

Education and Humans Services Board Notes
May 12th, 2026
Presented by the Ed and HS Team

Parents as Teachers Program (PAT)

The PAT program is dedicated to supporting parents as they navigate the challenges of pregnancy and parenthood. Core program components include home visits, supportive telephone assistance, parent education groups, case management, screenings, nurse and doula support.

Events:

The PAT team participated in the Stamford Early Childhood Fair this month, at Mill River Park. This free, family-friendly event included arts and crafts, face painting, story time, games, and more.

We are preparing for our upcoming graduation ceremony, scheduled for June 16, a meaningful milestone for the families we serve. This year, 17 families and 18 children who began the program during pregnancy or early infancy, and have remained actively engaged throughout, will be graduating. These children will be transitioning to kindergarten this fall, and we are proud to recognize their growth and their families' commitment over the years.

Program Updates:

During National Home Visiting Week (April 20–24), we recognized and celebrated the work of our Home Visitors across the PAT program and other home visiting services within the agency. Their dedication, compassion, and consistent support are essential in strengthening families, promoting healthy child development, and supporting parents.

As part of the celebration, several PAT families shared messages of appreciation. Below are a few reflections:

- “I want to congratulate all the home visitors, especially mine, for their love and dedication. Thank you for being with me during such an important time in my life, motherhood. If I had to describe your work in one word, it would be ‘calling.’ Because of you, I know I am not alone.”
- “To my home visitor, thank you for your patience, your consistent support, and for believing in my goals. A year ago, I shared my dream of opening a home-based daycare, and you immediately told me, ‘You can do it,’ encouraging me every step of the way. Today, that dream is a reality; my daycare is now open and serving families. Along the way, you also supported my child’s development and my growth as a mother. You have made a lasting impact on me and my child.”
- “Thank you for supporting me since my pregnancy. You helped me understand each stage of my baby’s development and always reminded me that I could count on you. You have connected me to valuable resources and taught me so much.”

- “To my home visitor, thank you for your support and for everything you’ve taught me about being the best mother I can be. I always look forward to your visits; you are truly welcome in our home. Thank you for the work you do.”

We are grateful for the dedication of our staff and the trust of the families we serve, and we look forward to continuing this work.

Collaborations:

The PAT Program continues to partner with community organizations to support maternal and child well-being. In collaboration with the Tiny Miracles Foundation, the Program Director of PAT served as a panelist at the annual Maternal Mental Health training, *“Culture, Community and Care.”* The event brought together experts to discuss supporting families in the NICU and advancing culturally responsive, trauma-informed care.

Parents as Co-Educators (Co-Ed)

Co-Ed provides home visiting services to families with children three to five years old, utilizing the Parents as Teachers (PAT) curriculum. Outreach Workers connect clients to internal and external resources and promote parent/school engagement.

Events: In April, Co-Ed hosted a family event at Terry Connors ice skating rink. Children and parents enjoyed ice skating for the first time, drinking hot cocoa and having fun on the ice. In June, Co-Ed will be hosting our annual family picnic at Scalzi park in Stamford. This is a well-attended and very popular event for families. Families will enjoy lunch, a bubble machine, lawn games, a splash pad, playground and many other fun activities.

Client Story:

Carla lives with her partner and their four daughters, ages 15, 12, 3, and 1. The family is Guatemalan, and both parents primarily speak Spanish. Carla is a caring and dedicated mother who is always looking for ways to support her children. Her three-year-old daughter, Mary, has been diagnosed with autism and is attending morning preschool and receiving services at Apples Early Childhood Education Center with Stamford Public Schools. Midday, Mary is transported from Apples to the Children’s Learning Center at Maple Avenue. Carla joined the Co-Ed program and has been actively involved using the Parents as Teachers curriculum to help her children learn and grow. She is also taking ESL classes at Building One Community to improve her English. Recently, the family faced a difficult situation and was evicted from their apartment. Carla’s landlord gave abrupt notice to Carla that he wanted to evict the family. The Outreach Worker supported Carla by explaining her tenant rights, helping her find new housing, and connecting her with resources. The family also received support, including client assistance gift cards for food, a double stroller as the mother did not have one for the younger children, and referrals to community services. Despite these challenges, Carla remains strong and focused. She continues working toward her goals of learning English, finding a job that earns better income, and creating a safe and stable home for her daughters. Co-Ed will continue to support the family by providing the PAT curriculum and ongoing guidance.

Family First in Education (Family First)

Family First in Education utilizes a two-generational approach focused on parent engagement and structured after school programming. By understanding both parent and student needs, the program comprehensively impacts overall family wellness, academic growth in reading/math and social/emotional development.

Events:

Scouts Update: Pack 25 at Family First has been in its fourth week and has been working towards obtaining their Earth Day Patch. Members have been picking up litter and made a bird feeder out of pinecones to earn their badge. One of Pack 25's members, participated in the Fishing Derby at Camp Seton, and received first place for catching a 12-inch bass.



May 4th kicked off National Teacher Appreciation week. Family First celebrated its teachers with a mid-week lunch and tokens of appreciation for all they do in supporting the growth and learning of our students.



Parent Engagement:

On April 22, Family First launched the first in a series of parent workshops focused on transitioning to middle school. Originally planned as a one-time event, strong parent interest led to an expanded series, with additional sessions scheduled for May, June, and July.

On May 9th, Family First is scheduled to attend the Stamford Museum and Nature Center for **the classic Planetarium experience**. These Astronomer-led planetarium shows take you on a journey through space with a focus on the night sky, constellations, our solar system, and other space objects in brilliant, high-definition resolution.

The Early Childhood Education & Head Start Programs (ECE) – Sites as needed

The Early Care and Education (ECE) program, NAEYC-Accredited Plus (the National Association for the Education of Young Children), serves up to 210 children six weeks through five years old, five days a week, year-round. There are four sites with 18 classrooms. This high-quality program instructs children and assesses their development to improve child outcomes. ECE supports family involvement through committee involvement and workshops throughout the year.

Program update:

In mid-April we celebrated our young learners during NAEYC's *Week of the Young Child*, making instruments and building tacos among other activities. Our state liaison for our ESCT funding, David Cohen, completed his second round of monitoring for the year. Our family services worker, Lina Palacio, held an event where fathers/father figures built and painted wooden boxes with their children. Greenwich Health Department's nurse Lori Liss visited the preschool classrooms for *Passport to Good Health*, during which she taught about *Good Bugs, Bad Bugs*. The children in our program learned about *Recycling, Light, Spring, and Wheels*. All regular activities continued including the implementation of *Second-Step Social-Emotional* curriculum in the preschool classrooms; site visits with our Mental Health Consultant; staff coaching; *Music with Mr. Nick*; and *Music and Movement*. We have available spaces for children in our preschool classrooms.

April Overall Enrollment: 181/207

Warburg Infant & Toddler Center

April Enrollment: 54/53; Attendance: 86%

Program Update: Eight students received Birth-to-Three services, one student received at-home services with New York's Early Intervention, one student received private services, and one student began attending GPS.

Gateway Preschool:

April Enrollment: 54/56; Attendance: 87%

Program Update: We had one monthly volunteer and one bi-monthly intern come to our classrooms. Eight preschool children attended GPS in the mornings to receive IEP services, four students received their IEP services on site, and three toddlers received Birth-to-Three services.

Grauer Preschool:

April Enrollment: 43/55; Attendance: 88%

Program Update: The Koala Bears class sorted recyclable items donated by the families. Five children received services in the mornings from GPS.

First Steps Preschool:

April Enrollment: 30/43; Attendance: 89%

Program Update: Four children received services in the mornings from GPS. Three students are in the process of evaluation with GPS.

Literacy Volunteers (LV)

Literacy Volunteers at Family Centers (LVFC) uses the services of trained volunteers to provide free, quality English language education to adults, equipping them with the skills needed to achieve personal and occupational goals. LVFC is committed to educating families, developing a more skilled workforce, and providing educational opportunities to the county's most vulnerable populations, those living in or at elevated risk for poverty with low literacy. LVFC delivers weekly classes at four locations throughout Greenwich and Stamford and through online platforms for synchronous, remote learning.

Events:

Literacy Volunteers students recently visited the Stamford American Job Center for an engaging field trip and information session. During their visit, they learned about the wide range of employment services available, including job search support, resume assistance, and training opportunities. The experience gave students valuable insight into local resources that can help them achieve their career and education goals.



Families from Literacy Volunteers participated in a community service event at Fairgate Farm in Stamford, an urban farm and community hub dedicated to sustainable agriculture, education,



and increasing access to fresh, healthy food. While helping with planting and garden maintenance, participants also practiced their English in a relaxed, hands-on environment. The experience highlighted the farm's important role in bringing people together, supporting food security, and creating meaningful learning opportunities for the community. It was also a great way to practice English!





Child Development Associate (CDA) students are nearing the exciting milestone of completing their credential and training program. Over the past several months, they have dedicated their Saturdays to working closely with their tutor and professional portfolio consultant, refining the materials required for their certification. Through this hands-on guidance, students have strengthened their reflective writing, digital skills, documentation, and understanding of best practices in early childhood education. Their commitment and hard work are setting them up for success as they prepare to earn their CDA credential and advance in their careers.



Congratulations to Jan Raymond on receiving the Darien Community Association Best New Volunteer Award for her outstanding work with Literacy Volunteers at Family Centers. Her dedication to supporting adult learners has made a meaningful impact on the community. Her tutoring has expanded the program into the Darien library, and we value her contribution. This recognition highlights the difference passionate volunteers can make in expanding access to education and opportunity.



Charter Oak Communities (COC)

Through a unique partnership with Charter Oak Communities (COC), Family Centers offers resident services throughout all twenty-one of COC properties provided by a team of nine Resident Service Coordinators (RSCs). We offer community-building along with personalized support intended to foster resident leadership and community cohesion while promoting independence and quality of life.

Program updates

- Across all properties, April focused on resident engagement, wellness, and supportive services which included: Chair Zumba, Senior Fit, bingo, trivia, balloon volleyball/tennis, movie days, walking groups, and seasonal crafts remained popular across sites.
- Special Events: Caption Call phone installations supported residents with hearing (and some visual) impairments; Spring Flings, socials, ice cream events, and bingo nights strengthened community connection.

- **Health & Education:** Nutrition classes, Medicare and benefits presentations, blood pressure screenings, and incontinence-supply education supported resident health needs.
- **Supportive & Case Management Services:**
 - Workforce development partnerships helped residents complete training in security and healthcare.
 - Housing stability efforts included eviction prevention assistance, utility support, rent rebate assistance, and resource navigation.
 - Food security expanded through farm partnerships and produce programs.
- **Community Moments:**
 - Musical performances by Patrick Guitar were warmly welcomed.
 - Communities acknowledged both joyful milestones and the loss of a resident and turned donating items into meaningful shared activities.
- **Seasonal Transitions:** Many sites ended the month with spring-themed activities and anticipation for May programming and gardening projects.

Events:

Residents participated in a Paint & Sip program designed to encourage creativity, social connection, and emotional wellness. The activity provided a relaxed, supportive environment where residents engaged in guided painting while enjoying light refreshments, fostering self-expression and peer interaction. Programs like Paint & Sip continue to support resident well-being by reducing social isolation, promoting positive mental health, and strengthening community bonds within our housing sites.

Our Clinton Manor community participated in a Sunday afternoon “Spring Fling: which was hosted by the Stamford Links; a connection made possible by our board member Kim Kispert. Our older adults enjoyed an afternoon on a trip down memory lane through musical activities, storytelling and ended with each participant receiving their own memory box.



Family Self Sufficiency (FSS)

FSS provides residents of Charter Oak Communities individualized support including vocational counseling, goal planning, educational assistance, financial literacy, and family referrals aimed at helping participants become economically independent.

Program Update:

April was an eventful month for the FSS program. Ten clients earned their master certificates in financial literacy through the FDIC Money Smart financial education program. There were also three new enrollments into the FSS program and two unemployed clients obtained jobs. One client was also able to graduate early and received \$35,000 in escrow savings due to meeting her goals and increasing her income during her time in FSS.

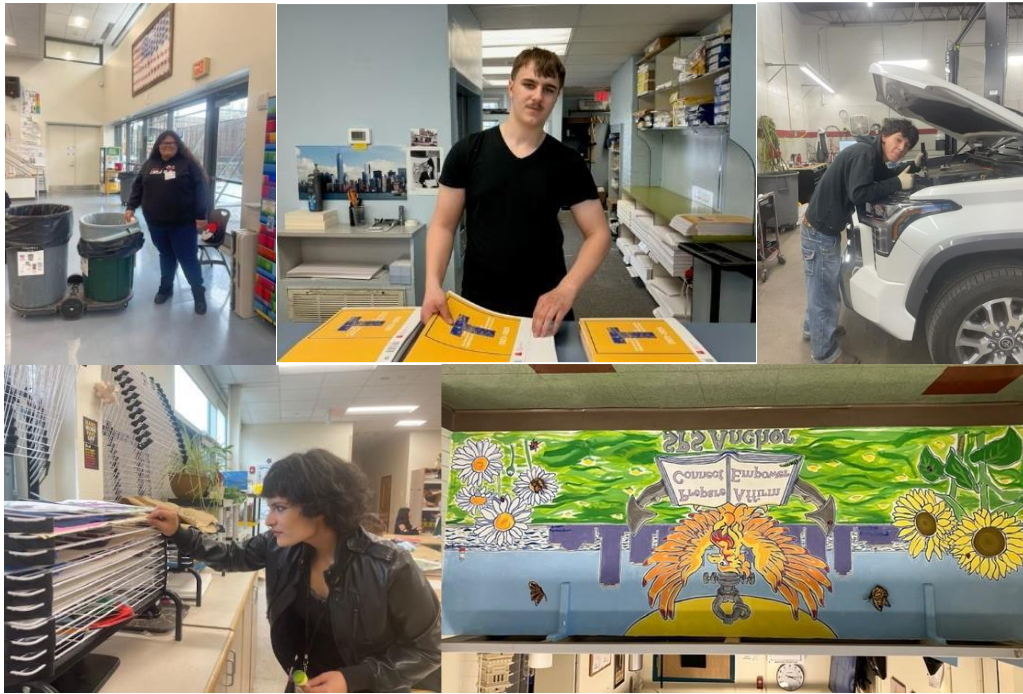
RITE Start

RITE Start provides career readiness for students attending the alternative high school programs at the Greenwich and Stamford public schools (Windrose and Anchor). Students participate in hands-on learning activities to identify, practice, and improve career competencies needed for today's market. Interested students are eligible to participate in short term work experiences to further practice skills, gain real life experience, and receive stipends for their efforts.

Program Update:

There are currently 12 students out on work experiences in Stamford and Greenwich, with a wide variety of placements that include healthcare, automotive, office work, and one student artist taking the lead on a mural project. Each of these students are gaining valuable real-world

experiences while earning a stipend for their hard work. Additionally, these experiences will be added to their resumes as most are hoping to obtain summer or part time employment.



Here to Help (H2H)

The H2H program is a service provided by Family Centers dedicated to supporting students and their families as they navigate Stamford Public Schools and the greater community with a focus on students who are chronically absent and disengaged. Services are tailored to each student's unique needs, focusing on improving communication with schools, connection to community resources, and providing individualized support to re-engage students in school.

Client Story:

The client is an 8-year-old third-grade student who was referred to H2H by her grandmother to be connected to therapeutic services. At enrollment, the outreach worker learned that the client had been diagnosed with selective mutism and presented as significantly withdrawn around adults. Her mother reported that the client was able to communicate and engage with peers during play but became quiet and avoidant in the classroom and in any environment involving adults. At home, the client exhibited episodes of dysregulation, including rage and, at times, aggressive behavior toward her mother and sibling. The client's mother reported feeling overwhelmed and urgently in need of support and services.

Following enrollment, the client's mother and outreach worker agreed that it would be most beneficial for the client to work primarily with a therapist, to minimize anxiety associated with engaging with the outreach worker. The outreach worker collaborated closely with the City of Stamford Youth Services Bureau to secure a therapist specializing in anxiety and selective

mutism. Since beginning therapy, the client's mother has reported significant improvement in the client's behavior at home, as well as some positive changes in the school setting. The outreach worker continues to maintain communication with the client's mother and provides ongoing support and psychoeducation regarding the client's diagnosis.

Collaborations:

- City of Stamford Youth Services Bureau
- Stamford Public Schools
- CT Education Advocacy

Intensive Family Preservation (IFP)

Through counseling and support, the Intensive Family Preservation Program (IFP) helps families resolve conflicts and improve parenting skills when there is an imminent risk of a child(ren) being removed from the home due to instances of child abuse or neglect. Family Centers partners with Family and Children's Agency of Norwalk to provide program services. The Connecticut Department of Children and Families (DCF) provides program funding and is the sole referral source.

Program Update:

Program is fully staffed and at capacity with cases. There is currently a regional waiting list.

Client Story/Highlights:

The Intensive Family Prevention (IFP) program received a referral from the Department of Children and Families due to allegations of physical abuse. This is not the mother's first report; she was previously substantiated for physical abuse in 2021. IFP is providing support to help the mother ensure safe caregiving practices and develop alternative discipline strategies.

At intake, it was identified that the family would benefit from increased in-home support and structure. The client is a married mother of two children (ages 21 and 13). She works part-time driving small trucks while managing household responsibilities. She reports feeling overwhelmed and underappreciated. The youngest child, who currently resides in the home, has been diagnosed with ADHD and does not have a current support plan in place.

Current interventions focus on strengthening family structure, improving communication between the child and caregivers, and increasing accountability for behaviors within the home. The IFP worker is supporting the child in developing daily routines, completing chores, and taking responsibility for his actions. Additionally, efforts are underway to connect the family with a therapist and collaborate with educational professionals to assess the child's learning needs and potential special education accommodations.

Friendly Connections (FS)

Friendly Connections supports isolated, lonely, and/or homebound Fairfield County seniors. The program alleviates isolation by utilizing trained volunteers and master's-level interns called

"Friendly Visitors." Friendly Visitors provide phone and virtual and home visits, and support clients navigating "end-of-life" issues, including mental health challenges or loss. They provide case management, counseling, social-emotional and crisis support, and connection to community resources.

Program Updates:

In April, Friendly Connections enrolled seven new clients including residents living at Scofield Manor, Parsonage Cottage, Wormser Congregate, McKinney Terrace and individuals residing in Greenwich and Westport. Additionally, Friendly Connections onboarded a new volunteer who will begin visiting clients in May.

Highlights:

Friendly Connections continues to provide strong, responsive support to older adults in our community. In April, Friendly Connections began a partnership with the Town of Westport following a meeting with the director of Westport's Center for Senior Activities and social workers from the town's Department of Human Services.

Friendly Connections began offering two additional time slots for individual sessions at Scofield Manor to serve interested residents. The program is rethinking how to best meet client needs through group support and increase participation. Friendly Connections will likely shift to monthly groups at Wormser Congregate, Scofield Manor and McKinney Terrace with a focus on structured, activity-based groups. Friendly Connections continues to offer biweekly support groups at Parsonage Cottage.

On April 24th, Friendly Connections' Outreach Worker and Director of Outreach Services attended a Behavioral Health for Older Adults Symposium which focused on important topics impacting older adults including mental illness in older age, substance use and dementia and cognitive impairment. The event also provided networking opportunities with other professionals working in related fields and offering a variety of services and programs to older adults in the community.

Collaborations:

- Parsonage Cottage
- McKinney Terrace II
- Charter Oaks Communities
- Scofield Manor
- Wormser Congregate
- Town of Westport