

# CHILD DEVELOPMENT KICKED OFF PRESERVICE TRAINING FOR HEAD START AND EARLY HEAD START

August 15 kicked off the two-week long Child Development Preservice Training/Orientation at Roar. This year's theme is, "Rebooting to maintain a standard of excellence". Head Start and Early Head Start staff enhanced their knowledge and skills, focusing on mental health and wellness for themselves, the children, and the families we serve.



Each staff member received journals, pens, and bookmarks with a special message from the VP of Child Development, Vivien Stearns, that read, "When we think about self-reflection, our next thought should be wellness. Am I well? When we are reflecting on our being, we are calculating what needs to change, and what can be improved. It is in stability that we find a space for awareness and reflection. Stability is the home, and self-awareness and reflection are the guests. Stability brings

us out of survival and into a space of thriving. It is in the presence of stability that we can offer ourselves the best assessment on how we are and how we can show up as our best selves for our coworkers, children, and their families."

The keynote speaker for the kickoff was Regional IV Head Start Associations' Executive Director Myra Ingram, who provided staff with an engaging experience. She shared a wealth of knowledge about Head Start, including reminding everyone of Family Services' impact on the program's rich history that has been in Forsyth County since 1965 due to Lyndon Johnson's War on Poverty.

Vivien shared, "Our Head Start programs provide quality early childhood development services to 499 3 to 5 year olds and 120 Early Head Start ages birth to 3 children in collaboration with community child care centers, WSFCS, and NC Pre-K."

The key elements of both programs are:

- Focus on school readiness, with an emphasis (especially for the older child) on social skills, language, literacy, math, science, self-help, and creative arts.

- Educational assessments were conducted throughout the program year.

**Regional IV Head Start Associations' Executive Director, Myra Ingram**  
Pictured centered with Child Development's VP, Vivien Stearns (R), and Operations Manager, Brita Price (L)



- Highly credentialed and qualified teachers and staff in childhood education.

- 4- or 5- star licensed centers, and the only National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) accredited center in the county.

- Parent involvement (including volunteering and advising).

- Good nutrition and health.

Our agency is excited for another excellent year of preparing young children in our community for success in school and life beyond school! Learn more about Head Start and Early Head Start by visiting [www.familyservicesforsyth.org](http://www.familyservicesforsyth.org) or calling 336-727-0617.

# RISE AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

## Together We RISE A Conversation with our 2022 RISE Chairs



**RISE Chairs**  
Pictured left to right  
Ashley Givens, EJ Cardenas, Natalie Broyhill

Home is often the most dangerous place in America for women and children. Domestic violence does not play favorites. It exists in every neighborhood, is prevalent in each community, and affects any age, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, gender, race, religion, or nationality. Physical violence often accompanies emotionally abusive and controlling behavior as part of a much larger, systematic pattern of dominance and control. Domestic violence can result in physical injury, psychological trauma, and even death. The devastating consequences cross generations and last a lifetime.

Natalie Broyhill, EJ Cardenas, and Ashley Givens are on a mission. As the RISE Against Domestic Violence event chairs for 2022, these three ladies are taking over a passion project that started in 2019. As a mission-critical campaign of Family Services, RISE focuses on raising awareness of domestic violence and raising funds to combat it. Their interest grew from attending the first RISE event in 2019, to learning more about the work of Family Services through friends. "I grew up in Winston-Salem and this community. My hometown is very dear to me. Family Services is part of the fabric of our community, and its services are essential. Many people don't want to think about domestic violence, let alone talk about it. We hope to bring the conversation to the forefront this October," Natalie stated. EJ added, "I'm new to this community. When I learned about the support that Family Services and RISE provide, I wanted to become more involved with their mission. Domestic violence exists in our community, and it shouldn't."

**For us, it's about raising awareness, raising compassion, and raising essential funds to protect women, children, and families who face violence at home. This could be any of us, so it takes all of us.**

### -RISE chairs

No one should ever feel unsafe in their relationship and their own home. We need to bring awareness and support to individuals who need a way out of these unhealthy and dangerous situations." Ashley and her family have always lived in large metropolitan areas and relocated here from the Washington, DC, area. "This is a small, tight-knit community. I love it, and I feel a responsibility, a duty, to understand my community and its challenges and invest my time where I can make an impact."

This Winston native and two pandemic transplants have formed a friendship bolstered by their passion in the hope that no one in Forsyth County will experience domestic violence. Ever. As the Chairs of RISE this year, they bring youth, vision, passion, and hope to Family Services advocacy and fundraising events for the month of October, traditionally positioned as national Domestic Violence Awareness month across the country.

The collaboration between the agency, its programs, the community, and other agencies are very important to Ashley, EJ, and Natalie. Ashley and EJ have young children – five, between the two of them under the age of 10. Both moms feel that Family Services' focus on children and families makes it easy for them to advocate for RISE. EJ commented, "As a mother of two daughters, [ages 2 and 8], I want to empower them as they grow up. I want them to know what a healthy relationship is and that domestic violence is not just about putting hands on another person. There is more to it than just physical abuse. Domestic violence is about power and control and often can be emotional, financial, or even verbal before its physical. I want everybody to be in a safe relationship. It is what we all deserve." Natalie added, "We as a community are denied the full potential and impact children and families suffering from domestic violence can contribute. If they are hurting, traumatized, or do not feel safe, we as a community are being denied the wonderful gifts and talents each of us contributes to making this a great place to live, raise a family, and operate a business."

"This is why we feel that domestic violence prevention is an issue that our community should care about and work to eradicate violence from our community in all forms," said Ashley. Because the Shelter for domestic violence victims in Forsyth County is not funded by recurring city or county funding, it operates at a deficit each year. This year the deficit is projected to be \$161,000, and it's this deficit that fuels the fire for our chairs. They hope our community can raise at least \$125,000 to fill this hole in funding for this much-needed part of Family Services crisis intervention services.

Learn more about RISE events and join EJ, Natalie, and Ashley in making a difference at [RISEforsyth.org](http://RISEforsyth.org).



**Jaime Gadson**  
Domestic Violence Speaker,  
Survivor, and Advocate

**Visit [RISEforsyth.org](http://RISEforsyth.org) for more information.**





## GROGAN SOCIETY FEATURE, TRACI ROSS FAMILY SERVICES PRESIDENT AND CEO

One of our newest Grogan Society members just happens to be the 10th president of Family Services! Traci Ross, Family Services President, and CEO, always had an example of the philanthropic spirit growing up. From her grandmother being a foster parent, to her mom making donations to those in need, to her friends coordinating fundraisers to support community members who had experienced trauma, she was always surrounded by the idea that you give what you have to those who need it. Her career path enriched the meaning of giving and how to share her talent, time, and treasure. In her first non-profit job, Traci worked in a group home for those dealing with mental health issues, and she started to see the needs in her community firsthand. "Seeing the needs of people and where I could 'help' was life-changing," Ross explained.

As Traci has moved through her career, she has honed in on the community needs that touch her heart. From being the Executive Director of her hometown Big Brothers Big Sisters chapter to being a Head Start Director, she always had a love of helping children, especially children who needed a leveled playing field. "I remember my pre-school experience and how important it was to my

education and having a good start in school, so I want to see every child have that opportunity to start on the right foot," Ross said.

Traci saw the opportunity to serve Family Services as President and CEO as the culmination of much of her work in non-profits. "This agency brought together so many programs that I have loved over my career—Head Start, Trauma Counseling, and more. I was immediately on board when I was approached to be a Grogan Society member. I always want to make my community a better place for all who live in it, and one way is to invest my money with non-profits who do good work, and their mission fits with my passions."

Financial giving isn't the only way Traci likes to give back. Ross explains, "It's important to share your knowledge and expertise with non-profits. Whether it is board service or volunteer projects, giving your time is a wonderful way to 'give' to a non-profit." Traci has served on many non-profit boards and often looks for non-profits that can help support those areas where her passions go unfulfilled in her daily work. Traci looks forward to the opportunity to serve in Winston-Salem by sharing her non-profit experience with other local agencies.

"My husband Mike and I have seen so many ways where the love and philanthropy of others have impacted friends and relatives. We've seen how a giving spirit can change lives, and that's why we do what we can to help make an impact, even a small impact, on the lives of those in need in our community."

opportunity would become available in the spring of 2022 to apply for federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding from Forsyth County. An ARPA Application Team comprised of Task Force and Pre-K Priority members worked to assemble and submit a proposal in June 2022 requesting two years of funding for targeted, high-quality programmatic supports for 30 classrooms. If awarded, the funding will help equitably implement the resources (outlined in the recommendations) to a model cohort of classrooms across Forsyth County to benefit children, teachers, and families, while helping shape the ongoing work to scale high-quality standards to all Pre-K classrooms.

While the past year's work has been productive, achieving the ultimate goal is far from complete. The ECE Task Force calls attention to the importance of the following points moving forward:

- The transformation of the Pre-K Priority Steering Committee to achieve renewed commitment and mobilization of the initiative;
- Clarity related to the new Pre-K Priority strategic plan to meet the goals of great outcomes for all;
- Creation of an advocacy plan related to increased state funding, addressing barriers to Pre-K that local families encounter, streamlining transitions to kindergarten, support for private providers seeking to increase their quality standards, and the active participation of business leaders to support the training and retention of the required workforce; and,
- Sharing this work with the community to gain broad input as the process continues.



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## CHILD ADVOCACY CENTER EARNS REACCREDITATION FROM NATIONAL CHILDREN'S ALLIANCE

Family Services' Child Advocacy Center was awarded reaccreditation by the National Children's Alliance following an extensive application and site review process! As the accrediting agency for Children's Advocacy Centers (CACs) across the country, the National Children's Alliance awards various levels of accreditation and membership to centers responding to allegations of child abuse in effective and efficient ways to the needs of child victims of abuse first. Accreditation is the highest membership level with the National Children's Alliance and denotes excellence in service provision. Accredited CACs must undergo a reaccreditation process every five years to ensure that best practices are continually being applied.

Jointly established in 2000 by several community departments and agencies, the Family Services Child Advocacy Center coordinates

a multidisciplinary approach to responding to allegations of child abuse in Forsyth County. Currently, the multidisciplinary team consists of Atrium Health Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center, Family Services, Forsyth County Child Protective Services, Forsyth County District Attorney's Office, Forsyth County Sheriff's Office, Kernersville Police Department, Parenting Path, and the Winston-Salem Police Department. The Center is in a confidential, comfortable, child-friendly, and age-appropriate location where children can be interviewed once, reducing the trauma of sharing their stories over and over. It is staffed by specially trained professionals skilled in child abuse prevention and treatment.

In 2021, the CAC served 201 children, 156 females, and 45 males, ranging from 0-18 years and older. 90-95% of cases are child sexual abuse cases; however, children exposed to physical abuse

or who may have witnessed a violent crime are also seen. The center also provides services for developmentally delayed adults who have been exposed to abuse.

Fulton McSwain, who has been the Child Advocacy Center Director for eight years, says, "The accreditation process is a rigorous one, and rightfully so. It is also an invaluable resource that ensures the Children's Advocacy Center and the Multidisciplinary Team provide the highest quality of services to children and family members impacted by abuse. This reaccreditation confirms that our team follows best practices to help children pursue safety, healing, and justice."

Congratulations to the entire Child Advocacy Center team for your excellent work!

## Early Childhood Education Task Force and Pre-K Priority Update

Ensuring access to high-quality Pre-K for four-year-olds is based on the principle of equity and is proven to be one of the soundest educational investments the public can make.

Recognizing this fact, the Forsyth County Commissioners, City Council of Winston-Salem, and Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools Board of Education signed a resolution in 2021 in support of forming an Early Childhood Education (ECE) Task Force. The Task Force was to be a one-year planning and recommendatory body to assist in creating a proposal to implement an equitable, accessible, high-quality Pre-K system to serve all children in Forsyth County. The 31 Task Force members represented diverse community sectors and met from June 2021 – June 2022, working in conjunction with the Pre-K Priority Steering Committee and four established work groups.

Over the year, the Task Force explored various Pre-K options across Forsyth County and their quality-related challenges, the insufficient and fragmented public funding sources, and the disparate outcomes reflected in our local public school students' third-grade achievement scores by race and ethnicity. Task Force members participated in one of the four Pre-K Priority work groups that convened monthly to focus on specific goals related to specific topics, including Advocacy & Funding, Quality & Evaluation; System Implementation & Administration; and Workforce Education & Training. During the year, the workgroups developed 19 recommendations that the Task Force endorsed to help inform the strategic next steps of the Pre-K Priority's goal of an expanded high-quality system.

The Task Force recognized at the start of the planning process that a unique

## RISE COMMUNITY EVENTS LIST

### Fact-A-Day, October 1-31

Follow local advocates on Family Services social media as they highlight a domestic violence fact each day of the month.

### A/perture Cinema Domestic Violence Film and Panel Discussion, October 3

Free viewing of the film *herself*. Doors open at 5:30 pm, movie begins at 6:00 pm. Panel discussion with local experts following the film.

### Domestic Violence Support Group, each Wednesday in October

The Family Services Domestic Violence support group meets each Wednesday from 6:00 pm-7:30 pm online. For more information or to schedule an appointment contact 336-776-3255 or email [advocates@familyservicesforsyth.org](mailto:advocates@familyservicesforsyth.org)

### Silent Witness Exhibit, October 7

A visual representation consisting of life-sized, red laminated silhouettes of the women, men and children murdered in acts of domestic violence in Forsyth County. 8:00 am- 8:00 pm at Bailey Park.

### Day of Unity, October 7

A commemorative celebration at Bailey Park honoring survivors and victims of domestic violence homicide from 12:00 pm- 1:00 pm.

### United Against Domestic Abuse: Breaking the Silence, October 7

A candlelight vigil hosted at Hogar del Inmigrante Inc. at 12:00 pm

### Forsyth County Board of Commissioners Meeting, October 13

Resolution for Domestic Violence Awareness Month from the Forsyth County Board of Commissioners is scheduled for 2:00 pm at the Forsyth County Government Center.

### Greater Winston-Salem (Wake up Winston) Breakfast for Members, October 12

This monthly event hosted by Greater Winston-Salem, Inc. will be held at Family Services. Only open to Greater Winston-Salem Inc. members at 8:00 am.

### City of W-S City Council Meeting, October 17

Mayor Allen Joines will proclaim October as Domestic Violence Awareness Month at 7:00 pm.

### Coffee and Conversation, October 19

Learn how we're working with the community to create life-changing opportunities. Free from 8:00 am- 9:00 am. RSVP with Lucia Higgins at [lhiggins@familyservicesforsyth.org](mailto:lhiggins@familyservicesforsyth.org).

### Domestic Violence/Sexual Assault Partners Breakfast, October 20

8:15-9:00 am. This event is closed to the public and is by invitation only.

### RISE Fundraiser Event, November 5

Our mission-critical limited ticketed event focused on raising funds to combat domestic violence. Purchase tickets at [RISEforsyth.org](http://RISEforsyth.org) beginning September 22.



2019 Inaugural RISE Planning Committee