Accredited by the National Academy of Early Childhood Programs

The Children’s Learning Center has been accredited by the National Academy of Early Childhood Programs since July 1993. It is one of fewer than 42 early childhood programs in New Hampshire (out of 1,200 licensed early childhood programs) to have achieved accreditation. Nationwide less than 8 percent of programs have achieved and maintained NAECP accreditation. Accreditation criteria far exceed individual state licensing requirements in the areas of teacher-to-child ratios and group sizes, curriculum, teacher credentials, and program management. NAECP accreditation is the field’s professional benchmark for high-quality early childhood education and child care programming. The Children’s Learning Center opened in 1991 and achieved NAECP accreditation in 1993.

Credentials from N.H. Early Childhood Professional Development System

All members of the teaching team at The Children’s Learning Center have received their credentials from the New Hampshire Early Childhood Professional Development System (NHECPDS). The NHECPDS is a relatively new entity that was unveiled in December 1999 marking a State milestone in recognizing early childhood educators as professionals with training, college degrees, and teaching expertise in the areas of child development and early childhood education. NHECPDS also plays an important role in improving the quality of care and educations provided for the children of New Hampshire. The credentialing system also serves an important function for parents as they seek the best quality early childhood education for their children. The credentialing of all CLC teaching team members, many at the highest level, is extremely rare in an early childhood program. Early childhood professionals are able to pursue credentials in five respective categories at four different levels as follows:

- Faculty, Trainer, Mentor: Levels 1–4
- Director: Levels 1–4
- Lead Teacher: Levels 1–4
- Associate Teacher: Levels 1–4
- Child Care Assistant: Levels 1–4
LEADERSHIP

Gail Coppins Gettens
Director

Gail was hired by St. Paul's School in July 1991 to coordinate the start-up of the Children's Learning Center. Since then, she has designed and overseen two expansions; in 1995 the center added space for a school-age program, and in 2000 an addition provided increased capacity for infant and toddler care.

Gail holds a master's degree in early childhood education and child development from Wheelock College and earned her bachelor's degree in 1985 from Dartmouth College. While at Dartmouth, she received an academic citation for her independent research on parent-child communication in the child care center setting. She was also awarded an early childhood education studies certificate. Gail completed her student teaching practicum at the Dartmouth College Child Care Center and was an intern in the Upper Valley Child Care Resource and Referral Office.

Gail is a lifelong learner and a major participant in the early childhood education field. She is a member of the New Hampshire Infant/Toddler Task Force. As a member of the Early Childhood Senior Mentor Corp, Gail provides support and assistance to directors and programs throughout the state. She is past president of NHAEC, the New Hampshire affiliate of the National Association for the Education of Young Children. In 1999 Gail received a human resources management certificate from the UNH Division of Continuing Education, and in 1992 Gail participated in the first Child Care Design Institute, a week-long seminar sponsored by the Harvard Graduate School of Design and Tufts University. Gail lectures frequently at colleges and universities throughout New England on early childhood education, child development, program administration, and facility design.

In 1998 NHAEC awarded Gail the Administrator Award in recognition of her outstanding center managerial skills and her contribution to early care and education in the state through her leadership and community involvement.

In 2003, as a member of the NH Infant/Toddler Task Force, Gail was a recipient of the Mary Stuart Gile Award. The mission of the Task Force is to improve the quality and capacity of infant and toddler care for all families in New Hampshire.

Before coming to St. Paul's School, Gail taught at the Wang Laboratories Child Care Center and was the director and head teacher of the Children’s Meetinghouse, Inc., the child care center on the campus of Middlesex School in Concord, Mass. She was project manager for SAU #24’s (Henniker, Hopkinton, Weare) federally-funded Chapter 1 programs, including the Early Childhood Home Visiting Program.

Gail is a teaching director. She is an active member of the CLC’s teaching team, teaching in the CLC’s classrooms a minimum of 10 hours each week.

Gail has state credentials in the following categories/levels: Director, level 4; Faculty, Trainer, Mentor, level 3.
LEADERSHIP

Barbara Ciarla  
Assistant Director  
Infant/Toddler Program Coordinator

Barbara coordinates all aspects of the infant/toddler classrooms and has been a member of the CLC’s infant/toddler teaching team since the CLC opened in September 1991. She graduated from Keene State College with a bachelor of science degree in elementary education and a minor in psychology. While at Keene State, Barbara completed student teaching internships in both the toddler and preschool classrooms at the college’s Child Development Center.

Barbara is a member of the advisory committee of the NH Technical College Early Childhood Education Department. The group advises the department in evaluating curriculum, textbook selection, and course requirements.

Barbara has attended several nationally-recognized, week-long seminars at Wheelock College in Boston. In June 1993 she attended “Caring for Infants and Toddlers,” and in July 2000 she attended “Legal and Financial Issues in Child Care Management.”

Barbara is active in both infant/toddler classrooms and teaches every morning in the infant/toddler II classroom.

Barbara has state credentials in the following category/level: Director, level 2.
INFANT/TODDLER I CLASSROOM

Sarah Chudzicki  
Infant/Toddler I Head Teacher

Before joining the CLC teaching team in the fall of 2001, Sarah worked at the Early Enrichment Center in Concord for four years, where she was an infant/toddler teacher and assistant director. She was the membership coordinator at the New Hampshire Association for the Education of Young Children. Sarah has been a Early Educator/Home Visitor with the Concord area Early Intervention and Support Program working with children birth to three years of age with developmental disabilities. Sarah earned an associate’s degree in human services with a concentration in early childhood education from Jamestown (N.Y.) Community College.

In July 2003, Sarah attended the nationally recognized, week-long seminar “Caring for Infants and Toddlers” at Wheelock College in Boston.

Sarah has state credentials in the following category/level: Lead Teacher, level 2.

Christine Bassett  
Infant/Toddler I Teacher

Before coming to the Children's Learning Center in May 2003, Christine taught preschoolers at the Easter Seals Child Development Center. Christine holds a bachelors of science degree in early childhood studies from Plymouth State College. While at Plymouth State, Christine taught at the college's Child Development and Family Center, along with completing a semester of student teaching in the second grade of Bristol Elementary School.

Christine is pursuing state credentials in the following category/level: Lead Teacher, Level 3.
INFANT/TODDLER I CLASSROOM

Jasmine Batchelder
Infant/Toddler I Classroom Assistant

Jasmine came to the CLC in the fall of 2002 after graduating in 2001 with a bachelor of arts degree in humanities from Pensacola Christian College. While a student, Jasmine worked in the Extended School Program of the Pensacola Christian Academy, where she taught children in the after-kindergarten classroom. She has attended workshops and in-service training sessions on topics in early childhood education and child development. Jasmine has had experience as a nanny for families in the Concord area.

Jasmine has state credentials in the following category/level: Associate Teacher, level 1.

Nancy LaJeunesse
Infant/Toddler I Classroom Assistant

Nancy LaJeunesse has joined the CLC’s teaching team as a classroom assistant in the Infant/Toddler I Classroom. Nancy brings over eight years of experience teaching and caring for young children. She has been both a preschool teacher and infant/toddler lead teacher in Concord area child care programs. Most recently Nancy has been an instructor at the Upreach Therapeutic Riding Center in Goffstown where she worked with children ages three years up to adults with special needs. Nancy has completed the Early Childhood Education Certificate program at NH Technical Institute in Concord.

Nancy is currently pursuing a New Hampshire Early Childhood Professional Development System credential at Associate Teacher: level 3.
Jeannette Perez  
*Infant/Toddler II Head Teacher*

Before coming to the Children's Learning Center in January 1998, Jeannette was a teacher and a parent educator at the Odyssey Family Center in Canterbury, where she taught in the infant/toddler classroom and provided training and counseling for new parents. She also taught infants and toddlers at the Early Head Start Program in Laconia. Jeannette graduated with a bachelor of arts degree in child development from Notre Dame College in Manchester and has completed graduate course work in early childhood education at Lesley College. Jeannette conducted her student teaching practica in the toddler classroom at Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center's Child Care Center in Lebanon and in a kindergarten classroom at the Dame School in Concord.

In July 1999, Jeannette attended the nationally-recognized, week-long seminar “Caring for Infants and Toddlers” at Wheelock College in Boston.

Jeannette has state credentials in the following categories/levels: Head Teacher, level 4; Director, level 1.


Laura Urban  
*Infant/Toddler II Teacher*

Prior to joining the CLC in August 2004, Laura was a Lead Early Specialist at the Early Head Start Program in Battle Creek, MI, teaching and caring for infants and toddlers. Laura was also a lead teacher in the infant classroom at the Bright Horizons Family Solutions work-site, child care center at Compuware's corporate headquarters in Farmington, Michigan. Laura is a graduate of Madonna University (Michigan).
Penny Beauchesne  
*Infant/Toddler II Classroom Assistant*

Penny came to the CLC in May 2003 from the Sandwich Children's Center where she was an infant and toddler teacher. She also taught preschoolers at the Chestnut Grove Child Development Center in Phoenix, MD. Penny holds a bachelor of science degree in early childhood education from the University of New Hampshire's College for Life Long Learning. In July 2004, Penny attended the nationally recognized week-long seminar “Caring for Infants and Toddlers” at Wheelock College in Boston.

Penny has state credentials in the following category/level: Lead Teacher, level 4.

Brenda Lortz  
*Infant/Toddler II Classroom Assistant*

Before coming to the Children's Learning Center in October 1997, Brenda worked in the Food Services Department at St. Paul's School for seven years coordinating the Tuck Shop, the student snack bar. Brenda teaches in both the Preschool classroom and in the Infant/Toddler II classroom.

Brenda has attended workshops and in-service training sessions on topics in early childhood education, child development, nutrition, and food sanitation.

Brenda has state credentials in the following category/level: Associate Teacher, level 1.
PRESCHOOL PROGRAM

Carol Montambeault  
**Preschool Head Teacher**

Carol Montambeault has joined the CLC’s teaching team as the preschool head teacher. Carol was the preschool head teacher and site director at the Head Start program of Franklin and Tilton for the past seven years.

Carol has also worked for the US Department of Defense for two years as a pre-school teacher at the US Army Child Development Center in Schweinfurt, Germany. There she collaborated with many of the local kindergartens through a German-American exchange program.

Carol has a BS degree in Early Childhood Education and is a member of the National Association for the Education of Young Children. She has facilitated many successful parent and staff workshops with the Head Start agencies and is a frequent guest speaker in early childhood education classes at NH Technical Institute in Laconia. Carol lives in Tilton with her husband, Ramon. She has a son, Joshua, and a daughter-in-law, Amanda. Carol is currently pursuing three credentials (Lead Teacher: level 4, Director: level 3, and Trainer, Mentor, Faculty: level 1) with the NH Early Childhood Professional Development System.

Elizabeth “Liz” Gill  
**Preschool Teacher**

Liz came to the CLC in September 2002. She holds a bachelor of science degree in early childhood studies from Plymouth State College. Liz completed her student teaching practica at the Child Development and Family Center at Plymouth State College, working with both preschool and kindergarten children. She also worked summers as a toddler teacher at area child care programs.

Liz has state credentials in the following category/level: Lead Teacher, level 3.
PRESCHOOL PROGRAM

Robin DeMarco
*Preschool Classroom Assistant*

Robin joined the CLC in March 2003. She holds an associates degree in early childhood education from New Hampshire Technical Institute. Robin completed her student teaching practicum at the CLC in the fall of 2002.

Robin has state credentials in the following category/level: Lead Teacher, level 1.

Brenda Lortz
*Classroom Assistant*

Before coming to the Children’s Learning Center in October 1997, Brenda worked in the Food Services Department at St. Paul’s School for seven years coordinating the Tuck Shop, the student snack bar. Brenda teaches in both the Preschool classroom and in the Infant/Toddler II classroom.

Brenda has attended workshops and in-service training sessions on topics in early childhood education, child development, nutrition, and food sanitation.

Brenda has state credentials in the following category/level: Associate Teacher, level 1.
Jaime Lesmerises  
*School-Age Classroom Head Teacher*

Jaime joined the CLC’s teaching team in January 2004. Jaime graduated in May 2004 with an associate degree in early childhood education from the New Hampshire Technical Institute in Concord, NH. She was the recipient of the J. G. Stone Award for outstanding contribution in early childhood education. She completed her teaching internship in the school-age classroom at the Children's Learning Center during the fall 2003 semester.

Jaime has state credentials in the following category/level: Head Teacher, level 2.

Bobbie Lynn Stone  
*School-Age Classroom Assistant*

Prior to joining the teaching team in August 2004, Bobbie Lynn was a preschool teacher at the Children's Discovery Center in Vero Beach, Florida. Bobbie Lynn graduated in 1998 with an associate degree in early childhood education from Hesser College. She has experience in the early childhood education field working both as a teacher and a professional nanny.

Bobbie Lynn is pursuing state credentials in the following category/level: Head Teacher, level 3.
SUPPORT STAFF

Maureen McCarthy
*Office Assistant*

Maureen is a graduate of Marygrove College in Detroit, Michigan. She coordinates the office area and administrative operations and provides clerical support to the director and the teaching teams. Prior to moving to Concord in June 2001, Maureen was a scheduling coordinator and office assistant at an orthodontic practice in Vero Beach, Florida.

Linda Sartorelli
*Kitchen Assistant/Classroom Assistant*

Linda joined the CLC’s teaching team in spring 2003. She coordinates the CLC’s food service operations by preparing lunch and snacks, developing menus, ordering supplies, and maintaining the kitchen environment. She also assists in the classrooms as needed, and consistently provides end-of-day support in the preschool classroom.

Linda has completed courses in early childhood education at NH Technical Institute in Concord. Linda has had many years experience in the food service industry.

Linda has state credentials in the following category/level: Associate Teacher, level 1.
SUBSTITUTES

Susan Stewart
Susan was a CLC preschool classroom assistant from December 1999 until June 2002. She is currently an associate faculty member and junior varsity volleyball coach at St. Paul's School. She has a bachelor of arts degree in humanities from New Hampshire College. She has taken seminars on topics in early childhood education.

Elizabeth “Liz” Brandt
Liz has been a classroom assistant in the Infant/Toddler I classroom during the 2001 through 2004 summer sessions. Liz graduated in May 2002 from Colby College with a bachelor of arts degree in human development and education. Liz also has a master's degree in elementary education from the University of New Hampshire and is an adjunct faculty member at St. Paul's School.

Jessica Seawards
Jessica has been at the CLC since April 2004. During summer 2004, Jessica worked full-time in the Infant/Toddler I classroom. She is a student in the early childhood education program at Southern New Hampshire University.

Molly McCarthy
During summer 2004, Molly worked full-time in the Infant/Toddler II classroom. Molly is a 2004 graduate of St. Paul's School. She is a freshman at the University of New Hampshire in Durham.

Kelly Griffus Herr
During summer 2004, Kelly was a teacher in the school-age summer camp program. Kelly earned a bachelor of arts degree in human development with concentrations in elementary and special education from Rivier College in May of 1999.

She is currently a teacher of emotionally and behaviorly disabled children for the Manchester School District. Kelly has also been a kindergarten teacher and a language arts teacher. Kelly has worked as a summer counselor at the Hudson Recreation Department.

Marybeth Lemay
Before joining the CLC teaching team as a substitute teacher in September 2004, Marybeth was a lead teacher at Easter Seals Child Development Center working with children 18 months to 3 years of age. During the past five summers she has also been a camp counselor and supervisor with the Halifax Recreation Department. She holds a bachelor of science degree in early childhood education from Plymouth State College.