

APRIL 2025

WEST OHIO COMMUNITY ACTION PARTNERSHIP



Kimberly Bruns, CEO

HEAD START: BUILDING BRIGHTER FUTURES, ONE CHILD AT A TIME



At West Ohio Community Action Partnership, we believe every child — regardless of income, background, or circumstance — deserves the opportunity to thrive. That belief is at the heart of the Head Start program, and it's why this work is so vital to our community.

Head Start is the most successful, longest-running, national school readiness program in the United States. The program is child-centered, family focused, comprehensive and community-based. Designed as a two generational approach, Head Start supports parents with guidance of self-sufficiency goals and job assistance information and supports more

than 20,000 Ohio working parents. Here at WOCAP, Head Start serves hundreds of children and families each year. Thanks to our dedicated staff, supportive partners, and engaged families, we're proud to say that we're giving children the foundation they need to succeed — in school, at home, and in life.

Ohio By The Numbers:

28,214 children & families
1,820 classrooms in **all 88** counties
1,663 homeless children served
8,321 staff

24,360 children up-to-date on all well child care
71% of families have at least one working parent
1,743 foster children served
535 pregnant women served

WHY HEAD START MATTERS

For many families in our community, Head Start is more than just a preschool — it's a lifeline. The program provides high-quality early childhood education to children ages birth to five, ensuring they are ready for school and life beyond the classroom. However, Head Start doesn't stop there. It also delivers comprehensive support in areas like:

- **Health and Nutrition** – Regular screenings and healthy meals to support physical and developmental growth
- **Family Engagement** – Resources and support that empower parents as their child's first and most important teacher
- **Social and Emotional Development** – A safe, nurturing environment that builds confidence, curiosity, and resilience



CREATING A RIPPLE EFFECT OF SUCCESS

When a child enters Head Start, the impact extends far beyond the classroom. Families gain access to community resources, children receive the care and education they need to grow, and our community benefits from stronger, healthier, more prepared young learners.

Head Start has been shown to improve school readiness, increase high school graduation rates, and break the cycle of poverty by giving children the tools they need from the very beginning.

COME SEE US!

Save the Dates! Exciting community events are just around the corner — mark your calendars and don't miss the fun and connection coming your way, as well the opportunity to talk to WOCAP staff about programs

- **Bridging The GAP**
 - Saturday, April 5, 2025
 - 8:30 - 1:00 PM
 - Lima Senior High School
 - 1 Spartan Way
- **Senior Saints Group of Philippian Church**
 - Monday, April 7, 2025
 - 12:00 - 1:00 PM
 - Philippian Church
 - 190 E 8th St, Lima

Call our Enrollment Team or Apply Online
419-227-2586 x www.wocap.org

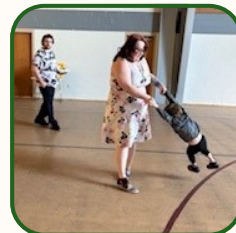


MOTHER/SON SPRING FLING DANCE

We had the sweetest time at our Mother/Son Spring Fling Dance in March 🌸💕
Moms and their little gentlemen came dressed to impress and danced the night
away. It was a magical event filled with laughter, love, and LOTS of smiles. 😊

A huge THANK YOU to all the families who joined us, and to our amazing staff who
made the day so special. Moments like these remind us how powerful
connection, joy, and celebration can be in a child's early years. 💕

Check out some of our favorite memories



CLASSROOM NEWS

EARLY LEARNING CENTER



FIRE SAFETY

Exciting Day at the WOCAP Early Learning Center

Our little learners had a special visit from our local Lima Firefighters! The children got to explore a real fire truck and learn about fire safety!

A huge THANK YOU to our brave firefighters for taking the time to teach our kids about staying safe and being prepared.

We loved meeting our local heroes, and learning that firefighters are here to help and protect us!



DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES AWARENESS MONTH



ST. MATTHEW'S CLASS

To honor and celebrate Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month, St. Matthew's classroom had special guests from the Allen County Board of Developmental Disabilities for storytime. Miss Annie read the children 'Since We're Friends', an Autism Picture Book. Afterward, Miss Annie and Miss Bethany had a nice chat with the children about how to be a good friend. They also gifted us our very own classroom copy of the book! The children really enjoyed our special storytime!

Thank you Miss Annie and Miss Bethany!



WEST OHIO CAP

BOWLING FOR WOCAP

JOIN US!!

**SATURDAY
APRIL**

WESTGATE
ENTERTAINMENT
CENTER

12

1:00 - 3:00 PM

UP TO 6 PEOPLE / PACKAGE
1 HOUR - \$31
2 HOURS - \$62
SHOES INCLUDED

***RESERVE YOUR
LANE TODAY***

Reservations Preferred



LINK FOR
1 HOUR

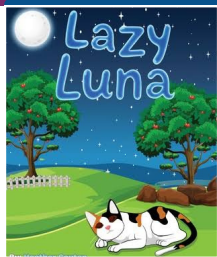


LINK FOR
2 HOURS



**HALF OF THE PROCEEDS EARNED FROM
THIS EVENT GO BACK TO WOCAP!**

BOOKS



Lazy Luna

a delightful bedtime story about a sweet, calico kitty named Luna who absolutely loves to sleep! With soft, rhythmic rhymes and vibrant, eye-catching illustrations, this charming tale invites young readers into Luna's world of cozy naps and peaceful dreams.



The Flower Thief

Spring is here and today a flower has sprung to life. But when Squirrel becomes too protective of it, Bird shows Squirrel the right way to let flowers blossom and grow.

OACAA Winter Legislative Conference



Pictured left to right: Kris Keller, Community Services Director, David Bradley, Chief Executive Officer and Co-Founder of the National Community Action Foundation, and Kim Bruns, West Ohio CAP Chief Executive Officer

Several WOCAP staff had the opportunity to attend the OACAA Winter Legislative Conference, joining fellow Community Action professionals from across the state to engage in critical conversations about policy, funding, and the future of our shared mission. The conference brought together agency leaders, staff, and advocates to discuss legislative priorities that impact low-income individuals and families. Our staff participated in workshops, networking events, and direct conversations with state legislators to help amplify the voice of Community Action and highlight the needs of the communities we serve.

Congratulations to Our Amazing Team Members!

We're proud to recognize and celebrate Child Development Services Director, Phyllis Montrose and Child Development Services Coordinator, Theresa Wynn, for their service and leadership as members of the Ohio Head Start Association, Inc. (OHSAI) Board. They were voted onto the board at the board elections in February. Their orientation and first board meeting is April 2nd. Their dedication to early childhood education and commitment to supporting families in our community truly exemplifies the heart of our mission. Thank you for representing our organization with passion, purpose, and professionalism.



BIRTHDAYS

1 - Nadean Runneals
8 - Phyllis Montrose
11 - Jenny Slife
12 - Keondra Tate
11 - Grace Raines
14 - Mag Gwinn
24 - Sheila Green
26 - Jennifer Jones
26 - Sequoya Walker
29 - Wendy Wertz
29 - Ashley Wagnild
30 - Mary Raines

ANNIVERSARIES

- Lora Elliott - 2 years
- Sabrina Downing - 2 years
- Danielle Anderson - 8 years
- Kimberly Bruns - 8 years
- Vance Cuthrell - 5 years
- Katrina Bogart - 18 years
- Stanley Hill - 4 years

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

4th - Home Based Family Day
11th - Home Based Family Day
17th - Policy Council Meeting
18th- Agency CLOSED (Good Friday)
23rd- WOCAP Board Meeting
Spring Break 21st through 25th
NO Head Start Classes - Early Head Start IN SESSION

Excellent Attendance

Our goal is to prepare your child for their next stepping stone of education whether it is Head Start or Kindergarten. Regular Attendance is an important part of your child's educational, social, and emotional development. When children are absent from school they are missing out on a lot of educational and social opportunities. We would like to thank those parents who assure their child is attending school every day. In the month of February, we had 60 children with Perfect Attendance.

Central A
Tarissa D.
Jayziere E.
Amelia L.

Central B
Chazarar A.
Jai E.

EHS Home Based (GG)
Za'Kius B.
Marc C.
Willow T.
Robert W.

EHS Home Based (JJ)
James K.
Harley P.

EHS Home Based (WW)
Carolyn M.
Aahliyah R.
Quentin W.

Lima Sr. I
Dylan B-T.
AuBrania S.
Ariel T.

Little Rascals C
Keenan W.

Shawnee Weekday Munchkin
Kane H.

Shawnee Weekday Terrific 2's
Malachi C.

Shawnee Weekday Transitional Toddlers
Kh'Air C.

The Children's Place
Cameliana A.

Trinity Creative Childcare
Amara B.
Leighton W.

Allen East
Asaiah F.
Zander M.
Ruby R.
Meena S.

Central D
Taevyn B.
E'marie S.

Central G
Kassidy A.
Jordyn B.
Kari B.
Phoenix B.
Teagan E.
Emma J-D.
Kyion S.

Howard A
Maysenders P.

Howard B
Zanyla G.
Xavion M.

O'Neal A
Zarian G. Jr.
Emmett L.
Ka'Lani M-A.

O'Neal B
Amiyah M.

HS Home Based (KC)
Axis J.
Abel M.
Aniya Y.

Market St. I
Abry P.
Jeremiah J.
Elena W.

Market St. II
Ji'ya Dupree
Braxton F.
Zaniyah H-B.
Kah'Zylah P.



Pictured Left to Right: Laural Kirchner, Coordinator of Education & Outreach at WBGU/PBS, Michael VanBroeklin, WOCAP Mentor Coach Coordinator, & Jennifer Freeman, WOCAP Mentor Coach



Bridging the Distance: Connecting Incarcerated Parents with Their Children Through Books

As part of our continued efforts to support families impacted by incarceration, we're excited to introduce a new initiative designed to help MVP participants stay connected with their children—through the power of books.

Recognizing that many of our MVP participants have been separated from their children for

extended periods, this project offers a simple yet meaningful way to foster connection and emotional bonding. The idea is to provide incarcerated parents with books or booklets that they can personalize and send to their children. Each parent will have the opportunity to inscribe a message, begin an activity, puzzle, or drawing within the book, and then have it mailed to their child to complete. This shared experience creates a tangible and interactive connection that transcends the physical separation, allowing parents and children to engage in a common, heartfelt activity.

Thanks to Laural Kirchner, Coordinator of Education and Outreach at WBGU/PBS, who generously delivered the materials, we now have the tools to begin this project. In the coming weeks, we will be finalizing the logistics to bring this initiative to life. Though simple in concept, we believe this effort has the potential to make a lasting impact on the relationships between parents and their children.

In a touching tribute to a remarkable leader, two of our classrooms at the Early Learning Center have been named in honor of our late CEO, Jackie Fox, whose passion and dedication helped shape the foundation of our agency and the futures of countless children and families.

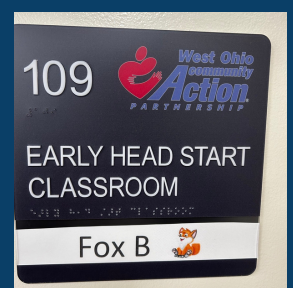
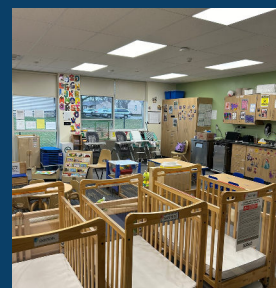
Jackie served as CEO of WOCAP with unwavering commitment, vision, and heart. Her leadership not only strengthened our programs but also left an indelible mark on the lives of staff, families, and the community she so deeply cared for.

Following her passing, our team felt it was only fitting to create a space that would reflect her spirit and lifelong dedication to early childhood education. The two classrooms now bear her name and serve as living testaments to the values she championed: compassion, opportunity, and the belief that every child deserves a strong start.

These classrooms are more than just a tribute—they are vibrant, joyful places where learning, laughter, and growth happen every day. Each child who walks through the doors is a part of her legacy, continuing the work she held so close to her heart.

We are proud to carry her memory forward and are deeply grateful for the lasting impact she made on our agency and the entire community. Her legacy lives on in every story read, every lesson learned, and every child who feels seen, heard, and loved in our classrooms.

A Lasting Tribute: Honoring the Legacy of Jackie Fox



Triple P Seminars

The Triple P - Positive Parenting Program knows all parents have different needs. That's why Triple P has many different ways for you to get your parenting help. So you can choose what will suit you and your family best.

Who is this for?

Parents of children
birth-12

Triple P can help you:

- encourage behavior you like
- deal with problem behavior
- become confident as a parent
- be realistic about parenting
- take care of yourself

Use the QR Code
to sign up &
receive free
workbook



Is this you?

Most of the time, parenting is great fun. You know you are doing a good job, but there are times when things get a little tricky.

What are Triple P Seminars?

Triple P Seminars are for large groups of parents - perhaps 20 or more. They're informal presentations, a little like a public forum. There are three seminars in the Triple P Series. You can choose to do one - or all of them. They deal with the most common parenting issues we all face.

The topics are:

- The Power of Positive Parenting
- Raising Confident, Competent Children
- Raising Resilient Children

Where do I go for a seminar?

The next seminar is hosted by WOCAP via Zoom in April

How long will it take?

The seminars last around 90 minutes. There is time at the end for questions, but you will not have to speak up if you do not want to. There is no homework or follow-up. You will be provided with great ideas to take home and try out with your family!



Join WOCAP's Upcoming FREE Seminars

Seminar 1 April 7th
Seminar 2 April 8th
Seminar 3 April 9th

TIME: 3:00 - 4:30 PM
WHERE: ZOOM

Contact:
Shareena Ingram 419-296-7105
Allison Cummings 419-604-9186
Stephanie Dubuque 419-227-2586 Ext. 148

Help Me Grow presents...

A Community BABY RESOURCE FAIR

Healthy Pregnancy, Healthy Mom, Healthy Baby

April 25, 2025
10 am until 12 pm

Location:
West Ohio CAP:
Early Learning Center
1825 Reese Ave
Lima, Ohio 45804

Sponsored by: **Humana**



Scan here
for FREE
registration

Healthy Snacks, Giveaways, & Local Resources

*Here is a short list of some of
the vendors to visit:*



Questions? Contact: Jennifer Kiene at jenniferkiene.helpmegrow@gmail.com

NEXTSTEP

SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION

the only employment network based in Ohio. NEXTSTEP is suitable through Social Security to work in all 50 states and are federally funded. They work with people who are receiving SSI/SSDI and are 18-64 years old.



TICKET TO WORK

» NEXTSTEP SERVICES TIMELINE

- Meet with Ticket Specialist to determine eligibility if you are a good fit
- Complete an Individual Work Plan and assign ticket
- Begin the job search and review work skills needed
- Begin interviewing at businesses and accept a job!
- Check in monthly with your Ticket Specialist and let them know if any issues arise

» WHAT SERVICES DOES NEXTSTEP PROVIDE?

Help people navigate determining what type of job best suits their desires & needs. They can assist with updating resumes, applying for jobs, job tours, interview skills, on the job training, and benefits counseling

» WHY IS NEXTSTEP THE RIGHT CHOICE?

At NEXTSTEP there is not a timeline. They will remain a resource and support for years to come after building a 100% customized plan according to needs and desires

» AM I REQUIRED TO HAVE WORK HISTORY?

Absolutely not! They can set up job tours where you get to walk through and see first hand all the businesses you are interested in, as well as learn about the possible jobs and how they are performed

» WHAT IS THE ENROLLMENT PROCESS FOR THE TICKET TO WORK PROGRAM?

One of the ticket to work specialists will set up a meeting to ensure you are a good match for the program. Ticket to work is absolutely free and starting an active ticket is quick and simple

Contact Information

Morgan Triplett
Ticket to Work Specialist
mtriplett@nextstepttw.org
419-586-2137 ext. 9-217

Liz Mann
Ticket to Work Specialist
emann@nextstepttw.org
419-586-2137 ext. 9-253



EARLY HEAD START/ HEAD START

ENROLL NOW

AGES BIRTH - 5 YEARS



419-227-2586

www.wocap.org

West Ohio CAP
540 S. Central Avenue
Lima, OH 45804



Parents are involved in decision making and in carrying out the program's activities. Parents serve on Parent Policy Council, parenting groups, and work as volunteers in the classroom. They also help to develop educational and social activities for their children.

FREE program that offers social, emotional and intellectual growth to prepare children for success in life

Head Start is a comprehensive program for children and their families. We offer Home-Based and Center-Based options to best meet your needs. The Home-Based option consist of a home based teacher, child, and family work together to provide activities and experiences designed to meet the child's needs in the home environment for 1.5 hours.

What Services Are Provided?

Developmental screenings, hearing, vision, dental exam and treatment, lead testing, hemoglobin testing, parenting classes, and various training opportunities. Transportation to the center may be provided for eligible children and each child receives a free snack, breakfast and/or hot lunch daily. Field trips and family days are scheduled throughout the year.

What Are The Requirements?

- Families income must be at or below 100% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines.
- Families/children experiencing homelessness or who are in foster care are also eligible.
- Children with a disability may also qualify.
- Services available for children age birth - five years of age
- Service are available to families/children that live or work in Allen County

Dine &
DONATE



Proud Supporter
of our Local
Community

**WINGS
and
RINGS®**

Dine In or Take
Out

**Wednesday
April 16th
5pm-8pm**

**15% of all food
sales will be
donated to
WOCAP**

**Download our
Wings and Rings
App and join
Buffalo Sauciety.
Earn points with
each purchase for
rewards.**

**\$1.19
Tenders
All Day**

Board of Trustees - 2025

Representatives must be One Third Private Business, One Third Public Entity, and One Third Low-Income

Low-Income Representative

Homer Burnett
C.A.L.L. Pantry

Brianna Dysert
Policy Council Representative

Connie Dershem
Allen Co. Council on Aging

Hellen Douglas
Family Promise

Patti Hamilton
AGAPE Ministries - Auglaize

Shannon Tyler
MET Housing - Allen

Private Representative

Linda Chartrand (VP)
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Elizabeth Muether
Mercer Co. District Library

Warner Roach
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Lima Chamber of Commerce

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