

**Head Start & Early Head Start
Home-Based Pre-Institute**

September 23, 2025

&

**36th Annual Head Start & Early Head Start
Home-Based Institute**

September 24-25, 2025



Happy Birthday Head Start

You are cordially invited to join

***T/TAS** in celebrating*

Head Start's

60th

Birthday



Gatlinburg Convention Center
Gatlinburg, Tennessee



T/TAS
at WKU
est. 1973

Head Start & Early Head Start Home-Based Pre-Institute: *An Overview and Orientation to the Head Start Home-Based Option or Get the Party Started! Finding Fun in our Work!*

September 23, 2025

Gatlinburg Convention Center

Gatlinburg, Tennessee

See Page 5 for details on the *36th Annual Home-Based Institute* on September 24-25, 2025.

We are pleased to offer your choice of workshops for the Pre-Institute this year:

- **Overview and Orientation to the Head Start Home-Based Option or**
- **Get the Party Started! Finding Fun in Our Work!**

**You must choose one option when registering for the Pre-Institute. **

Option 1: Overview and Orientation to the Head Start Home-Based Option will be a full-day, interactive session for staff who want to take a good look at the requirements of the Head Start Performance Standards and how those requirements apply to the Home-Based option. Presenters will discuss practical applications for carrying out the requirements of Home-Based Head Start/Early Head Start.

The first part of the day will focus on the Home-Based Program Option and the requirements that make it a great program! The second part will focus on Services to Expectant Families and how these services should be carried out and managed to ensure a quality program for all.

The Standard Registration Fee is **\$500** per person. See page 9 for registration details.

Learning Objectives

- ★ Participants will be introduced to and review the requirements for operating a Head Start or Early Head Start program using the home-based option.
- ★ Participants will review the Head Start Program Performance Standards and discuss techniques and strategies to implement the standards in Home-Based Head Start and Early Head Start.
- ★ Participants will receive information and materials about approaches and techniques in working with home-based families.
- ★ Participants will explore the various ways that Services to Expectant Families can be implemented.



Your Presenter for **Option 1: Overview and Orientation to the Head Start Home-Based Option**



Amy Hood, EdD, T/TAS Executive Director, Infant/Toddler & Early Childhood Specialist, has a Doctorate in Child and Youth Studies, an MA in Early Childhood, and a B.S. in Child Development. She is the Director of the Family Child Care Network of KY and has served as an adjunct faculty member at Western Kentucky University. Dr. Amy Hood has worked extensively with Early Head Start administrators and caregivers since Early Head Start began and is an expert on Early Head Start. She was an EHS Coordinator with a Wave I program and has provided training and technical assistance to Early Head Start programs across the United States. Dr. Hood is certified in all four modules of the Program for Infant-Toddler Caregivers and has been certified reliable on the Toddler CLASS tool.

(T/TAS reserves the right to substitute presenters.)

An Overview and Orientation to the Head Start Home-Based Option

Tentative Agenda – Eastern Time Zone

Tuesday, September 23, 2025

8:00 – 9:00 AM	Pre-Institute Registration
9:00 – Noon	Examining the Home-Based Program
Noon - 1:30 PM	Lunch on Your Own
1:30 - 4:30 PM	Introduction to Serving Expectant Families in Home-Based Q&A Session

Option 2: Get the Party Started! Finding Fun in Our Work! will be a full-day, interactive session that will have us learning and enjoying our time together. We will discuss ways to enhance our socialization adventures and explore how our personalities affect and add to our work with each other and the families we serve. Come help “set up the party” for a fun and enjoyable day!

Learning Objectives

- ★ Participants will discuss ways to enhance socialization events and encourage families to participate.
- ★ Participants will explore our personalities and how those affect our relationships with each other as well as our families.
- ★ Participants will explore how interactions with others build teamwork throughout the program.

Your Presenters for **Option 2: Get the Party Started! Finding Fun in Our Work!**



Melody Hedden, Special Project Consultant, has over 25 years of experience in Head Start. Melody has a Master of Science and Bachelor of Science in Human Services from Walden University. Melody received ERSEA certification through HG Jones Associates and the Family Service Credential Trainer from Portage Project. Melody is the current Head Start/Early Head Start Director for Western Kentucky University’s Campus Child Care, overseen by T/TAS. Melody was a Head Start child herself (1979-1981) and later enrolled her children in Head Start. She is passionate about facilitating life-changing events in the lives of children and families while ensuring the implementation of the Head Start philosophy.



Sherri Meyer, T/TAS Early Childhood Specialist, has worked in the early childhood field since 1992. She has a BA in Elementary Education with a Middle School Math Endorsement and an MA in Education in Interdisciplinary Early Childhood Education from Birth to Age 5, both from Western Kentucky University. She has worked with children from birth to school age in child care, Head Start, and Early Head Start. Sherri has much experience working with early care and education professionals in providing training and technical assistance. She continues to enjoy being a part-time faculty member at WKU’s Applied Human Sciences FACS department, working with individuals interested in the early childhood field.

(T/TAS reserves the right to substitute presenters.)

Get the Party Started! Finding Fun in Our Work!

Tentative Agenda – Eastern Time Zone

Tuesday, September 23, 2025

8:00 – 9:00 AM	Pre-Institute Registration
9:00 AM – Noon	Examining Our Own Personalities Related to How We Approach Life and Work
Noon - 1:30 PM	Lunch on Your Own
1:30 - 4:30 PM	Teamwork and Enhancing Socializations with Families and Children

**60 YEARS
OF THE
HEAD START
PROGRAM**

From classrooms[®] to communities, Head Start programs give children and families the tools to succeed in school and life.

36th Annual Head Start & Early Head Start Home-Based Institute

September 24-25, 2025

Gatlinburg Convention Center

Gatlinburg, Tennessee

The Head Start & Early Head Start Home-Based Institute is a unique training event designed for new and veteran home visitors and other staff working in programs using the home-based model for delivery of Head Start or Early Head Start services. The Institute also welcomes programs and staff interested in learning more about the Head Start home-based option or considering a home-based model as a temporary option. New home visitors and home visitors who would like a review or refresher course may also wish to attend **The Home-Based Pre-Institute on September 23, 2025.**

The National Home Visitor Resource Center and T/TAS have continued incorporating school readiness goals into workshops as appropriate.

The Standard Registration Fee is **\$600** per person. See page 9 for registration details.

****Registrants are required to select their choice of workshop sessions in advance during registration.****



Learning Outcomes

- ★ Participants will receive practical information and materials specific to the home-based program option.
- ★ Participants will share strategies and techniques for working with families in home-based programs.
- ★ Participants will increase their professional knowledge of appropriate methods and materials to use in the Head Start and/or Early Head Start Home-Based option.

Your Presenters



Janet Buckley, Special Projects Consultant, has over 30 years of leadership experience in a variety of Head Start and other non-profit programs. She founded and still manages the National Home Visitor Resource Center, and her training materials on the Home-Based option have been disseminated nationally. She has a BA in Communications, an MA in Education, and a Certificate in Non-Profit Management.



Michael Gramling, Special Consultant and Lifelong Social Justice Advocate, found his professional home in 1979 when he discovered Head Start and embraced its values and its goals, particularly those of enhancing the dignity of families living in poverty and of supporting parents as the primary educators of their children. The body of work he has produced since then reflects his values, his academic training, and his real-life experiences as a Head Start parent, teacher, and manager. Michael is the author of *The Great Disconnect in Early Childhood Education: What We Know vs. What We Do*, published by Red Leaf Press. Michael has an M.A. in Human Development from Pacific Oaks College.



Melody Hedden, Special Project Consultant, has over 25 years of experience in Head Start. Melody has a Master of Science and Bachelor of Science in Human Services from Walden University. Melody received ERSEA certification through HG Jones Associates and the Family Service Credential Trainer from Portage Project. Melody is the current Head Start/Early Head Start Director for Western Kentucky University's Campus Child Care, overseen by T/TAS. Melody was a Head Start child herself (1979-1981) and later enrolled her children in Head Start. She is passionate about facilitating life-changing events in the lives of children and families while ensuring the implementation of the Head Start philosophy.



Dr. Amy S. Hood, Executive Director & Infant/Toddler Specialist, has worked with Head Start and child care since 1988. She has an extensive educational background in early childhood development, with a BS in Child Development, an MA in Early Childhood, and an EdD in Child and Youth Studies. In addition to her work in T/TAS, Dr. Hood is also the Director of the Family Child Care Network of KY.



Kaity Kellett, Family Child Care Specialist, Family Child Care Network of KY, is a childcare professional who started her career at the YMCA, then went to Head Start/Early Head Start before joining the Family Child Care Network of KY. She has a BA in Educational Support for Youth Services and a minor in Child Development and Family Services. Kaity, born in a rural town on the coast of North Carolina, was raised in a family child care setting and is proud to be a part of a team that promotes and fosters that environment.

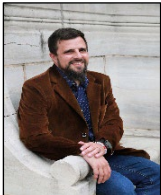


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Special Guest Presenters



Carol Bolz, Education Specialist/Manager, Mid-America Regional Council/Mid-America Head Start, Kansas City, Missouri, has over 38 years of experience in early education. She has an MA in Curriculum and Instruction: Early Childhood Emphasis from the University of Missouri-Kansas City and a BS in Education from Emporia State University. She is a certified trainer for DRDP, CLASS, and Young Investigators: The Project Approach. Co-Author of articles, blogposts, and book chapters related to the Project Approach and play.



Aaron Shore, Instructional Coach, Drake University Head Start, Des Moines, Iowa, has worked in the early childhood field since 2013, when he started as a Lead Preschool Teacher. He has a BA in Child, Adult, and Family Services from Iowa State University. He has experience consulting with center and home-based child care providers. He is also an expert in dad jokes.



Pegi Stamps, Home-Based Program Manager, University of Kansas Project Eagle, Kansas City, Kansas, with over 40 years of experience in early education. She has an MA in Early Childhood Education from the University of Missouri and a BS in Child Growth and Development from the University of Central Missouri. She is a certified trainer for Young Investigators: The Project Approach and a contributing author to many articles and book chapters related to the Project Approach.



Samantha Stevens, Teacher Coach, Lucas County Family Council Early Head Start, Toledo, Ohio, has over 25 years of experience in the early childhood field. She started as an Infant Teacher in 1999. She currently works with Home-Based and Center-Based teachers in Lucas County, Ohio. She has a BS in Child Development with a minor in Family and Community Services from Michigan State University.



Sheila Thomas, Program Manager, Owsley County Board of Education, Booneville, Kentucky, has over 42 years in Early Childhood and Special Education Programs. Ms. Thomas has an MA in Elementary Education and Early Childhood and a BA in Elementary Education Grades 1-8 from Eastern Kentucky University. She currently works with the Owsley Early Childhood Programs, including education managers, disabilities services, health, transportation, facilities, human resources, family engagement, and fiscal management. She is a Level 5 Trainer through Kentucky Early Care/Child Care Aware.

Head Start & Early Head Start Home-Based Institute

Tentative Agenda – Eastern Time Zone

Session descriptions are available on page 11 of this brochure.

Wednesday, September 24, 2025

- 8:00 - 9:00 AM Registration and Continental Breakfast
- 9:00 - 9:10 AM Welcome and Introductions – *Amy Hood, EdD*
- 9:10 - 10:00 AM *CELEBRATING* Head Start – *CELEBRATING* Home Visitors – *Amy Hood, EdD*
- 10:10 - 10:15 AM Break
- 10:15 - 11:45 AM **Workshop Session I:**
- Cook Up the Perfect Plan: Ingredients for the Perfect Home Visit — *Janet Buckley, MEd*
 - Creating Reciprocal Partnerships in the Home-Based Setting Using the Project Approach — *Pegi Stamps, MA, & Carol Bolz, MA*
 - Party with Parents: Building Relationships that Last – *Melody Hedden, MHS*
 - Blow Out the Tantrums! – *Amy Hood, EdD*
- 11:45 - 1:15 PM Lunch on Your Own
- 1:15 - 2:45 PM **Workshop Session II:**
- Tiny Toes, Big Words: Literacy on the Go – *Sheila Thomas, MEd*
 - Planning Successful “Socialization” Day Activities – *Janet Buckley, MEd*
 - Tied With a Bow: Building Strong Bonds for Social-Emotional Growth – *Sherri Meyer, MAE*
 - Screens, Scenes, and Party Dreams: Helping Families Make Smart Screen Time Choices – *Kaity Kellett, BA*
- 2:30 - 2:45 PM Break
- 2:45 - 4:00 PM Birthday Party, Fun, & Games – Round Robin Q & A and Networking (Optional) – *Amy Hood, EdD*

Thursday, September 25, 2025

- 8:00 - 9:00 AM Continental Breakfast
- 9:00 - 10:15 AM **Workshop Session III:**
- Fill Your Party Bucket with Kindness, Empathy, and Positive Interactions – *Melody Hedden, MHS*
 - Screens, Scenes, and Party Dreams: Helping Families Make Smart Screen Time Choices – *Kaity Kellett, BA*
 - Coaching Home-Visitors – *Aaron Shore, BA and Samantha Stevens, BS*
 - Protecting Our Families from Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) – *Michael Gramling, MA*
- 10:15 - 10:30 AM Break
- 10:30 AM – Noon **Workshop Session IV:**
- Everyone’s Invited: Creating a Welcoming Party Environment for All – *Sheri Meyer, MAE*
 - Protecting Our Families from Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) – *Michael Gramling, MA*
 - Party Planning 101: Routines, Rituals, and Transitions in Home-Based Settings – *Kaity Kellett, BA*
 - Make a Wish, Make Math Count! – *Amy Hood, EdD*

NOON – Depart to implement new ideas!

Training Location

The *Head Start & Early Head Start Home-Based Pre-Institute* and *The Annual Head Start & Early Head Start Home-Based Institute* will take place at the **Gatlinburg Convention Center**, located at 234 Historic Nature Trail in Gatlinburg, Tennessee. The Gatlinburg Convention Center is the first in the region to achieve the Global Biorisk Advisory Council® (GBAC) STAR™ accreditation, the gold standard for prepared facilities. Under the guidance of GBAC, a Division of ISSA, the worldwide cleaning industry association, the Gatlinburg Convention Center has implemented the most stringent protocols for cleaning, disinfection, and infectious disease prevention.



Hotel Accommodations

We would like to recommend several hotels that are within walking distance or a quick trolley ride to the conference center:

- Hampton Inn Gatlinburg 1-865-436-4878
967 Parkway
Gatlinburg, TN 37738
- Courtyard by Marriott Gatlinburg Downtown 1-865-436-2008
315 Historic Nature Trail
Gatlinburg, TN 37738
- Holiday Inn Express Gatlinburg Downtown 1-865-868-6200
322 Historic Nature Trail
Gatlinburg, TN 37738

Registering for T/TAS Events

It is easy to register online for events sponsored by T/TAS! Visit our website at www.ttas.org, locate the event for which you wish to register, and then click on the register button.

Payment Policy: *Payment or Purchase Order is due at time of registration.* Registrations received without a copy of a purchase order or payment by credit card will be confirmed to participate in this event pending receipt of PO or payment. Spots will be held temporarily, and Cancellation policies apply.

Registration Deadline: Unless the event fills first, registrations for this event must be received by **September 13, 2025**.

Enrollment is Limited: T/TAS cannot guarantee enrollment at events. If available enrollment slots fill, you will have the option of being placed on a waiting list in case a space opens due to cancellations. We recommend you do not make hotel or travel arrangements until you receive your registration confirmation. T/TAS is not liable for any hotel or travel penalties or fees that may be incurred by participants or registrants.

Confirmation of Registration: Registrations can only be confirmed by email. Please provide a unique email address for each participant. If an administrator needs to receive a copy of the confirmation, please include the administrative email address on the Group Contact Profile. If you do not receive a confirmation within five days of registering for the event, please contact the T/TAS office at ttas.register@wku.edu or call 800-882-7482.

Cancellations/Substitutions Policy: To obtain a refund of registration fees (less the \$75 enrollment charge), cancellations must be received by email to ttas.register@wku.edu by **September 11, 2025**. If you do not receive an email confirmation of your cancellation from T/TAS within 3 business days, you must call 800-882-7482 to confirm your cancellation email was received in order to be eligible for the refund. Substitutions can be made up to the cancellation deadline date. ***After the cancellation deadline date, no refunds will be provided.***

Photo/Video/Recording Policies: Recording this event with electronic devices is not permitted. Participants at this event may be photographed, videotaped, and/or audiotaped. By registering for the event, authorization is given to be photographed, videoed, and/or audio recorded at the event, in connection with T/TAS's programs, publications, the Internet, and public websites. T/TAS and any employees, officers, and associates, as well as any assignees, are released from all claims for damages for libel, slander, invasion of privacy, right of publicity, or any other claim based on the use of the above-described material(s).

T/TAS Also Brings the Training to You

You have questions...T/TAS Specialists have solutions.

Let the highly qualified T/TAS at WKU Training Specialists bring up-to-date information and best practices to your program leadership, as we work together to develop individualized strategies and solutions for your program.

- Customized program roadmap planning
- Staff in-service/pre-service trainings delivered from a variety of remote platforms
- Need-based learning designed by you to engage in creative discussion and problem solving

To learn more, to discuss your local training needs, or to schedule training, call **800-882-7482**.





Workshop Sessions of the 36th Annual Home-Based Institute

All times are in the Eastern Time Zone.

Registrants are required to select their choice of workshop sessions in advance as they register for the Home-Based Conference. Register under “Events” at ttas.org.

Wednesday, September 24, 2025

9:00 - 10:15 AM

Opening Session: *Welcome to the 36th Annual Home-Based Institute!*

CELEBRATING Head Start – CELEBRATING Home Visitors – Amy Hood, EdD

Join us as we celebrate the rich history of Head Start and the Home-Based Program. We will also celebrate the heart and soul of the program – *You*, the dedicated workers who make it all happen. We are proud to celebrate the work you do, the lives you touch, and the heart you bring to Head Start!

10:30 AM – 11:45 PM

Workshop Session I Selections

Cook Up the Perfect Plan: Ingredients for the Perfect Home Visit – Janet Buckley, MEd

There is no magic recipe for a perfect home visit, but there are six key ingredients that should be included in every home visit to ensure its success and productivity. Let’s get cooking!

Creating Reciprocal Partnerships in the Home-Based Setting Using the Project Approach – Pegi Stamps, MA, and Carol Bolz, MA

Young children are integrated learners and natural investigators. They want to learn about their world through questions, curiosities, and ideas. This workshop will demonstrate how home visitors work in collaborative partnership with families in showcasing how the Project Approach (Helm & Katz) involves children, families, and the community in the design and implementation of dynamic and meaningful weekly learning activities. The session will engage participants in defining the phases of project work using the Project Approach in the home-based setting while embracing the primary role of families in individualizing for children's development and learning.

Party with Parents: Building Relationships that Last – Melody Hedden, MHS

Learners will leave this session with the skills to develop trusting relationships with families. Discussion topics include respecting the family's culture and values, listening with curiosity, as well as self-accountability. Join us as we party our way through building relationships that last!

Blow Out the Tantrums! – Amy Hood, EdD

Do your families sometimes expect you to come in with a magic wand or sprinkle some magic dust around their homes to make their kids "behave better"? One of our roles as Home Visitors is to help families better understand why they do what they do. Once we understand why the child is behaving a certain way, we can then help identify strategies that the families can use to guide their children. This session will examine our role in working with families to help "prevent inappropriate behaviors and how to deal with them appropriately.

1:15 – 2:45 PM

Workshop Session II Selections**Tiny Toes, Big Words: Literacy on the Go – Sheila Thomas, MEd**

Early literacy isn't just about preschoolers learning their ABCs. The foundations of literacy begin much earlier, in infancy and toddlerhood. While infants and toddlers aren't reading in the traditional sense, they are actively building the foundational skills that will make them successful readers and writers later on. Families and teachers are laying the groundwork for brain development, vocabulary development, print awareness, and motivation.

Planning Successful "Socialization" Day Activities – Janet Buckley, MEd

Socialization days serve multiple purposes for parents, children, staff, and the program. They require planning and linkage with the home visit activities. How we present socialization days, what we name them in our program, and listening to parents' suggestions will be discussed.

Tied with a Bow: Building Strong Bonds for Social-Emotional Growth – Sherri Meyer, MAE

This session will focus on our connections with children in our care. We will discuss the importance of building relationships with young children, looking at how children grow in their social/emotional development, learning environment, and behaviors.

Screens, Scenes, and Party Dreams: Helping Families Make Smart Screen Time Choices – Kaity Kellett, BA

Just like planning the perfect birthday party, managing screen time at home takes preparation, balance, and thoughtful choices. In this fun and informative session, Head Start home visitors will explore how to help families set healthy boundaries around screens and promote meaningful, real-world interactions.

2:45 – 4:00 PM

Birthday Party, Fun, & Games and Q & A (Optional) – Amy Hood, EdD

While it states this is optional, we hope you will join us as we engage in this networking time to celebrate Head Start, Early Head Start, and the Home-Based program option. Dr. Amy Hood and the other presenters will facilitate this session to ensure a fun celebration of professional development!

Thursday, September 25, 2025

9:00 - 10:15 AM

Workshop Session III Selections

Fill Your Party Bucket with Kindness, Empathy, and Positive Interactions – Melody Hedden, MHS

Recently, have you caught yourself saying words like exhaustion, fatigue, burned out, stretched too thin, or “they” are asking too much of me? Don’t let stress burn you out! Join us for an interactive session on taking care of yourself so you can take care of others.

Screens, Scenes, and Party Dreams: Helping Families Make Smart Screen Time Choices – Kaity Kellett, BA

Just like planning the perfect birthday party, managing screen time at home takes preparation, balance, and thoughtful choices. In this fun and informative session, Head Start home visitors will explore how to help families set healthy boundaries around screens and promote meaningful, real-world interactions.

Coaching Home-Visitors – Aaron Shore, BA, and Samantha Stevens, BS

What does coaching look like for Home Visitors? We will explore communication, curiosity, and active listening. Participants will gain observation tools for coaching and a menu of practices for coaching home visitors.

Protecting Our Families from Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) – Michael Gramling, MA

We live in an age in which our families face unprecedented challenges. The safety net that for years has helped shield them from the trauma and deprivation of poverty is under attack and may soon disappear altogether. Let us work together to forge networks and to develop strategies to resist ICE. Let us re-imagine our role as family advocates and be willing to take action on behalf of our families who dare not do so themselves.

10:30 AM - NOON

Workshop Session IV Selections

Everyone’s Invited: Creating a Welcoming Environment for All – Sherri Meyer, MAE

This session will focus on our attitudes and views and how this impacts the relationship with the families and children we visit. We will discuss the diversity of the families we serve and how we can set the stage for the partnership we are developing and continue to build on.

Protecting Our Families from Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) – Michael Gramling, MA

We live in an age in which our families face unprecedented challenges. The safety net that for years has helped shield them from the trauma and deprivation of poverty is under attack and may soon disappear altogether. Let us work together to forge networks and to develop strategies to resist ICE. Let us re-imagine our role as family advocates and be willing to take action on behalf of our families who dare not do so themselves.

Party Planning 101: Routines, Rituals, and Transitions – Kaity Kellett, BA

Daily routines, meaningful rituals, and smooth transitions are the heartbeat of quality home-based learning experiences. In this hands-on and reflective session, home visitors will explore how to “plan the party”. Designing predictable, nurturing routines and intentional rituals that promote secure relationships, school readiness, and family engagement. We will also take a closer look at the “in-between moments” like shifting from play to cleanup or transitioning to nap time, and how to help families turn these potentially stressful times into calm, teachable ones. Whether it’s morning hellos, diaper changes, mealtimes, or goodbye songs, participants will discover how these everyday moments can become

powerful opportunities for connection, regulation, and learning.

Make a Wish, Make Math Count! – Amy Hood, EdD

Math may not be your favorite subject, but establishing a healthy math foundation in early childhood years is critical for a child's school success. Join us in this session where we will explore strategies for changing attitudes and review the math "classes" we should be offering to our children and families.



Successfully Serving Head Start/Early Head Start and Child Care over 50 Years!