



GIVE YOUR CHILD THE BEST BEGINNING

ALAMANCE ALLIANCE & PROJECT LAUNCH SUPPORT PARENTS IN THEIR MOST IMPORTANT JOB

The New World of Parenting

Your child's behavior has meaning — now you can learn the language

As a parent, you know your child best — and you want what's best for your child. That incessant crying at night may just be a bout of colic. You wonder whether a 4-year-old should still be having temper tantrums. You worry about your child care provider's complaints regarding your child's biting. These may not be the questions you have about your child's behavior, but all parents have at least a few questions. Behavior has meaning; understanding this simple idea is crucial to being the best parent you can be.

Today, one in four children struggles with a social-emotional issue significant enough to impair their daily functioning. Your pediatrician has the tools to determine if your child might benefit from further evaluation and personalized support to enhance his or her development and growth. A comprehensive suite of services is available to empower your family to improve your child's cognitive, fine and gross motor skills, speech, and social-emotional development.

Research shows that 80 percent of a child's brain development occurs within the first three years of life. Sound social-emotional development provides a firm foundation for all other aspects of your child's growth. It supports the formation of friendships, strengthens the ability to cope with adversity, and contributes to successes in school, work and the broader community.

So, for your child to be fully prepared for school, he or she needs more than just the ABCs and 123s. The ability to form and sustain positive relationships and cooperate with teachers, children and other adults is critical.

Alamance County now has a new way to support you in your most important job — raising a healthy, happy child. Through two federally funded SAMHSA grants — Project LAUNCH and Alamance Alliance — preventive and therapeutic measures are now available to promote the wellness of children from birth to 8 years of age, and to create a network of information and assistance for families.

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These programs focus on showing how early detection, positive parenting, and timely treatment can help families prevent some unwanted behaviors and avoid potential problems to help children have the brightest possible futures. All you have to do is talk to your child's doctors, teachers and child care providers about any behavioral issues that you think may be meaningful. Through these programs, professionals are receiving the appropriate information, tools, and support to responsibly answer your concerns and refer you to the right resources.



Did you know ...

That talking to your cooing baby can affect how his brain is formed? Researchers at the National Scientific Council on the Developing Child have learned that young children experience their world via relationships — and stable, caring relationships can actually strengthen the brain's architecture. For instance, when your baby babbles and you respond, it's called a "serve and return" interaction. These interactions with adults strengthen connections in the brain that will lay the foundation for everything from self-confidence to school achievement to how a child controls anger. For more information on the science behind a child's development, visit www.developingchild.harvard.edu.



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SAMSHA's mission is to reduce the impact of substance abuse and mental illness on America's communities.

The School-Ready Child

How do children become ready for school? It starts at birth, with the support of parents and caregivers, when young children acquire the social and emotional skills, knowledge, and attitudes necessary for success in school and life. Some young children face challenges (poverty, parental unemployment, low birth weight, depression in the family, abuse and neglect, etc.) that make their development vulnerable. We need public policies to focus on the healthy development of babies and toddlers as an essential part of preparing children for success.

1 *It's all about relationships*

Babies know their needs will be met when they have healthy relationships with at least one caring adult. That adult may be a parent, a relative, or another caregiver. More than six million children under age three spend some or all of their day being cared for by someone other than their parents.

Trust • Confidence



2 *Everyday experiences shape early learning*

For babies, everyday experiences provide opportunities to learn how to operate in the world. In fact, children's academic successes at ages 9 and 10 can be attributed to the amount of words and talk they hear from birth through age 3.

Curiosity • Communication

3 *Emotions*

Emotions play a big role in the young child's capacity to learn. Emotions are stored at the core of the brain's architecture, surrounded and integrated with higher-level brain functioning.

Empathy • Resilience • Self-Control

5 *What a school-ready child looks like*

The school-ready child is:

Confident • Empathetic
Collaborative • Cooperative
Problem-Solver • Curious
Self-Controlled • Creative
Persistent • Communicative



Source: www.zerotothree.org

4 *The importance of play*

Through play, babies and toddlers explore and make sense of the world around them. Play promotes a love for learning by stimulating and supporting children in their development of skills, concepts, language, communication and concentration.

Persistence • Creativity
Cooperation • Problem-Solving

Triple P: A new resource for all parents of young children in Alamance County

Triple P (the Positive Parenting Program) helps take the guesswork out of parenting, helps parents feel confident they're doing the right thing and gives them strategies to use at home right away.

Triple P is a system of easy-to-use solutions that helps all parents:

- Create a stable, harmonious family environment
- Teach your children the skills they need to get along with others
- Deal positively, consistently and decisively with problem behavior
- Encourage behavior you like
- Develop realistic expectations of your children and yourself
- Take care of yourself as a parent

Triple P is a toolbox of solutions for parents. Parents choose the strategies they need. They choose the time and place. It's all about making Triple P work for parents and their family. And Triple P really does work! It is backed by 30 years of research and used successfully by parents from many different circumstances and backgrounds all over the world.*

Around 100 individuals in your community have been trained to provide this valuable resource for families — in doctor's offices, the Health Department, Alamance Burlington School System and other places that work with young children and their families.

*Source: www.triplep.net/glo-en/home



Ashley Motley uses her own experiences as a mom to help other parents access care for their children.

PHOTO BY LAUREN WICKER



A Team Approach

Child development specialists help families navigate the system

by Mike Blount

Part of what makes Project LAUNCH unique is its preventative system of care approach to supporting families. A Family Centered Health Navigator and an Early Childhood Mental Health Specialist work together as a team with two Alamance County pediatric medical practices. Families whose children receive well-child visits at Burlington Pediatrics and Kernodle Clinic (Elon) have access to a team to learn more about their child's development, the latest on positive parenting and help with finding community resources.

Making health care more efficient

OnPulse is a private HIPAA compliant, web-based communications and care coordination network for small and large health care delivery organizations (i.e. doctor practices and large health care systems)

Organizations use OnPulse to build deeper relationships with their staff, referring providers, patients and community agencies. Through real time clinical collaboration, patient engagement and resource sharing, OnPulse empowers these organizations to directly address the growing demands of care efficiency and avoidable hospital readmissions and much more.

Do you want to learn more about how OnPulse can help your organization? Visit www.onpulse.com or call (919) 294-9410.



Finding Answers For Parents

Ashley Motley was 20 when she gave birth to her son, Jameson, who was 14 weeks early. He was born severely underweight. The young mom was very concerned for her son's health and had many questions. Luckily, she had a great doctor and nurse who eased her worries and walked her through everything she needed to know. Today, 7-year-old Jameson is just like any other child his age, thanks to his mother getting him care early on.

"Being a parent and the experiences I have had so far raising my son have helped me to relate to parents better and to see things from a parent's point of view."

Ashley Motley
Family Centered Health Navigator

As a result of her experience, Motley decided to embark on a career to help other mothers who were in similar situations. Family Centered Health Navigators with Project LAUNCH can help families learn about child development and parenting support through Triple P. They can also help families identify their most pressing needs, strengths and interests through a Health and

Wellness Interview process, create a customized Family Health Plan that includes community resources to help address needs, and a plan of action. For example, some families have needs that affect their access to health care, including transportation and finances, while others may want home visiting assistance or referrals for therapeutic services. Through this process, Motley helps families understand and move through the often complicated system of services to recruit the resources they need, and gain the confidence to begin managing their care. Project LAUNCH has also provided a safe and secure web-based platform (OnPulse) on which families can choose to share their Family Health Plan to help make sure they are fully involved in decisions related to their care, send invitations to persons they wish to participate in their Health Team, and eliminate the need to "tell their story" over again to practitioners and agencies from whom they seek services.

Going back to her own experience, Motley says young mothers may experience panic and feel overwhelmed with their children, whether it be an emotional, physical



Debbi Kennerson-Webb of Project LAUNCH is an early childhood mental health specialist, helping parents to address behavioral problems at a young age.

PHOTO BY LAUREN WICKER

or social concern. She recalls spending a lot of time on the internet after Jameson was born, using search engines to connect with other moms and find more information. Part of Project LAUNCH is making sure parents are informed, so they can make sure their children get the best care.

“When I was a young mom, I was terrified,” Motley says. “Being a parent and the experiences I have had so far raising my son have helped me to relate to parents better and to see things from a parent’s point of view. I feel I am better able to empathize with some of the feelings parents experience when parenting is challenging and I am able to rejoice with them in small victories.”

Motley, herself, is trained in the Triple P Positive Parenting program and she uses it with her son often. The program uses a positive approach to manage a child’s behavior and it encourages good communication and positive attention. It also uses assertive discipline, but no forms of physical punishment. The program is praised internationally for its effectiveness.

Motley says that she enjoys doing what she does — helping young parents find the help they need. She adds that if she didn’t have the help she had from her medical providers, she’s sure her son would be at a disadvantage.

“I wish I would have had a resource like a Family Centered Health Navigator available to me when Jameson was born. I could have really used the support of a parent who had gone through a similar experience, help with navigating the system to get in connection with available resources, and so many other things.”

Changing A Child’s Behavior

Early Childhood Mental Health Specialist Debbi Kennerson-Webb is a child development expert participating in Project LAUNCH. The specialists can help provide assessments, intensive parenting support and problem-solving, short-term therapeutic services for families and referrals to other therapeutic services as needed.

“It takes a lot of courage to admit you need help with anything, let alone raising your children,” Kennerson-Webb says. “When families understand they are not alone in this challenge — and that their community is aware of their needs and knows how to help — it’s a lot easier to enjoy being a parent.”

Kennerson-Webb says she feels very lucky to have chosen her profession because she gets to practice with tools and techniques she can then suggest to families. This allows her to give them real life examples of times she has had similar experiences, which she believes helps other parents feel confident as they try new things.

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Debbi Kennerson-Webb
Early Childhood Mental Health Specialist

For example, Kennerson-Webb says when her son got in trouble at school, she got involved by talking to the teachers and administrators. When working with a school or early childhood education setting, her approach has always been to support the adult who made a decision about her child. Through that experience, she was able to teach her son that while he may not think something is fair, he needs to follow instructions and rules when he is given them from another adult.

Building Family Centered Medical Homes

Experts know that families play a vital role in a child’s health. A Family Centered Medical Home is an approach to care that works in partnership with families and doctors to make sure the child’s medical and non-medical needs are met. Project LAUNCH is collaborating with the following pediatric primary care practices to support their efforts to ensure the overall health of each child.

Burlington Pediatrics

Burlington Pediatrics
Burlington Pediatrics West
Mebane Pediatrics
www.burlingtonpeds.com

Kernodle Clinic-Pediatrics, Elon

www.kernodle.com

Call Project LAUNCH to learn more:
(336) 228-6872

“Most parents feel a strong desire to teach their children the correct way of doing things,” Kennerson-Webb says. “However, many parents do not look at social behaviors or the ability to regulate your own emotions as something that needs to be taught — it is often assumed children just know what is right or wrong.”

Kennerson-Webb says that simply paying attention to what your children do well is an incredibly powerful way of shaping a child’s behavior. Many parents, in their attempt to teach correct behaviors, pay more attention to children when they make mistakes and do not always provide the child with an acceptable alternative behavior, which will not lead to a behavioral change.

“What research has helped us understand is what type of responses to our children’s behavior and what type of guidance is more effective,” Kennerson-Webb says. “It often only takes a few conversations for parents to be able to make a change and then be able to generalize it to other situations. Getting help early can not only prevent the problem from becoming more intense, but can help both the parent and child feel more confident to take on challenges in the future.”

To See Paige Smile

Alamance Alliance helps family deal with child's trauma using new therapy

by Kendall Fields

Nearly a year ago Patricia Filyaw, her husband Rick and their 17-year-old daughter Celeste welcomed 2-day-old Paige into their home knowing that she was up against a number of challenges. The Filyaws learned about Paige through a church member. Paige's biological mother birthed her while she was in prison and Paige displayed numerous symptoms of a child who suffered trauma while in the womb.

The little girl was born with drugs in her system. She didn't smile. She didn't coo. She cried at the sight of any stranger, arching her back in violent, painful-looking fits.

But, the Filyaws were patient, determined to give Paige a chance at a better life.

Patricia and her husband took Paige to the emergency room countless times, wondering what was wrong. Was it her ears? Was she sick? As the crying, sleeplessness and detachment worsened, with Paige refusing to be held by anyone but Patricia, the Filyaws sought help from a child psychologist.

Patricia was almost relieved to learn that the behavioral issues Paige was suffering actually had a proper diagnosis: sensory processing disorder.

Sensory processing disorder is a condition where there is a breakdown in the signals sent from the senses to the nervous system and signals do not get the appropriate motor or behavioral response, e.g. a light touch causing extreme physical pain. According to the Sensory Processing Disorder Foundation, 1 in 20 children suffer from sensory processing disorder, and for 1 in 6 children the symptoms are so severe it impairs functioning in everyday activities.

But even in the toughest times, Patricia and her family did not give up on Paige.

"If that child needs you and you love that child, don't give up," Patricia says. "Get [the] support you need from places like Alamance Alliance and your family and friends because it does get better and the rewards are far better than the worries or fears."

The psychologist connected the Filyaws to Laura Muse, LPC at Alamance Alliance

so they could get the support they needed, including access to new therapy techniques to improve Paige's social-emotional development and teach the family skills to cope with her challenges.

As a component of Alamance Alliance, Muse used one of the program's five evidence-based practices to act as a behavioral therapy for Paige. Attachment and Biobehavioral Catchup (ABC) therapy helped Paige feel secure with the Filyaws so she could start on a track to healthy development.

"Get [the] support you need from places like Alamance Alliance and your family and friends because it does get better and the rewards are far better than the worries or fears."

Patricia Filyaw
Parent

Muse worked with the family for three months, coaching them on how best to nurture Paige. At the end of the therapy period, Muse gave the Filyaws videos and photos she had taken during each therapy session so they could reflect on Paige's progress.

Today, 11-month-old Paige Filyaw smiles — even laughs.

Patricia's voice sounds giddy as she describes how just the other day Paige ran up to Muse, giggling and kissing her. For Paige, this seemingly simple act of affection and socialization was monumental. "It is the most special feeling," Patricia says, choking back tears, "to see Paige getting over her crying spells and developing into this well-rounded, healthy girl with no issues."

Alamance Alliance and the support it provided was key in Paige's development, Patricia says. Paige's biological mother gave up her parental rights when she learned Paige was thriving with her new family. The Filyaws are currently in the process of legalizing Paige's adoption.



What is trauma?

Experiencing or witnessing an event involving actual or threatened death or serious injury to self or others is traumatic. The person's response involves intense fear, helplessness or horror. In young children trauma may be any incident that overwhelms the child's ability to cope. Children are more vulnerable to trauma because of their size, age and dependence. Trauma may severely affect every aspect of a child's development and set them on a life trajectory of serious mental and physical health issues.

Traumatic events in children's lives can include:

- Loss of a loved one
- Child abuse
- Domestic abuse
- Community violence
- Medical procedures
- Accidents
- Natural disasters
- War



Your Child's Mental Health: It's OK to Talk About It

Teaching parents skills for success

It is important to remember that while children do “grow out of” many things, mental health problems can and do occur in children under the age of 5. Infants and toddlers have the capacity to experience peaks of joy and elation as well as depths of grief, sadness, hopelessness, intense anger, and rage.

- Mental health problems for infants and toddlers might be reflected in physical symptoms such as poor weight gain or slow growth, delayed development, inconsolable crying, sleep problems, aggressive or impulsive behavior and paralyzing fears.
- Untreated symptoms of mental health problems can accumulate and seriously affect a child's ability to learn and function.
- Because infants and young children develop in the context of close, consistent relationships, their own emotional well-being is directly tied to the emotional functioning of their caregivers and families.
- Untreated parental depression, substance abuse, domestic violence and trauma disrupt parenting and can affect the mental health of children.

Source: www.zerotothree.org

The good news is that mental health issues identified in young children and their families are treatable and there are treatments especially developed for this age group. Laura Muse, LPC is one of many therapists and professionals in Alamance County who provide assistance to families through the use of evidence-based practices (EBPs). An

evidence-based practice is a structured, research-based intervention that leads to positive outcomes. Alamance County clinicians use these five evidence-based practices to teach parents and caregivers skills to help children thrive.

Parent Child Interaction Therapy (PCIT) for children ages 2-12

Step-by-step, live coached sessions with both the parent/caregiver and the child designed to improve parenting skills, child behavior and parent-child relationship

Trauma Focused Cognitive Behavior Therapy (TF-CBT) – for children ages 3-18

A treatment model for children who have post-traumatic stress disorder or other problems related to traumatic life experiences and their families

Attachment and Bio-behavioral Catch Up (ABC) for children ages 6 months-24 months

Training program for caregivers of young children who have been neglected and caregivers of young children in foster care

Child Parent Psychotherapy (CPP) for children ages 0-6

Parent/child attachment-based treatment for young children exposed to interpersonal violence

Incredible Years for Parents (IY) for children ages 0-12

A series of training programs for parents, grouped by age range, with a focus on building and strengthening parenting skills

Help Your Children Grow Up Well

www.alamancesoc.org • projectlaunch.promoteprevent.org

The first eight years shape your child's future, with nearly 80 percent of brain development occurring within the first three years. Project LAUNCH and Alamance Alliance aim to improve the lives of children in Alamance County by supporting parents to raise children with good social, emotional and behavioral health. When children have a secure beginning, they have more confidence and better relationships, laying the foundation for success in their futures.

1. Tips for Raising Healthy Children

- Surround the child and yourself with nurturing relationships
- Smile and laugh with your child
- Provide stable and consistent caregivers at home and in child care settings
- Understand and respond to your child's cues, such as facial expressions
- Spend unhurried time with your child
- Comfort and reassure your child when he is scared, angry or hurt
- Develop daily routines to promote your child's feelings of security and to help her learn what you expect
- Learn stages of child development and have age-appropriate expectations
- Observe good relationships and imitate healthy ways to manage conflict
- Identify early signs of social and emotional problems
- Realize that whatever you are doing or going through may affect a child in your life

Source: "What is Infant Mental Health?" By Florida State University Center for Prevention and Early Intervention Policy

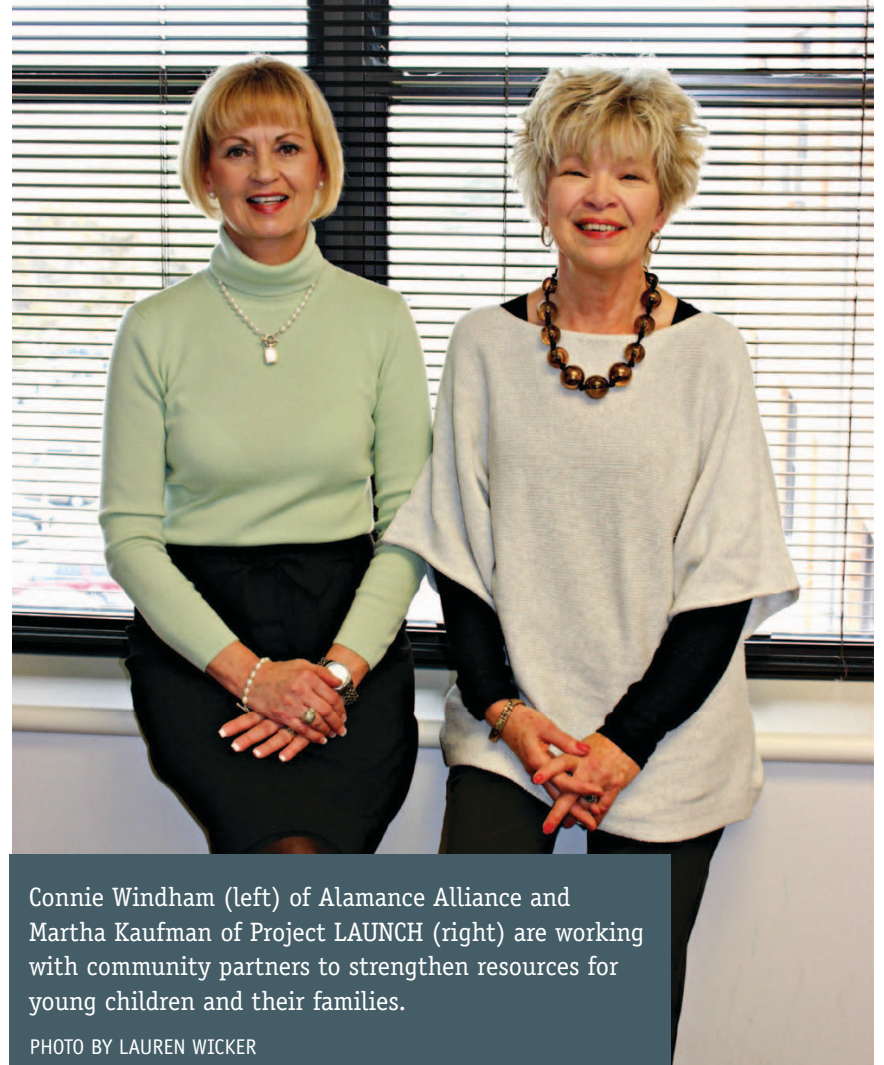


2. Look for the Triple P logo

Look for the Triple P sign in doctor's offices, the Health Department, Alamance Burlington School System and other places that work with young children and their families and ask for more information.

3. Find additional information

- Alamance Alliance: www.alamancesoc.org
- Project LAUNCH: projectlaunch.promoteprevent.org
- Zero to Three: www.zerotothree.org
- American Academy of Pediatrics: www.healthychildren.org/english/healthy-living/emotional-wellness
- Harvard Center for the Developing Child: www.developingchild.harvard.edu
- National Child Traumatic Stress Network: www.nctsn.org



Connie Windham (left) of Alamance Alliance and Martha Kaufman of Project LAUNCH (right) are working with community partners to strengthen resources for young children and their families.

PHOTO BY LAUREN WICKER

4. Ask for help

If you worry that your child may need extra help, do you know where to turn? It's time to talk about it. Parents don't need to be scared. If you are concerned about your child's development and live in Alamance County:

- Discuss your concerns with your child's pediatrician or other health care provider
- If your child is aged 0 - 3, contact the Children's Developmental Services Agency (CDSA) at (336) 449-4055
- If your child is aged 3 - 5, contact the Alamance Burlington School System (ABSS) at (336) 570-6130 ext. 37819
- For additional local resources, contact the Alamance Partnership for Children at (336) 513-0063