

SPRING 2025



YOUR CHILDCARE RESOURCES

connection



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*This page: Program parent
Gabrielle with son, Reece.*



Building Brighter Futures

When Gabrielle was pregnant with her son, Reece, she already knew where his foundation for learning should begin. Working next door at the Alzheimer and Parkinson Association, Gabrielle had the unique opportunity to witness firsthand the unwavering dedication of Childcare Resources.

“I could see the commitment the teachers gave to their students” says Gabrielle. “It was

an easy and clear decision, even before Reece was born, that this was where his educational journey should start.”

Once enrolled, Reece began his journey smoothly, but in his second year, teachers noticed challenges with his speech and physical development. He was barely talking, and his ability to express himself was significantly delayed compared to his peers. As a single parent, Gabrielle worried about his future.

But thanks to the comprehensive programs and individualized care at Childcare Resources, Reece's progress has been nothing short of transformative. On-site speech and physical therapy sessions provided him with the tools to overcome developmental delays.

"If the services hadn't been provided on-site, Reece wouldn't have received the support he needed due to my demanding schedule. Childcare Resources was crucial to his success."

With Reece in good hands, Gabrielle was able to go back to school, advance her career, and watch her son thrive. She cherishes moments like reading books to Reece's class and watching him joyfully participate in artistic projects. Knowing that these experiences strengthen her bond with Reece and prepare him for kindergarten, she feels proud to be part of Childcare Resources' commitment to holistic parent engagement.

Gabrielle wants other families to know that Childcare Resources isn't just a school—it's a community committed to the success of each child and family.

"I credit Reece's progress to the individualized attention and resources they provide."



Teachers, volunteers, and staff show a special interest in my son, and I can see that they make each and every child feel that way," she says. "I know Reece wouldn't have received this level of care anywhere else." ★



Starfest speaker Dr. Dan Wuori and Childcare Resources Executive Director Shannon McGuire Bowman.

Center Stage at Starfest

Starfest brought together over 400 passionate supporters of early childhood education for two unforgettable events. Held on Monday, February 3rd, at the beautiful Quail Valley River Club and Quail Valley at The Pointe, the event featured renowned early learning expert, advocate, and storyteller Dr. Dan Wuori as guest speaker.

“You can think of early childhood like an apprenticeship,” said Dr. Wuori. “This is why choosing an early childhood program is such a pivotal decision. It’s not about

finding a babysitter— it’s about deciding who will co-construct your child’s brain.”

During the luncheon, Dr. Wuori discussed his new book, challenging the separation between childcare and education in American policy. He was then joined by Executive Director Shannon McGuire Bowman for a Q&A session, where they dove deeper into misconceptions about early learning and discussed actionable steps to prioritize children’s needs.

Under the stars on the Indian River, evening attendees had the chance to meet Dr. Wouri in person and hear more about his experiences. He shared his thoughts on Childcare Resources, affirming that its work aligns with and validates the proven impact of high-quality early childhood education.

“What I saw this morning at the school blew me away. Childcare Resources is a model of what’s possible with community support, despite the broken financial model of childcare. The real conversation we need to have is how to replicate and scale this success nationwide.”

This year’s Starfest was a testament to the collective commitment to supporting early childhood education, and we are grateful to Dr. Wuori and all of our supporters for making it such a memorable day! ★



Photos, from top

1. Event Chair Barbie Horton and Susan van der Stricht

2. Susan Blaxill-Deal, Laura Adams, Helen Boehm Johnson

3. Samantha Lynch, Jeff Pickering, Stephanie Pickering, Luke Webb.



Were you seen at Starfest? Scan the QR code to view the gallery!





Blossoming Minds

In the Chrysanthemum classroom, our four-year-olds are taking big steps toward kindergarten readiness through play-based learning that nurtures their curiosity and development. Guided by dedicated teachers Ms. Mavinee and Ms. Michaela, this vibrant classroom brings the Reggio Emilia approach to life, a teaching method they refined through Childcare Resources' professional development training.

“The Reggio Emilia approach allows my students to take the lead in their learning,” said Ms. Mavinee. “By following their natural curiosity, I can create lessons that are meaningful, hands-on, and deeply engaging.”

Each day, students engage in sensory play, interactive storytelling, and creative problem-solving activities designed to build essential skills.

One such lesson on hibernation had students following two bears, Grinder and Coola, through a live webcam, while creating bear-themed art projects and reading *Brown Bear* by Eric Carle. The children then explored volcanoes through a sensory play activity with sand and spray bottles.

“The students explored books on volcanoes and dinosaurs, deepening their understanding of time and concepts of large numbers,” said Ms. Michaela. “Watching their excitement as they explore, question, and discover is the most rewarding part of teaching.”

By blending academics with exploration and imaginative play, the Chrysanthemum classroom ensures that every child gains confidence, independence, and a strong foundation for their next educational adventure. ★

A Beautiful Partnership

The Chrysanthemum students also benefit from weekly Movement in Motion sessions with Ballet Vero Beach. This collaboration is a cornerstone of our kindergarten readiness programming, helping students build vital skills through creativity and movement. These lessons heighten creativity and help support the development of gross motor skills.

“Dance has many roles in early education, among them communication,” explains Ballet Master Camilo. “Through

movement and understanding the meaning of movement, we can communicate with one another. It also develops the body, coordination, balance, and teaches them how to move safely—within their stages.”

The students eagerly anticipate each week’s lesson, thrilled to express themselves through movement and hone their skills in new ways. These sessions don’t just prepare them for kindergarten—they build confidence, foster trust, and inspire joy. ★

Ballet Vero Beach company members work with students in the Chrysanthemum classroom on a weekly basis.



Did you know?



Childcare Resources was the first nonprofit to establish an endowment fund with the Indian River Community Foundation in 2013. Today, it remains the Foundation's oldest and top-performing endowment account among approximately 20 organizations in the Foundation's Endowment Partner Program. As of the end of 2024, the fund holds a value of \$841,108, reflecting strong financial stewardship and long-term sustainability for the organization's mission.

In 2024 alone, the endowment saw an investment growth of \$86,000, representing a 12% return. This success ensures continued support for high-quality early childhood education, wellness services, and outreach initiatives, securing a brighter future for children and families in Indian River County for generations to come.

For more information, please contact Tiffani Atteo: 772-567-3202 ext. 102 or Tiffani@ChildcareResourcesIR.org ★

Time to Celebrate!



Higher Education Program graduate Nicole Hill (L) with Childcare Resources Higher Education Program Coordinator Stephanie Harmody.

Childcare Resources of Indian River is thrilled to celebrate the achievements of five early childhood educators who have recently graduated through its Higher Education Program. This milestone reflects their commitment to professional growth and dedication to advancing early childhood education in our community. Scan the QR code to learn more about our graduates! ★



scan me!



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