

Monomoy Early Childhood Council

A CFCE Advisory Council of Cape Cod Children's Place

Supported by

MA Early Education and Care's "Coordinated Family and Community Engagement" (CFCE)

Minutes

November 6, 2025

Harwich Elementary School Professional Library and on Zoom, 6 -7pm

Welcome (18)

Introductions, Names and affiliations

Lucy Gilmore CFCE Coordinator for Chatham and Harwich

Kathie Smith - President of Friends of HECAC

Emily Faherty - PUPS preschool teaching assistant, HECAC volunteer

Jenn Gould - Owner Monkey Business Preschool , HECAC volunteer

Ashley Symington - Dir. of Har. Youth and Family Services, Preschool Family Support coord.

Charles Gruszka - Retired Early Education Administrator, HECAC volunteer

Sue Trask - retired Early Intervention teacher, HECAC volunteer

Sue Lellis - retired WIC Nutritionist, HECAC volunteer

Gretchen Kolb-Cauble - Owner, Rocking Unicorn Preschool

Christy Lin - Harwich Elementary School Occupational Therapist, parent of young children

Francie Joseph - retired Harwich Early Childhood Coordinator, HECAC volunteer

Angie Chilaka - President Harwich Children's Fund

Katie Nickerson - WIC family outreach coordinator

Ashley Our - owner Three Harbors Preschool

Sheila House - retired Har. Youth and Family Services Director, Harwich Children's Fund

Mary Jo Burke - retired Early Intervention

Andra Walford - Early Childhood Educator, parent of young child

Bambi Rosario-Wyatt - Early Intervention

Early Childhood Council Mission

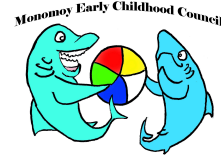
To ensure local coordination and maximize local participation in early education and care services and programs to best serve children and their families. The Council seeks to

- build upon and link to services in their communities,
- identify local gaps in services,
- improve the delivery of CFCE required services,
- coordinate and plan activities that benefit children ages birth through age eight,
- refer to other local community partners that provide comprehensive services,
- provide opportunities for active participation of families to inform policies and planning of CFCE services and to develop leadership skills as their child's primary teacher and advocate.

Monomoy Early Childhood Family Resource Center ~ Satellite of the Cape Cod Children's Place

Harwich Elementary School 263 South Street door 3

lgilmore@monomoy.edu ~ 508-430-7216 x3044



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Five Protective Factors

Parental Resilience, Social Connections, Knowledge of Parenting & Child Development, Concrete Supports in times of need and Social & Emotional Competence.

Review and Approve Minutes from the 10/2 meeting were approved after Lucy changed what Robin Milen shared to emphasize that the *Monomoy District is investigating the possibility of Universal Preschool - but nothing is definite. It is just in the beginning stages.*

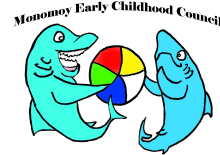
Kathie Smith's Friends of the Harwich Early Childhood Advisory Council finance report:

- \$2,817.75 tuition scholarship was awarded to a family with a child enrolled at Three Harbors Preschool. There were no donations reported.
- Jessica Moraes has been hired as our Treasurer / Clerk. She will begin in her new position in January after training. She is an Early Childhood educator, parent of young children (her son is good friends with Emily's son) and she has known Lucy since her eight year old son was an infant. She has supported our council with clothing donations.
- Three new board of directors will be reported in our 501c3 filing:
 1. Emily Hyatt Faherty, PUPS Preschool assistant teacher, has agreed to act as President. She will have the ability to write checks. She will pay the HECAC Treasurer / Clerk.
 2. Jen Gould, owner/teacher of Monkey Business home preschool will serve as a director
 3. Katie Nickerson, WIC outreach coordinator, will serve as a director.

Kathie assured the new directors that the job is not demanding and can be as much as they want to make it (with new fundraisers, projects and grant writing if they choose to do that)

Francie asked if the new directors are responsible for reviewing scholarship applications. Kathie says, yes, directors will review applications while maintaining strict

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confidentiality. This will be a primary role, unless they name others to form an application review committee. Gretchen reminded us that if a director is a preschool program director - they would abstain from voting if the application supports tuition for their school. Sue Trask asked how many directors are needed for the 501c3 (and quorum for voting). There is space for six names including the President, so that is the minimum needed (Lucy googled this and it looks like there are a minimum of 3 required by law). Kathie mentioned that the longest standing HECAC members are early childhood teachers because parents tend to leave when their children age out of their "early childhood" stage of life. We need to draw from that resource (early childhood educators) to find more council members.

Kathie also shared a letter from Angie Chilaka, President of the Harwich Children's Fund:

1. We would love to have Kathy Smith as the liaison between the HCF and the Early Childhood
2. We agree that you should keep your 501 3C going.
3. We will help you to run the Book Drive with Lucy
4. We will help you with some of your projects that directly involve children. Ex: Lucy's STEM program and other kids programs that you do throughout the year.
5. We can work with you on some fundraisers and getting young recruits for both of our organizations. Collaboration is a good thing.
6. Due to our mission statement- we help children directly.

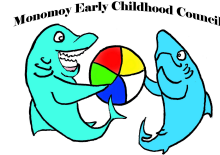
We can not fund professional development for the pre school teachers.

Lucy's CFCE - Monomoy Updates

Harwich Women's Club Santa's Workshop party is a free community event open to families with children as well as senior citizens!

Harwich Community Center Activity Room - Thursday December 11, 3:30 - 6pm

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There will be festive decorations, free children's books and activities including cookie decorating, homebaked treats, the opportunity to take a photo with Santa and his elves (bring your own camera).

The Harwich Women's Club have generously fulfilled gift wishes for 16 children.

Cape Cod Children's Place winter program registration will open on 12/16 "Story Explorers" at the Harwich Jr Theater Arts Center with Emily Murray and Chelsea Brown will be offered on Friday mornings for ages 3 - 5 with a participating parent or caregiver.

Harwich Children's Fund will be helping with the Children's Book Drive this Spring! We need to begin planning soon - who would like to be a part of that process? In 2024, it ran from Friday June 7 through Juneteenth (13 days total) and there were a total of 859 books donated! We need to begin to ask for prize donations this winter (before they close for the season). Ask Bookstores to block time on the weekends of the book drive, begin to generate volunteer list and scheduling in late April or early May. Chatham Women's Club may be interested in helping.

South Shore Early Education center in West Yarmouth has some Voucher openings and may be able to provide transportation.

Do we want to plan a Family STEAM Night? The Harwich Children's Fund has offered to help with funding the event!

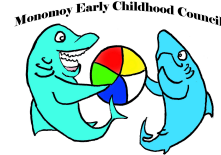
Other News / Community Partner Updates

Katie Fitz-Nickerson , on zoom, reported WIC is open during the Government shutdown with the same hours. All participants are receiving full benefits. They are now signing up families for Thanksgiving and Holiday programs in partnership with Chatham Works.

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We temporarily lost the zoom recording because Lucy's laptop ran out of battery. Zoom participants rejoined the meeting when her laptop was reconnected to power.

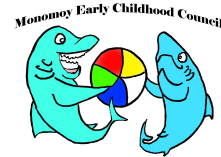
Bambi Rosario Wyatt reported that Early Intervention referrals are down so families are able to receive services within a week's time after they are approved for services. Families can self refer.

Sheila House shared information about her work with the High School PASS (Positive Alternatives to Student Support) program and invited us to participate in their Yoga fundraiser on Saturday 11/8.

Ashley Our reported that Three Harbors Preschool is searching for an early childhood education assistant to join her team. Certification is not necessary for hiring but desire to aim for certification is desirable.

Christy Lin, Occupational Therapist for Harwich Elementary School, and Harwich parent of young children, (in reference to our 10/2 meeting minutes) questioned whether it was necessary to point out that ELL students are part of the PUPs program especially since there was no criteria for the program. Given the current political climate, there is concern regarding targeting/pointing out this one group and further fueling people's negative perceptions of immigrants. Christy just wants people to be mindful about how information that is conveyed can be perceived and be mindful of the current political agendas.

Charles Gruszka recommended attending the School District's FY27 Budget Workshop on November 13th. These meetings are not recorded or offered to view live online. These meetings are very insightful and highlight the district's budgetary goals. Charles also said he thinks Monomoy School District's Superintendent Online Survey for public input was a unique and wonderful opportunity for the community to give their input into the search process.



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Gretchen Kolb Cauble is planning a Professional Development opportunity with Sharing Kindness, hopefully to take place in March. She asked for all interested in helping with the planning process to reach out to her. She said Sharing Kindness staff have been a huge help in supporting some of her students who are experiencing grief. She recommends the Grief Backpack, filled with books dealing with the subject of grief and loss, that are available through CLAMS.

Sue Lellis reported that the Cape Cod Family Pantry (where she volunteers once a week) has never been busier. They are accepting donations of all kinds, including frozen turkeys.

Next Meeting: Thursday January 8, 2025