

Success by 6 Resource Centers



The Issue

The foundation of lifelong learning and success is built during the earliest years of life – long before our youngest residents arrive at school. Parents and communities thus share a common goal – seeking the positive early developmental experiences that help young children thrive.

The research is clear – ensuring positive development of young children, starting at birth or before, prepares children for school achievement. Since early learning begins at home, parents are their children's most influential first teachers.

Why it matters

Parents and caregivers who provide stable, nurturing relationships for their young children not only result in children who are better prepared for school, they also demonstrate the characteristics essential for a strong workforce and a healthy community, such as self-confidence, ability to work cooperatively with others, initiative and persistence in learning.

The Opportunity

United Way's network of Success By 6 Resource Centers provide early learning resources funding supervised play sessions and a developmental toy lending library for parents and caregivers so more young children have the experiences that are essential to healthy human development beginning at birth.

The Approach

Built around partnerships with local school districts and early childhood centers, Success By 6 Resource Centers are currently located on-site at 17 locations across the region. The centers provide a Toy and Resource Lending Library filled with educational toys and books appropriate for children birth to age 6. All play sessions and materials are available for checkout free of charge. The centers are an important support for parents – especially parents with limited resources and those who faced their own educational attainment challenges.

Centers conduct a range of activities that complement the early learning library, including educational training sessions, technology stations for self-guided learning, parenting groups both on site at school buildings and in partnership with community organizations. Outreach is conducted to engage and serve not only traditional parents, but also family caregivers, child care providers, early childhood educators and parent educators. Other specific groups that are connected to, and that use resources from the Success By 6 Resource Centers include Missouri Preschool Project, community preschool programs, special education programs, home-based child care providers and many more.

Success By 6 Resource Centers provide a focal point for parent engagement around early learning. The centers are able to increase the number of parents that they reach by making the center open to different group meetings, or by staff organizing special parent group meetings. Often Early Childhood PTA members use Success By 6 Resource Centers for their meetings and for special events. The existing centers also attract meetings by faith groups, and others organizing events to help young parents and their families.

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Focus on Results

Data collected from the centers demonstrates both the scope of parents and caregivers reached with early learning resources, as well as outcomes on parenting skills and child development enhancement, including:

- » Parents reporting increased time in literacy and other developmental activities with their child
- » Children who show enhanced readiness for school, such as cooperative play, enlarged vocabulary and listening skills

In the 2015-2016 academic year, 5,776 young children were served by Success By 6 Resource Centers.