

What's New in the Center of Excellence?

Tennessee State University's Early Head Start - Child Care Partnership Expands To Rutherford County



The Tennessee State University Center of Excellence for Learning Sciences has been awarded new funding to expand its Early Head Start – Child Care Partnership (EHS-CCP) program to Rutherford County. Beginning September 2020, select child care

centers will join the partnership alongside the Nashville centers Daniel Payne Christian Child Care Center, 18th Ave Family Enrichment Center, Mini Rock Stars Child Care Center, and Fifteenth Ave. Baptist Church Child Learning Center serving children aged birth to three years old.

The Center was awarded just over \$1 million and will serve 64 children and families. This grant includes Quality Improvement funds to enhance classroom learning equipment and materials and to provide training for staff and families. The Center also gains five new staff to run the program including an Assistant Director, a Fiscal Analyst, an Education Coach, and two Family Service Workers.

Tamara Barnhill manages the Early Head Start programs under the direction of Dr. Kimberly Smith, Director of the Center of Excellence for Learning Sciences. “Receiving this new EHS-CCP grant expands the reach of the TSU Early Head Start Program,” said Ms. Barnhill. “It allows children and families in the Rutherford County area to experience the same high-quality child care services currently being provided by our program in Davidson County and the Early Head Start program in Northwest Tennessee (Gibson, Henry and Weakley Counties).”

“I am excited that TSU-COELS has the opportunity to expand its EHS-CCP services beyond the immediate

Metro Nashville area,” said Dr. Smith. “I look forward to establishing new community partnerships in Rutherford County.”

Enrollment will begin on September 1, 2020. Families in the area may contact Melissa Ashmore, Family & Community Engagement Coordinator at mashmore@tnstate.edu for assistance with enrollment applications.

Tennessee State University was among the first group of awardees in the nation to receive an EHS-CCP grant. Since then, the Center has formed partnerships with several local child care centers in north Nashville to provide full-day, full-year care for children as well as screenings, high quality standards, professional development events, and parent engagement services that are provided by traditional Early Head Start programs. The EHS-CCP sites began serving children and families in 2016 and there are currently up to 80 children cared for among the four centers. Each child receives free dental and hearing screenings, free child development screenings, and daily child development activities. All services are offered year-round.



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