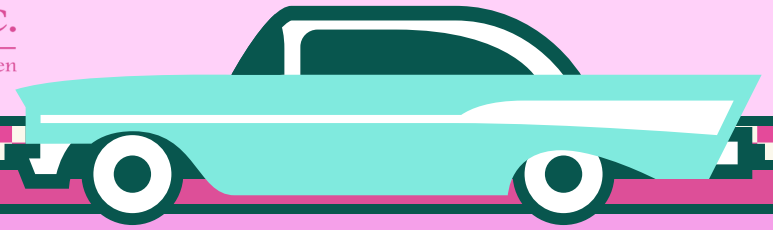




Child Care Council
of Dutchess and Putnam, Inc.

Connecting Communities and Children



Champions of Child Care

May 8th, 2025

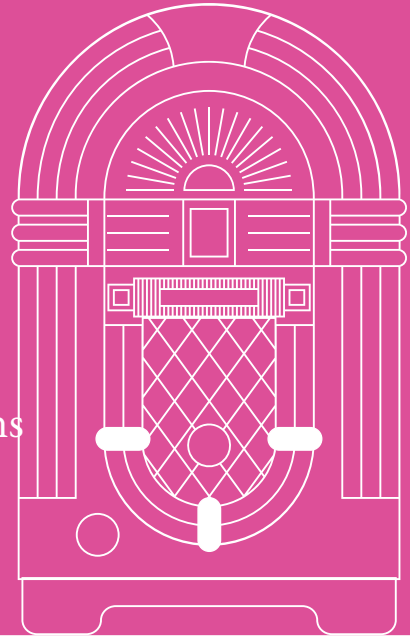
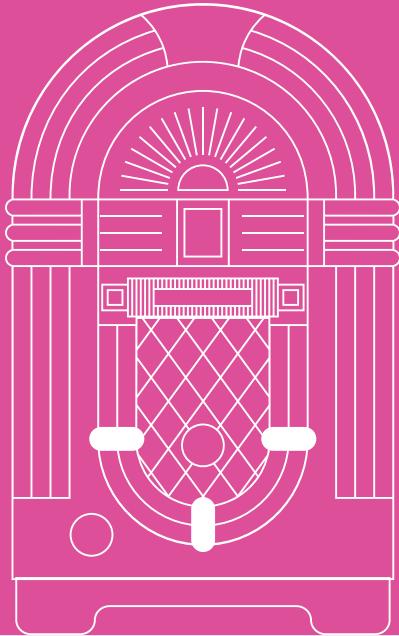


Strengthening Child Care for our Community

2025 Champions of Child Care

May 8, 2025

Registration
Welcome
Introductions
Dinner
Certificate Presentations
Raffle
Closing



At DAY ONE, we celebrate the achievement of early childhood education, focusing on programs that:

- ✦ Nurture early childhood development with care and intention.
- 👶 Provide high-quality education for toddlers and preschoolers.
- 👩 Build and empower educators, celebrating their impact.
- 🏡 Support families through community and resources
- ☀️ Create a safe, inclusive, and joyful learning environment!



**Scan to
learn more!**



Child Care Resource and Referral (Dutchess and Putnam)

- Provides information to parents on locating child care, consumer education, referrals, subsidies, services for families
- Recruits child care providers, provides start-up information and technical assistance in meeting regulatory requirements
- Provides the community with education on child care issues and current data needed in planning for community services
- Supports employers in planning, implementing and providing employee child care services
- Offers Quality Improvement initiatives to child care providers
- Facilitates regular Professional Development for all Regulated Child Care Programs

Child Care Registration (Dutchess and Putnam)

- Provides supervision of 49 family day care homes in Dutchess and 10 in Putnam
- Provides supervision of 37 school age programs in Dutchess, and 8 in Putnam
- Includes processing new and renewal applications, monitoring and inspecting programs, providing technical assistance and investigating complaints

Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) (Dutchess and Putnam)

- Supports group and family day care providers in serving nutritious meals and snacks to children in their care
- Manages the CACFP federal reimbursement program for participating providers
- Provided 327,076 meals & snacks in 2024

Health Care Consultancy Services (Dutchess and Putnam)

- Registered Nurse on staff conducts training on health issues for child care providers
- Reviews and approves health care plans for medication administration
- Conducts training for medication administration

Day Care Subsidy Administration (Putnam)

- Manages the subsidized day care services program

Infant-Toddler Technical Assistance (Dutchess and Putnam)

- Infant Toddler Specialist and Infant/ Early Childhood Mental Health Consultant provide training and technical assistance to providers who care for children ages birth through five years.

Resource Lending Library (Dutchess and Putnam)

- Onsite lending library consists of toys, equipment, teaching units and professional resources

Child Care Tuition Scholarship Program (Dutchess)

- Administers child care scholarships to income-eligible families whose children attend regulated child care programs in Dutchess County. Funded by the Dyson Foundation
- Provided scholarships for 10 children, totaling \$45,147 in 2024.

Professional Development (Dutchess and Putnam)

- Provides opportunities for child care providers to take trainings in the ten required topic areas
- Training opportunities may be held at the Child Care Council (41 trainings) or at the program site (13 trainings)
- Quarterly cluster meetings for home-based child care providers

Business Services (Dutchess and Putnam)

- Provides child care business trainings
- Assists child care programs with program budget creation
- Offers individualized child care business technical assistance

Legally Exempt Enrollment Services

- Provides support to 123 enrolled LE providers in Dutchess County & 7 in Putnam County
- Includes new & renewed applications, annual inspections and providing technical assistance to programs

Congratulations to all of our nominees!

Day Care Centers

Acorns to Oaks

Miss Ella, Miss Serene

Acorns to Oaks II Inc.

Ms. Adrienne

Care 4 Me, Inc

Child Care by Valerie, Inc

Barbara McCutcheon, Lisson Shorter, Andrea Addington

Creative Kids of Beekman

Charlene, Dana Trusso, Tracey Burger

Jessica Zeidan, Sophia Rambusch

Community Family Development, Inc. North Site

Andra Caygo, Justina Paulin

Tina, Kamyryn Lee, Sarah Whitley

Dreamland Daycare Services LLC

Dutchess Community College Day Care Center

Heart 2 Heart Child Care Center LLC

Rasaura Mercader

Honeybee Child Care Corp

Gabi Morgan

Honeybee Child Care Corp II

Little Lamb Family Day Care, Inc

Cece, Lexie, Luz

Mahopac Kids Childcare & Mahopac Falls Nursery School

Once Upon a Time Pre-School and Daycare

Lisa Montalto

Step by Step Child Care Center LLC

Danielle Brescia, Danielle Navarro,

Gabby Khuns, Samara Pineiro

Alyssa Poorman, Caitlin Deluca, Dainna Lifieri,

Drew Brophy, Gina, Jenna Viviano,

Jessica Haindl, Marisa Lifrieri, Michelle Pineiro,

Sharon, Gina, Samara, Tara Gigliotti

Stepping Stones Childcare and Development, Inc,

Antonia DelTreste, Chesa Krasniqi, Denise Giannasca,

Terry DiDio, Dana O'Brien, Jennifer Alves,

Julianne Custer, Kathleen,

Kristina Boblinger, Mackenzie Wingate,

Marianne Peci, Michelle O'Meara,

Nicole Cannella, Nicole Woodward, Sue Mock

Taconic Innovations

Camilla Motolinia, Alicia Lewis, Teresa Genova

The Nest Child Care Center LLC

The Church of St. Lawrence O'Toole

The Enchanted Forest Day Care and Learning Center, LLC

Jessica Rupolo

Totally Kidz Childcare LLC

Amanda Finley

Wish Upon A Star Childcare, Inc

Young Men's Christian Association of Central and Northern Westchester, NY, Inc

Patti Borsari Sam Badia



Group Family Day Care

Charles In Charge Daycare LLC

Nadia Charles

Corlies Christian Childcare LLC

Daddy's Daycare Christian Center

Froggy's Play Palace

Brittany Valentine

Guardian Angel Daycare

Hilltop Daycare LLC

Home Sweet Home Group Day Care LLC

Melanie Coyt

Jonnalynne Rouse Enterprises Inc.

Kristin Lafalce

Carrie Merrit Rosemary Sweeney

Kristin Lafalce

Little Friends Child Care

Renee Swart, Millie Hauser

Little Kids of Mahopac

Family Daycare Corp

Mariposas Childcare Center LLC

Natalie Ortiz

My Little Angels Daycare/Preschool Inc.

Denise Clair

Nanu's Loving Day Care

Mary Golokeh

The Little House on the Hill Day Care

Lauryn Surju

Tiny Hands & Feet LLC

Trudys Group Family Day Care, Inc

Trudy Abrams

Family Day Care

Blooming Buddies

Allison Ugarte

EAD Child Care Services

Ernestine Dunn

Forever Friends Child Care

Wendy Pruss

Jennifer Schaeffler

Lina's Family Daycare

Pasqualina Mosher-Volino

Desiree Testerman

School Age Child Care

City of Beacon

First Reformed Church of Fishkill

Mt. Tremper Outdoor Ministries, Inc

Legally Exempt Child Care

Martin James

Milestone Anniversaries

Congratulations to the Early Childhood Educators celebrating Milestone Anniversaries since 2024

Five Years

Amira Abuhalmeh

Bright Horizons Children's Center, Inc

Daniella Barone

Step by Step Childcare Center LLC

Kristina Bohlinger

Stepping Stones Child Care &
Development, Inc

Kaitlyn Ghasia

Acorns to Oaks II

Jennifer Gorski

Froggy's Play Palace

Emily Haindl

Step by Step Childcare Center LLC

Gianna Heinrich

Creative Kids Beekman

Suzanne Mock

Stepping Stones Child Care LCC

Lorena Oktrova

St. Lawrence O'Toole Early
Childhood Learning Center

Ten Years

Susan Deehan

Step by Step Childcare Center LLC

Adrienne Lebowite

Acorns to Oaks II

Michelle Pineiro

Step by Step Childcare Center LLC

Teresa Rokitowski

Honeybee Child Care Corp. II

Fifteen Years

Kathy Evans

Honeybee Child Care Corp.

Carol Feehan

St. Lawrence O'Toole Early
Childhood Learning Center

Mary Rokitowski

Honeybee Child Care Corp.

Twenty Years

Cynthia Secor

Bright Horizons Children's Center LLC

Thirty-Five Years

Beth Becker

Busy Bees Learning Center GFDC





Education Awards



Congratulations to the following persons who have achieved an Education Milestone since 2024.
We salute your efforts to further your education to enhance what you offer to children and their families.

Master's Certificate in Theology

Doretha Oliver

The Happy Face Daycare

Bachelor of Science in Early Childhood

Amanda Perez

Acorns to Oaks II

Child Development Associate

Alexsia Benitez

Bright Horizons Children's Center, Inc

Yei Garcia

Bright Horizons Children's Center, Inc

Wraishmin Hashmat

Astor Services for Children and Families

Asia Howard

Astor Services for Children and Families

Patricia Kamwela

Astor Services for Children and Families

Leah McGann

Astor Services for Children and Families

Katie McGuigan

Astor Services for Children and Families

Debra McTighe

Astor Services for Children and Families

Enedina Moran Merina

Astor Services for Children and Families

Kathleen Sprauge

Astor Services for Children and Families

Family Development Credential

Lizet Amado

Astor Services for Children and Families

Destinee Mercado

Astor Services for Children and Families

Brittania Reid

Astor Services for Children and Families

Brenda Rosales

Astor Services for Children and Families

NYS Teaching Assistant Level I

Samantha Beebe

Astor Services for Children and Families

Magdalena Dzopalic

Astor Services for Children and Families

Angeline Johnson

Astor Services for Children and Families

Jessica Lunsford

Astor Services for Children and Families

Fun Facts!

How did Champions of Child Care get started?

For many years the Child Care Council of Dutchess and Putnam, Inc. held a luncheon at a local restaurant for its Annual Meeting with speakers, election of the Board of Directors and recognition of child care providers. The recognition of providers was at the end of the meeting and as the program seemed to last longer each year, many in the audience had returned to work before the recognition took place.

Then in 2003, a small group of us decided “to give it a shot” and host an event solely to recognize and honor child care providers. There was little time to plan, so we hoped it would all come together. We had no intention of doing this again.

Approximately 100 people attended (more than we had anticipated) at the Poughkeepsie Grand Hotel. The son of one of the Council staff entertained with a spectacular tap dancing routine and everyone enjoyed a delicious dinner. The rest of the evening was devoted to presenting awards and honoring child care providers. As people were leaving, we were overwhelmed with the many sincere thank you’s. But one family day provider’s comment made all the difference as she said, “I was planning to close my doors because I felt discouraged and unappreciated. But after tonight I feel appreciated and I’m staying open.”

That one comment gave us the reason and the inspiration to continue to celebrate the many dedicated, caring and passionate people who care for our children every day.

How many awards have you given out between 2003 and 2024?

Milestone Awards

5 Year Milestone Awards: 326

10 Year Milestone Awards: 177

15 Year Milestone Awards: 102

20 Year Milestone Awards: 63

25 Year Milestone Awards: 34

30 Year Milestone Awards: 25

35 plus Year Milestone Awards: 14

TOTAL Milestone Awards: 741

Education Awards

Child Development Associate: 150

School Age Credential: 12

Family Development Credential: 11

Accreditation/Re-Accreditation: 14

Associates Degree: 55

Bachelors Degree: 41

Masters Degree: 27

Doctorate: 1

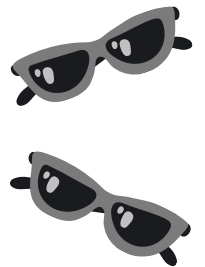
NYS Teaching Assistant Certification: 1

Other: 14

TOTAL Education Awards: 336

Special Awards:

We have given awards to 326 child care providers that have been nominated by their peers.



How do you decide who receives a Milestone or Education Award?

A flyer is sent by mail and electronically to all regulated child care providers asking for years of service in five year increments and any educational achievements received within the past 12 months.

How do people nominate child care providers?

About 2 months before the Champions Event, we invite anybody to submit a nomination for any child care provider in Dutchess and Putnam Counties. We send this form electronically to all parents and providers on our mailing list and through the postal service to all regulated child care providers. We ask this to be shared across all social media outlets and ask that it be given to all parents in child care programs. The link to our online nomination form is available on our website and also through our Facebook page. Many reminders are sent out electronically during the nomination period.

Since 2003 we have received approximately 3436 nominations!

How do you choose the Special Awards Winners?

After all of the nominations have been submitted, the Champions of Child Care Committee spends about a week reading through all of them on our own. We then come together and vote on the nominations that were written to decide the most deserving of the award in each category. We do not count the number of nominations or decide the winner based on the number of nominations submitted for that program or individual.

How do you choose what the theme is?

There are evaluation forms on the tables at the Champions Event. We ask for feedback in all areas of the event.

How did COVID-19 impact Champions of Child Care?

Because of COVID-19, 2023 was the first Champions of Child Care event since 2019. We had begun 2020 preparations, but sadly had to cancel. We were very disappointed! During the pandemic is where child care providers shone their brightest! Since we had already opened the Nomination submission form, we decided to continue to receive and send the recipients all of the kind words that were submitted. We sent over 300 messages to providers! We also sent each provider a certificate of appreciation to show our support.

Congratulations to our Award Winners!

Dutchess County

Child Care Council Award of Excellence

Care 4 Me Inc.

Community Impact Award

Community Family Development

Outstanding Supportive Program Award

Lina's Family Daycare

Mariposas Childcare Center LLC

Day Care Center of the Year

Totally Kidz Wingdale

School Age Program of the Year

First Reformed Church of Fishkill

Group Family Day Care

Program of the Year

Froggy's Play Palace

Family Day Care Program of the Year

Jennifer Schaeffler

Director of the Year

Tara Gigliotti

Step by Step Child Care Center LLC

Staff Member of the Year

Michaela Monohan

Rookie of the Year

Nadia Charle

Charles in Charge

Daycare LLC

Putnam County

Child Care Council Award of Excellence

Stepping Stones Childcare &

Development Inc

Community Impact Award

Heart 2 Heart Child Care

Center LLC

Outstanding Supportive Program Award

Mahopac Kids Childcare & Mahopac

Falls Nursery School

Day Care Center of the Year

St. Lawrence O'Toole Early Childhood

Learning Center

School Age Program of the Year

Mt. Tremper Outdoor

Ministries Inc

Group Family Day Care

Program of the Year

Little Kids of Mahopac

Family Daycare Corp.

Director of the Year

Melanye Coyt

Home Sweet Home Group Day

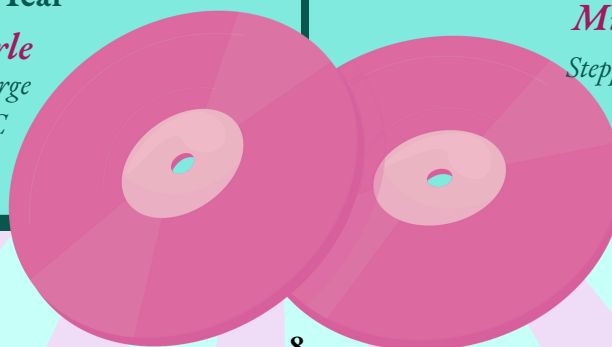
Care LLC

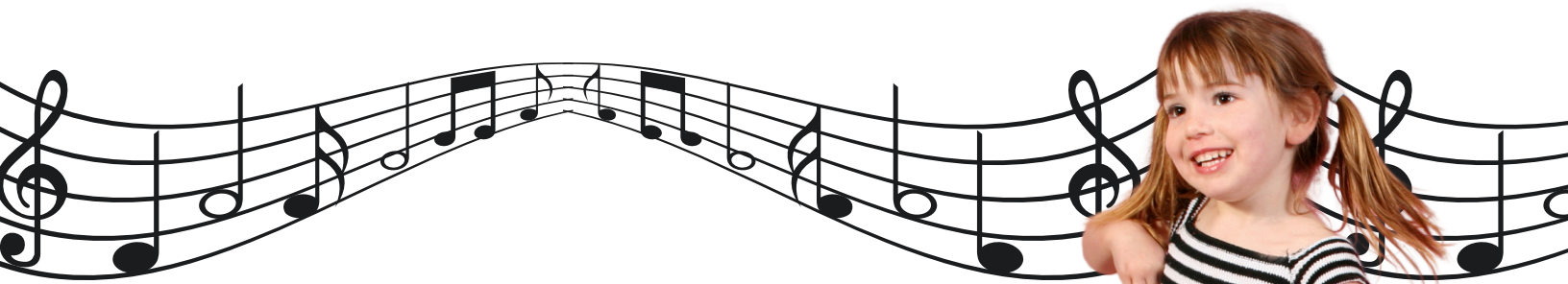
Staff Member of the Year

Michelle O'Meara

Stepping Stones Childcare &

Development Inc





We proudly support the
Child Care Council
of Dutchess & Putnam, Inc.
and the
2025 Champions
of Child Care

Rhinebeck Bank
Your Community Bank!
We're Better Together
RhinebeckBank.com
Member FDIC



To Our YMCA of Central and Northern Westchester Childcare Staff

Your dedication, patience, and compassion are the heart of our programs. Every day, you bring open minds, open hearts, and a strong commitment to nurturing young minds — and it never goes unnoticed.

Through your creativity and kindness, you create safe, joyful spaces where children feel valued and excited to learn. Your presence guides their growth and brings comfort, encouragement, and celebration to every milestone.

We know this work isn't always easy — and we're deeply grateful for the love and energy you bring each day. You're not only shaping young lives, you're strengthening our entire YMCA family.

With heartfelt appreciation,
Your YMCA Leadership Team



Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)

Do you care for children in your home while their parents are at work or school? Would you like help serving healthy food to the children in your care?

This food program helps you pay for meals and snacks served to children up to age 13 enrolled in your care. Most home day care providers are eligible and joining is free.



What are the benefits of CACFP?

Children are served nutritious meals and snacks and develop healthy eating habits that will last a lifetime.

Parents know their children are eating safe, healthy meals and snacks. Parents don't have to pack food to bring to child care.

Providers receive regular training and guidance about many nutrition, mealtime, and child development topics. The reimbursement helps providers buy healthier foods.

Communities benefit through CACFP. Studies show that children enrolled in CACFP have healthier diets and are not sick as often as other children. CACFP payments to providers help reduce child care costs for working families.

If you would like more information or to join CACFP call
Lorraine Scuccimarra at 845-473-4141 ext. 220

Professional Development

Monthly trainings on a variety of topics, covering the OCFS required topic areas

Monthly First Aid/CPR trainings (on Saturday mornings)

Babysitting Class for youth ages 10-16 (on Saturday mornings – usually 2-3 times a year)

Onsite training fees:

8-12- \$120.00 hourly rate

13-17- \$170.00 hourly rate

18-22- \$220.00 hourly rate

Any amount over 22 participants is calculated at \$10.00 per participants per hour of training.

Don't have a minimum of 8 staff for an onsite training? Buddy up with another program(s)/provider(s) to share the cost of a training.

Do you prefer to have training at your site? We can do that too! Tell us what topic you want and we can bring the training to you.

Choose one of these topics or one of your own:

- Active Play for All Ages
- Active Supervision
- Activities for Young Children (art, science, etc.)
- Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)
- Behavior Management
- Business Trainings
- Child Abuse/Mandated Reporting
- Classroom Management
- Developmentally Appropriate Practice (any age)
- Guiding & Supporting School-age Behavior
- OCFS Regulations
- The Importance of Play



Check out our calendar online or sign up to receive our emails for trainings being offered in our Dutchess office. For more information or to register for a training, contact Wendy Cooper at (845) 473-4141 ext. 228 or via email at wcooper@childcaredutchess.org.

Infant through Early Childhood Resources

The Infant Toddler Specialist will assist providers in maintaining quality environments, learning materials for infants and toddlers, early childhood development, and teacher and administrative standards in childcare centers.

Tiffinie Helweg: thelweg@childcaredutchess.org
(845) 473-4141 x217



The Infant Early Childhood Mental Health Consultant works in partnership with providers to strengthen children's social emotional development while addressing challenging behaviors early on before intervention is needed.

Cyndie Hackett: chackett@childcaredutchess.org -
(845) 473-4141 x223

Marketing and Advertising

Do you need assistance with marketing your business?

Reach out to Sarah Rokitowski, Director of Marketing and Outreach
srokitowski@childcaredutchess.org
845-473-4141 ext 219

Here's how we can help:

- Tips and tricks on creating your own advertisements
- How to use social media to your advantage
 - Creating noteworthy posts to get more interactions
- How to write for advertising
- How to use Canva and other free programs to create your own graphics
- Where to advertise to get more traction
- Assistance in upgrading your current graphics and logos
- Answering your questions to help you market your program



Health Care Consultant

We have a registered nurse on staff who can help you through the steps to become approved to administer medication at your program.

In addition, our Health Care Consultant can...

Answer questions about common childcare health issues.

Review current health care plans.

Assist with the development of health care policies and writing of health care plans.

Help caregivers accommodate children with special needs and complete Individualized Health Care Plans.

Offer Medication Administration Training (MAT).

Tailor both telephone and on-site consultations to your individual needs.

Support all modalities of childcare in their efforts to provide a safe and healthy environment for the children they serve.

Do you have questions about?

Immunizations?

Exclusion criteria?

Infections Control procedures?

Outbreaks of common childhood illness?

Enrolling a child with special health care needs?

Reach out to Megan Weber
mweber@childcaredutchess.org
845-473-4141 ext 231



Grants and Business Services

Child Care Program Business Trainings and Services

- Core Business Series
- Sustainability Planning
- Business Basics
- Basic & Intensive Technical Assistance
- Assistance with creating Budgets, Contracts and Policies
- Strengthening Business Practices for Child Care Programs



For More Information:

Kathleen Murphy, Director of Business Services
kmurphy@childcaredutchess.org
845-473-4141 ext. 224

Looking for Child Care Provider Support?

Call the Child Care Council Resource and Referral Line

845-473-4141 ext 221

One Stop Child Care Provider Support

How we can help:

Maintain Current & Accurate Program Information
Updated Market Rates
Child Care Provider Resources
Child Care Assistance/Parent Financial Aid
Child Care Statistics





New York State's Quality Rating & Improvement System for Early Childhood Programs

QUALITYstarsNY Supports Champions of Child Care



Child care providers work tirelessly to ensure the children in the communities they serve receive high-quality early education while their families are at work or school. We are proud to partner with the Child Care Council of Dutchess and Putnam in this special event honoring the champions in our field.

Learn more at



qualitystarsny.org

What is QUALITYstarsNY?

QUALITYstarsNY is designed to provide individualized support and resources to early childhood professionals to improve and sustain high quality across New York State—at no cost to programs.

Benefits of Participating:

- ★ One-on-one support from a Quality Improvement Specialist
- ★ Professional development & scholarships for staff to grow as early childhood professionals
- ★ Guidance, information, and resources to enhance your learning environment
- ★ And much more!

DUTCHESS

SPORTS BAR & BBQ

1820 New Hackensack Road
Poughkeepsie NY 12603

Live Music Every Friday and Saturday

(845)-849-1774

DISCOUNT VOUCHER

Free
Appetizer

Valid until 12/31/25

**Coupons to be used separately
Cannot be combined

DISCOUNT VOUCHER

10% Off
Dinner For Two

Valid until 12/31/25

**Coupons to be used separately
Cannot be combined

DISCOUNT VOUCHER

Free
Dessert

Valid until 12/31/25

**Coupons to be used separately
Cannot be combined

Thank you to the Child Care Council Staff!

Nancy Owen

Council Clerk

33 years

Jeanne Wagner

Executive Director

27 years

Karen Walsh

Assistant Director

19 years

Lorraine Scuccimarra

CACFP Coordinator

19 years

Dawn Haecker

Putnam County Day Care

Services Assistant

18 years

Carol Hand

Day Care Registrar

18 years

Megan Weber, RN

Health Care Consultant

9 years

Kathleen Murphy

Director of Business Services

6 years

Cyndie Hackett

Infant Early Childhood

Mental Health Consultant

5 years

Rebecca Shaffer

Registration Supervisor

5 years

Wendy Cooper

Day Care Registrar

4 years

Nicole O'Leary

Putnam County Day Care Services

4 years

Tiffinie Helweg

Infant Toddler Specialist

3 years

Brianna Vigliotti

Day Care Registrar

3 years

Kim Ciardullo

Day Care Registrar

Legally Exempt Enrollment Specialist

2 year

Deborah Taffe

Bookkeeper

2 years

Sarah Rokitowski

Director of Marketing and Outreach

9 months

Mara Goulette

Day Care Registrar

8 months

Crystal Cooper

Referral/ Legally Exempt Specialist

6 months

Daisy Rivera

Day Care Registrar

3 months

2024 Board of Directors

Julie Riess

Chair

Member at Large

Marguerite Woodcock

Member at Large

Christa Hines

Treasurer

Member at Large

Valina Addo Esq.

Secretary

Member at Large

Bonnie Fogarty

YMCA Putnam County

Michael Hall

Dutchess Community College

Marisol Hoffman

Group Family Daycare

Andrea Massi

Member at Large

Jazmin Raby

Astor Early Childhood Program

Jennifer Santosuosso

Member at Large

Estefany Umbach

Day One Early Learning

Indra Ong

Day One Early Learning

Margaret Slomin

Member at Large

Annie Spinelli

Child Care Provider of Putnam

Thank you to the Champions of Child Care Committee

Lance Bixby (Photographer)
Wendy Cooper
Kathleen Murphy
Jaszin Raby
Valina Addo Esq.

Mary Rokitowski
Sarah Rokitowski
Lorraine Scuccimarra
Estefany Umbach
Jeanne Wagner
Karen Walsh

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Darla Fulmer
Fun Max
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Hudson Plaza Wine and Spirits
My Wine & Spirits
Nothing Bundt Cakes

Pamal Broadcasting
Pastry Garden
Price Chopper
Lorraine Scuccimarra
Starbucks
Stewarts
Stop N Shop

EVERY
CHILD
MATTERS

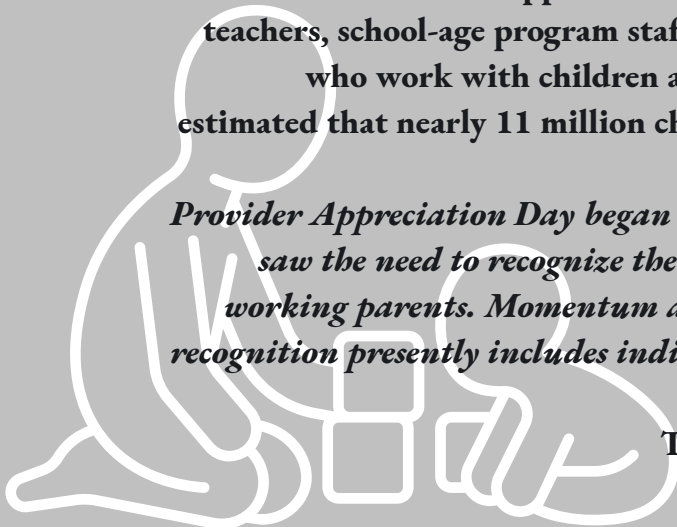



Nicole Colon and the entire staff at Villa Borghese.

The second Sunday in May has long been recognized as the day to honor mothers and their commitment to children. The Friday before Mother's Day, May 9, 2025, is Child Care Provider Appreciation Day, a special day to recognize child care providers, teachers, school-age program staff, child care center directors and staff, and all those who work with children and are responsible for their education and care. It is estimated that nearly 11 million children under age 5 are cared for by 2.8 million child care providers in the United States.

Provider Appreciation Day began in 1996 by a group of volunteers in New Jersey who saw the need to recognize the tireless efforts of providers who care for children of working parents. Momentum and support for this event has grown each year, and recognition presently includes individuals and government organizations throughout North America, Europe, and Asia.

To learn more about Provider Appreciation Day, visit www.providerappreciationday.org.





May we raise children who love the unloved things-
The dandelion, the worms and the spiderlings.
Children who sense the rose needs the thorn
And run into rainswept days the same way they
turn towards sun.

And when they're grown and someone has to speak
for those who have no voice
May they draw upon that wilder bond, those days
of tending tender things--
And be the one.

Nicolette Sowder

