

## Early experiences last a lifetime

Build Ohio is a collaborative of private and public partners. Together, members work to develop a comprehensive well-integrated early care and education system that:

- 1) Provides high quality services and supports in a variety of settings
- 2) Utilizes a well-trained and educated professional workforce
- 3) Is available and affordable to all families who want and need it
- 4) Prepares children for success in school and life.

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**Build**  
Strong Foundations For  
Ohio's Youngest Children



The important role of  
*early childhood  
professionals*  
in the care and education  
of Ohio's children

To be successful in school and in life, Ohio's young children (birth through five) must grow-up in an environment that develops self-confidence, positive social emotional skills and a love for learning.



*Make the  
world of  
discovery  
part of  
their day*

### It's all about our children and the world we create for them.

New research on brain development has taught us that a child's early experiences are critical in developing strong language, cognitive and social skills.

Children's brains are like sponges, and what they learn in the first years of their lives carries a lifetime impact.

### *Did you know?*

- 90% of brain growth occurs from birth to six years old.
- A child develops the ability to reason by the age of five.
- By the age of three, many children know 1100 words.

### The importance of what you do for children

All children benefit from high-quality early care and education from improved math and language ability, to better social skills and behavior. And the impact is even more pronounced with disadvantaged children.

Low-income children, who attend high quality programs, are more likely to stay in school, attend college, earn more money and land a high-skill job than their peers who do not have the same opportunity.

As more moms and dads join the workforce and society places new demands on parents, your job takes on new meaning. Because of challenging academics and the fast-paced, high-tech world we live in, children are expected to function on a much higher level than ever before.

Your work is critical to Ohio's future.

A coalition of state, private and business organizations is working to increase community support and public investment in quality early care and education.



*Endowing our children with the joy of learning*



### Early childhood professionals are the important community link.

During the first five years of life, children learn a great deal, shaping their future for years to come. They develop respect for people, places and things, the ability to work well with others, and trust and self-confidence in decision-making.

Early childhood professionals play an important role in the development of our youngest children. Today in Ohio, 62% of children under the age of six live in homes where both parents or their single parent works. This means that more children than ever before are spending growing-up-time outside the home.

Through your work, you are helping children create the knowledge and social base they will draw from for the rest of their lives.

Talking with parents about their child's early experiences is important. By listening to their successes and challenges raising their children, you can establish a good relationship. Respect and responsiveness are key.

Many resources can provide parent education materials. Your local resource and referral agency, the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services – Bureau of Child Care and Development, the Ohio Department of Health, the Ohio Department of Education and the Ohio Child Care Resource and Referral Association offer information for parents.

### What can you do?

Make your voice heard. Participate in public discussions that elevate the role of early care and education. Support increased public investment and look for ways to form public private partnerships with organizations that share your concern about children.

- Join an early childhood professional organization to learn about new research and advances in the field.
- Take advantage of training opportunities and college courses to advance your skills.
- Visit elementary schools in your area and learn about their programs; invite school teachers and principals to visit your program and share your curriculum.
- Host a meeting with elementary school professionals to discuss skills that will help children be successful in kindergarten and share what you are doing to prepare children.

- Develop transition plans with elementary schools that make kindergarten entrance welcoming and trouble-free for children and families.
- Share information with parents about the elements of quality early care and education and the important role it plays in lifelong learning.
- Educate policy makers, businesses and the public about the advantages of high quality programs.
- Seek opportunities to serve on Chambers of Commerce, Workforce Development Boards and Economic Development Commissions to promote the value of early care and education to the state and local economies.

