, but I think he enjoys hanging out and playing with the facilitators as well. He has the opportunity to observe children his own age, explore the surroundings, and play with people besides his two older siblings."





GROW ON THE GO

PLAY, LEARN, AND GROW TOGETHER

Parenting is joyful, but can also present difficulties and challenges.

Es una dicha ser padres, pero también presenta dificultades y desafíos.

Feel empowered, supported, and strengthened as you attend weekly Circle of Parents meetings. Join other Harnett County parents/caregivers at our Circle of Parents group.

Siéntase empoderado, apoyado y fortalecido mientras asiste a las reuniones semanales del Círculo de Padres. Únase a otros padres/proveedor de cuidados del Condado de Harnett en nuestro grupo de Círculo de Padres.

circle of parents®
Sharing Ideas. Sharing Support.



- TUESDAYS & THURSDAYS @ 9:30AM - 11AM
LOCATION: 170 PINE STATE ST. LILLINGTON
- WEDNESDAYS @ 9:30AM - 11AM
LOCATION: 494 ANTIOCH CHURCH RD. ERWIN

To register, email familysupport@harnettsmartstart.org or call 910-893-2344.

Para registrarse, envíe un correo electrónico a familysupport@harnettsmartstart.org o llame al 910-893-2344.



Grow on the Go is a mobile play unit offering play and learn opportunities for Harnett County families with children between the ages of birth to five years old.

Registration is not required - simply find us at our designated location for Pop Up & Play fun!

JANUARY SCHEDULE:

The Grow on the Go Playmobile is getting a much needed rest during the month of December. Stay tuned for January dates and locations!

- January 20th / 1:30 - 3pm
@Cameron YMCA
- January 27th / 1:30pm - 3pm
@ Cameron YMCA



GRUPO DE JUEGOS LISTO PARA CRECER

TEMA DEL MES:

Letras del Abecedario



LOS CUIDADORES APRENDERÁN:

Que un paso en el aprendizaje de la lectura es aprender que las letras forman palabras escritas y representan sonidos en las palabras habladas.



MENSAJES CLAVE:

1. Antes de aprender a leer, nuestros niños necesitan aprender sobre las letras del alfabeto y esas letras:

- Tienen nombres
- Verse diferentes entre sí cuando se escriben

2. Podemos ayudar a los niños a familiarizarse con las letras mediante la repetición y usando actividades agradables, como:

- Leer libros del alfabeto que muestren la letra y que ayuden a los niños a practicar escuchar y decir el sonido que produce esa letra.



LIBROS RECOMENDADOS:

- Millie Waits For the Mail, by Alexander Steffensmeier
- ABC for You and Me, by Margaret Girnis
- Eating the Alphabet, by Lois Ehlert
- Tomorrow's Alphabet, by George Shannon

READY TO GROW PLAYGROUP

THEME OF THE MONTH:

Letters of the Alphabet



CAREGIVERS WILL LEARN:

- That one step in learning to read is learning that letters make up written words and represent sounds in spoken words.

KEY MESSAGES:

1. Before they learn to read, our children need to learn about the letters of the alphabet and that those letters:

- Have names
- Look different from each other when they are written



2. We can help children become familiar with letters through repetition and by using enjoyable activities such as:

- Reading alphabet books that show the letter and that help children practice hearing and saying the sound that letter makes.

BOOK RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Millie Waits For the Mail, by Alexander Steffensmeier
- ABC for You and Me, by Margaret Girnis
- Eating the Alphabet, by Lois Ehlert
- Tomorrow's Alphabet, by George Shannon





READY TO GROW

GRUPO DE JUEGOS LISTO PARA CRECER

Ready to Grow Playgroup facilitates developmentally appropriate playgroups for children and caregivers who reside in Harnett County. Eligible children must be between the ages of birth through 5 years old. Playgroup facilitators use Kaleidoscope Play & Learn Curriculum to provide hands on activities that focus on early literacy and social emotional competency. Caregivers learn about the purpose of play and will connect with other parents during group time. Children and caregivers will participate in coordinated group activities to prepare the children for success in school.



El Grupo de Juegos Listo para Crecer tendrán sus reuniones en persona en Lillington. Las familias del condado de Harnett, que tengan niños recién nacidos hasta 5 años de edad, son bienvenidos a participar. Las familias tendrán la oportunidad de aprender y jugar con otras familias en persona.

Cameron Playgroup: Tuesdays @ 1:30pm - 3pm

Cameron Grupo: Todos los martes de 1:30pm - 3pm

Erwin Playgroup: Mondays @ 10am - 11:30am

Erwin Grupo: Todos los lunes a las 10am - 11:30am

Lillington Playgroup: Mondays @ 9am - 10:30am OR 11am - 12:30pm; Wednesdays @ 10am - 11:30am

Lillington Grupo: Lunes de 9am a 10:30 o de 11am a 12:30pm; miércoles de 10am a 11:30pm



zümbini®

with Ms. Katie!

- **January 12th / 9am**
170 Pine State St, Lillington
- **January 12th / 11am**
170 Pine State St, Lillington

Registration
NOT Required!



Winter Wonderland

SENSORY PLAY PARTY

Friday, January 23rd

9am - 10:30am or 11am - 12:30

170 Pine State St, Lillington, NC 27546



DECEMBER MEMORIES



THERE'S
SNOWBODY
LIKE!
YOU!

