

HCFCCA

SEPTEMBER 2026 NEWSLETTER

Volume 47 Issue 2



SEPTEMBER TRAINING

Crunch, Rustle, Explore! Fall Activities

*Explore the rich opportunities Fall offers
for outdoor learning*

September 3, 2026

6:10 pm Raffle and Networking

6:30 pm In Person Training

9830 Patuxent Woods Dr

2 CR CRK

BOARD MEETING

September 10 at 6:30 pm

In Person Meeting



*All are welcome to attend to learn more about how our Board
operates. RSVP at hcfccabusiness@gmail.com for details*

RESOURCE LINKS

Click me!

- A Parents Guide to Regulated Child Care
- CDC Developmental Milestones
- Tuesday Tidbits 8/18/2026
- Maryland Infants and Toddlers Program Brochure
- OCF Technical Assistance Specialist
- NRC for Health and Safety in Child Care and Early Education

a note from

Uyen



I can't believe we are already in September and getting ready for our first in-person training of the 2026–2027 year!

I want to remind everyone that the Board and Committee Chairs are here to support you. Please feel free to reach out to us with any questions, ideas, or support you may need.

We Need Your Newsletter Contributions!

Our Newsletter Team is working hard to make our monthly newsletter more interesting, informative, and enjoyable to read—but we can't do it without your support! I look forward to hearing from you and learning more about the wonderful experiences and creativity within our membership. Consider sharing:

- ☀️ A special childhood memory or story
- 🍰 A favorite family recipe
- 💡 A teaching moment or lesson from your career
- 🎨 A creative art project
- 📖 A helpful tip or idea for fellow providers
- ❤️ Anything else you think our members would enjoy!

Don't be shy—your story matters! You never know who you may inspire or help through your contribution. And as an added bonus, you will have the opportunity to earn a PAU when the Credentialing Program is back in full force.

I look forward to a great year with you!

reminiscing with *Uyen*



The 2026 Mid-Autumn Festival (Moon Festival) falls on Friday, September 25, 2026. It is celebrated across many Asian cultures with traditions centered around family reunion, gratitude, and appreciation of the moon.

When I think of the Mid-Autumn Festival, some of my fondest childhood memories revolve around eating mooncakes with my family. These round pastries, traditionally filled with lotus seed, mung bean, red bean paste, or a more savory taste of bbq pork and fermented duck eggs. We walked around the neighborhood with lights & colorful paper lanterns in different shapes of animals, geometric design.



For me, the Mid-Autumn Festival is more than a celebration—it is a beautiful reminder of childhood, family, traditions, and the importance of staying connected to the people we love.



**in case you
missed it . . .**

BBQ Party



What a fun afternoon at our end of summer BBQ and General Membership Meeting! We had so many great ideas, lots of laughter, and incredible support for bringing back our conference next spring.

Thank you to everyone who attended, shared your ideas, and showed your support. A special thank you to Sona for generously allowing us to use your space and for helping make this gathering possible.



Getting to Know You

We are excited to recognize and celebrate our HCFCCA members! Each month, we hope to feature a childcare provider in our newsletter so members can get to know one another, share experiences, and learn from the history and wisdom of our fellow providers.

How did you get started in family childcare?
What has kept you in the childcare profession over the years?
What is one of your favorite memories from your childcare career?
What has been one of the biggest changes you have seen in family childcare?
What is something you are most proud of as a childcare provider?
What advice would you give to someone who is new to family childcare?
What do you wish you had known when you first started?
What has being a member of HCFCCA meant to you?
What is one fun or interesting fact about you that members may not know?
Anything else?

Please provide a photo of yourself and/or your childcare program. Make certain you have permission to share the children's photos.



Please send an email to
newsletterhcfcca@gmail.com or
fill out the the Google Form

 Click me!

Save the Date!

2026-2027

September 3, 2026 In Person 2 CUR

Crunch, Rustle, Explore! Fall Activities

October 1, 2026 In Person 3 CUR

A Child's Eye View: Inspiring Wonder through in Person Environmental Design

November 5, 2026 In Person 3 CD

Introduction to the Pyramid Model

December 3, 2026 Virtual 1 PRO 1 SN

Developmental Screening Essential

January 7, 2027 Virtual 2 HSN

Beyond Mr. Yuk Poison Safety and Prevention

February 4, 2027 Virtual 3 PRO

Marketing Your Business for Growth

March 4, 2027 In Person 3 CUR

Creating a Writing Center from Dollar and Thrift Store Finds

April 1, 2027 In Person 3 CUR

Exploring Scientific Thinking and Inquiry with Children's Literature

May 6, 2027 In Person 1 PRO 2 CD

Showcasing Growth: Documenting through Portfolios

June 3, 2027 In Person 1 CUR 1 PRO

Empowering Infant & Toddler Understanding through Discovery



Conference Committees



Conference Chair/Program Committee: *Uyen Feliks*

- Oversees the entire conference
- Coordinates all committee chairs
- Develops the conference schedule
- Communicates with presenters
- Identifies and invites keynote speakers
- Serves as the speakers' primary contact
- Gets MSDE funding and approval
- Reserves the facility
- Coordinates workshops

2. Vice Chair

- Assists the Conference Chair
- Oversees committee progress
- Acts on behalf of the Chair when needed

3. Registration

- Manages attendee registration and check-in
- Ticketbud or other ways to pay like Zeffy
- Ensure we are getting a discount for non-profit

4. Welcome Committee

- Prepares name badges and conference packets
- Welcomes guests and provides information

5. Marketing & Communications Committee

- Promotes the conference through social media, email, and newsletters
- Designs flyers and brochures

Conference Committees



6. Sponsorship & Vendor Committee

- Secures sponsors/donations
- Maintains relationships with vendors
- Coordinates vendor setup and logistics

7. Finance Committee

- Develops and monitors the conference budget with Conf. Chair
- Processes payments and reimbursements
- Tracks income and expenses

7. Hospitality Committee

- Orders and Coordinates refreshments and meals, including vendors & presenters
- Keep food and beverage stations stocked
- Maintain cleanliness in the area and kitchen
- Set up and clean up of food areas
- Consider variety of dietary needs

8. Logistics & Facilities Committee

- Coordinates venue setup and room layouts
- Manages signage and equipment placement
- Ensures all meeting spaces are prepared
- Assists keynote speakers and workshop presenters
- Troubleshoots technical issues during the conference

Conference Committees



9. Decorations & Ambiance Committee

- Plans conference décor
- Creates centerpieces and signage
- Helps create a welcoming environment

10. Photography & Media Committee

- Takes photos and videos during the conference
- Collects testimonials
- Shares conference highlights on social media
- Cleans up after the conference

11. Evaluation & Follow-up Committee

- Creates and Collects conference evaluations
- Summarizes attendee feedback

12. Fundraising and Donation

- Solicit sponsorships from local businesses and organization's
- Request donations such as gift cards, raffle items, food, beverages, and supplies
- Plan and assist with fundraising events and activities

Please look over the various committees needed to make our conference a success! Let Uyen know how you would like to help at hcfccabusiness@gmail.com or 443-220-7336

a note from

Bethany



The end of August and beginning of September bring transition. Kids heading off to kindergarten. New families arriving. The familiar rhythms of summer giving way to something different. Maybe the weather will actually cool down this year.

These transitions aren't small things. There's the real work of saying goodbye to children you've nurtured and known. There's the adjustment of new routines, new personalities, new dynamics in your homes and classrooms. There's the mental load of it all—the paperwork, the planning, the recalibration.

And yet, there's something here too. A natural permission to begin again. To reset what wasn't working. To recharge what got depleted over the busy months. To look at your practice with fresh eyes and ask: *what do I want this season to be?*

*That's the gift of transitions, even when they're hard.
They're invitations.*

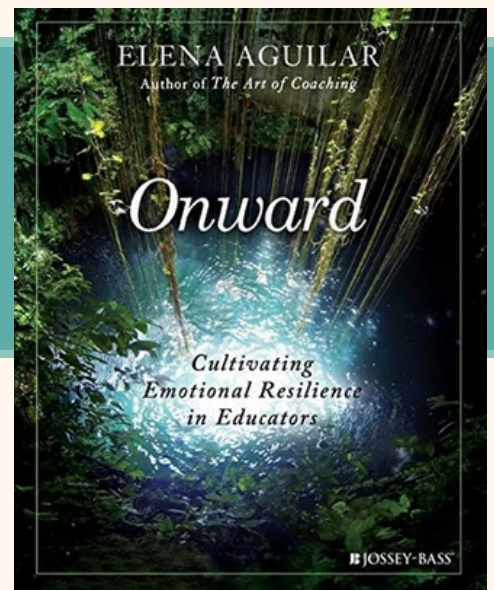
As you move through these changes, I hope you'll lean on this community. Share what you're learning. Ask questions. Let others carry some of the weight. That's what we're here for.

Here's to new beginnings and the courage to embrace them.

Building Resilience: *Understand Emotions*

*This year I 'm going to be reading through the book **Onward** by Elena Aguilar. Join me each month here in the newsletter for a short recap of each habit or grab a copy of the book and read along with me.*

-Bethany



Emotions aren't the enemy — they're information. When a child's meltdown sends your own frustration spiking, or a parent's offhand comment lingers with you all day, your body is telling you something worth listening to, not something to push down and power through.

Providers often feel they have to be endlessly calm and endlessly patient, on top of everything else the job asks of them. But resilience isn't the absence of hard feelings — it's knowing how to recognize them, name them, and let them move through you instead of running the show.

This month, try noticing the moment before the reaction: when you feel tension in your body — a clenched jaw, tight shoulders, shallow breath — pause and name the emotion underneath it. Just naming it, even silently, can take some of its power away.

Reflections

What's one emotion that shows up often in your workday?
What tends to trigger it, and what helps it pass?

Naming what you feel isn't a detour from the work — it's what makes steadiness possible in the middle of it.

a note from

Anita



As we head into fall, I'm pleased to share important updates from both the Volunteer and Finance committees.

Volunteer Opportunities & PAUs

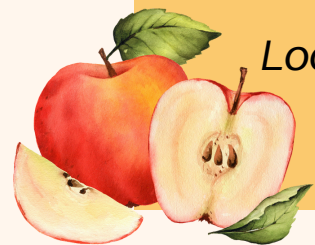
With our credential program starting up again, we have many ways for you to earn Professional Activity Units (PAUs). Whether you serve on our Board, chair a committee, volunteer on a committee, or help with our upcoming Spring 2027 Conference, there are numerous opportunities to contribute and advance your credentials. Please watch our newsletter for announcements about these openings—we'd love to have your involvement.

Financial Update

I'm happy to report that our annual audit was completed in July with no discrepancies. Thank you to Angela, Uyen, and Maria for their diligent work reviewing our finances. The audit has been submitted to our accountant.

We've adjusted our budget to account for the costs associated with our upcoming conference, and all related income has been properly recorded. This positions us well financially for a successful event.

Looking forward to seeing you involved in the months ahead!



a note from *Claudia*



Dear HCFFCA Members,

Welcome to another wonderful year together! I want to take a moment to thank each of you for being part of our childcare community. Your dedication, passion, and commitment to providing quality care and education to children make such an important difference in the lives of the families we serve.

As your VP of Membership, I am excited to continue working alongside all of you to strengthen our association, create opportunities for connection and professional growth, and make sure every member feels welcomed, valued, and supported.

To our current members: *Thank you for your continued support and involvement. Your participation helps make our association stronger!*

To those who are new to family childcare or have not yet joined: we would love to welcome you! Our association is a wonderful place to connect with other childcare providers, share ideas and experiences, learn from one another, and grow together as professionals. There is strength in coming together, and your voice and experience can make our community even stronger.

If you have been thinking about becoming a member, this is the perfect time to join us! Come be part of a community that supports, encourages, and celebrates family childcare providers.

Here's to another year of connection, collaboration, learning, and growth! I look forward to meeting our new members and seeing all of our returning members throughout the year.

Warmly,
Claudia
HCFFCA VP of Membership



Autumn

Rhymes



Little Brown Acorn

Little brown acorn, small and round (make small circle with fingers)
Falls from the tree to the cold, cold ground (flutter hand down)
A squirrel comes along, so quick, so spry (walk fingers along arm)
Picks it up and scurries by! (grab and tuck fist under arm)



Five Signs of Fall

Five signs of fall, come and see
(hold up five fingers)
The first is an apple, red as can be
(fold down one finger)
The second's an acorn, brown and small
(fold down another)
The third is a raindrop starting to fall
(fold down another)
The fourth is a sweater to keep us warm
(fold down another)
The fifth is a leaf caught up in a storm!
(fold down last finger, flutter hand)
Five signs of fall, now can you say —
(hold up open palm)
Which one will you see today?
(shrug, point to child)



a recipe from

Claudia



Apple Ring Pancakes

light and fluffy pancakes with sweet apples

INGREDIENTS

- 2-3 apples
- 2-3 tablespoons butter divided
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cups water
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 cups pancake mix
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon of cinnamon or pumpkin pie spice



INSTRUCTIONS

- Peel and core the apples. Slice into $\frac{1}{2}$ " rounds.
- Pour water into a mixing bowl. Add vanilla, cinnamon, and pancake mix. Whisk until smooth.
- Heat 1 tablespoon of butter in a large skillet over medium heat. Place one apple slice in the butter and pour about $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of pancake mix over top, until it just covers the apple slice. Cook pancake until bubbles begin to form and edges dry out. Flip pancake. Cook another minute or two.
- When pan begins to dry, add remaining butter and melt in the skillet.



a note from

Nancy



How to Raise Your Children to Be Kind and Caring

Kindness is a social skill that needs intentional teaching, practice, and nurturing. Here are five ways to guide your children toward empathy and care.

Be the blueprint. Children mirror our actions more than our words. How you treat others—from cashiers to neighbors—teaches far more than any lecture.

Normalize real apologies. Teach children to genuinely acknowledge the impact of their actions, moving beyond forced “sorries.” This models accountability and respect.

Encourage everyday gestures. Compassion doesn’t require grand acts. Smiling at strangers, sharing toys, or sitting with lonely classmates create lasting impact through small actions.

Prompt curiosity, not judgment. Help children understand that everyone carries unseen burdens. Teaching them to wonder about someone’s story instead of reacting harshly builds genuine emotional intelligence.

Keep communication open. Create a safe space for discussing tough topics like exclusion and peer pressure. Listen without fixing, helping them navigate social dynamics themselves.



a craft from *Claudia*



Paper Bag Tree

Materials

- paper bags
- fun felt leaves—we got them from the store, you could make your own from felt or paper
- glue and scissors

Take the paper bag and cut strips down about mid ways.

Then twist the center of the bag. Last twist all the cut pieces of bag to make the sticks/branches.



Meet the

HCFCCA Board

Uyen Feliks, *President*

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Bethany Corrie, *VP of Education*

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Anita Marino, *Treasurer*

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Maria Trout, *Secretary*

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Claudia Cuestas, *VP of Membership*

hcfccavpmembership@gmail.com

Sona Yoder, *VP of Marketing and Public Relations*

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Angela Lamberti, *HCFFCA Representative to MSFCCA*

atlamberti@gmail.com



HCFCCA Committees

(you know you want to join one)

Fundraising

Uyen Feliks

By Laws, Policy & Procedures

Nancy Cauley

Website

Claudia Cuestas

Sunshine

Lynda Davenport

Newsletter

Janelle Jackson

Bethany Corrie

newsletterhcfcca@gmail.com

Parent Line

Nancy Cauley

Social Media

Natacha Michel

Mentoring & Networking

Kim Stinnett

Nominating Committee

Nancy Cauley

Volunteer

Anita Marino

Conference Committee

Your name could be here!

Check out page 6-8

Hospitality

Deena Kinnaman

Email Uyen at
hcfccabusiness@gmail.com
to volunteer



CALL FOR ARTICLES

Have Something to Say? *We need YOU to contribute to our newsletter!*



Your contributions to our newsletter enhance the quality of HCFCCA. By sharing your insights, experiences, and ideas, you help foster a collaborative environment where we can all learn from each other and grow as providers. We are grateful for the knowledge you contribute to help us all become better child care providers.



DEADLINES

For the 2026-2027 school year:

August 16	January 17
September 20	February 21
October 18	March 21
November 15	April 18
December 20	May 16

TOPICS TO CONSIDER

Nature: Bringing nature indoors, getting outside in all weather, identifying plants in your yard.

Art and Crafts: From open ended process art to handprint crafts for parents, showcase what you are doing in the art area.

Recipes: Share your tried and true lunch recipes and sweet treats you like to make for special occasions.

Book reviews: Tell us about a favorite picture book you've read with the children or an early childhood education book you've enjoyed.

**You can submit an article or ask for more information
at newsletterhcfcca@gmail.com**

We can help you participate in the Food Program.



Contact us!

Fernanda Brito

| 757-657-0711

Are you a licensed childcare home
or center provider?



Enjoy the nutritional & financial benefits of the Food Program.



What is the Food Program (CACFP)?

CACFP is a federally-funded program that **reimburses qualifying organizations for serving nutritious meals and snacks** to eligible children and adults.

CACFP Benefits:

Provide Nutritional Education

Receive Money for Serving Healthy Meals

Support Low-Income Families

Nourish Healthy Meals for Children

How can I join the Food Program?

You can join the Food Program
by **finding a sponsor.**



Learn More
Scan QR Code

SCAN ME

ATTENTION EARLY CHILDHOOD PROFESSIONALS

You could be eligible for free
tuition, fees, and books at
Howard Community College
through the Child Care Career
and Professional
Development Fund
(CCCPDF!)

APPLY TODAY IF YOU...

- have worked in a licensed child care setting for at least one year
- be eligible for a MSDE Level 2 or greater Credential Certificate
- want to work toward an AAS in Early Childhood Development (career program) or an AAT in Early Childhood/Special Education or Elementary Education/Special Education (transfer programs)

TO QUALIFY FOR THE SCHOLARSHIP, THE STUDENT MUST...

- work at least 10 hours/week in a licensed child care setting while completing the program
- maintain a 2.5 minimum GPA while enrolled
- continue to work in child care at least 20 hours/week in Maryland for a period of time (2 years for a 2 year degree, 4 years for a 4 year degree) after your degree is completed

TO LEARN MORE OR APPLY NOW...

Contact HCC's CCCPDF Coordinator:
Joan Johnson jjohnson6@howardcc.edu



You Can Get There From Here.