

The early years matter!



From Ready At Five's Executive Director Steven Hicks



Celebrating the Young Child this Month *and Every Month!*

Last month we celebrated the *Month of the Young Child*.

Everywhere, we focused attention on the needs of young children and their families and recognized the early childhood programs and services that meet those needs. Well, almost everywhere. The White House recently released its FY2018 "[skinny](#)" budget. The funding cuts in education are big, and, unlike the past few budgets, early learning is not even mentioned. Remember, this is just a proposal, and Congress will use this guidance as they draft their next funding plan for the government. Meanwhile, Congress is finalizing the [FY2017 budget](#) this week - it's over 7 months late. That is a long time for our children to wait. And while many programs supporting young children have been spared the knife, the administration promises to be more forceful next time. From the comments (and tweets) made, we could not be in a more perilous time for our children and ensuring that they get equitable opportunities to high-quality early learning.

[Read more here.](#)



Executive Director Steven Hicks enjoyed reading a story and handing out gift bags with books to Mrs. Wagner's Pre-K students from Arlington Elementary School during the Week of the Young Child.

Engage with ReadyRosie



Check out this great activity to do with your child when reading a book. Then make sure to sign up for a free trial of ReadyRosie by going to www.readyrosie.com/register/ and enter the access code 19888!



Events

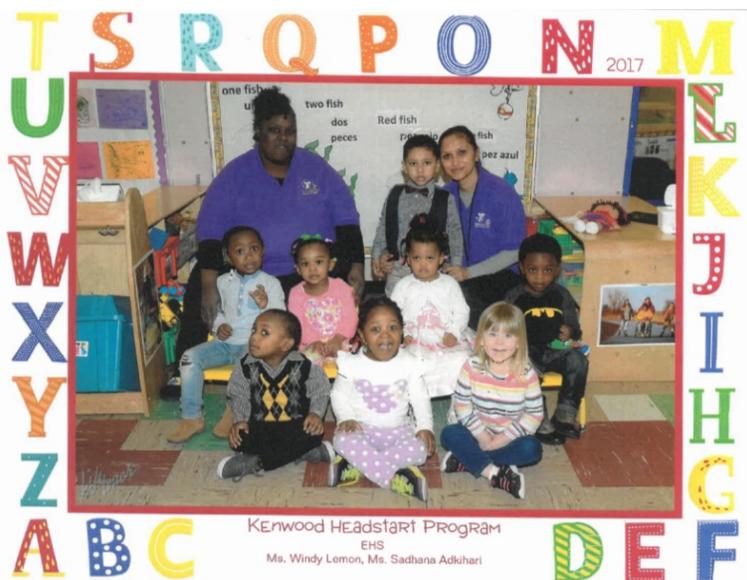
We had 240 colleagues join us for our School Readiness Symposium "**Building Equity in Early Learning**" on April 25, 2017 at the BWI Airport Marriott. Dr. Walter S. Gilliam, Ph.D., Director of the Yale Child Study Center delivered the keynote ***Shining a Light on Implicit Bias to Improve the Quality of Early Learning for All Children***. Following a Lunch Plenary from Angelique Kedem of the Annie E. Casey Foundation on ***Embracing Equity - 7 Steps to Advance Race, Ethnic Equity and***

Inclusion, participants had their choice of four different afternoon workshops. Materials from the day can be found [here](#).



Program Update

Our PETALS pilot got off to a great start this spring! In the hands of capable teachers like Sadhana Adhikari at Kenwood Head Start, we used engaging Read Alouds to help build language and vocabulary skills for young learners, ages 2 and 3. All children participating in our pilot classrooms received a PETALS take-home library of books and activities to continue building their skills at home, thanks to generous funding from the Wright Family Foundation.



Featured Resources

[Domain Of Learning Card: Build Your Child's Math Skills By Counting](#)

This activity card provides parents/caregivers and early learning teachers with easy-to-use tips and activities in English and Spanish to support children as they develop critical math skills.

[Download here for free](#) or [purchase here](#).



Legislative Update

Kindergarten Assessment: [Senate Bill 145](#)/[House Bill 654](#) (both passed) alters the date by which a [statewide kindergarten assessment](#) that is administered from October 1 to October 10.

Early Learning Assessment: [Senate Bill 667](#)/[House Bill 548](#) (both passed) authorizes a county board to administer the [early learning assessment](#) to enrolled prekindergarten students in the county after consultation with prekindergarten teachers. The bills otherwise authorize the assessment to be administered to prekindergarten students only to identify a disability.

A Chance to Give

Please help us as we work to ensure that all children in Maryland have the foundational skills needed for success in school, career and life.



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The early years
matter!

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