

Program: Healthy Families, Healthy Ohio

Situation: Ohio has several urgent initiatives that prioritize the social, emotional, physical, intellectual, financial, occupational, environmental, and spiritual well-being of Ohio’s children and youth. Among these enterprises is the Third Grade Reading Guarantee; patient-centered healthcare; ending human trafficking, reducing the number of youth involved with the Department of Youth Services; ending Ohio’s opiate epidemic; and creating a strong workforce in Ohio. While schools and communities have a significant impact on children, parents are at the center of childhood development. Parents need a healthy environment and supports to rear healthy children. Research indicates that the greatest window of opportunity to develop our children's social intelligence (attachment, independence, cooperation), emotional intelligence (trust and impulse control), motor development, vision, thinking skills (cause and effect, problem solving) and foundational reading skills (early sounds, vocabulary) is between the ages of 0 and 48 months. The greatest chance to enhance these areas of intelligence and competence is early school years through puberty (Schiller, 2009). Ohio has the talent needed to create opportunities for families to flourish, making our state the premier place to live, work, and raise a family. And we know that a one-size-fits-all approach will not allow the creativity of experts in local areas to generate responses that best use local resources available through private and public partnerships to meet the needs of parents and children in their communities. To this end, The Ohio Council proposes environmental and individual supports that promote healthy families and a healthy Ohio regardless of whether the family is in rural Ohio, Appalachia, an urban center, or suburban neighborhood.



