



For Immediate Release
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The Children's Community Head Start Welcomes Congressman Tim Bishop and Announces New Program for Suffolk County Families

(Ronkonkoma...) The Children's Community Head Start (CCHS), a federally funded comprehensive preschool program for income eligible families, has received \$1,325,615 through a competitive application process made available under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA). The federal grant is 80% of the total cost for the program. CCHS must raise an additional 20% in donated goods and services, including volunteers, that support the activities of the program. The funds will be used to expand CCHS' already existing Head Start Program and to begin an Early Head Start Program.

The Children's Community Head Start (serving preschoolers and their families) and Early Head Start (serving pregnant women and families with infants and toddlers) have centers in Port Jefferson and Ronkonkoma, NY, and will open in April 2010 in Miller Place. To be eligible, families must be low income and live in CCHS' catchment area of 13 school districts in central Suffolk County. Children with disabilities as well as children living in foster homes or shelter housing are also eligible. In addition to a high-quality and structured home-based and classroom-based experience, children will benefit from health and nutrition services, family advocacy, parent training and strong relationships with local school districts thus aiding their transition to Kindergarten.

According to the *2009 Long Island Index* research report prepared by the Rauch Foundation, early childhood education "prepares children for school, and when provided in a high quality program it can reduce grade repetition, drop out rates, and juvenile delinquency." The report further explains that high quality programs can lower future costs that the public school would otherwise assume.

During Congressman Timothy Bishop's visit to the Children's Community Head Start in Port Jefferson earlier this month, the Congressman pointed out that The Children's Community Head Start and Early Head Start were examples of what the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act was intended to do – create jobs and provide services to families who need them.

"There has been a lot of talk about the federal stimulus money and the impact it will have on the country. Here is an example of how children and families right here in our community will benefit with a high quality early childhood education. Plus, we were able to hire additional staff. It is a win-win for everyone," states Denice Karotseris, the Director of The Children's Community Head Start.



In the enclosed photo, teacher DeeDe Kiklinski (left) and Elizabeth A. Geary, Director (right), along with preschoolers from The Children's Community Head Start present Congressman Timothy Bishop (center) with a photo of the children to thank the Congressman for his commitment to early childhood education.

For information on eligibility and enrollment or to volunteer, call Denice Karotseris at (631) 476-9698.

The Children's Community Head Start
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