

April 2023

# SPRING ON THE SHORE

## ECMHC NEWSLETTER



## Spring Has Sprung!

By Madeline Parler

Spring is a time of rebirth and renewal, and here at the ECMHC, we are excited to welcome you to this new season of change. Now that the weather has gotten warmer, it's a great opportunity to get outside and show your little ones the beauty of nature. Our spring activity in this issue will get your family into the spring spirit by helping you create memorable moments with your little ones.

This spring we want to bring you updates about early childhood intervention practices in the area that we're involved in. As always, it's the ultimate honor to serve the families of the Lower Shore!

## Chick It Out!

Can you find all 8 chicks hidden in this issue?

## In This Issue:

WELCOME TO SPRING

COMMUNITY BABY SHOWER

ADVOCACY DAY

SPRING ACTIVITY

SUPPORTING AUTISM

INCLUSION TRAINING

CONTACT US



# Baby Showers Bring Spring Flowers



Parents at the shower played The Price is Right, competed to change diapers the fastest, and ate a free lunch.



The interns also noticed during the event that our pamphlets were not available in Spanish. The ECMHC is currently working towards creating Spanish versions so we can better serve the Hispanic families in our community. We're looking forward to providing these in the future!

## By Madeline Parler & Emma Watkins

This March, ECMHC interns Emma Watkins and Madeline Parler hosted a table at the JUDY Center community baby shower that they helped plan during the steering committee meeting in November. Community baby showers are public events designed to help struggling families by connecting them with resources and budget-friendly services that aim to help parents and their children. At the ECMHC table, our representatives shared organizational goals and informational pamphlets with the parents. The ECMHC team also put together free "goody bags" for the parents, complete with diaper rash cream, diapers, wipes, thermometers, and other helpful infant products.

This spring's shower was a fun chance to raise awareness of our services. We'll see you all at the next one!



ECMHC intern consultants Emma Watkins & Madeline Parler tabling at the JUDY Center community baby shower.





# NASW-MD 26th Annual Student Advocacy Day

by Emma Watkins

This February, the Lower Shore ECMHC staff attended the NASW-MD's 26th annual Social Work Student Advocacy Day. While the meeting is usually held at the Capitol Complex in Annapolis, the NASW decided to hold its first-ever Online Advocacy Day due to ongoing renovations. This 7-hour long meeting of over 400 social workers aimed to help students "understand the legislative process and identify strategies to influence social policies and programs." The event featured keynote speakers from around the country and four different workshops to choose from about careers in legislative advocacy, the licensing test controversy, the criminalization of poverty, and the status of LGBTQ+ legislation. Attendees also had the opportunity to attend live committee hearings about Maryland bills and budgets.

The meeting also drew attention to a useful resource for those looking to get involved in advocacy - The NASW's Weekly Bill Profile Report. This report is published weekly during legislative sessions and details bills concerning relevant social work topics, the NASW's position on each bill, when hearings will be held, and actions that have or will be taken. The report is a great way to learn about bills that you want to advocate for!

## What can I DO?!

1. Develop relationship w/ legislators & VOTE
2. Know the issues (class work, link w/ advocacy groups)
3. Be familiar with the NASW MD **ADVOCACY** page and *Weekly Bill Profile Report*  
[https://www.nasw-md.org/page/ProfileReport\\_12817](https://www.nasw-md.org/page/ProfileReport_12817)
4. Join the NASW MD Legislative Committee
5. Send emails, make telephone calls
6. Provide testimony as a citizen
7. Participate in a rally/ action
8. Run for Office



Speakers Gisele Ferretto, MSW, LCSW-C of the University of MD & Jim Kunz, PhD of McDaniel College shared ways to advocate for causes that matter to you.

## How to find a bill hearing- to be held

<https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/mgawebwebsite/Meetings/Day>



1. Go to MGA site
2. Go to **MEETINGS** and select **DAYS**
3. Insert the date  
Full schedule will be under **EACH** committee
4. Scroll down to the committee hearing the bill
5. Click on the link next to the bill number



# SPRING ACTIVITY



## Carrot Planting

by Emma Watkins

Gardening is a great way to connect with your children and with the Earth! Planting veggies can help you teach your kids about where food comes from and get them excited about eating healthy foods.

### Instructions

1. Place the seeds in a cup of water for an hour.
2. Transfer the seeds to a damp paper towel.
3. Place the seed-towel in a sunny spot.
4. Wait 3 days. Be sure to keep the towel damp.
5. Fill a small pot with soil. Plastic cups work, too.
6. Push the carrot seeds 1/4 of an inch into the soil.
7. Place the pot in an area that stays sunny.
8. Lightly water when the soil starts to look dry.
9. Harvest when the tops of the carrots are thick.

This should take about 3 months.

### You Will Need:

- A Pot with a Hole in the Bottom
- A Garden Trowel or a Spoon
- Potting Soil
- Carrot Seeds
- A Paper Towel





# Supporting the Families of Autistic Children

by Emma Watkins

Parenting a child with autism presents unique challenges. To those of us without autism, their ways of communicating and differing needs can be difficult to understand. The additional support needed to raise an autistic child in our allistic society can leave parents feeling drained and frustrated. Just like our autistic children, the parents of these children need support, too. Here are some of our Do's and Don'ts when it comes to supporting these families.

Earlier this spring, the UMBS Social Work Department hosted a webinar about Supporting Families in the Early Stages of an Autism Diagnosis. Speakers Carolyn Gilmore, M.S, CCC-SLP; Alice Williams, M.S. CCC-SLP educated attendees on how to spot autism in children and how to support their families. This included common indicators such as developmental delays, language difficulties, hallmark symptoms, and screening methods. The presenters made sure to cover common misconceptions (such as autism only affecting boys) and affects on the family.



## Do:

- Listen and empathize
- Offer practical help
- Create self-care opportunity
- Educate yourself on ASD



## Don't:

- Treat the child like a burden
- Give unsolicited advice
- Compare the child to others
- Pity, judge, or criticize them



The LSECMHC Presents

# Leading Inclusive Early Childhood Programs

## Our Upcoming Training

Friday, June 2<sup>nd</sup> from 9:00<sup>AM</sup> - 12:00<sup>PM</sup>

Have you ever wondered how you can promote the inclusion of disabled students in your classroom? This June, join the Lower Shore ECMHC program and the Center for Healthy Communities at SU online on Zoom to discover the principles of universal design for learning. Whether your student is living with a physical, developmental, intellectual, or learning disability, our training will teach you how to assist your student in the classroom. These skills can be generalized to non-disabled classmates and families as well! During the training, presenter Kirsten Rhodes will explain the essential components of IFSP's and IEP's so you can learn how to create implementable plans that align with your goals for each student. Attendees will learn about strategies for leading collaborative student support teams and create inclusion statements for their programs. We look forward to seeing you on Zoom!

Scan the Code  
to get your  
**FREE Ticket!**



[tinyurl.com/ECMHCevent](https://tinyurl.com/ECMHCevent)



Know Somebunny that's Struggling?

# HOP ON IN!

Learn More about our Referral Process

**By Emma Watkins**

The ECMHC Program offers **FREE** consultation services for caregivers of children ages birth to five who struggle with mental, developmental, and behavioral issues to promote their capacity to support the child's social-emotional development. We help these children form secure relationships with adults and peers, manage and express emotions, explore their environment, and learn. Consultation can help reduce challenging behaviors, prevent suspensions, improve adult-child relationships, and reduce stress.

## HOW IT WORKS:

1. Tell us a little bit about your child and their behavior. We accept referrals from parents, caregivers, and providers.
2. Schedule a visitation with us. We will observe your child's behavior at their school/daycare and ask questions.
3. Help us gather more info by completing questionnaires.
4. Together, we will discuss and design strategies.
5. Collaborate with your child's preschool/childcare on practicing the strategies. These could include changes to the classroom or child-specific strategies.
6. Tell us what worked and what didn't. We can make changes and connect you with resources if needed.

## CONTACT US!

**CALL US:**

**(410) 677-6590**

**EMAIL US:**

**jiparker**

**@salisbury.edu**

**FAX US:**

**(410) 677-0206**

**FIND US ON:**

**Facebook.com**

**/LSECMHC**