

Case Study

Bright Ideas Preschool and Learning

Sarah Gallo, Owner



Sarah Gallo established Bright Ideas Preschool and Learning Center in Amherst NH in the summer of 2020, a significant achievement during the early stages of the global pandemic! Once doors opened, enrollment picked up quickly, and by early spring they had a waiting list for new students. A combination of a convenient location, pent up demand, and the closure of an early childcare center in town, created an ideal set of circumstances for Sarah's business model and its success.

Sarah graduated from Boston University and worked as a teacher and in non-profit administration, before working from home managing pilot projects funded by the Massachusetts Department of Developmental Services. She eventually moved with her husband and family to Amherst NH. The community's rural nature and close proximity to services was an ideal fit for her family. As the pandemic hit, her son's preschool permanently closed and her daughter's elementary school switched to remote learning. Sarah, like many other families, had to find a way to juggle full time working from home with remote learning for her kids.

This new reality created a spark of interest in Sarah. As she used to teach preschool, she started developing a loose business plan to open a new preschool, that supported Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) therapy services in the afternoon. An informal agreement was put in place to purchase the school supplies and curriculum from the preschool that closed. After a few hurdles with real estate, a lease was secured for a perfect stand alone space in Salzburg Square on NH 101. This unique business model includes partnering with Tiffany Remy, CEO of Kin:Pathic, who serves as a teacher and also rents space to provide ABA services in house. Holly Majkut, a skilled teacher, complements the services offered with her expertise as a licensed clinical mental health counselor and art therapist.

This may sound pretty seamless, but like all new businesses there were some significant hurdles to overcome in a relatively short time. The preschool needed to open for the 2020-2021 school year. Although Sarah found an ideal space in March 2020, she needed to obtain a use variance from the Amherst Zoning Board of Adjustment and approval from the NH Childcare Licensing Bureau. Both of these tasks were slow moving and challenging as most offices were completely closed during this time. The Small Business Development Center was extremely helpful, providing her with a list of things to think about including references for an attorney and accountant. After meeting with a few web designers, she decided to build the website herself via Wix, while a friend took professional pictures for the site.

As for plans to expand the business, Sarah is considering offering family counseling, and possibly additional art therapy options, parent workshops and parent/child relationship building classes. Learn more about Bright Ideas Preschool and Learning Center: [Bright Ideas Preschool & Learning Center Amherst NH \(brightideasnh.com\)](https://www.brightideasnh.com)

