



because the first 5 years matter



It's event time at Preschool Promise! Thank you to all who attended our first Preschool Promise Annual Meeting in January, and thank you to **Audrey Starnes** and her team of teachers and students for hosting us at **Stepping Stones Learning Center** in East Dayton. We were excited to share the work we are leading to ensure that every child can be ready for Kindergarten. If you could not join us, please check out [this video](#) with some testimonies from the teachers and families we serve.

We are gearing up for our **15th Annual Readiness Summit** that will take place **March 1** at Sinclair College. We're expecting **500+ supporters** of early childhood education, and we'll focus on **"Wiring the Brain: The Science of Reading Explained."** We also will host our 3rd annual Excellence in Early Education Celebration April 25 to honor our amazing educators. Watch for more details!

Issue 6 is on the ballot in the City of Dayton on March 19. *Issue 6* provides essential funding for Preschool Promise as well as other critical services in Dayton. We encourage you to learn more and to **vote March 19.**

Thank you for being a supporter and partner in our work to ensure that Montgomery County is a great place to be a young child.



Gratefully,

ROBYN LIGHTCAP
Executive Director

PRESCHOOL PROMISE RECEIVES \$4M RESEARCH GRANT

Preschool Promise has been awarded the Education Innovation Research Grant; a **highly competitive \$4 million federal grant** from the U.S. Department of Education. The grant will support our work to research the impact of **Conscious Discipline**, an evidence-based, trauma-informed method for improving students' social-emotional skills and classroom quality.

We are so proud to have won this competitive grant that **will put us in the vanguard of early education research** relating to Conscious Discipline and its impact on classroom quality and student outcomes. We are one of just 45 organizations and collaborators nationally to be chosen for this round of Education Innovation and Research grants. With the help of our amazing local early education partners and a highly respected evaluation team, we're going to learn more about how to ensure all our young children start Kindergarten on track — not behind.

The project began this January and will conclude in 2028.

[Click here](#) to read the U.S. Department of Education announcement regarding the 45 awards. Preschool Promise was also featured in the [Dayton Daily News](#) and the [Dayton Business Journal](#) for this opportunity!



HOPE ZONE IS BUILDING STRONG CONNECTIONS

Preschool Promise is partnering with Omega CDC to improve Kindergarten reading for children attending four sites in the Hope Zone in Northwest Dayton.

Coaching has officially begun, and teachers had the opportunity to hear from a local Kindergarten teacher, **Leslie C. of Westpark Academy**, on how the KRA is administered and how the data is analyzed. Preschool teachers engaged in powerful discussions about how we move the needle to prepare students in Preschool for Kindergarten.

Ready to Read coaches and staff are training teachers **Heggerty Phonemic Awareness**. The Heggerty curriculum provides students with consistent and repeated instruction that develops their decoding and encoding skills. This program will provide supplemental phonics instruction that will be used alongside Creative Curriculum.

WE'RE SUPPORTING PRESCHOOLS' BUILDING IMPROVEMENTS

Our **ELEVATE Facilities Project**, funded by the **City of Dayton** and the Northwest Dayton Partnership, is officially underway. We're providing local child care centers with help paying for much-needed building improvements. Pictured (below) is **Angie's Early Learning Center**, one of the sites that has received funds. In the before picture, the outdoor area had black mats, which were intensely hot in the summer, covering the children's play space. The new turf not only improves the look of the playground; it also provides a maintenance-free natural environment for the children.



WE'RE INTRODUCING THE IDI ASSESSMENT

Preschool Promise staff and our Black Boy Ambassadors have begun taking the **Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) Assessment**. The IDI helps us better understand successes and challenges around diversity, equity, inclusion and justice related issues.

BLACK BOY BRILLIANCE IS LIFTING UP YOUNG BLACK BOYS

Every child has the right to receive a high-quality early education. That means we have to recognize the inequities that children — especially Black boys — face in school and in our communities. We partnered with **Never Whisper Justice**, the creators of the powerful documentary, **Black Boys**, and **B2 Studios**, to create a promotional video that featured Preschool Promise children and illustrates the barriers that Black boys face in our community. The video helped us let individuals know about our more than 20 screenings.

1,000 PEOPLE CAME OUT FOR BLACK BOYS

Through our partnership with **Never Whisper Justice**, we hosted **more than 20 showings of Black Boys** for teachers and community members. **Nearly 1,000 people attended** the showings. More than half are teachers and administrators from our Preschool Promise centers.

CHILDREN LOVE OUR BLACK BOY AMBASSADORS



Currently, we have **6 Black male Ambassadors** in our Ambassador program. These men are visiting classrooms and making positive connections with young children. Our Ambassadors have spent **250 hours at 7 different sites**. On November 30, a training on culturally responsive teaching was conducted by Preschool Promise's **Lynne Willis**. The men discussed the importance of children's classrooms embracing their culture.

JANUARY PLAYKITS AND BOOKS-OF-THE-MONTH HIGHLIGHT TALKING AND READING

Our January **Book-of-the-Month**, *What Do You Do With A Tail Like That?*, is a non-fiction picture book that stirs the imaginations of readers, young and old. Along with December and February's titles, this book highlights opportunities to practice a Core 4 Skill. Talking and Reading involves exploring words that rhyme, name recognition and sharing thoughts out loud to help children build reading skills. The **January Playkit** gives kiddos opportunities to write their own stories and illustrate them, too!

Did you know **Dayton Metro Library** includes our Books-of-the-Month in their **Dial-A-Story** titles? Families can call **937-250-7500** to listen to a selection of stories read by library staff or a guest reader. Our Book-of-the-Month is always the final selection on the list.



OUR PARENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE HAS GREAT IDEAS

Each September our marketing department encourages current Preschool Promise parents/guardians to consider joining the Parent Advisory Committee. **Eight to 10 individuals are chosen** to advise Preschool Promise staff about program policies, procedures, practices and communications that impact families.

They assist our team with educating families about the importance of early learning and the resources available to them to support their children. Parent Advisors have shown their advocacy for expanded and improved early learning resources and opportunities, with particular focus in areas of racial equity and equity for differently abled children. The committee, along with their children, are some of the faces that you see in our marketing pieces.

WE'RE SUPPORTING PROGRAMS TO ADVANCE MENTAL HEALTH

Preschool Promise is partnering with **Youthland Academy** and **The Village Network** to provide mental health support and education for children, families and educators. All teachers in the center receive in-depth coaching and training in the Neurosequential Model and Conscious Discipline to address concerns and foster a supportive learning environment. In addition, The Village Network has embedded a Behavioral Specialist and Mental Health Clinician to offer teachers additional strategies, provide parent workshops and work with children through day treatment and onsite therapy when appropriate.



Thank you for your generous support of Preschool Promise!

