



COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

April 2023

Over the years, we have used a variety of means to transport children on field trips – parents' vehicles, rented school buses, and Wonders-owned mini buses and vans. Although the mode of transportation has varied, ensuring children's safety while in the vehicles remains a consistent priority. You may have read recently that in 2020, guns surpassed cars as the leading cause of death for children and youth in the United States. This disheartening fact and the all too frequent news reports of school shootings bring a different type of safety to mind – both physical and emotional. All too often, parents and caregivers are tasked with addressing this crisis with children.

Our leadership team recently participated in a half-day active shooter training, and all staff will participate in this same training this summer. In addition to the emergency training, we regularly cultivate resources for staff so they have the tools to comfort, educate, and reassure children when there is gun-related violence in the news. Below are resources shared by some of our partner schools and may be helpful as you listen to your children's questions and worries.

I recently read that an effective way to deal with challenges that feel insurmountable is to recognize and begin with your sphere of influence. We hope that your conversations at home and within your individual spheres of influence will grow to create a meaningful change for the health and safety of our children and our society.

Sincerely,

Joanne Hurt
Executive Director

Resources for Families:

- [Fuller Youth Institute Processing the Tragedy of School Shootings](#)
- [APA Helping your children manage distress in the aftermath of a shooting](#)
- [NASP Talking to Children About Violence: Tips for Parents and Teachers](#)
- [Helping Children Cope With Frightening News](#)
- [How to Talk to Kids About School Shootings](#)
- [10 Strategies for Talking to Children About School Shootings](#)
- [Helping your children manage distress in the aftermath of a shooting](#)
- [Talking to Kids About Current Events](#)

Teacher Appreciation Week

May 8 - May 12, 2023

Shh...It's a Surprise:

In preparation for Teachers Appreciation Week, we are putting together a surprise video for Wonders educators! Help us create a memorable "Thank you" for by submitting a 30-second

Submit a Video Message!

message to Wonders teachers. It is fast and easy! [Video Submissions are due by May 1st!](#)

Record and Submit Your Message by Clicking Here

Advancing Teacher Professional Development

Wonders Professional Development Consortium

Ensuring High-Quality: For Children and Families

Each school year, **Wonders teachers complete 18-24 hours of professional development through Wonders PDC, at no cost to our classroom educators.** Since August, Wonders teachers have participated in workshop topics including: First-Aid/CPR, Emergency Preparation/Active Shooter, Spirited Children in Early Learning, and Exploring the Mysteries of Sensory Processing and Strategies to Help Young Children Self-Regulate. Additional workshop topics offered this school year will include: Medication Administration, Child Abuse and Neglect, Conflict Resolution, Taking Learning Outdoors, and The Magic of Transitions.

On April 10th, Wonders Extended Day and Early Learning educators participated in our Spring Professional Development Day, a full day dedicated to training and skill-building. Training topics included Taking Learning Outdoors, The Magic of Transitions, Conflict Resolution, and curriculum implementation. Our summer camp team also had an opportunity to meet to discuss, plan, and prepare for camp beginning this June.



Mentorship Program: Coaching and Reflection

Lifelong learning is key to the Wonders mission and includes our staff, too! Gerald Bolden, Program Director at Wonders at Chevy Chase and Extended Day Auxiliary Program Manager, facilitates two mentor programs for Extended Day educators and leaders. The Leadership Mentor Program focuses on topics that include time management, licensing regulations, health and safety procedures, team building, behavior management, and parent and community engagement. The monthly mentor meetings for first year Extended Day educators provides a collaborative space and resources to support children’s social-emotional development, health and safety, and curriculum activities planning.

Leading For Children: Leadership Program

For a second year, Wonders is hosting reflective practice journal study groups with educators from [Leading for Children](#). Using their book, “The Five Commitments of Optimistic Leaders for Children”, the groups will dive into these five commitments:

- Think Impact - to make informed decisions
- Cultivate Self- Awareness - to guide thought, emotion, and behavior
- Nurture Relationships - to support learning and collaboration
- Refine Communication - for mutual clarity and understanding

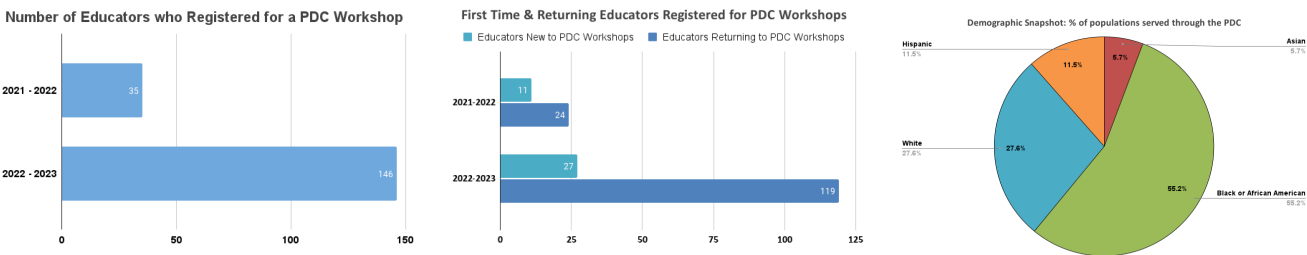
- Activate Curiosity - to find connections and continue learning.

As stated in the book, “Leadership is how you see yourself, your willingness to recognize and own the impact you have on others, and your commitment to take action to effect positive change. Leadership is not defined by a role or title. At Leading for Children, we encourage every adult who continues to the well-being of young children to recognize their role as leaders. The Optimistic Leader envisions excellence and commits to achieve it.”



Wonders PDC by the Numbers

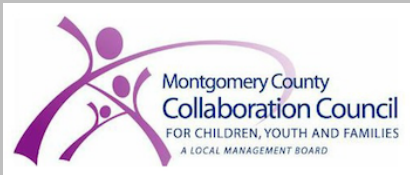
Wonders Professional Development Consortium (PDC) is a Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) certified training program that offers high-quality MSDE-approved Core-of-Knowledge (COK) workshops to ECE and OST educators. Through the consortium, we offer workshops led by experts and certified trainers from the Wonders team on a variety of topics in six major areas: Child Development, Curriculum, Professionalism, Community, Special Needs and Health, Safety and Nutrition.



- *"This conference went very well. I didn't realize that it was Wonders' first conference. It couldn't have gone any smoother/better!"*
- *"Amazing seminar (Conference)! I thoroughly appreciate this opportunity."*
- *"Thank you (Wonders PDC), for leading this educational experience."*

2023 OST Conference: PD for OST Educators in MD

This March, Wonders Professional Development Consortium (PDC) with support from the [Montgomery County Collaboration Council](#), hosted the first out-of-school time conference for regional OST and school-age educators. **A total of 30 Maryland educators completed three, 2-hour MSDE-approved workshops led by three certified trainers on the Wonders staff and a professional trainer from the National Center for School Mental Health.** Conference participants earned a total of 6 Core of Knowledge that meet compliance requirements under the Maryland State Department of Education.



Thank you for supporting new professional development opportunities for ost and school-age educators in Maryland!



March Snapshot
Early Learning + Extended Day Highlights

Baby Supply Drive:
Supporting New Families

Thank you to our early learning and extended day families who donated items for the Baby Supply Drive. **We collected 3 strollers, 2 bassinets, 2 high-chairs, 1 boppy, 1 car seat, and 3 blankets.** Thank you for helping us make a difference by donating supplies that new parents need to welcome home a baby. A Wider Circle will continue to accept lightly-used donations at their warehouse. [Visit A Wider Circle online to plan your trip.](#)

Politics and Prose Book Fair
Thank you for joining us!

It was wonderful to see new and familiar faces at the Politics and Prose Bookstore on March 25th. **The community raised a total of \$561.75 through in-store purchases, and a total of 37 books were donated for our early learning classrooms and extended day programs.** Thank you to everyone who purchased books at either of the Politics and Prose locations and who made a donation to benefit the children in our programs.



Tri-State Camp Conference:
An Exciting Summer Ahead!

Gerald Bolden, Program Director at Chevy Chase, and Chris Powers, Program Director at Horace Mann, joined camp professionals for the 2023 Tri-State CAMP Conference, a three-day conference dedicated to educational workshops and connecting CAMP Directors to resources that elevate summer camp experiences for children. Gerald and Chris bring a wealth of knowledge on interactive and skill-building activities and games that are implemented in Wonders Summer Camp!

Gerald Bolden, led over 100 camp professionals at the Tri-State CAMP Conference in a workshop, "More Indoor Games for Inclement Summer Weather". Camp professionals learned a variety of indoor games that support campers' social emotional learning, teach good sportsmanship, and build friendships.



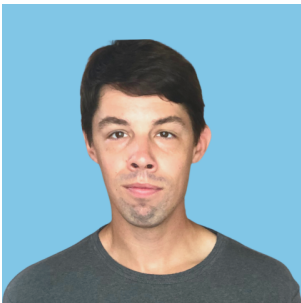
Story Tapestries:
Advocacy Through Storytelling

Early Learning families participated in a Story Tapestries workshop building skills to better communicate stories to children and help both parents and children identify messages of advocacy and problem-solving. Through an interactive storytelling session, Story Tapestries and Wonders parents discussed the many ways stories reflect challenges in our own lives and how to use these

stories as a way to identify solutions to these challenges to become better advocates for ourselves and those around us. This is our third year partnering with the Story Tapestries Ensemble to bring arts-centered learning into our early learning classrooms. [Learn more here.](#)

Milestone Celebrations
Celebrating Milestone Anniversaries during PDD!

During our Spring Professional Development Day, Wonders recognized the five-year and twenty-year anniversaries of two Wonders employees, Chris Powers, Program Director at Horace Mann, and Rafiqah Mahdi, Lead Teacher at Leland. [In this video](#), Chris shares his motivations and passion as a child care educator.



Chris Powers
Program Director
Wonders Extended Day at Horace Mann
5-Year Milestone Celebration



Rafiqha Mahdi
Lead Teacher
Wonders Early Learning at Leland
20-Year Milestone Celebration

Annual Teachers Bonus Fund
May 22nd - June 12

In May, we will launch our annual Teachers Bonus Fund. Contributions to the Bonus Fund enable us to distribute meaningful bonuses in mid-June to recognize teachers' impact on children's learning. **You can make an early contribution today and help us reach our \$20,000 fundraising goal.** All contributions directly benefit the lead teachers, teachers, floating teachers, substitute teachers, assistant directors, and directors - the teams that make children's experiences at Wonders special!

Contribute to the Teachers Bonus Fund


Stay Involved
Community Engagement Events!

Anthony's Coal Fired Pizza RestaurantFundraiser


Saturday, April 15th
11:00am - 9:00pm

20% of dine-in and take-out orders mentioning Wonders Learning will be donated to our organization. Saturday sounds like a great day to grab some pizza and wings!
[RSVP and view the event here: https://fb.me/e/4fhV0elx5](https://fb.me/e/4fhV0elx5)

Share this Event on Social Media





ANTHONY'S
COAL FIRED PIZZA & WINGS



wonders
early learning + extended day

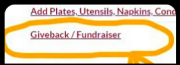
EAT OUT FOR A CAUSE



Mention Wonders Fundraiser

SATURDAY, APRIL 15TH

7776 Norfolk Ave,
Bethesda, MD
www.acfp.com



- DINE-IN
- CALL-IN
- ORDER ONLINE

Before submitting your online order Click "Giveback/Fundraiser"

Orders through third-party vendors such as Postmates, UberEats, Grubhub, etc. will not count towards this event.



RAINBOW FAMILIES[®] ANNUAL FAMILY CONFERENCE & GATHERING

Our Voices Heard, Our Families Strong
May 20, 2023

Workshops | Kids Camp | Community Awards
LGBTQ Affirming Vendor Fair | Inspiration
Special Guests | Community Connection

Hosted by Washington Episcopal School, Bethesda Maryland



Information :

 rainbowfamilies.org  conference@rainbowfamilies.org

Rainbow Families Annual Conference

Saturday, May 20, 2023
8:30 am - 4:30 pm
Washington Episcopal School, Bethesda, MD

Wonders is proud to be a sponsor of the Rainbow Families Kids' Camp during the Rainbow Families Annual Gathering and Conference this May. Families attending the conference will have access to all-day care for children ages 5 - 11 years old.

Learn More and Register Here

Join us with a contribution today!

Teaching children through play and a nurturing and diverse community.
[Make a donation today to ensure access to quality care and education.](#)

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