

Report Card to the Community

A quality education is the cornerstone for a better life. Throughout the community, our children are engaged in some of the most important work of their young lives—learning, growing and preparing for success in school and beyond.

For more than five years, the United Way of Lackawanna County's Success By 6 program has brought together parents, caregivers, educators, business and governmental leaders and community agencies to promote positive outcomes for young children.

Success By 6 continues to work tirelessly to improve the quality, affordability and accessibility of early care and education programs for children so that they enter school ready to learn. Our community as a whole benefits greatly when our young people are well-educated and well-prepared for success throughout their lives.

Fulfilling Pennsylvania's Promise for Children.

Success By 6 is working with the state program—Pennsylvania's Promise for Children—with a shared belief that every young child in Pennsylvania deserves the chance to succeed in school and life. Part of that promise recognizes that young children are best able to learn when they enjoy good health and nutrition, a safe and stable family life and creative activities that stimulate curiosity. For more information, please visit papromiseforchildren.com.

Pre-K Counts Public/Private Partnership.

Success By 6 was an active partner in this Public/Private Partnership to strengthen Pennsylvania's families and communities through quality preschool education. Through Pre-K Counts, school districts and community partners such as child care facilities, Head Start and Early Intervention align curriculum to Pennsylvania early learning standards. Parents and caregivers are involved in their child's development and legislative and community leaders learn about the value of quality early education for the community's sustainable future.

Success By 6 worked with the Scranton School District to administer Pre-K Counts to more than 500 local children.

According to a Progress Report Card issued in the fall:

- Overall patterns of child progress exceeded the norm.
- Strongest gains were made in spoken language, reading, classroom behavior and daily living skills.
- Some children progressed from showing mild delays to no delays in developmental functioning.

Early Education Advocacy.

A bus load of early care and education teachers and advocates, sponsored by the United Way and Pre-K Counts through the Scranton School District, traveled to Harrisburg to speak with policymakers and ask their support of critical programs such as Keystone Stars, PA Pre-K Counts and Child Care Works. The day concluded with more than 500 advocates for children rallying at the Capitol.

Pennsylvania Pre-K Counts.

Established by the Pennsylvania Department of Education, PA Pre-K Counts brings quality half-day and full-day pre-kindergarten to three and four year olds in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. It is an initiative to provide early learning experiences to prepare young learners for kindergarten and school success.

Success By 6 was instrumental in advocacy efforts to support the passage of this program by the General Assembly in Harrisburg. Success By 6 and PA Pre-K Counts was featured in the statewide program, CAPITOL CONNECTION which aired on PCN and reached 3 million households.

Children Do Come with Directions.

In conjunction with Pre-K Counts and the Child Care Information Services (CCIS) of Lackawanna County, Success By 6 created an informational guide for parents entitled "Children Do Come with Directions." The booklet provides information about community resources, health, safety and development. School readiness and quality childcare options are also highlighted. Over 4,000 of these booklets were distributed to parents through hospitals, businesses, child care centers, Head Starts and school districts.



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Pre-K Tax Credits.

As an approved Pre-K Scholarship Organization by the PA Department of Community and Economic Development, the United Way of Lackawanna County obtained \$133,800 in tax credits from 13 area companies. These dollars assisted 93 children and their families in Lackawanna and Wayne counties with tuition assistance at 8 different preschools in our region.

We gratefully acknowledge the following organizations for their support of this program:

- Absolute Distribution, Inc.
- Community Bank & Trust
- The Dime Bank
- Fidelity Deposit and Discount Bank
- Gentex Corporation
- M & T Bank
- PFFC (PNC Bank)
- PPL Energy Plus, LLC
- Penn Security Bank & Trust Co.
- Pennstar Bank
- Towanda Printing Co. - A Division of Times Shamrock Communications
- UGI Energy Services

What Do You Wonder About Kindergarten?

Success By 6 was awarded a \$16,500 School Readiness Transition Grant by the Office of Child Development and Early Learning. This grant addresses the needs of children moving from pre-k to kindergarten in a variety of settings.

The Old Forge School District, Carbondale Area School District and John Adams School in Scranton were chosen as partners in this project. A transition specialist was hired to implement the plan that is expected to help more than 200 children prepare for kindergarten success.

PA One Book.

Success By 6 partnered with the Lackawanna County Children's Library and Everhart Museum to host PA One Book Author Kathryn Ayers for three performances. Over 500 children received a soft cover edition of the PA One Book, *Up, Down and Around* compliments of Success By 6 which was funded by the Margaret Briggs Foundation. PA One Book is a statewide initiative focused on early literacy.

Classroom Readers.

Signifying their commitment to early care and education, more than 20 policy makers, business and community leaders visited area classrooms to read to young students during the week of April 13th. The guests read to children in pre-k classes, Head Start and child care classrooms as part of the celebration of the Week of the Young Child.

Keystone STARS.

This voluntary initiative of the Department of Public Welfare seeks to ensure continuous quality improvement in child care centers. Lackawanna County boasts one of the highest enrollments in the state as 82 percent of our child care centers actively participate in Keystone STARS. This includes ten "Star 4" sites—the highest rating possible.

Stepping Up to the Plate.

More than 1,000 young children, parents and caregivers participated in Early Childhood Day at PNC Field. Prior to taking in a Scranton/Wilkes Barre Yankees game, the children paraded on the field in a pregame ceremony. The event highlighted the importance of early education and was featured in the May edition of Happenings magazine.

In the Community and Workplace.

Success By 6 was present at numerous parenting groups and public events such as the Family Place at the Library and Sunday In the Park at Nay Aug Park. In addition, Success By 6 participated in several work place employee fairs and presentations. Over 3,000 materials regarding early education and state programs for children were distributed at these events.



State Representative Jim Wansacz visited an area classroom to read "Up, Down and Around" to the students.



Despite the weather, more than 1,000 children and their families enjoyed Early Childhood Day at PNC Field.

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