



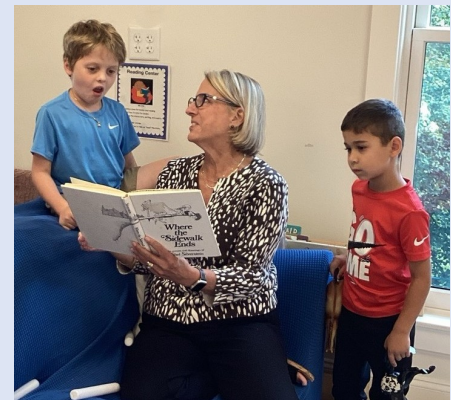
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The mission of Concord Children's Center is to cultivate an intimate, welcoming community where children develop respectful relationships and inquisitive minds, build confidence in their individual gifts, and are engaged, prepared and inspired to learn

News & Updates from CCC

Dear CCC Community,

As we begin a new school year together, it feels like the perfect time to return to the core values that guide our work at CCC. At the heart of our program is a belief that **children flourish in warm, welcoming, sensory-rich environments where they are known and valued as individuals**. We believe that **care and education are inseparable**: children learn through play, exploration, and discovery as well as through the relationships they build with trusted adults and one another. We **encourage children to take developmentally appropriate risks that build genuine confidence and independence**, and we **honor each child's unique interests, strengths, needs, and ways of learning**. We believe that **meaningful experiences in nature are an essential part of childhood**, which is why our children spend time outdoors every day. And we know that **families are our most important partners**. These are the values that bring our mission statement (see above!) to life.



Throughout the year ahead, you'll see CCC's mission and values reflected in the everyday life of our classrooms. Our educators will create thoughtful environments that encourage play and exploration, within predictable routines that give children security and confidence. Children will spend meaningful time outdoors, developing a sense of connection to the world around them. And we will continue to build strong partnerships with families, recognizing that you know your children best and that our work is strongest when we do it together. These values have guided CCC for more than 50 years, and as another year begins, we look forward to living them alongside our children, families, educators, and the whole CCC community.

Because the CCC community is as much for the adults as it is for the children, I hope you'll join us for the many opportunities to gather over the coming weeks and months and get to know one another. Throughout September, we're trying a Wednesday afternoon "standing play date" from 5 p.m. onward at our West Concord location and at the [Playscape at Ripley](#). Come for pickup and then *Stay and Play!* It's an easy, informal way to meet other CCC families, and we hope everyone will take advantage. This week we also have our **fall potluck picnics: West Concord on Tuesday, September 15**, and **East Concord on Thursday, September 17**, both at 5:30 p.m. Look for your child's classroom flag and set up your blanket nearby!

Sandwiched between the picnics is our **first Board Meeting** of the year, at 7 p.m. on **Wednesday, September 16**, at our West Concord location. Then, on **Friday, September 25** at 7 p.m., we'll host our [Fall Social](#). Read more below and check your email for your invitation! It's a fun night out and an opportunity to make some adult connections without a small human pulling you away. And there

is plenty more community-building to come this year, including the [Concord Bookshop Fundraiser](#), [Night at the Museum](#), and our [Gala](#) in the spring.

I look forward to seeing you at one of these events, or simply around our buildings as we settle into another year together. Thank you, as always, for your trust in CCC and for being part of this community.

Fondly,
Suzie

This Fall at CCC: Launching a New Program and Bringing Back a Past Program

Early Learning Collaborative (ELC)

This new program is designed to support both toddlers and their caregivers through a combination of facilitated play, parent education, and community building. The weekly morning session begins with a stay-and-play for caregivers and children together. The children then continue facilitated exploration and play in the classroom, while caregivers participate in an education roundtable focusing on:

- developmental milestones,
- typical toddler behaviors,
- social-emotional development, and
- common parenting challenges.

Participants will also trade practical strategies for surviving — and thriving through — the big developmental leaps. Whether families are navigating tantrums, building routines, encouraging independence, or simply looking for a supportive community, the ELC offers practical guidance, meaningful connections, and a welcoming space for caregiver and child to thrive.

The ELC is co-led by CCC infant-toddler educators **Amy Gonzalez** and **Jordan Zirkel**. Jordan joined CCC in 2017 and graduated with a degree in early childhood education. Before joining CCC as an educator, she spent many years at CCC as a high school volunteer and summer educator. Amy joined CCC in 2021 with 20 years of experience teaching infants through preschoolers, including at her own family childcare program.

There will be three fall sessions of the ELC:

- Monday mornings (September 14-December 7)
- Tuesday mornings (September 15-December 1)
- Thursday mornings (September 17-December 10)

Each session is from 9:30-11:30am. For more information and to register, visit the [ELC page](#) on the CCC website.



ELC educators Jordan Zirkel and Amy Gonzalez

Afterschool

After a six-year hiatus, the CCC Afterschool program returns on Wednesday afternoons at our East Concord site this fall. The program will return completely for the 27-28 school year at both our East and West Concord sites. CCC has offered an Afterschool program since our founding in 1975, and we are happy to see its return.

Afterschool is for children attending kindergarten, first grade, or second grade in the [Concord Public Schools](#). It combines opportunities for active and quiet play, child-initiated and teacher-directed curriculum, and a variety



of activities that motivate children to explore and learn. The program's early childhood focus supports the developmental stage of school-aged children, reinforcing the social, emotional, and intellectual skills they are mastering. We offer older children the opportunity to reinforce the academic skills they are gaining in their elementary school programs in a developmentally supportive environment.

Julia Abreu, our Afterschool Coordinator, has worked at CCC since 2012. She holds a Master's in Early Childhood Education from Fitchburg State and a B.S. with a concentration in Early Childhood Education from Wheelock College. Julia is a current CCC parent as well as a CCC alumna.

Photo (l-r): Dan, Delilah, Mackenzie, Julia, and Wesley Abreu

Staff Summer Learning

Our Third Summer at Shelburne Farms

For the third year in a row, CCC educators participated in a summer program at the [Northeast Farm to School Institute](#) at [Shelburne Farms](#) in June. West Concord Program Director **Anne Williams**, Afterschool Coordinator **Julia Abreu**, and educators **Ghada Bitar** and **Isabelle Lechauve**, led by their coach, **Rina Zampieron**, learned how to educate children about the sources of the food we eat. They also developed a mission statement for our West Concord Farm to School program containing three achievable goals:

- becoming more sustainable by following the approach of *reduce, reuse, recycle* (including introducing composting at both CCC sites),
- focusing on nurturing food, and
- making connections with local farms within our community.



(l-r): Ghada Bitar, CCC's coach Rina Zampieron, Isabelle Lechauve, Anne Williams, and Julia Abreu.

August Professional Development Day

CCC educators and administrators kicked off the 26-27 school year with a professional development day on **Tuesday, August 18**. The morning featured a workshop for CCC staff on *The Magic of Child-Led Emergent Curriculum*, led by [Two Pushy Dames](#). The Farm to School team provided an update for staff on their work in the afternoon, followed by the annual Rock, Paper, Scissors competition which was won this year by Hexagon Room educator **Kayla Blake**.



Advancement Updates

Coming Up: the CCC Fall Social!

Save the evening of **Friday, September 25**, for the annual CCC fall social! This adults-only evening is a great opportunity to meet and socialize with fellow CCC parents and staff and get to know our community. [West Concord Wine & Spirits](#) will be serving up a variety of alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages for your enjoyment, including a tasting of craft beers and non-alcoholic cocktails!



CCC Awarded Analog Foundation Grant

Concord Children's Center is grateful to the [Analog Devices Foundation](#) for its recent generous grant award to our FY27 **Tuition Assistance Program**! Support from the Foundation will help ensure that all children and families, regardless of financial status, have the opportunity to experience the wonder and joy that our educators create each day. Thank you, ADF!



Fund for CCC Update

The FY26 Fund for CCC closed on June 30 having raised **\$97,208.08** to benefit our children, our staff, and our school! Current and past families and staff, grandparents and special friends, and corporations all contributed to the success of last year's Fund. Each donation makes a difference, and we are grateful to each donor for their support.

Fund for CCC donations benefit areas across the school, including **professional development, tuition assistance, outdoor play spaces, and special programs.**



The FY27 Fund for CCC will kick off in November with a **NEW** Giving Challenge ... details to follow closer to the date!

Back to School at CCC

The 2026-2027 school year is off to a running start, filled with building, reading, cooking and trying new foods, creating, and much more!





Upcoming Dates

- Tuesday, September 15, 5:30pm: West Concord picnic
- Wednesday, September 16, 5:00pm: Stay & Play @ Ripley Playscape, Play Date @ West Concord
- Wednesday, September 16, 7:00pm: Board meeting
- Thursday, September 17, 5:30pm: East Concord picnic
- Wednesday, September 23, 5:00pm: Stay & Play @ Ripley Playscape, Play Date @ West Concord
- Friday, September 25, 7:00pm: Fall social
- Wednesday, September 30, 5:00pm: Stay & Play @ Ripley Playscape, Play Date @ West Concord

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!

- Tuesday, October 12: Indigenous People's Day, CCC closed

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 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).

2026-27 Board Members

Elie Adam, Chair
Casey Leathers, Vice Chair
Amantha Butler, Treasurer
Carolyn Horgan, Clerk
Kayla Blake
Evan Brender
Erin Connors
Jamie Dutton
Sarah Franzen
Amy Gonzalez
Sean Hetherman
Andrew Locke
Sarah Sample
Steven Serrano
Anthony Ullo

Community News

2026 Verrill Farm Harvest Festival

The 2026 Verrill Farm Harvest Festival is coming up on **Saturday, October 3, 2026, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.** at [Verrill Farm](#), located at 11 Wheeler Road in Concord. This year's event features games, prizes, hayrides, food, and more -- fun for the whole family! Scan the QR code in the flyer for more information and to purchase tickets.



Concord Children's Center | concordchildrenscenter.org



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