

EARLY LEARNING COMMUNITIES BUILDING BLOCKS FOR SUCCESS

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An early learning community is a place where local leaders, residents and other stakeholders are committed to the goal of all young children reaching their full potential, not just some. It is a neighborhood, city or county that is working to ensure that children and families have access to the opportunities, aligned services and supports they need to make this goal a reality. It is a place that supports neighborhoods where children can grow up safe and healthy and where families can thrive. Finally, it is a place where local policies create a broader framework of support for families with young children

Ensuring that all children thrive: The North Star of early learning communities

- Young children and pregnant women are healthy
- Children are ready to succeed in school
- Children live in safe, stable and nurturing families and communities

The building blocks of early learning communities

BUILDING BLOCK

#1

Community Leadership, Commitment and Public Will to Make Early Childhood a Priority

- Community members support and understand the importance of early childhood health, learning and well-being
- The community invests in young children and families
- A rich network of informal supports is available for all families
- Community resources for children and families are well-known, accessible and easy to use

BUILDING BLOCK

#2

Quality Services that Work for All Young Children and Families

- Access to high-quality, basic services that proactively promote and support health, learning and family strengths
- Routine screening, identification, referral and linkage for risks/needs
- Timely access to a continuum of services for children and families at risk and those with identified needs
- Families and parents who are actively engaged as partners

BUILDING BLOCK

#3

Neighborhoods Where Families Can Thrive

- The built environment promotes safety and allows families to access basic services in their neighborhoods and beyond
- Economic and employment opportunities are available to all
- Residents feel a sense of belonging and hope within their neighborhoods and connection to the broader community

BUILDING BLOCK

#4

Policies that Support and Are Responsive to Families

- Policies that govern child and family services
- Workplace and other policies that directly affect families
- Land use and community development policies

Putting the Pieces Together: The Infrastructure of an Early Learning Community

- Effective leadership
- Use of data to drive change
- Sustainable financial backing
- Supports for service providers

LEARN MORE:

Center for the Study of Social Policy www.cssp.org

National League of Cities www.nlc.org