

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) and
Children's Trust Stop Abuse for Every (SAFE) Child Community*

Minutes

March 5, 2026

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

Welcome (12 participants) Introductions, Names and affiliations

Lucy Gilmore - Monomoy CFCE Coordinator

Ashley Our - Owner/Director Three Harbors Preschool / HECAC board of directors

Melissa Maguire - Monomoy Dir. of Student Services and Special Education

Bambi Rosario-Wyatt - Kennedy Donovan Cape Cod Early Intervention Intake Coordinator

Ashley Symington - Director of Harwich Youth and Family Services

Jen McIlvin - Harwich Elementary School Integrated Preschool Teacher

Sue Peterson - Retired Early Educator / HECAC volunteer

Sue Trask - Retired Integrated Preschool teacher / HECAC volunteer

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

Jen Gould - Owner/Teacher Monkey Business Preschool / HECAC board of directors

Francie Joseph - Retired Monomoy Early Childhood Coordinator / HECAC volunteer

Charles Gruszka - Retired Early Education administrator

Early Childhood Council Mission

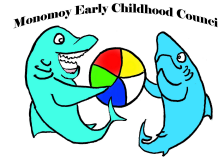
To ensure local coordination and maximize local participation in early education and care services and programs to best serve children and their families. The Council seeks to

- build upon and link to services in their communities,
- identify local gaps in services,
- improve the delivery of CFCE and SAFE Child Communities 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:

February 5, 2026 Minutes were approved with the following changes: Paragraph discussing the Integrated Preschool Program and Pups program enrollment numbers was redacted to avoid misinterpretation and fluctuations in enrollment. A New flyer for Family STEAM program with registration going through Cape Cod Children's Place was added. Dates for Spring book drive were added (May 29 - June 7). The name of the kindergarten boot camp is changed to Kindergarten Kick-Off. (However, due to snow days, this may not be able to happen at the school.)

Friends of the Harwich Early Childhood Advisory Council (HECAC) Report:

Two scholarships were awarded. \$1,000 to Three Harbors Preschool (2nd tuition award), \$800 to The Magic Place day care in Yarmouth.

HECAC bank Balance: \$17,845.20

Lucy mentioned that we are granting scholarships consistently, nearly every month. Francie mentioned that having Lucy back (after her year away) is much appreciated and important to have a well known community contact for referrals.

Lucy's CFCE - Monomoy Updates

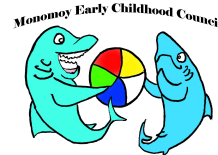
Lucy asked everyone to use this new **Family STEAM Night** flyer

 **FY26 Q3 Family Steam Night.pdf** instead of the one given to you at our February 5 meeting. The new flyer has a QR code and email for registration through Cape Cod Children's Place. Lucy has sent messages to Joy, Christie and Jen to share the flyer in their newsletters and on social media. Ashley Symmington is going to share the flyer as well. Harwich Children's Fund has offered to pay for, pick up and deliver the pizza. Stations are being set up by Jen McIlvin (play dough), Christy Lin (leaf rubbing), Billy Weimer (engineering challenge), Emily Faherty (ball catapults, and more!), companion Sky and his owner Patrick, Andrea Higgins from Harwich Conservation Trust (bird beak

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adaptations), and 4th graders Huck Lindahl and Kiera Lin (Bee Bot robots). Lucy will set up What Will the Water Drop Do?, Make a Flying Thingamajig to test in the wind tunnel, Ball Ramp and Live Worm Lab. Jen connected me with the MRHS STEM club teacher to share volunteer requests - so far we have 6 Monomoy High School "STEMinists" signed up to help. A few more volunteers are needed to help run stations, sign-in families as they arrive, and serve pizza. Lucy is hoping to have some volunteers to help set up at 3:30. Sue Peterson offered to help pick up supplies before the event. Jen Gould and Sue Trask offered to arrive early to help set up.

Spring Book Drive will be Friday, May 29 - Sunday, June 7. Participating stores include Belonging Books (at the Cordial Eye on Main street in Hyannis and also online), Below the Brine (Harwich), Yellow Umbrella Books and Where the Sidewalk Ends (Chatham). Lucy has an updated version of the prize donation letter which includes Friends of HECAC tax identification number and our logo.

revised - book drive HECAC donation letter - Google Docs Businesses who donate should email lgilmore@monomoy.edu a high resolution copy of their logo to be included in the poster. We need about five more prize donations from local restaurants or retail stores. Ashley Symmington volunteered to make the poster this year once we have collected all of the prize donations and information. Charles Gruszka volunteered to pick up the books that are donated to Below the Brine. Sue Trask offered to approach businesses for prize donations (400 East).

Cape Cod Children's Place Upcoming programs:

Strategies for Effective Parenting: Coffee Chat with Cindy Horgan

Tuesday, April 28 at Harwich Elementary School 9:15 - 10:15am in the Activity Room

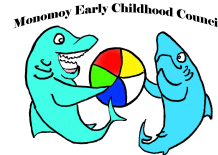
Tuesday, May 5 at Chatham Elementary School 8 - 9am in the Shark Center

Cape Cod Children's Place will be offering an evening Playgroup with leader Emily Faherty at the Chatham Elementary School June 3, 10, 17 (Wednesdays) 4:30 - 5:30pm. We discussed the goal for families with children entering the Pups program and Kindergarten would have the opportunity to meet and perhaps schedule

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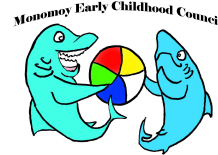
some play dates over the summer. Each family will receive a book and a kit of learning materials to promote practice of school readiness skills over the summer. The group agreed upon the name **"Future Friends Playgroup"** because it implies (as Francie pointed out) that parents may also make some new friends through the playgroup as well.

Other News / Community Partner Updates:

Melissa Maguire reported that the Pups screening was held and all families who registered attended. The lottery will be held virtually March 9th, and will be recorded. They will draw wooden disks with children's initials from a bag that are put onto a board until the slots are filled. They will then continue drawing names for placement on the waitlist. Families will have until March 13th to decide if they are going to accept the spot. Some families have signed up for both the Integrated Preschool and Pups, so they will need to decide which program they will register for if they have spots in both. The Integrated Preschool will have an open house on Monday, March 23rd 5 - 6:30 <https://www.monomoy.edu/student-services-special-education/early-childhood-education/monomoy-integrated-preschool#>, followed by screening on March 25th and lottery on April 1st. For the Open House, Lucy will provide CCCP Spring programs calendar / newsletters and some books for families to take. Pups already had their open house. In the future they are talking about a shift to offer open house during curriculum night.

Jen McIlvin shared updates for the PRISM Early Literacy grant: The team has been reviewing different curriculums looking at how they meet Monomoy standards and meet needs of the team (ex: full day or half day). That process has been narrowed down to three and now they are looking specifically at the ELA domain in each of those programs and applying a rubric to that. Wednesday they will meet to review the results and to decide upon which program they want to pilot. Melissa told us they have a coach and there are many meetings as a part of this process. They will be applying for a continuation grant for next school year that will help cover the cost of the curriculum materials. Charles asked if there has been involvement with early childhood providers who are outside of the Monomoy system? Jen M. responded that they were invited to

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some professional development opportunities. Community partners were invited to their professional development day in December and information was shared from a P.D. day in October. Scheduling is challenging since the P.D. days are held during the work day when other early ed programs are in session.

Ashley Symmington is working with Brooks Free Library and Nicole Camp, Mental Health Coordinator for MRSD, to offer a workshop that focuses on early literacy as it is related to dyslexia and other reading challenges. Tentative date is the evening of April 3rd. Childcare will be provided in a different section of the library. Pizza dinner may be served (details pending).

Saturday, May 2, Let's Talk Mental Health conference style, from 9am -1pm at the Harwich Community Center. Childcare will be offered for children ages 4 - 10. Some workshops will be teen friendly. Lucy recommended Sharing Kindness as possible presenters.

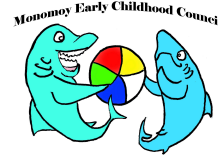
Sharing Kindness is offering a Grief 101 workshop on March 18th specifically designed for early educators and parents to know how to help support young children manage grief.

<https://sharingkindness.org/events/#event=78300398;instance=20260318173000?popup=1&lang=en-US>

Lucy reminded everyone that Cape Cod Children's Place is offering a conference on Saturday, March 28th: Connected Communities from 8-12:30 at the Doubletree Cape Cod, Hyannis. Email dolly@capecodchildrensplace.com to register.

Charles Gruska commended the MRSD for opening the high school as a personal care site during the recent blizzard. Food Services also opened the kitchen to offer hot breakfast and lunch. Everyone applauded the efforts of all involved with the regional shelter at CC Tech, the warming center at the police/fire station as well as the DPW and Eversource crews for helping our community.

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Charles pointed out that there was currently a close to \$1.25 million gap between the level service budget draft passed by the School Committee and the MRSD assessment figure in the Town Administrator's draft of the FY27 Harwich Town Budget. Therefore, it appears that it very likely MIGHT require an override in Harwich to reach the goal of maintaining a level service budget if that would require exceeding Harwich's levy limit. He also reported that the MRSD Administration is scheduled to meet with Harwich's new Town Administrator on March 16 and with the Harwich Select Board on March 23 (6pm, televised on Harwich local access Channel 8). The Town Meeting Warrant for Harwich needs to be finalized by March 30. So, this month will be an important one to pay attention to.

Next Meeting: Thursday, April 2, 2026 Harwich Elementary School Library and on Zoom.