

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MEDIA INVITE:

QUILT REVEAL AND OVERVIEW OF THE SIGNIFICANCE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD SUPPORT PROGRAMS IN WESTCHESTER AND WHAT CAN BE DONE TO IMPROVE ACCESS

Wednesday, September 28th at 9:30am

Westchester Children's Museum at Playland Park in Rye

Quilts Made by Hundreds of Adults and Children to Be Unveiled on September 28 for Westchester Children's Association's Early Childhood Support Awareness Campaign

WESTCHESTER COUNTY, N.Y. (September 19, 2022) – Over the past year, the Westchester Children's Association (WCA) has collected hundreds of quilt squares from Westchester County and beyond. Their Hope Quilt Project created quilting opportunities for schools and other groups to participate in WCA's awareness campaign on the importance of early childhood supports. In addition to the hundreds of squares created by the Board and staff at WCA, as well as supporters and donors, students from School 30 in Yonkers, Westchester Reform Temple Early Childhood Center in Scarsdale, and The Lakeland School District Lincoln Tutus Elementary School, participated in the creation of the squares.

Early childhood home visiting services provide individualized support and guidance to families with children ages 0-5 in the home setting and provide connections to needed services. The lack of program capacity and funding in Westchester and New York State has caused eligible families to go without this critical resource. In Westchester County, 95.2% of eligible children are not receiving home visiting services; these programs are effective in decreasing abuse and neglect, increasing school readiness, and improving maternal and child health outcomes. Westchester Children's Association advocates for the expansion of home visiting programs at the county and state level so that every eligible family can have access.

To bring greater awareness to this important issue, WCA initiated The Hope Quilt campaign in November of 2021. Several quilts were recently completed and three will be unveiled at a special event to be held Wednesday, September 28th at 9:30am at the Westchester Children's Museum at Playland Park in Rye. The public is invited to attend.

"Early childhood home visiting programs provide essential services to families to foster the healthy development of babies," says WCA Executive Director Allison Lake. "But because of the lack of funding, only four percent of new parents and their infants who need the support of trained professionals can participate in these programs. The Hope Quilt Project was created to enlist the community in creating quilt patches with messages or pictures of hope, and engaged volunteers and sponsors to support the funding and execution of the campaign."

Thanks to The Village Square Quilters in Scarsdale, all of the collected squares have been combined into five quilts varying in size from 70 x 70, with the largest approximately 85 x 90. Three of the quilts will be unveiled at the event on September 28th. The three quilts will remain on display as a testament to the communal effort made to provide extra support to help infants and young parents and the others will be shared around the county with home visiting agencies and County buildings.

About Village Squares Quilters

“What began as a ‘Sure, we’ll help you put together your WCA Hope quilt,’ turned into our honor at being able to really become a part of this remarkable organization” said Susan Wolman of the Village Squares Quilters, a non-profit organization whose members share a love of everything quilting. Members include people at all quilting levels who come together to learn from each other via lectures, workshops, and one-on-one guidance. The organization also distributes hundreds of quilts yearly to nursing homes, veterans, children, and residents of shelters, and teaches quilt-making to new mothers at Bedford Hills Correctional Facility. For more information visit www.Villagesquaresquilters.com

About Westchester Children’s Association

Westchester Children’s Association (WCA) is a multi-issue, child advocacy nonprofit that works to ensure that every child in Westchester is healthy, safe, and prepared for life’s challenges. Since 1914, WCA has been the leading independent voice for Westchester’s children by identifying their needs, making those needs known to the public, and ensuring those needs are met through advocacy and mobilization efforts. For more information about Westchester Children’s Association, visit their website at www.wca4kids.org.

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