

Head Start & Early Head Start Home-Based Pre-Institute & 37th Annual Head Start & Early Head Start Home-Based Institute

Rooted in Relationships, *Growing Through Home-Based Care*



STRONG RELATIONSHIPS
Building trust and connection
with every family.



HOME-BASED CARE
Bringing support, resources,
and encouragement home.



BRIGHT FUTURES
Empowering children
to grow and thrive.



**Gatlinburg Convention Center
Gatlinburg, Tennessee**

September 22-24, 2026



Head Start & Early Head Start Home-Based Pre-Institute: *An Overview and Orientation to the Head Start Home-Based Option or Growing Strong Families One Visit at a Time!*

September 22, 2026
Gatlinburg Convention Center
Gatlinburg, Tennessee

See Page 5 for details on the *37th Annual Home-Based Institute* on September 23-24, 2026.

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**
- **Growing Strong Families One Visit at a Time**

**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 12 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 BS 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 22, 2026

8:00 – 9:00 AM	Pre-Institute Registration
9:00 AM – 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: Growing Strong Families One Visit at a Time will be a full-day, interactive session where we will explore relationships and plant the seed as families work with us to help young children become lifelong learners. Our work with families to empower them to be advocates for themselves and their families is part of the Head Start goals. We will make connections by building relationships for stronger families and children's success in school.

Learning Objectives

- ★ Participants will explore how their relationships with the family and children help to create lifelong learners.
- ★ Participants will discuss ways to empower families to be advocates for their families.
- ★ Participants will discuss how stronger families lead to school success for their child(ren).

Your Presenter for Option 2: Growing Strong Families One Visit at a Time



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.)

Growing Strong Families One Visit at a Time

Tentative Agenda – Eastern Time Zone

Tuesday, September 22, 2026

8:00 – 9:00 AM	Pre-Institute Registration
9:00 AM – Noon	Performance Standards to Family Engagement & Education
Noon – 1:30 PM	Lunch on Your Own
1:30 – 4:30 PM	Continue Family Engagement Conversation with Protectant Factors with Families Recap & Closing



37th Annual Head Start & Early Head Start Home-Based Institute

September 23-24, 2026

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 22, 2026**.

The Standard Registration Fee is **\$600** per person.
See page 12 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



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.



Sherri Meyer, 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.

Special Guest Presenters



Aaron Shore, Instructional Coach, NextDoor, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, formerly at 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.



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.



Scott Vineyard, Food Service Director, Bowling Green, Kentucky, has worked in the food/hospitality industry for over 33 years. He has a BS in Marketing and Business from Western Kentucky University. Scott developed and teaches In2Work and Harvest Programs to inmates to help fight recidivism. He is passionate about food insecurity and co-founded Love Others Community Kitchen, which feeds the food insecure in his community.



Tammy Vineyard, Special Projects Manager, TTAS at Western Kentucky University, Bowling Green, Kentucky, has worked as support for Head Start and Early Head Start programs since 2022. She is halfway through a master's degree in Organizational Leadership with a Nonprofit Certificate from WKU and has a BA in Psychology from WKU. She co-founded Love Others Community Kitchen with her husband, Scott, and serves on the Board of Directors for her community's soup kitchen.

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 do not offer group rates to any of the hotels, as there are plenty of reasonably priced accommodations in the area. 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

Gatlinburg Trolleys

Trolleys operate on a daily basis, serving patrons 365 days a year, providing an easy, free way to get around Gatlinburg. Visitors in the area can board a Trolley at any stop in the City and be off to their destination. All Trolleys stop at the Mass Transit Center, located at Ripley's Aquarium of the Smokies.

The Gatlinburg Trolley can also be used as an easy way to get into downtown without the hassle of driving into the City and finding a parking spot. You can use the Park N Ride Lot at the Gatlinburg Welcome Center, located at 1011 Banner Road in Gatlinburg, just off of the Spur, just before entering town, board a trolley, and be in downtown Gatlinburg in a matter of minutes.

Head Start & Early Head Start Home-Based Institute

Tentative Agenda – Eastern Time Zone

Session descriptions are available on page 9 of this brochure.

Wednesday, September 23, 2026

- 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 *Rooted in Relationships – Strengthening Our Home-Based Journey – Amy Hood, EdD*
- 10:10 - 10:15 AM Break
- 10:15 - 11:45 AM **Workshop Session I:**
- Words in Bloom: Growing Language Through Everyday Relationships — *Kaity Kellett, BA*
 - Harvesting Solutions to Food Insecurity in an Ever-Challenging World — *Scott Vineyard, BS*
 - Building Connections with Home-Based Educators Through the Lens of a Coach – *Aaron Shore, BA and Samantha Stevens, BS*
 - Learning Rooted in Early Childhood Math Play – *Sherri Meyer, MAE*
- 11:45 - 1:15 PM Lunch on Your Own
- 1:15 – 2:45 PM **Workshop Session II:**
- Branching Out: Building Relationships Through Outdoor Play & Exploration – *Kaity Kellett, BA*
 - Building Connections with Home-Based Families Through the Lens of a Home-Based Educator – *Aaron Shore, BA and Samantha Stevens, BS*
 - Grow More Time: Practical AI for Home Visitors – *Tammy Vineyard, BA*
 - Beyond the Behavior: Supporting Emotional Growth – *Amy Hood, EdD*
- 2:30 - 2:45 PM Break
- 2:45- 4:00 PM *Growing Connections through Teamwork with Families & Colleagues – Sherri Meyer, MAE*

Thursday, September 24, 2026

- 8:00 - 9:00 AM Continental Breakfast
- 9:00 - 10:15 AM **Workshop Session III:**
- Learning Rooted in Early Childhood Math Play – *Sherri Meyer, MAE*
 - Unplugged Connections: Helping Families Balance Screen Time and Relationships – *Kaity Kellett, BA*
 - Growing Children: One Developmental Milestone at a Time – *Amy Hood, EdD*
- 10:15 – 10:30 AM Break
- 10:30 AM – Noon **Workshop Session IV:**
- Rooted in Play: Strengthening Relationships Through Play-Based Home Visiting – *Kaity Kellett, BA*
 - Cultivating Communication Across Generations – *Tammy Vineyard, BA*
 - Beyond the Behaviors: Supporting Emotional Growth – *Amy Hood, EdD*

NOON – Depart to sow the seeds of new ideas!



Workshop Sessions of the 37th 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 23, 2026

9:00 - 10:15 AM

Opening Session: *Welcome to the 37th Annual Home-Based Institute!*

Rooted in Relationships – Strengthening Our Home-Based Journey – Amy Hood, EdD

As we begin our conference dedicated to Home-Based Head Start, we will start with something MORE than policies, paperwork, and program goals. It's about people!

It's about the relationships we build, the trust we earn, and the lives we impact one visit, one conversation, and one moment at a time.

10:30 AM – 11:45 PM

Workshop Session I Selections

Words in Bloom: Growing Language Through Everyday Relationships – Kaity Kellett, BA

Language grows through relationships. Every diaper change, meal, walk, play experience, and conversation creates opportunities for children to build communication skills and strengthen connections with caring adults. In this session, participants will explore how everyday moments become powerful language-learning opportunities. Through movement activities, hands-on practice, and collaborative discussions, home visitors will learn how to coach families to intentionally build language, literacy, and communication skills through meaningful interactions.

Harvesting Solutions to Food Insecurity in an Ever-Challenging World – Scott Vineyard, BS

A creative resource session for the Compassionate Leader, Mentor, and Community Member who wants to see change in their community and is willing to work for it.

Building Connections with Home-Based Educators Through the Lens of a Coach – Aaron Shore, BA, and Samantha Stevens, BS

Learners will discuss ideas, tools, and strategies for coaches to support the home visitors they work with to provide quality home visits to the families they work with weekly. Discuss burnout that can happen with being a coach, home visitor, supervisor, and provide strategies to help with self-care. Discuss how coaching, at times, looks at the big picture and not just one piece of the puzzle.

Learning Rooted in Early Childhood Math Play – Sherri Meyer, MAE

This session will review Head Start Early Learning Outcomes with math skills children should experience to be ready for school entry.

1:15 – 2:45 PM

Workshop Session II Selections

Branching Out: Building Relationships Through Outdoor Play & Exploration – Kaity Kellett, BA

Nature creates opportunities for connection, curiosity, and regulation for both children and adults. This session explores how outdoor experiences strengthen relationships, support development, and encourage meaningful family engagement during home visits. Participants will engage in hands-on outdoor-inspired activities while learning practical ways to encourage safe, accessible outdoor play for families.

Building Connections with Home-Based Families Through the Lens of a Home-Based Educator

– Aaron Shore, BA, and Samantha Stevens, BS

Learners will discuss ideas, tools, and strategies for home visitors who work with Home-Based families weekly. How to stay connected with families and provide quality visits while empowering the family week after week. Discuss burnout that can happen with being a home visitor, with being a parent, and discuss strategies and ideas for not only home visitors but families to keep coming back week after week.

Grow More Time: Practical AI for Home Visitors – Tammy Vineyard, BA

In this interactive, beginner-friendly session, participants will explore how AI can simplify everyday tasks in home-based programs—from writing lesson ideas and family communication to organizing schedules and reducing paperwork. We'll break down what AI is (and isn't), demonstrate easy-to-use tools, and practice creating prompts that get helpful, realistic results. Participants will leave with ready-to-use strategies to save time, reduce stress, and enhance both their professional work and personal productivity—without needing a tech background.

Beyond the Behavior: Supporting Emotional Growth – Amy Hood, EdD

This session will explore the reasons why children behave as they do. Participants will have the opportunity to examine strategies for talking with families about behavior and how to appropriately discipline children.

2:45 – 4:00 PM

Growing Connections Through Teamwork with Families & Colleagues – Sherri Meyer, MAE

This active session will explore various ways that each of us utilizes when communicating with colleagues and families. Come ready for some fun team building!

Thursday, September 24, 2026

9:00 - 10:15 AM

Workshop Session III Selections

Learning Rooted in Early Childhood Math Play – Sherri Meyer, MAE

This session will review Head Start Early Learning Outcomes with math skills children should experience to be ready for entry to school.

Unplugged Connections: Helping Families Balance Screen Time and Relationships – Kaity Kellett, BA

Screen time is a common topic for families, but conversations about technology can be challenging. This judgment-free session explores what current research says about children and screen use while focusing on relationship-based approaches to supporting families. Participants will learn practical strategies for discussing screen time, promoting healthy media habits, and encouraging meaningful interactions, play, and connection in everyday life.

Growing Children: One Developmental Milestone at a Time – Amy Hood, EdD

This session will allow participants the opportunity to review the milestones for typically developing children, and we will also look at red flags. We will discuss appropriate screening and assessment strategies.

10:30 AM – NOON

Workshop Session IV Selections

Rooted in Play: Strengthening Relationships Through Play-Based Home Visiting – Kaity Kellett, BA

Play is one of the most powerful ways to build connections between children, caregivers, and home visitors. In this interactive session, participants will explore how play-based interactions strengthen relationships, support development, and increase family engagement during home visits. Attendees will participate in hands-on play experiences, movement activities, and collaborative challenges while learning how to coach families through meaningful everyday play.

Cultivating Communication Across Generations – Tammy Vineyard, BA

In this interactive session, we'll explore how generational differences impact relationships with co-workers, caregivers, and children's families in home-based settings. Participants will gain practical strategies to "speak the language" of different generations, strengthen engagement, and build more meaningful connections during home visits. We'll decode communication styles, explore real-life scenarios, and have a little fun along the way—because whether you "jive," "🤔", or say "that's cool," connection is what matters most.

Beyond the Behavior: Supporting Emotional Growth – Amy Hood, EdD

This session will explore the reasons why children behave as they do. Participants will have the opportunity to examine strategies for talking with families about behavior and how to appropriately discipline children.

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, 2026.**

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, 2026.** 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, you authorize being 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.**

