



# Norwalk Citizen

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## NECC gets boost from two grants

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The Norwalk Early Childhood Council has received a \$40,000 grant from the [William Caspar Graustein Memorial Fund/Children's Fund of Connecticut](#) and a \$26,500 grant from the [United Way](#) of Coastal Fairfield County.

These grants will help to continue the critical work of improving early care and education for Norwalk's youngest citizens.

The grant supports Norwalk as it continues to be a participant in the GMF Discovery Initiative. The initiative encourages and helps more than 50

Connecticut communities collaborate on the creation of early childhood systems that ensure early learning success for all children. This is accomplished through collaborative work within and between communities, statewide partners and government agencies.

More information about the William Caspar Graustein Memorial Fund can be found at ([www.discovery.wcgmf.org](http://www.discovery.wcgmf.org)). This grant will be used to build on established groundwork in Norwalk and to support the positions of Norwalk's early childhood coordinator and the Norwalk Healthy Families collaborative coordinator. The GMF has also supported the development of the 2012-2016 Norwalk Early Childhood Action Plan and the executive summary, which is available in the [Early Childhood Office](#) located in room 311 in Norwalk City Hall.

Funding from United Way of Coastal Fairfield County will be used to support early childhood literacy efforts in Norwalk. Funds will be used to continue the Reach Out and Read Program at the [Norwalk Community Health Center](#) at which children receive an age-appropriate book at each well-child visit.

The grant will also continue to fund initiatives through the [Family Resource Center](#) at [Fox Run School](#), including a weekly early learning group taking place in the [Tracey Elementary School](#) area that serves families with children birth-5; asl well as Raising Readers Parent Book Clubs. Also funded by the grant is a series of parenting workshops held in collaboration with [Stepping Stones Museum for Children](#) in Norwalk.

Efforts to create a community where children birth to age 9 are healthy, ready to learn and succeed in school and life have been underway for several years. In 2007, the School Readiness Council, the Norwalk Healthy Families Collaborative and Norwalk Kids Start Smart came together to form the Norwalk Early Childhood Council. The Council is composed of early care providers, health services organizations, family resource centers, parents, educators and others supporting Norwalk's young children and their families.

These community partners have worked together to increase the availability of affordable,

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quality preschool, assist parents, early care providers and kindergarten teachers with the challenges of transition to kindergarten, increase the number of children who have a regular doctor and access to health care and equip parents with the knowledge and confidence they need to help their children succeed in school and life.

The next meeting of the Norwalk Early Childhood Council will take place on Wednesday, September 12, 9:30 am -- 11:30 am at Norwalk City Hall. If you would like more information about the meeting or the work of the Council, please contact [Barbara Smart](#) at [Smartb@norwalkps.org](mailto:Smartb@norwalkps.org) or 203 854-4114.

If you would like more information about this event or to schedule an interview, please contact: [Mary Oster](#), 203.854.4148.

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