

United Way's 'No One Way to Pre-K' campaign aimed at creating public awareness of importance

United Way Success By 6® and its early childhood partners have launched MyPre-K, an early childhood public awareness campaign in Northern Kentucky. The purpose of the general campaign is to show the unlimited potential of young children and elevate Pre-K as the first educational step toward shaping our youth.

The tagline for the campaign is "There is no one way to Pre-K."

While United Way Success By 6® has had much success at the state level in determining what it means to be kindergarten ready and defining a quality rating and improvement system, they will begin to focus on increasing awareness and creating change at the grassroots level by engaging more parents and caregivers in the communities where they live.

To accomplish this, Northern Kentucky early childhood partners and school districts have collaborated to implement the MyPre-K awareness campaign with a consistent message about the importance of learning experiences designed to increase community demand for high quality full-day preschool.

Over 30 partners representing teachers, pediatricians, school districts and early childhood partners in Northern Kentucky saw this as a huge need in the community and rallied together to create this campaign. Through discovery and research, the project team spoke with dozens Northern Kentucky families to uncover their motivations, values, and potential barriers to accessing quality early learning experiences. These discussions were then used to inform the campaign messaging and awareness efforts.

"I'm really proud to be part of this project because in Northern Kentucky we have a history of coming together and getting things done. I think it speaks volumes that we were able to bring all the school districts together, and all of our early childhood partners together to work toward the common good, to work toward adopting the same messaging, and to work towards reaching more families in our community to sign up for early childhood programs," said Amanda Greenwell, director, United Way of Greater Cincinnati – Northern Kentucky.

The official launch event for the campaign took place on Wednesday, October 18 at the Center for Great Neighborhoods in Covington. Nearly 100 community members were in attendance for the event, which included the launch of a parent portal, MyPre-K.com.

During their research, the project team heard from parents that there was no one place to go for information. Through the MyPre-K.com portal, parents can access a variety of resources, including child care options in each school district and information on how to obtain financial assistance for child care.

"There's a wide variety of resources available on the site, and that's what makes it so great," said Greenwell.

"We know that all school districts in Northern Kentucky are different and offer various levels of service to our children, so parents can learn all of the different options available in their specific district, as well as information on getting help to pay for the child care options. In addition, they can find out what resources are available at their local library."