There is work to be done, and Ready At Five is doing its part to increase the number of children entering kindergarten ready to succeed.

“We all own the responsibility for the critical needs of young children, and Ready At Five is a collaborative leader working to ensure that all children have the foundational skills needed for success in school and life. We must reach children when they are young to instill in them curiosity, enthusiasm and a love of learning.”

Jack R. Smith, Ph.D., Interim Maryland State Superintendent of Schools.
As a business leader whose work helps advance early childhood education, I know how important it is to form meaningful partnerships so children have the best start in life. I strongly support Ready At Five’s mission that helps connect Maryland children with high-quality early education programs that prepare them for kindergarten—and for long-term success in school and beyond.”

Jeffrey D. Brookes, President, Brookes Publishing Co. and Ready At Five Executive Leadership Committee Member
OPPORTUNITY FOR GROWTH

Ready At Five recognizes the importance of research-based, high quality professional development. This year, our two School Readiness Symposia, The Arts Work in Early Childhood and Collaboration in Action: Supporting Dual Language Learners and their Families engaged and inspired more than 475 early childhood education professionals and stakeholders.

Professional development – at the core of Ready At Five’s portfolio of work – is essential to elevating the early childhood workforce and is the foundation for creating high quality early childhood learning experiences. By designing, piloting, and evaluating innovative programs, curricula and tools for educators, we are able to successfully broaden our reach to more children throughout Maryland. The expansion of our Vocabulary Improvement and Oral Language Enrichment Through Stories (VIOLETS) curriculum – now in 495 early childhood classrooms – is the result of offering eight VIOLETS professional development opportunities reaching more than 125 early educators. Six Learning Party trainings reached more than 100 early educators, and nine STEM-related professional development events reached more than 300 practitioners; all of these opportunities support the continued professional development of Maryland’s early childhood workforce. The Promoting Enrichment to Advance Language Skills (PETALS) curriculum is in development and will build on the success of the VIOLETS language development program by reaching two- and three-year-old children and their families.

“I feel that I’ve grown as a parent by coming to the Learning Parties each week. There is no handbook on how to parent a four year old, so hearing the stories of other parents is really a good thing. Our instructor was so enthusiastic that it was contagious and made us all want to learn how to become more engaged parents.”

Dad and Learning Party Participant
Howard County

“After attending Ready At Five’s 29th School Readiness Symposium, “Collaboration in Action: Supporting Dual Language Learners and their Families,” I have a new appreciation for how to include and support the DLLs in my classroom and to enrich the experiences of all the children – everyone can embrace and learn from each other’s cultures.”

Teacher from Somerset County.

LEARNING PARTIES REACHED MORE THAN 350 CHILDREN AND OVER 420 PARENTS/ FAMILIES IN 2015

“I have noticed a huge gain in my students’ vocabulary since starting the VIOLETS program in our classroom. The children look forward to our VIOLETS time and love the books. Using VIOLETS helps children to think about the vocabulary that is shared in each story and how it affects real-world situations, especially in their own lives.”

VIOLETS classroom teacher, St. Vincent DePaul Head Start, Baltimore City

VIOLETS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR 125 EARLY EDUCATORS

495 CLASSROOMS USING VIOLETS

OPPORTUNITY FOR REFLECTION

As we reflect on Maryland’s early care and education system, we are fortunate that Maryland was one of the states that was awarded a Race To The Top Early Learning Challenge Grant. The implementation of the grant was guided by strong leadership, stakeholders from across the state, and sub-grantees, including Ready At Five, who were charged with working on the grant projects. Tremendous progress was made to improve Maryland’s early care and education infrastructure. With those elements now in place, we are compelled to plan and execute the work that remains. It is substantial work that must be done to ensure that all Maryland’s young children are ready to do kindergarten work – moving us from 47% of children ready for school – to a greater number of children fully ready. As we consider the progress made we must focus on the future – one in which all children, regardless of their circumstance or zipcode, are on a path to success. Ready At Five remains confident that this can be achieved. Please join with us to make it happen.
OPPORTUNITY FOR GROWTH

Opportunities for growth inspire us as we look to 2016 and beyond. Ready At Five’s Executive Leadership Committee, external stakeholders and staff have undergone a rigorous process to develop our 2016-18 Strategic Plan. With an eye to successful outcomes for all of Maryland’s young children, we refined our guiding principles, and we are proud to share them publicly.

OUR APPROACH

There are four key approaches that drive our work:
• Implement data-driven solutions based on analysis and dissemination of Maryland’s early childhood data and national research
• Advance the knowledge and skills of the early childhood workforce through high quality professional development, curriculum and resources
• Support children birth to five and their families through information, publications and tools
• Engage educational and health leaders, policymakers, the philanthropic and business communities through education and advocacy.

“...makes Ready At Five’s work compelling and urgent. This is our future workforce! We need these children to be successful in school, so that someday they can solve problems for customers, innovate new and simpler ways of working, and create products and services we can’t even dream of today.”

Meredith C. Callanan, Head of Corporate Marketing & Communications, T. Rowe Price Group
Chair, Ready At Five’s Executive Leadership Committee.

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