United Way’s EDUCATION AGENDA

- School Readiness
- Early Grade Literacy
- Middle Grade Success
- Graduation for All
- Post Secondary Success
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Access to Quality Early Education in York County

FOCUS, formerly known as Focus On Our Future, was developed in 1994 in a collaborative effort between United Way, York County Community Foundation, Penn State York, and Child Care Consultants, Inc. Initially funded by grants from the Howard D. Heinz Endowments and Pew Charitable Trusts, FOCUS has grown into a program supported by businesses, foundations, community leaders, individuals, educational institutions, and state government. FOCUS wants all children to enter school ready to learn.

Through inclusion, collaboration, research, and integrity, FOCUS works to improve the lives of children in York County by supporting quality early childhood experiences.
FOCUS is partnering with the Pre-K for PA Campaign. Building on the shared belief that all children should have the opportunity to enter school ready to learn, Pre-K for PA was launched in 2014. The campaign sets out to make pre-kindergarten a priority issue in the gubernatorial and legislative elections by advocating for increased access to high-quality pre-kindergarten for all of Pennsylvania’s 3 and 4 year olds. The campaign has grown quickly and was embraced by individuals and organizations across the state that believe investing in our children is the right choice and an urgent necessity.

United Way of York County Executive Director Robert Woods addresses the crowd in York during a Pre-K for PA breakfast which gathered local legislators and educators to discuss the importance of funding early education.
The Early Literacy 100 Book Challenge had an extremely successful 2014-15 year, as 247 children from 20 early learning centers’ classrooms read 38,337 books! The pre-literacy program encourages families to read to their children every day, which research tells us is the best way to prepare them for success in school.

Donations for this year’s program were received through drives held during United Way’s Day of Action in June 2015. Through these drives, over 1,600 books were received -- giving children that participated in the program a variety of new books to read. A variety of reading material is important as it’s been proven that kids with more books score higher in reading proficiency, according to the Educational Testing Service.

2015 Participating Centers

Crispus Attucks Early Learning Center
Eastern Branch of the YMCA of York and York County
Family Literacy Program (School District of the City of York)
Hanover Area YMCA
YMCA of York and York County
York Day Nursery
York Jewish Community Center
YWCA York
FOCUS’s 4th Annual Love 2 Learn event was sponsored by the York Area Association for the Education of Young Children and York Galleria. It was held in February at the York Galleria mall. Seven early learning centers, 15 community stakeholders, and over 350 people came together to celebrate and engage with York County’s youngest children.

Each early childhood program showcased a learning center that demonstrated why their programs are highly ranked in the state of Pennsylvania. Families were encouraged to interact together through art, science, math, blocks, and literacy. Center directors and teachers were there to support engaging play and bring to life why these aspects of play are critically important to healthy growth and development.

Thank you to businesses and organizations that gave donations to make this event a success: The Bon Ton Stores, Inc., Brown’s Orchards, Christopher Banks, CJ Banks, Chuck E. Cheese, Jimmy John’s, Laser Alleys, Loving Memories Photography, Mister Hot Shine Car Wash, Paul of Fifth Avenue Salon, Stauffers of Kissel Hill, Thisilldo Creations, Weis Markets, and York Revolution Baseball.
One of the collaborative programs run through FOCUS is the Ready Freddy Program. Research indicates that the most effective kindergarten transition programs include components that involve the child and family, early childhood educators and school personnel. This enables connections to be formed between families, children and educators. The United Way has successfully run the Ready Freddy Program in York County since 2009.

The Ready Freddy curriculum was developed by Kevin Smith-Lystico at the Office of Child Development at the University of Pittsburgh. The following themes were addressed:

- **Children's Strengths and Needs**
- **Setting and Achieving Goals**
- **Literacy Skills**
- **Numeracy Skills**
- **Socio-emotional Skills**
- **Helping Your Child Learn**

A child needs to be “on-track” in all of these areas in order to be successful in kindergarten. Unfortunately, not all families have the skills and/or resources to help their child succeed. Kindergarten teachers reported that many children across York County enter school without experiences with books and reading. Others are not exposed to simple math concepts. Far too many do not have the social skills required to appropriately participate in a classroom setting. These children are starting school behind and they rarely catch up.
Children served by Ready Freddy in School Districts across York County:
The Week of the Young Child™ (WOYC) is an annual celebration sponsored by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), the world’s largest early childhood education association, with nearly 80,000 members and a network of over 300 local, state, and regional affiliates.

The purpose of the Week of the Young Child™ is to focus public attention on the needs of young children and their families and to recognize the early childhood programs and services that meet those needs.

In support of WOYC, United Way of York County organized guest readers from local companies and organizations to visit early learning centers across the county to read to the classrooms. Both the children and volunteers had a great time and the enthusiasm of the kids cemented the importance of taking time to read with them.

Pictured at left is Darrell Auterson, President and CEO of the York County Economic Alliance, as he reads to the classroom at Christ Lutheran Child Development Center. Darrell Auterson is also a member of the York County Early Learning Investment Commission.
In 2015 United Way of York County launched Reading Ready Corners, which are locations based in high traffic areas where children and adults may experience wait times. The goal is two-pronged: first, to encourage reading while adults and kids are waiting, and second, to offer the child a book to take home with them. Statistics show that access to age-appropriate books is a key factor in determining reading success. Reading Ready Corner books range from infant through school-age in both English and Spanish selections.

United Way Reading Ready Corners are part of the focus on the Campaign for Grade Level Reading. Reading proficiently by third grade is the earliest predictor of high school graduation and career success. The initial Reading Ready Corners have been well received, and plans are in the works to expand to additional sites throughout the next year. Ongoing book donations are needed to keep the locations stocked.
Companies are able to receive tax credits when contributions are made to Scholarship Organizations, an Educational Improvement Organization, and/or a Pre-Kindergarten Scholarship Organization. Not only does United Way of York County partner with early learning centers in York County to offer scholarship dollars, but it waives the 20% allowable administrative fee. This means that 100% of your charitable tax donation will go directly to providing early education scholarships to kids in York County. We are committed to seeing every child in our community have access to a quality early education. Help us get there.

**Approved Scholarship Centers**

- Kindercare Learning Center #301025 - Central York School District/ York Suburban School District
- Stillmeadow Nazarene Child Care Center- Central York School District
- U-Gro Learning Center- Central York School District
- The Early Learning Center- Central York School District
- Sunbeam Station Child Care- Northeastern School District
- Otterbein Early Learning Center- Northeastern School District
- Crispus Attucks Early Learning Center- School District of the City of York
- Kidsville Junction- South Eastern School District
- Delta Christian Academy & Child Development Center- South Eastern School District
United Way of York County works directly with the PA Key Tuition Reimbursement Voucher Program to make education available and affordable for early childhood professionals. The Bridge Scholarship works with Pennsylvania State University York Campus, York College of Pennsylvania, and Harrisburg Area Community College to put early childhood education professionals back on track toward achieving their higher education goals.

Funds donated to the Bridge Scholarship Program are held in trust by United Way of York County. Early childhood educators may apply for the funds to help offset expenses not covered by the PA Key Tuition Reimbursement Voucher. Funds are used to fund the child development associate, school age credential, director’s credential, associate’s degree, and bachelor’s degree at these institutions.

Second year results:
- 51 participants from 23 centers in York County
- 118 total number of courses covered
- Bridge scholarship courses total for the past two years: 188
The mission of the York County Truancy Prevention Initiative is to reduce the truant population in York County by establishing a protocol for improved communication, instituting a consistent response to the issues and initiating interventions.

With truancy as a leading factor preventing children’s success in school, graduation from high school and their ability to become productive members of society, the York County Truancy Prevention Initiative aims to ensure that elementary and middle school students are prepared to succeed in later grades, and that young adults make a successful transition from high school to work life – two of United Way’s priorities in Education. As a program of United Way of York County, in partnership with the York County Bar Foundation, the York County Truancy Prevention Initiative ultimately serves all school-aged youth in York County, by establishing itself as a clearinghouse for what works to prevent truancy and dropouts, staying current on national education policy research and finding ways to enhance York County’s provision of truancy prevention programs using best practices research.

The York County Truancy Prevention Initiative is a partnership between the United Way of York County, York County Bar Foundation, and the County of York.
On May 21, 2105, in a partnership with York College, 200 truancy stakeholders, which included school districts, businesses, and community members, gathered for the Truancy Summit. Featured speaker of the day was Ron Fairchild, President and CEO of Smart Learning Group, who also serves as the lead of Community Solutions Assurance for the Annie E. Casey Foundation’s Campaign for Third Grade Reading.

The theme throughout the day was true prevention of truancy by establishing positive attendance habits with students and families in the early years with a specific focus on reading proficiently by the end of third grade. Thank you to the York County Bar Foundation, John C. Uhler, and Carolyn Steinhouser for their generous contribution to create DVD’s of all sessions to use throughout the state for technical assistance and to promote best practices for those who were unable to attend.

**Truancy Summit Break-out Sessions**

- Partnering with the Medical Community
- Homelessness and Resources
- Successful Community Collaborations
- Successful Children, Youth, and Family Partnerships
- Preventing Truancy and Creating a Climate of Attachment for Students
- High School Reengagement
- Successful Transitions in the Early Years
- Third Grade Reading Emphasis
The goal of the Youth Court Alliance is to re-engage truant students in school and divert these students and their families from entering the Magisterial District Court for truancy hearings. Currently, Youth Court Alliance is in the School District of the City of York at William Penn High School. Students go through training to serve as judges, bailiff and, most importantly, as jurors who will provide dispositions aimed at reconnecting the truant youth to their school. Dispositions include jury duty, research, and social action projects.
"Let Youth Be the Judge"

The 2014-15 Numbers:

- Number of cases: 69
- 83% participants who successfully completed YCA
- Participants who had zero unexcused absences while enrolled in the program: 91.8%
- Unlawful days prior to the program = 596
- Unlawful days after the program = 44*
- Unlawful tardies prior to program = 1,603
- Unlawful tardies after the program = 30*

Total Student Community Volunteer Hours: 1,178

*Number based on 30 days after the program

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United Way of York County
High Quality Early Learning Programs: NAEYC

NAEYC (National Association for the Education of Young Children) Accreditation of programs for young children represents the mark of quality in early childhood education. NAEYC Accreditation began in 1985 with the goal of providing an accrediting system that would raise the level of early childhood programs. Today, over 6,500 programs are NAEYC Accredited.

NAEYC accredited programs invest in early childhood education because they believe in the benefits to children and families. Early childhood experiences - from birth to age 8 - have an enormous impact on children’s lifelong learning and positively contribute to their health and development. Early childhood education programs with the mark of quality benefit children with greater readiness for and success in school.

It is for this reason that parents and families are seeking NAEYC-accredited programs. Parents choosing an early childhood education program can be overwhelmed trying to find the highest-quality program for their child. NAEYC Accreditation is the mark of quality that families are looking for. NAEYC Accreditation gives families the chance to make the Right Choice for Kids.
NAFCC

NAFCC (National Association for Family Child Care) Accreditation is an indicator that family child care offers safe, inviting spaces and warm, nurturing care, complete with educational activities designed to meet the needs and interests of all children, while promoting individual development.

Nationally accredited homes meet higher standards in child care and set the benchmark for quality. The Pennsylvania Pre-K Counts pre-kindergarten program, established by the Pennsylvania Department of Education, will make quality pre-kindergarten opportunities available to children and families across the commonwealth.

NAFCC Accredited Providers
Cindra Bowers

Family Child Care providers interested in getting accredited, should visit the website: www.nafcc.org/Getting-Started
The Pennsylvania Pre-K Counts pre-kindergarten program, established by the Pennsylvania Department of Education, makes quality pre-kindergarten opportunities available to children and families across the commonwealth. The program is based on the quality components adopted for pre-kindergarten by the State Board of Education; provides families in participating communities with a choice of quality pre-kindergarten options in a school, child care center, Head Start, or nursery school; increases access to quality pre-kindergarten to children and families throughout the commonwealth with a priority in at-risk communities; and builds on the work of the Pre-K Counts Public-Private Partnership for Educational Success, a three-year project funded by leading Pennsylvania foundations and supported by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

Early results from this public-private initiative find that children’s early learning improves when all early learning programs in a community share resources to improve quality and coordinate early learning experiences in pre-kindergarten, kindergarten, and beyond.

For every $1 invested in early education is saved in adulthood.
Pre K Counts Classrooms
Crispus Attucks Early Learning Center
School District of the City of York
York Day Nursery, Inc.
York Jewish Community Center
YWCA of York
Kindercare Early Learning Center

Head Start Classrooms
Jefferson Building
St. Mark’s Lutheran Church
York Learning Center
Wallace Elementary
Orendorf Elementary
United Methodist Church
Pleasant Street
St. Matthew’s Lutheran Church
Canadychly Elementary
Windsor Elementary
Cathy’s Cottage- Head Start and Early Head Start
Zion United Church of Christ
York Haven Elementary
Delta/ Peachbottom Elementary
Hannah Penn K-8
McKinley Elementary
UCP of South Central PA
Early Head Start of York County
Keystone Stars

Keystone STARS is an initiative of the Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL) to improve, support, and recognize the continuous quality improvement efforts of early learning programs in Pennsylvania.

The Keystone STARS Performance Standards provide the foundation for the program. The Performance Standards are grouped into four levels:

   STAR 1, STAR 2, STAR 3, and STAR 4.

Each level builds on the previous level and utilizes research-based best practices to promote quality early learning environments and positive child outcomes. The standards address staff qualifications and professional development, the early learning program, partnerships with family and community, and leadership and management.

Keystone STARS is managed through a partnership of the Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL) and the Pennsylvania and Regional Keys.

Keystone Stars - 4 and 3 Star Centers Listed at Right

Creative Roots Early Learning Center 4
Crispus Attucks Early Learning Center 4
Good Shepherd Day Care 4
JCC School for the Early Years 4
Jennifer Bryer 4
Kindred Spirits 4
Otterbein Early Education Center 4
York Day Nursery 4
YWCA of Hanover Day Care 4
Bethany Christian Learning Center 3
Brenda F. Clinton 3
Creative Kids Day Care 3
Creative Kids Day Care II 3
Friendship Elementary SACC 3
Hanover YMCA Child Care 3
Inquiring Minds Early Learning Child Care 3
Kidsville Junction ChildCare & Preschool 3
Kindercare Learning Center 301025 3
New Creation Station 3
Otterbein ECE SACC Program 3
Shrewsbury Elementary SACC Program 3
Southern Elementary SACC Program 3
Stewartstown Elem. After School Center 3
Stillmeadow Nazarene Child Care Center 3
Sunbeam Station Child Care 3
The Early Learning Center 3
U-Gro Learning Centre 3
Wallace Elementary 3
YWCA York- Spring Forge Middle School 3

Star Ratings are as of May 2015
Thank You to our Community Partners!


Thank You for supporting United Way of York County

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