



MAY 2026

# HCPC CONNECTIONS

HARNETT COUNTY PARTNERSHIP FOR CHILDREN



## HELLO FRIENDS!

Welcome to the May edition of HCPC Connections, where a *sprinkle of fairy-dust* brings meaningful moments to families across Harnett County!

This month, we're celebrating growth, connection, and the enchanted wonder of early childhood, where every giggle and milestone feels like a bit of magic. From the joyful laughter at our Ready to Grow Playgroups to the supportive conversations in Circle of Parents, our community continues to shine when families come together. Be on the lookout for the Grow on the Go Playmobile as it tinkers its way through Dunn this May, bringing playful learning and pixie-sized adventures to neighborhoods near you. And don't miss the rhythm and movement of our Zumbini sessions, where music creates a fun, fantasy-filled space for little ones and caregivers to connect.

Add a little extra magic to your child's world by registering for Dolly Parton's Imagination Library—details can be found on the back cover of this newsletter. It's a simple way to fill your home with stories, imagination, and wonder each month.

We're also excited to celebrate the incredible moms and caregivers in our community with a special Mother's Day event created just for you!

There's something truly enchanted about this time of year, and we're so glad you're a part of the magic at HCPC!



## 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.

# Follow Us on Social Media



GET CONNECTED FOR THE LATEST HCPC NEWS & UPDATES



 on Facebook  
@HarnettCountyPartnershipForChildren

 on Instagram @hcopartnershipforchildren\_

 on TikTok @HarnettPartnershipForChildren

 on YouTube @harnettcountypartnershipfo9443

## LOCATIONS

### Cameron RTG Group:

107 Carletta Cagle Dr, Cameron

### Dunn Public Library:

110 E Divine St, Dunn

### Erwin COP & RTG Groups:

494 Antioch Church Rd, Dunn

### Lillington COP & RTG Groups:

170 Pine State St, Lillington



## 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





- Cameron Ready to Grow Playgroup (RTG)
- Erwin Ready to Grow Playgroup (RTG)
- Lillington Ready to Grow Playgroup (RTG)
- Grow on the Go (GOTG)
- REGISTRATION REQUIRED
- Open Play
- Circle of Parents (COP)



**SUN.      MONDAY      TUESDAY      WEDNESDAY      THURSDAY      FRIDAY      SAT.**

|                                  |  |  |  |  |  |    |
|----------------------------------|--|--|--|--|--|----|
|                                  |  | 1  | 2  |  |  |    |
| 3                                | 4  | 5  | 6  | 7  | 8  | 9  |
|                                  | <p><b>9am - 10:30am:</b><br/>RTG (Lillington)</p> <p><b>11am - 12:30pm:</b><br/>RTG (Lillington)</p> <p><b>10am - 11:30am:</b><br/>RTG (Erwin)</p> | <p><b>9:30am – 11am:</b><br/>COP (Lillington)</p> <p><b>1:30pm – 3pm:</b><br/>RTG (Cameron)</p>  | <p><b>9:30am – 11am:</b><br/>COP (Erwin)</p> <p><b>10am – 11:30am</b><br/>RTG (Lillington)</p>             | <p><b>9:30am – 11am:</b><br/>COP (Lillington)</p>  | <p><b>10am - 11:30am:</b><br/><b>Mother's Day Event</b></p> <p><i>(Register for Mother's Day event in-person during regular group hours.)</i></p>                      |    |
| 10                               | 11   | 12   | 13   | 14   | 15   | 16 |
| <p><b>HAPPY Mother's DAY</b></p> | <p><b>9am - 10:30am:</b><br/>RTG (Lillington)</p> <p><b>11am - 12:30pm:</b><br/>RTG (Lillington)</p> <p><b>10am - 11:30am:</b><br/>RTG (Erwin)</p> | <p><b>9:30am – 11am:</b><br/>COP (Lillington)</p> <p><b>1:30pm – 3pm:</b><br/>RTG (Cameron)</p>  | <p><b>9:30am – 11am:</b><br/>COP (Erwin)</p> <p><b>10am – 11:30am</b><br/>RTG w/ Zumbini (Lillington) </p> | <p><b>9:30am – 11am:</b><br/>COP (Lillington)</p> <p><b>1:30pm – 3pm:</b><br/>GOTG (Dunn Public Library)</p> | <p><b>9am - 10:30am:</b><br/>Open Play (Lillington)</p> <p><b>11am - 12:30pm:</b><br/>Open Play (Lillington)</p>   |    |
| 17                               | 18   | 19   | 20   | 21   | 22   | 23 |
|                                  | <p><b>9am - 10:30am:</b><br/>RTG (Lillington)</p> <p><b>11am - 12:30pm:</b><br/>RTG (Lillington)</p> <p><b>10am - 11:30am:</b><br/>RTG (Erwin)</p> | <p><b>9:30am – 11am:</b><br/>COP (Lillington)</p> <p><b>10am – 11:30am:</b><br/>GOTG (Lillington Head Start)</p> <p><b>1:30pm – 3pm:</b><br/>RTG (Cameron)</p> | <p><b>9:30am – 11am:</b><br/>COP (Erwin)</p> <p><b>10am – 11:30am</b><br/>RTG (Lillington)</p>             | <p><b>9:30am – 11am:</b><br/>COP (Lillington)</p> <p><b>1:30pm – 3pm:</b><br/>GOTG (Dunn Public Library)</p> | <p><b>9am - 10:30am:</b><br/>Open Play (Lillington)</p> <p><b>11am - 12:30pm:</b><br/>Open Play (Lillington)</p>   |    |
| 24                               | 25   | 26   | 27   | 28   | 29   |    |
|                                  | <p><b>HPCP CLOSED</b></p> <p><b>MEMORIAL DAY</b></p> <p><b>REMEMBER AND HONOR</b></p>  | <p><b>9:30am – 11am:</b><br/>COP (Lillington)</p>  | <p><b>9:30am – 11am:</b><br/>COP (Erwin)</p> <p><b>10am – 11:30am</b><br/>RTG (Lillington)</p>             | <p><b>9:30am – 11am:</b><br/>COP (Lillington)</p> <p><b>1:30pm – 3pm:</b><br/>GOTG (Dunn Public Library)</p> | <p><b>9am - 10:30am:</b><br/>Open Play w/ Zumbini Summer Kickoff (Lillington) </p> <p><b>11am - 12:30pm:</b><br/>Open Play w/ Zumbini Summer Kickoff (Lillington) </p> |    |

## KID SPOTLIGHT:

EMERSON, 4 YRS OLD (5 ON MAY 4<sup>TH</sup> - HAPPY BIRTHDAY, EMERSON!)

**What is your favorite part of Ready to Grow Playgroups?**

“Riding the car on the roller coaster outside.”

**If you had fairy wings, where would you fly first?**

“To church.”

**What kind of magic would you use to help your friends?**

“If they need to move something that’s really heavy, the strong magic can pick up the thingy... My strong, strong magic.”

**If you found a tiny fairy house, what would you leave outside for them?**

“A magic stick so they can do magic.”



## MAY WITH FUN & PURPOSE:

### NATIONAL MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH

Mental health is a hot topic. This is good news. It means the stigma for mental health issues is slowly going away. Mental health issues are finally getting the attention they deserve. Mental health affects thoughts, feelings, and actions. When one has positive mental health, they are better equipped to handle stress, be more productive, and realize their full potential.

While we focus on our physical well-being, the food we eat, exercise, and getting regular check-ups for vision and dental care, we often forget to take stock of our emotional and spiritual needs. Everyday demands take their toll.

Taking care of our mental health is as normal as eating healthy, exercising, or even saving for the future. Share your story to help others understand that achieving mental health is a daily process. Share the message. #MentalHealthAwarenessMonth



### NATIONAL SMILE DAY | MAY 31

The first recorded smile on record took place on 126 B.C. Okay, we made that up. But did you smile? Joking aside, we generate a smile when funny things happen or find pleasure in the things we do. Someone we love or enjoy spending time with may be the cause of a grin or beaming look of joy. Smiles are powerful! They not only create engagement between two people but the more a person smiles, the healthier their brain can be. Smiling has a direct link to our brain and can help to reduce stress.

### HOW TO OBSERVE NATIONAL SMILE DAY

Share your smile and how a smile improves your day on social media using the hashtag #NationalSmileDay. Funny jokes are also welcome!



Circle of Parents  
Círculo de Padres



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**<sup>®</sup>  
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](mailto:familysupport@harnettsmartstart.org) or call 910-893-2344.

Para registrarse, envíe un correo electrónico a [familysupport@harnettsmartstart.org](mailto:familysupport@harnettsmartstart.org) o llame al 910-893-2344.

# GROW ON THE GO

PLAY, LEARN, AND GROW TOGETHER



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!



## MAY SCHEDULE:

- May 14th, 21<sup>st</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> / 1:30pm - 3pm  
@ 110 E Divine St, Dunn, NC 28334

- May 19th / 10am - 11:30am  
@ Lillington Head Start





# 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



# zumbini®

with Ms. Katie!



Registration  
NOT Required!

- **May 13<sup>th</sup> @ 10am**  
@ 170 Pine State St, Lillington
- **May 29<sup>th</sup> @ 9am & 11am**  
@ 170 Pine State St, Lillington

# GRUPO DE JUEGOS LISTO PARA CRECER

# READY TO GROW PLAYGROUP

## TEMA DEL MES:

Manejo de la Frustración y la Concentración



## LOS CUIDADORES APRENDERÁN:

- Cómo ayudar a su hijo a calmarse cuando esté frustrado o molesto
- Cómo ayudar a su hijo a mantenerse quieto, concentrado y a continuar con una actividad

## MENSAJES CLAVE:

1. Es importante que los niños comprendan que la frustración es una emoción normal que todos tenemos, pero que volver a un estado de calma es necesario y se siente mejor que mantenerse molestos.
2. Cuando los niños intentan cosas nuevas, necesitamos equilibrar el permitirles manejar su frustración por sí mismos y apoyarlos en cómo afrontarla. Podemos redirigir a los niños con calma hacia una nueva actividad o hablar con ellos sobre lo que les molestó y ayudarles a decidir cómo enfrentar el problema.



## THEME OF THE MONTH:

Handling Frustration & Focus



## CAREGIVERS WILL LEARN:

- How to help their child calm him/herself when frustrated or upset
- How to help their child sit still, stay focused, and stick with an activity

## KEY MESSAGES:

1. It's important for children to understand that frustration is a normal emotion that we all have, but that returning to a calm state is necessary and feels better than staying upset.
2. When children try new things, we need to balance letting them work through their frustration on their own and supporting them in addressing frustration. We can calmly redirect children to a new activity or talk to them about what was upsetting and help them decide to deal with the issue.



## LIBROS RECOMENDADOS:

- You Get What You Get by Julie Gassman
- Calm Down Time by Elizabeth Verdick
- The Little Engine that Could by Watty Piper



## BOOK RECOMMENDATIONS:

- You Get What You Get by Julie Gassman
- Calm Down Time by Elizabeth Verdick
- The Little Engine that Could by Watty Piper



REGISTER YOUR CHILD  
TODAY TO RECEIVE  
FREE BOOKS!



[www.harnettsmartstart.org](http://www.harnettsmartstart.org)

A LOOK BACK AT SWEET MOMENTS WITH MOMS, GRANDMAS & CAREGIVERS



TINY BUT  
MAGICAL

