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The mission of Concord Children's Center is to cultivate an intimate, welcoming community where children develop respectful relationships and inquisitive minds, build confidence in their individual gifts, and are engaged, prepared and inspired to learn

News & Updates from CCC



Dear CCC Community,

CCC's mission speaks of ***cultivating a welcoming community where children develop inquisitive minds, build confidence, and are inspired to learn***. Our mission describes the experience we want for every child, but it is our teachers who make that experience possible. It is their knowledge, experience, and relationships with children that bring the mission to life every day.

One example of this work took place last Friday, October 30, when **Ruth Bruneau**, our Director of Training and Development, led educators in exercises designed to strengthen their observation skills. By watching and listening to how children explore materials, interact with others, and make choices, our teachers gain valuable insights into each child's interests and development. They use these observations to plan meaningful learning experiences that support each child as an individual. This thoughtful, intentional approach is at the heart of CCC's Core Values.

This month, we're also beginning a new series spotlighting the educators who do this important work. We'll start with our West Concord Infant/Toddler teaching teams, sharing their backgrounds, experience, and reflections on what makes teaching young children, and teaching at CCC, so special. I hope you'll enjoy getting to know them better!

You'll have another opportunity to learn from our educators on **Tuesday, November 17** at 7:30pm, when **Julia Abreu**, our Afterschool Coordinator and former preschool educator, joins Concord Public Schools teacher and CCC parent **Jacqui Turner** for a Zoom discussion about Kindergarten readiness. They'll explore how CCC's play-based approach helps children develop the skills and confidence they need for elementary school.

Finally, as you participate in Family-Teacher Conferences over the coming weeks, I encourage you to ask questions and learn from your child's teaching team. Our educators know your children well, and sharing their insights with families is one of the most important ways we put our mission into practice.

And please help us introduce more families to the wonderful program our educators provide at CCC! Encourage your friends and neighbors to attend our **Enrollment Open House** this **Saturday, November 7**, from 9–11am at both locations.

I hope to see you at the Concord Bookshop fundraiser on **Saturday November 21**. Thank you for your support of CCC!

Fondly,
Suzie

Educator Spotlight: West Concord Infant-Toddler Program

Starting this month, we will be highlighting in the newsletter the educators behind a specific program at one of our sites. We kick things off this month with our **West Concord Infant-Toddler educators**. Below are photos of each teaching team, bios for each team member, and each educator's answer to one of the following questions:

- What do you love about CCC?
- What do you love about teaching?
- What advice do you have for young families?

Circle Room Teaching Team



- **Sam Connerty** joined CCC in 2024 with over 10 years of experience in early childhood care and education. She received her teaching certificate from Mt. Wachusett Community College in 2012. Sam loves teaching because she loves building strong, meaningful connections with children and families.
- **Audrey Jemlich** joined CCC in 2024 and has over 20 years' experience teaching both toddlers and preschoolers. She has studied early childhood education at Fisher and Mount Wachusett Community College and is Director 2 certified. Audrey says that it "brings me such job watching children learn, reach their goals and gain confidence over time. Every day is unique, filled with creativity, new experiences, and lots of hugs."
- **Cindy Oulighan** returned to CCC in 2019 after being a toddler teacher with us from 2015-2017. Previously she ran a family childcare in her home for over 30 years and was a nanny for 10 years. Cindy has taken courses in Education from Middlesex Community College and Northeastern University. Cindy advises families to "consider every moment as precious -- even the difficult ones. You will look back some day and ask yourself 'where did that time go?' It goes by way too quickly!"
- **Sashi Qualitz j**oined CCC in 2013 and has an associate's degree in Early Childhood Education. She is also a CCC parent. Sashi reminds families that "your job isn't to make every uncomfortable feeling disappear. Children learn to manage frustration through practice and support, not by never experiencing it."

Photo (l-r): Audrey Jemlich, Sashi Qualitz, Sam Connerty, Cindy Oulighan

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Crescent Room Teaching Team



- **Lillian Albanese** joined CCC in 2019 and has worked at our Emerson and East Concord sites as well as West Concord. She has a degree in Human Development and Elementary Education from UMass Amherst.
- **Doris Asencios** joined CCC in 2023 with over 23 years of experience in early childhood education. She holds a Bachelor of Education from The Higher National Pedagogical Institute of Huari in Ancash, Peru, and has worked with Infants, toddler, preschool and kindergarteners in Maynard. Doris teaches because she "loves making children feel safe, welcomed, and understood."
- **Lynn St. Germain** joined CCC in 1988 as a toddler teacher and has spent the past 38 years with this age group. She has a bachelor's degree in early childhood education with a concentration on infants and toddlers. Lynn is a past CCC parent. Her advice to young parents: "Don't sweat the small stuff. Your child loves you and just wants to be with you."

- **Holly Swanson** has been with CCC since 2001 and has worked as both a teacher and an administrator. Holly attended Mount Wachusett Community College, is certified in early childhood education, and has her Child Development Associate Certificate. Holly says "I love getting to watch infants and toddlers discover, learn, grow, and experience so many firsts."

Photo (l-r): Holly Swanson, Lynn St. Germain, Lillian Albanese, Doris Asencios

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Heart Room Teaching Team



- **Jessica Franks** joined CCC in 2026, bringing experience working with infants-preschool age children. She has a B.S. in Speech, Language, and Hearing Sciences from the University of Massachusetts. Jessie says that "the relationships I build with children and their families create a strong foundation for exploration and growth, both in and out of the classroom!"
- **Isabelle Lechauve** joined CCC in 2022 and has worked at our Emerson and East Concord locations as well as West Concord. She has many years of experience working with infants and toddlers in both the U.S. and France. Isabelle received her B.A. in Classical Literature from Brest University in France and is a CCC alumni parent. Isabelle reminds families that "parenting is wonderful, but it can be challenging. It is normal to face difficulties, and there is no need to pretend everything is okay if you are struggling."
- **Kathy Manero** joined CCC in 1999. She has taught all ages at multiple CCC locations, including 22 years at our West Concord location. Kathy has also worked as a Kindergarten Assistant at Thoreau Elementary School. She received her degree in Early Childhood Education from Middlesex Community College and is a CCC alumni parent.
- **Morgan Shaw** joined CCC in 2026 and has prior experience teaching young children. She has taken Child Development and Early Childhood coursework at Mount Wachusett Community College. Morgan says that she "loves being part of a team that values learning, connection, and creating opportunities for children to explore their interests and learn at their own pace."

Photo (l-r): Kathy Manero, Jessie Franks, Morgan Shaw, Isabelle Lechauve

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Upcoming Family and Parent Events

Parent Education Opportunity: Kindergarten Readiness

We are excited to offer a virtual Parent Education Presentation on **Kindergarten Readiness** on **Tuesday, November 17**, at 7:30pm. Afterschool Coordinator **Julia Abreu** and Concord Public Schools teacher and current CCC parent **Jacqui Turner** will share what the term "Kindergarten readiness" means and how CCC's mission to be a place where children are "prepared to learn" manifests in the transition from preschool to elementary school. To attend, please RSVP to **Julia** and let her know any questions you may have as well.

Upcoming Farm to School Events

Save the dates for two upcoming community Farm to School events!

- **Saturday, January 23**: a **family pickling morning**! Activities will include pickling vegetables, sampling pickled vegetables prepared by our classrooms, and more! This event will take place at both our East and West sites.
- **Saturday, May 22**: our third ***Build, Bloom and Scoop*** family morning at **Gaining Ground** -- open to all families!

Details on both these events to follow after the holidays but mark your calendar now!

Advancement Updates

This Saturday: Enrollment Open Houses

Do you know someone who is applying for their child to enroll at CCC next fall? Is one of your friends considering CCC for their child? Make sure they know about our **Enrollment Open Houses** this **Saturday, November 7**, from 9-11am at both our East and West Concord locations. Visitors can tour our sites, meet educators, visit classrooms, see outdoor spaces and ask questions. Children welcome! For more information, contact CCC Enrollment Coordinator **Emily D'Arcy**.

This Week: CCC in the Bookshop Window

CCC and our Farm to School program are featured this week in the **Concord Bookshop** community window. Check out the photo below and be sure to see it in person if you're in Concord Center before next Monday!



Concord Bookshop Fundraiser: Saturday, November 21

Stop by the **Concord Bookshop** on **Saturday, November 21**, for this year's **CCC Bookshop Fundraiser**! The Bookshop kindly allocates a percentage of all sales on the day to CCC. Our teachers and staff have put together wish lists of books for their classrooms, and these books will be available for purchase on the day. CCC staff members will be reading books to children in the Children's Corner while parent volunteers help shoppers select books (and if you're a teacher who'd like to read in the Children's Corner or a parent who'd like to volunteer during the event, please contact CCC Development & Outreach Coordinator **Jennifer Saxe**). The event is a fun community day as well as a great chance to take care of some holiday shopping while supporting CCC.

Next Month at the Bookshop!

On the afternoon of **Sunday, December 13**, CCC volunteers will be gift-wrapping customer purchases at the **Concord Bookshop**. During the holidays, the Bookshop invites local nonprofits to wrap customer purchases and share information about their organization with Bookshop visitors.

***** We would appreciate hands to wrap gifts on this day! *****

If you have an hour or two between 12-5pm to help wrap gifts, please contact CCC Development & Outreach Coordinator **Jennifer Saxe**.

The Fund for CCC Giving Challenge is coming up ... but for just one week!

CCC community members will be receiving their fall Fund for CCC solicitation letter next week. The Fund for CCC is CCC's annual fundraising effort that supports the **growth, development**, and **education** of each child by enriching the school's annual operating budget. Donations benefit areas across the school, including **special programs, professional development, tuition assistance,** and **outdoor play spaces**. Last year's Fund for CCC raised **over $97,000** to benefit our children and our school.

The **Giving Challenge**, CCC's annual friendly competition to encourage families and staff to support the Fund for CCC, will kick off on Monday, November 30, and close at the end of the day on Friday, December 4!! All classrooms reaching **70 percent participation** in the Fund for CCC from families and educators by the end of the Challenge will enjoy lunch on CCC after the holidays! **There are a variety of ways to make your donation**!

**** We have a special opportunity this year: Thanks to the generosity of a past Board member, the first $10,000 in Fund for CCC commitments received during the week of the Giving Challenge will be matched dollar for dollar! Plan to make your Fund for CCC donation early in the week of November 30 to double your impact! ****





Fall Around CCC
















Upcoming Dates

- Saturday, November 7, 9-11am: Enrollment open houses at East and West Concord
- Tuesday, November 17, 7:30pm: Virtual Parent Education Presentation on Kindergarten Readiness
- Wednesday, November 18, 7pm: Board meeting
- Saturday, November 21: 10am-5pm: **Concord Bookshop Fundraiser**
- Thursday and Friday, November 26 and 27: Thanksgiving, CCC closed
- Monday, November 30-Friday, December 4: Fund for CCC Giving Challenge

Subscribe to the CCC Calendar

Stay current on events at CCC by subscribing to the **on-line calendar**. Select which events you want to be kept informed about and stay up to date!

CCC Board Updates

Thank You to our Board!

As a non-profit, CCC is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors that is primarily responsible for the Center's financial and organizational oversight. We are grateful to our 26-27 Board members for their time and advice on behalf of CCC. Their involvement and engagement help make CCC the best school it can be for our children and

2026-27 Board Members

Elie Adam, Chair
Casey Leathers, Vice Chair
Amantha Butler, Treasurer
Carolyn Horgan, Clerk
Kayla Blake
Evan Brender
Erin Connors

the best community it can be for our families and educators.

We are always seeking Board and Board committee members. Please contact CCC Executive Director **Suzie Kornblum** if you are interested in getting involved with the work of the Board or its committees (Advancement, Finance, Long-Range Planning, Nominating, and Personnel).

Jamie Dutton
Sarah Franzen
Amy Gonzalez
Sean Hetherman
Andrew Locke
Sarah Sample
Steven Serrano
Anthony Ullo

Community News

2026 Great Pumpkin Smash!

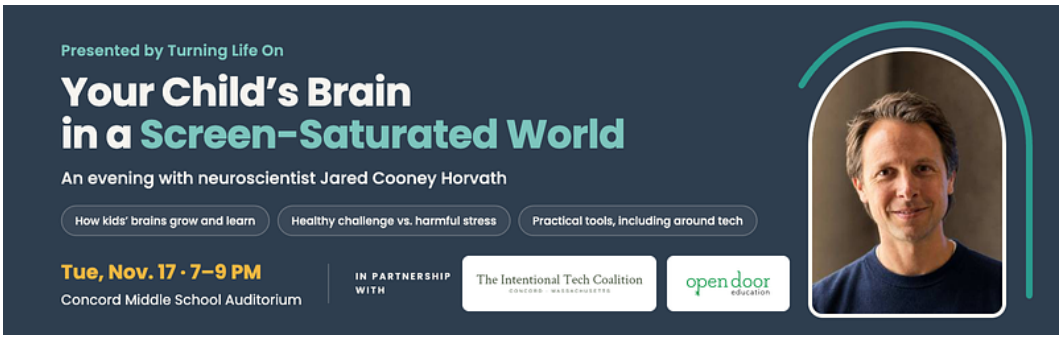


Join us on **Sunday, November 8**, from 10am-2pm for a smashing good time at the sixth annual **Great Pumpkin Smash** at **Codman Community Farms**! This family-friendly day is all about having fun while also making a positive impact on our planet!

Event Highlights:

- **Pumpkin Smashing:** Bring your jack-o'-lanterns and decorative gourds to smash and feed to the Codman Farm pigs!
- **Tasty Treats:** Farm fresh food offerings, including wood fired pizza and ice cream cookie sandwiches from the **Ice Cream Bike**!
- **Composting Corner:** Get tips on how to get started with composting in your home or with a curbside collection program!
- **Farm Tours:** Take a guided tour of Codman Community Farms with Farmer Pete to see sustainable farming practices in action!
- **Live Music:** Enjoy the sounds of local musicians.
- **Face Painting:** Fun, eco-friendly face painting for kids and adults!

Event organized by **Codman Community Farms**, the Lincoln and Concord Chapters of **Mothers Out Front**, and **Weston Community Children's Association**.



Kids and Technology

Raising kids in a fast-changing, tech-driven world can feel overwhelming. Join **Dr. Jared Cooney Horvath**, a neuroscientist and Harvard educator who has worked with more than 1,000 schools, on **November 17** at 7pm in the **Concord Middle School** auditorium for a discussion on "Your Child's Brain in a Screen-Saturated World." Dr. Horvath will offer clear, practical answers for families of kids in K–12 in a 90-minute presentation followed by a 30-minute live Q&A.

You'll leave knowing:

- What builds kids' attention, memory, and real understanding, and what gets in the way
- How to tell healthy challenge from harmful stress
- Concrete things you can do at home, and ask about at school, including around technology.

Learn more and RSVP on the **event page**.

Concord Children's Center | 1300 Main Street | Concord, MA 01742 US

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