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Middletown School Readiness Council Receives \$90,000 Grant For Early Childhood Education Program

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The Hartford Courant

12:35 PM EST, January 25, 2013

MIDDLETOWN —

The Middletown School Readiness Council recently received a \$90,000 grant to help the school district's early childhood education program.

The grant to fund the Middletown Discovery Program comes from the William Caspar Graustein Memorial Fund, the Children's Fund of Connecticut and the state Department of Education.

The program works to engage parents in a child's education to make them better learners at a young age and prepare them for educational success. From the grant, \$50,000 will be used for literacy activities and \$40,000 will help fund the program's staff and administrative costs.

"For children to succeed in school, attention to their health and social-emotional development beginning at birth is essential," Children's Fund of Connecticut President Judith Meyers said in a news release.

The program began in Middletown in 2005, and works with children under age 8.

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The Register Citizen (registercitizen.com), Serving Torrington, CT

News

Torrington Early Childhood Collaborative received a \$90,000 grant

Wednesday, January 2, 2013

Torrington >> Torrington's Discovery Initiative, the Torrington Early Childhood Collaborative (TECC) announced Wednesday Jan. 2 that they were awarded a \$90,000 grant to used towards implementing its community plan and early childhood literacy programming. □□Discovery grants are funded by the **William Caspar Graustein Memorial Fund**, the **Children's Fund of Connecticut**, the **Annie E. Casey Foundation**, and the **Connecticut State Department of Education**. This grant will help to ensure all children in Torrington, regardless of race and income level, are ready for school by age five and prepared to be successful learners by age nine. □□Cheryl Kloczko, Superintendent of Torrington Schools, said that investing in early childhood education guarantees that those students will possess the necessary skills and learning behaviors required to be successful in kindergarten and the deeper understanding families have of required academic and behavior expectations. □□"In addition, the more success a student achieves in the elementary grades the less chance the student will become a drop out upon entering high school; which will make more students college and career ready and prepared to be contributors to the greater community upon graduation from high school," said Kloczko. □□The goal of Discovery is to create an early childhood system that ensures optimal healthy development leading to early learning success for Connecticut children of all races and income levels. Discovery supports communities in establishing collaborative structures in which parents are full partners. □□The Torrington Discovery Program launched in 2002 serves as a local resource for children from birth to age eight and their families. TECC seeks to engage parents in their child's early childhood education - birth through age eight, and in taking leadership roles within the community on behalf of all children. □□"Over 60 members have worked in concert to help successfully transition children from preschool to kindergarten through the implementation of an all-district Kindergarten Readiness Fair now in its sixth year. This event has helped families get hands-on experience of how to help their child prepare for school," Kloczko said. □□Judith Meyers, President and CEO of the Children's Fund of Connecticut and the Child Health and Development Institute said that for children to succeed in school it is essential that they receive proper attention to their health and social-emotional development.

URL: <http://www.registercitizen.com/articles/2013/01/02/news/doc50e4960584c2a429780684.prt>

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Branford Early Childhood Collaborative Receives Community Plan Implementation Grant

Posted by [Jessica Ciparelli](#) December 13, 2012



The Branford Early Childhood Collaborative (BECC) recently announced grant support for implementing its early childhood community plan. Discovery grants are funded by the William Caspar Graustein Memorial Fund, the Children's Fund of Connecticut, and the Connecticut State Department of Education. This grant will help to ensure all children in Branford, regardless of race and income level, are ready for school by age five prepared to be successful learners by age nine.

"We are thrilled to have completed Branford's Early Childhood Community Plan and are beginning to move into implementation of these strategies," said Jodi Kelly, coordinator for the BECC. "We have worked hard over the past few years to create a local early childhood decision making body by engaging parents,

teachers, local organizations, the town of Branford, the Board of Education, the United Way of Greater New Haven and community members all working together with the goal of making life a little better for Branford's youngest residents."

The goal of Discovery is to create an early childhood system that ensures optimal healthy development leading to early learning success for Connecticut children of all races and income levels. Discovery supports communities in establishing collaborative structures in which parents are full partners. Each community creates and implements its own community plan. Advocates and other stakeholders work to improve policy and practice at the local and state levels. Across Connecticut, 52 communities focus on improving the quality of and access to early care and education for children from birth through age five, improving the quality of PreK-3 education in ways that increase early language and literacy development among all children, improving young children's health and social/emotional development, and increasing local and statewide capacity to measure and continue improvements.

The Branford Early Childhood Collaborative Discovery Program, launched in 2003, serves as a local resource for children from birth to age eight and their families. The BECC seeks to engage parents in their child's early childhood education – birth through age eight, and in taking leadership roles within the community on behalf of all children.

"On behalf of the Town of Branford, I am pleased to commend and congratulate Branford Early Childhood Collaborative (BECC) for their fine work on behalf of Branford's youngest citizens, as recognized by their recent grant award from the William C. Graustein Memorial Fund's Discovery Community initiative," said First Selectman of Branford Anthony J. DaRos. "The BECC has forged strong partnerships in support of the health, safety and education of Branford's children, and their leadership and coordination within our community toward better outcomes for children has raised awareness to the priority of early childhood issues, especially education."

"As the architects of our community plan for early childhood, now implemented in collaboration with the Town, the Board of Education and many stakeholders, the BECC is serving Branford well by informing and shaping policy," DaRos continued. "As we continue to implement our community plan to improve the lives of our kids, the Town will count on the expertise and collaborative strength of BECC toward our successes. I thank the many good people working in and supporting the BECC and the Graustein Memorial Fund for their generosity and leadership."

“Discovery communities are building on their own local resources to develop an early childhood system that reflects the needs and values of the community,” said David M. Nee, Executive Director, William Caspar Graustein Memorial Fund. “We are pleased to support local collaborative councils, along with our state partners, with both funding and training, so that children of all races and income levels can become successful learners.”

“For children to succeed in school, attention to their health and social-emotional development beginning at birth, is essential,” said Judith Meyers, President and CEO of the Children’s Fund of Connecticut and its nonprofit subsidiary the Child Health and Development Institute (CHDI). “We are pleased to help community collaboratives address early child health in all aspects of their work and engage health providers along with others to optimize the chances for children’s success in school and in life.”

Grants from the William Caspar Graustein Memorial Fund to Discovery communities across the state are made possible by partnerships with the State Department of Education, Children’s Fund of Connecticut, the Annie E. Casey Foundation and the Connecticut Center for School Change. William Caspar Graustein Memorial Fund’s Discovery initiative offers grants and capacity building to 52 communities and six statewide partners. Capacity building is currently available in the areas of collaboration, parent engagement, results-based accountability, community planning and decision-making, and facilitative leadership. To learn more, visit: <http://discovery.wcgmf.org>.

URL: <http://branford.patch.com/announcements/branford-early-childhood-collaborative-receives-community-plan-implementation-grant>



Middletown Discovery Program Awarded Grant by William Caspar Graustein Memorial Fund

- Posted by [Judith Weir](#)
- January 9, 2013

MIDDLETOWN, Conn. (January 9, 2013) — The Middletown School Readiness Council today announced grant support for implementing its community plan for early childhood literacy programming. Discovery grants are funded by the William Caspar Graustein Memorial Fund, the Children’s Fund of Connecticut, and the Connecticut State Department of Education. This grant will help to ensure all children in Middletown, regardless of race and income level, are ready for school by age five prepared to be successful learners by age nine.

“We have really been so fortunate over the years to have had the ongoing support of the Graustein Memorial Fund to build an early childhood system here in Middletown so that we can reach our goal of having all of our city’s children come to school ready for success”, said Betsy Morgan, chair of the Middletown School Readiness Council.

The goal of Discovery is to create an early childhood system that ensures optimal healthy development leading to early learning success for Connecticut children of all races and income levels. Discovery supports communities in establishing collaborative structures in which parents are full partners. Each community creates and implements its own community plan. Advocates and other stakeholders work to improve policy and practice at the local and state levels. Across Connecticut, 52 communities focus on improving the quality of and access to early care and education for children from birth through age five, improving the quality of PreK-3 education in ways that increase early language and literacy development among all children, improving young children’s health and social/emotional development, and increasing local and statewide capacity to measure and continue improvements.

The Middletown Discovery Program launched in 2005 serves as a local resource for children from birth to age eight and their families. Middletown Discovery seeks to engage parents in their child’s early childhood education – birth through age eight, and in taking leadership roles within the community on behalf of all children.

Home-visiting services during the early stages of parenting have been proven to help mothers and fathers get themselves off to the right start as parents. One of the effective strategies offered by home-visiting programs is the services of a knowledgeable non-threatening “friend” to mothers and fathers who are experiencing life circumstances or health issues that may impact the positive development of their child. Research has shown how critical maternal bonding is to the future success of a newborn. This requires time and space for nurturing. In addition, the relationships established, type and frequency of stimulation as well as sense of security received through age three are vastly more important to a child’s brain development than we ever thought before. It is therefore especially wise for us to invest in services that support struggling families from the time a child is born, knowing that a great start is always better than a fitful beginning.

Early childhood efforts in Middletown have included a constant search for funding of home-visiting programs for children at birth through at least age three or longer if needed. The graph below provides a history of home-visiting services that have been added over the years. In 1992 Middlesex Hospital could offer services to 57 families per year. With the addition of Child FIRST in 2012, Middletown has the capacity to provide home visiting for 235 families.

Middletown has a vision for its families with very young children - strengthened by a supportive community, families have the resources, knowledge and skills to experience a healthy pregnancy and nurture the best in their children from birth through age eight. The collaborative’s work is divided into four categories - Strong Families, Healthy Children, Successful Learners and Supportive Community. *Middletown: 2012, An Early Childhood Report Card* has recently been published detailing this work and its results over the last twenty years.

“Discovery communities are building on their own local resources to develop an early childhood system that reflects the needs and values of the community,” said David M. Nee, Executive Director, William Caspar Graustein Memorial Fund. “We are pleased to support local collaborative councils, along with our state partners, with both funding and training, so that children of all races and income levels can become successful learners.

“For children to succeed in school, attention to their health and social-emotional development beginning at birth, is essential,” said Judith Meyers, President and CEO of the Children’s Fund of Connecticut and its nonprofit subsidiary the Child Health and Development Institute (CHDI). “We are pleased to help community collaboratives address early child health in all aspects of their work and engage health providers along with others to optimize the chances for children’s success in school and in life.”

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<http://middletown-ct.patch.com/announcements/middletown-discovery-program-awarded-grant-by-william-caspar-graustein-memorial-fund>



Danbury Discovery Program Awarded Grant by William Caspar Graustein Memorial Fund

- Posted by [Judith Weir](#)
- January 9, 2013

Danbury, Conn. (January 9, 2013) — Danbury's Promise for Children Partnership today announced grant support for implementing its community plan for early childhood literacy programming. Discovery grants are funded by the William Caspar Graustein Memorial Fund, the Children's Fund of Connecticut, and the Connecticut State Department of Education. This grant will help to ensure all children in Danbury, regardless of race and income level, are ready for school by age five and prepared to be successful learners by age nine.

"Danbury's children benefit greatly when everyone works together to create an early childhood system--one in which schools, childcare providers, businesses and the health community partner to prepare children for success in school. Underlying this system is a deep understanding that parents are their children's first and most important role models and teachers," said Caroline LaFleur, Coordinator Danbury's Promise for Children Partnership. "This grant from the William Caspar Graustein Memorial Fund is helping us build a city where all children have the chance for a great start in life."

The goal of Discovery is to create an early childhood system that ensures optimal healthy development leading to early learning success for Connecticut children of all races and income levels. Discovery supports communities in establishing collaborative structures in which parents are full partners. Each community creates and implements its own community plan. Advocates and other stakeholders work to improve policy and practice at the local and state levels. Across Connecticut, 52 communities focus on improving the quality of and access to early care and education for children from birth through age five, improving the quality of PreK-3 education in ways that increase early language and literacy development among all children, improving young children's health and social/emotional development, and increasing local and statewide capacity to measure and continue improvements.

Danbury's Promise for Children Partnership, launched in 2007, serves as a local resource for children from birth to age eight and their families. The Partnership seeks to engage parents in their child's early childhood education – birth through age eight, and in taking leadership roles within the community on behalf of all children.

In Danbury, funds have been used to reach out to parents to connect them to the resources they need to support their families and to help parents understand the importance of early literacy and learning. Community outreach efforts include the distribution of Directories of Resources for Danbury Families in English and Spanish, parent workshops on early learning, and an early childhood community fair. Danbury's Promise for Children Partnership also funded a study that shows how School Readiness Programs in Danbury are closing the Achievement Gap.

"Discovery communities are building on their own local resources to develop an early childhood system that reflects the needs and values of the community," said David M. Nee, Executive Director, William Caspar Graustein Memorial Fund. "We are pleased to support local collaborative councils, along with our state partners, with both funding and training, so that children of all races and income levels can become successful learners."

"For children to succeed in school, attention to their health and social-emotional development beginning at birth, is essential," said Judith Meyers, President and CEO of the Children's Fund of Connecticut and its nonprofit subsidiary the Child Health and Development Institute (CHDI). "We are pleased to help community collaboratives address early child health in all aspects of their work and engage health providers along with others to optimize the chances for children's success in school and in life."

Grants from the William Caspar Graustein Memorial Fund to Discovery communities across the state are made possible by partnerships with the State Department of Education, Children's Fund of Connecticut, the Annie E. Casey Foundation and the Connecticut Center for School Change.

William Caspar Graustein Memorial Fund's Discovery initiative offers grants and capacity building to 52 communities and six statewide partners. Capacity building is currently available in the areas of collaboration, parent engagement, results-based accountability, community planning and decision-making, and facilitative leadership. To learn more, visit:

<http://discovery.wcgmf.org>.

<http://danbury.patch.com/announcements/danbury-discovery-program-awarded-grant-by-william-caspar-graustein-memorial-fund>



Griswold Discovery Program Awarded Grant by William Caspar Graustein Memorial Fund

- Posted by [Judith Weir](#)
- January 9, 2013

Griswold, Conn. (January 9, 2013) — The Children First Griswold Early Childhood Collaborative today announced grant support for enhancing its community plan for early childhood literacy programming. Discovery grants are funded by the William Caspar Graustein Memorial Fund, the Children's Fund of Connecticut, and the Connecticut State Department of Education. This grant will help to ensure all children in Griswold, regardless of race and income level, are ready for school by age five prepared to be successful learners by age nine.

“As a partnership dedicated to improving the lives of our youngest residents, we are thrilled to be part of the Discovery Initiative. With the support and guidance from the Memorial Fund, the Children's Fund of Connecticut, the State Department of Education, and the other statewide partners, we are developing a robust Community Plan to ensure all of Griswold's children are healthy, prepared and successful lifetime learners. This Plan will lay a strong foundation for the healthy development and success of our children for years to come” said Beth Ware, Chair of the Children First Griswold Early Childhood Collaborative

The goal of Discovery is to create an early childhood system that ensures optimal healthy development leading to early learning success for Connecticut children of all races and income levels. Discovery supports communities in establishing collaborative structures in which parents are full partners. Each community creates and implements its own community plan. Advocates and other stakeholders work to improve policy and practice at the local and state levels. Across Connecticut, 52 communities focus on improving the quality of and access to early care and education for children from birth through age five, improving the quality of PreK-3 education in ways that increase early language and literacy development among all children, improving young children's health and social/emotional development, and increasing local and statewide capacity to measure and continue improvements.

Children First Griswold, launched in 2004, serves as a local resource for children from birth to age eight and their families. Children First Griswold seeks to engage parents in their child's early childhood education – birth through age eight, and in taking leadership roles within the community on behalf of all children.

Beth Ware explains, “Through the Community Planning process, we have strengthened our Collaborative and gained a better understanding of the needs of our children and community, thus allowing us to develop strategies and actions that directly impact their overall health and development. Recently, Children First Griswold hosted a Family Fun Day themed "Healthy Minds, Healthy Bodies" in which hundreds of families engaged in physical fitness and literacy activities, all the while munching on healthy snacks provided by local farmers and businesses. We're also facilitating the delivery of much-needed healthcare services through a mobile community outreach van which will begin in January 2013. This mobile outreach is crucial as many of our families have limited access to healthcare. The initiative will be officially announced at Children First Griswold's Health and Safety Expo in early March.”

“Discovery communities are building on their own local resources to develop an early childhood system that reflects the needs and values of the community,” said David M. Nee, Executive Director, William Caspar Graustein Memorial Fund. “We are pleased to support local collaborative councils, along with our state partners, with both funding and training, so that children of all races and income levels can become successful learners.”

“For children to succeed in school, attention to their health and social-emotional development beginning at birth, is essential,” said Judith Meyers, President and CEO of the Children’s Fund of Connecticut and its nonprofit subsidiary the Child Health and Development Institute (CHDI). “We are pleased to help community collaboratives address early child health in all aspects of their work and engage health providers along with others to optimize the chances for children’s success in school and in life.”

Grants from the William Caspar Graustein Memorial Fund to Discovery communities across the state are made possible by partnerships with the State Department of Education, Children’s Fund of Connecticut, the Annie E. Casey Foundation and the Connecticut Center for School Change.

William Caspar Graustein Memorial Fund’s Discovery initiative offers grants and capacity building to 52 communities and six statewide partners. Capacity building is currently available in the areas of collaboration, parent engagement, results-based accountability, community planning and decision-making, and facilitative leadership. To learn more, visit:

<http://discovery.wcgmf.org>.

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About the William Caspar Graustein Memorial Fund

The William Caspar Graustein Memorial Fund works collaboratively to improve education for Connecticut’s children by and strengthening the involvement of parents and the community in education, promoting school change and informing the public debate on educational issues.

<http://newlondon.patch.com/announcements/griswold-discovery-program-awarded-grant-by-william-caspar-graustein-memorial-fund>



New Haven Discovery Program Awarded Grant by William Caspar Graustein Memorial Fund

- Posted by [Judith Weir](#)
- January 9, 2013

New Haven, Conn. (January 9, 2013) — The New Haven Early Childhood Council today announced grant support for implementing its community plan for early childhood literacy programming. Discovery grants are funded by the William Caspar Graustein Memorial Fund, the Children's Fund of Connecticut, and the Connecticut State Department of Education. This grant will help to ensure all children in New Haven, regardless of race and income level, are ready for school by age five prepared to be successful learners by age nine.

"We are grateful to the William Caspar Graustein Memorial Fund, the Children's Fund of Connecticut, and our state legislators for enabling us to continue to increase the quality of early learning opportunities in New Haven, to expand access to early care and education for our children, and to better address the critical health needs of these children," said Jennifer Heath, co-chair of the New Haven Early Childhood Council and Executive Vice President of the United Way of Greater New Haven.

The goal of Discovery is to create an early childhood system that ensures optimal healthy development leading to early learning success for Connecticut children of all races and income levels. Discovery supports communities in establishing collaborative structures in which parents are full partners. Each community creates and implements its own community plan. Advocates and other stakeholders work to improve policy and practice at the local and state levels. Across Connecticut, 52 communities focus on improving the quality of and access to early care and education for children from birth through age five, improving the quality of PreK-3 education in ways that increase early language and literacy development among all children, improving young children's health and social/emotional development, and increasing local and statewide capacity to measure and continue improvements.

The New Haven Early Childhood Council, launched in 1997, serves as a local resource for children from birth to age eight and their families. The New Haven Early Childhood Council seeks to engage parents in their child's early childhood education – birth through age eight, and in taking leadership roles within the community on behalf of all children.

One of the ways the Council has supported early literacy development among young children has been through the Little Read, which has been held for the past three years. In 2012, the Council organized a city-wide reading of the bi-lingual book *The Hungry Caterpillar*, providing over 4,000 copies of the book to young children in New Haven early care and education programs. It also partnered with a wide array of community organizations to host literacy-based events throughout the City and at these events distributed over 1,000 children's picture books for home libraries.

"Discovery communities are building on their own local resources to develop an early childhood system that reflects the needs and values of the community," said David M. Nee, Executive Director, William Caspar Graustein Memorial Fund. "We are pleased to support local collaborative councils, along with our state partners, with both funding and training, so that children of all races and income levels can become successful learners."

"For children to succeed in school, attention to their health and social-emotional development beginning at birth, is essential," said Judith Meyers, President and CEO of the Children's Fund of Connecticut and its nonprofit subsidiary the Child Health and Development Institute (CHDI). "We are pleased to help community collaboratives address early child health in all aspects of their work and engage health providers along with others to optimize the chances for children's success in school and in life."

Grants from the William Caspar Graustein Memorial Fund to Discovery communities across the state are made possible by partnerships with the State Department of Education, Children's Fund of Connecticut, the Annie E. Casey Foundation and the Connecticut Center for School Change.

William Caspar Graustein Memorial Fund's Discovery initiative offers grants and capacity building to 52 communities and six statewide partners. Capacity building is currently available in the areas of collaboration, parent engagement, results-based accountability, community planning and decision-making, and facilitative leadership. To learn more, visit:

<http://discovery.wcgmf.org>.

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<http://easthaven.patch.com/announcements/new-haven-discovery-program-awarded-grant-by-william-caspar-graustein-memorial-fund>



Enfield KITE Discovery Program Awarded Grant by William Caspar Graustein Memorial Fund

- Posted by [Judith Weir](#)
- January 9, 2013

Enfield, Conn. (January 9, 2013) — The Enfield Discovery Collaborative KITE (Key Initiatives to Early Education) today announced grant support for implementing its community plan for early childhood care and education. Discovery grants are funded by the William Caspar Graustein Memorial Fund, the Children's Fund of Connecticut, and the Connecticut State Department of Education. This grant will help to ensure all children in Enfield, regardless of race and income level, are ready for school by age five prepared to be successful learners by age nine.

"One of the many ways KITE has been able to help parents is through the preschool playgroups at the FRCs. Parents of young children have opportunities for their children to practice school skills, like circle time and playing with other kids, in advance of kindergarten. This and many other small opportunities promoted by KITE when taken together add up to a richness that would otherwise be missing."

The goal of Discovery is to create an early childhood system that ensures optimal healthy development leading to early learning success for Connecticut children of all races and income levels. Discovery supports communities in establishing collaborative structures in which parents are full partners. Each community creates and implements its own community plan. Advocates and other stakeholders work to improve policy and practice at the local and state levels. Across Connecticut, 52 communities focus on improving the quality of and access to early care and education for children from birth through age five, improving the quality of PreK-3 education in ways that increase early language and literacy development among all children, improving young children's health and social/emotional development, and increasing local and statewide capacity to measure and continue improvements.

The Enfield Discovery Program launched in 2004 serves as a local resource for children from birth to age eight and their families. Enfield Discovery seeks to engage parents in their child's early childhood education – birth through age eight, and in taking leadership roles within the community on behalf of all children.

The Book Buddies Program is run by the Enfield Fire Department. It is a wonderful example of a grass roots effort to support early literacy in the Town of Enfield. Twice a year wrapped children's books are delivered to Enfield Kindergarten students by Fire Truck and stories are read to the students by Enfield's very own fire fighters. The success of this program is also due to the collaboration of Hallmark Cards, who donates the wrapping paper and Enfield seniors and high school students who volunteer their time to wrap the books.

"Discovery communities are building on their own local resources to develop an early childhood system that reflects the needs and values of the community," said David M. Nee, Executive Director, William Caspar Graustein Memorial Fund. "We are pleased to support local collaborative councils, along with our state partners, with both funding and training, so that children of all races and income levels can become successful learners."

"For children to succeed in school, attention to their health and social-emotional development beginning at birth, is essential," said Judith Meyers, President and CEO of the Children's Fund of Connecticut and its nonprofit subsidiary the Child Health and Development Institute (CHDI). "We are pleased to help community collaboratives address early child health in all aspects of their work and engage health providers along with others to optimize the chances for children's success in school and in life."

Grants from the William Caspar Graustein Memorial Fund to Discovery communities across the state are made possible by partnerships with the State Department of Education, Children's Fund of Connecticut, the Annie E. Casey Foundation and the Connecticut Center for School Change.

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<http://enfield.patch.com/announcements/enfield-kite-discovery-program-awarded-grant-by-william-caspar-graustein-memorial-fund>