

Bright futures start with the first five years



Fox Valley United Way

Their achievements affect us all



The long-term health and welfare of a community is directly tied to the health and welfare of its children. Those who are strong, prepared and ready for kindergarten have a significantly greater chance for success in school and in life. That's why **Fox Valley United Way** is now committing all of its resources to promoting positive early childhood experiences. The impact of our **SPARK program** has proven that to advance the common good, we need to ensure that area children have what they need to succeed.



Strong, Prepared And Ready for Kindergarten

Developing healthy, successful children is our most important investment



“Early childhood programs pay dividends for life.”

— James J. Heckman, Ph.D.

The reality:

The first 2,000 days are crucial.

Approximately 90% of a child’s brain develops in the first five years. A three-year-old child’s vocabulary predicts third grade achievement; a child not reading at grade level by third grade is four times more likely to drop out of school. Children who participate in high-quality early childhood programs are more likely to go to college, gain employment, own a home and earn a higher wage as adults.

Our children are falling behind.

The 2017 Kindergarten Individual Development Survey (KIDS) showed that only 24% of Illinois children were ready for kindergarten in all three key developmental areas: social and emotional development, language and literacy, and math.

Access and equity are essential.

In Kane and Kendall counties, 36% of children live at or below the Federal Poverty Level and more than 12,000 children under age five live in households isolated by language barriers, restricting access to high-quality early childhood experiences.

Our bold goal:

All children will be strong, prepared and ready for kindergarten

How to achieve it:

Through a whole child/whole family approach

Developmental screenings

Screening tools can help identify at-risk children, and match them to programs and services that can assist them.

Parent interaction

Meeting with parents helps determine the best early childhood placement according to their needs and risk factors. It also enables us to identify other issues that may be impacting a child’s physical, mental, social and educational needs.

Collaboration for holistic development

Gathering professionals and coordinating services to meet the needs of the whole child. From nutrition and housing to health and education, we work together to address issues that impact success in school and beyond.

THE SPARK EQUATION



Leverage Resources

HOW CAN WE FURTHER LEVERAGE RESOURCES AND SUPPORTS TO FAMILIES THROUGH A COLLABORATIVE FRAMEWORK?



Build Capacity

HOW CAN YOUR PROGRAM BUILD CAPACITY TO REACH THE SHARED CAPACITY GOAL THROUGH A COLLABORATIVE FRAMEWORK?



Work Effectively

HOW CAN WE COORDINATE EFFORTS TO SUPPORT EFFICIENCIES AND ACHIEVE GREATER IMPACT FOR FAMILIES AND CHILDREN?



Positive Outcomes

FOR FAMILIES AND THEIR CHILDREN

“A successful, productive adult starts at birth.”

— *First Five Years Fund*

Studies have shown that the return on investment for dollars devoted to quality early childhood development is 13%.

Yet, among developed countries, the U.S. is second to last in funding for such resources.

The health and success of our children is up to us. We need to take the lead together in order to create long-term impact for our community.

Won't you join us and give today?

Visit foxvalleyunitedway.org

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Fox Valley United Way

AURORA

44 E. Galena Blvd.
Aurora, IL 60505

ST. CHARLES

202 W. Main St.
2nd Floor
St. Charles, IL 60174

