



EPPEL

Elgin Partnership for Early Learning

BUILDING A *bright* FUTURE.

ANNUAL REPORT | 2020 - 21



Connect With Us! — — — — —

elginpartnership.org

OUR MISSION, OUR VISION:

Building a connected community dedicated to helping all young children thrive.

EPEL IS:

Building *Awareness*, Providing *Access*, Committing to *Action* to increase children and families participating in services and programs.

Early Learning



Family Engagement



Health and Development



Building a Bright Future



After a challenging 2020, we hoped we would get our COVID-19 vaccines and everything would return to normal. EPEL quickly realized that 2021 would continue to be complicated. 20-21 unveiled the inequities for young families and the great need for system changes. Although we were much more agile in '21, we needed to take a moment, sit in the challenges, and rethink the future to respond with action. EPEL refocused our priorities at the local level while the state also committed to reimagining the early care and education system with families at the center. We spent the year listening and learning from parents, child care providers, early care businesses, state and local organizations, and community partners to continue aligning and building an early childhood system with the top priority being equitable outcomes for families. EPEL is working with partners to Build Awareness, Provide Access and Commit to Action to increase children and families participating in services and programs.

Meeting families where they are is a strategy to engage, learn from and support some of our hardest-to-reach families in laundromats, neighborhoods, food pantries, and the community. EPEL is proud of the number of families we have touched this year, but we know the impact isn't always measured in the quantity of bags you distribute if no one looks inside at the materials. In discussions, I pose the following questions: What was the conversation with the bag/book you gave? What did we learn from the family that informs our work? How did we use that learning opportunity to grow and change the process while committing to action for children? Through family engagement, outreach, collaborative partnerships, and data, EPEL continuously learns and grows from family input and experiences.

- 4,800 families and partners visited the EPEL website to Build Awareness and Access resources
- 1,007 families, partners, and community members subscribed to the EPEL early childhood newsletter to Build Awareness and be informed of how they can impact young learners together
- 5,883 child and family touches through 5 Learning On the Go sites, 3 Early Learning Laundromats, monthly Mobile Food Pantries, and 69 family engagement events to listen, learn and wrap families in care
- 9,847 books were distributed to children to build literacy skills in home

EPEL is here to listen, learn and commit to collective action to be a part of the change for our youngest learners and families. EPEL is here to support, advocate, build awareness and provide access to high-quality programs.

Community, I invite you to lean in, learn from families and turn those lessons into action with EPEL to build a strong foundation for children. Here's to a new year and new innovative opportunities for all children to be Happy, Healthy, and Ready for Kindergarten.

Together We Can!

Amber Peters
Executive Director, Elgin Partnership for Early Learning

THE FACTS

Did you know that learning begins at birth? There were 2,035 babies born at Advocate Sherman Hospital in FY 2021. There are 18,463 children between the ages of 0 and 5 years old living in our communities and 2,193 of those entered kindergarten!



Latino
POLICY FORUM

School District U-46 has the largest dual language program in Illinois and the nation.



2,637 children from birth to age 3 are eligible for services; 89% not being served by publicly-funded early care programs

2,868 children from 3 to 5 years old are eligible for publicly funded preschool; 49% not being served

57% of students served by District U-46 come from low-income households

CONNECTING AND MOBILIZING COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

EPEL has engaged with 590 community group members and has connected with over 80 community partners. We are committed to providing accessible services and events to everyone in our communities.



3,185 FOLLOWERS



3 Laundromats, 5 Parks, 4 Story Walks, Festival Park Move, Play and Learn



FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

5,883 child and family touches with Learning on the Go, Language in the Laundromat, food pantries, and wrap around services

69 family engagement events

215 WIC families received *Did You Know?* Parent materials for 0-2 year olds

261 parents engaged at Summer Park sites

98 connections made with home visitors to expand early learning opportunities into preschool

HEALTHY DEVELOPMENT

4,000 DIAPERS GIVEN TO FAMILIES
2,003 FAMILIES WRAPPED IN SERVICES

Screening, referrals, health and dental care, WIC, etc...

EPEL offers Ages and Stages development and social-emotional screenings online, in-person, and through partners, U-46, DayOne Pact, and Easterseals, to ensure children receive the best start. EPEL assisted in connecting 65 new parents to health care resources.

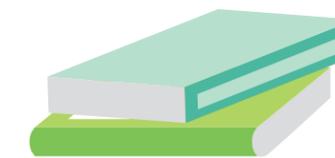
EARLY LEARNING

EPEL has networked with 89 child care providers to collaboratively improve outcomes for children.



Spanish and English *Getting Ready for Kindergarten* Calendar (66,000 distributed calendars since 2015)

9,847 BOOKS GIVEN THIS YEAR



(A total of 31,847 books given to this date.)



Donate Today!



EPEL is meeting families where they are to learn from, support, and offer high-quality early learning opportunities in the community to build a strong foundation so all children develop to their full potential.

As an early learning champion, we hope you will donate to support the children and families in the community. Thank you for being a part of a community that values these critical early years. **Together We Can!**

Meet the Mendoza Family



My husband and I were married in July of 2021, and where we were living did not have any good work opportunities. We decided to move to Elgin where we stayed in hotels for 5 months with our four children. After months of searching, we found a landlord that let us move in right away. I am a stay-at-home mom and my husband is a handyman. He, unfortunately, injured his back and we no longer had income. We were very tight on money and barely making ends meet. I considered going back to work, but it is very hard to do with only one child in school at the time and 3 others to take care of. One day, I was in the laundromat with my 1-year-old and a teacher asked me, "can I give her a book?". I said "of course that's fine", so she brought over a book and a zip lock bag with papers that I set aside and took home. Honestly, I was

going to throw the baggie away because most of it was in Spanish (which I don't know) but my 6-year-old daughter was going through it and said here mommy; it was a card from Amber. I've been praying for a blessing but not one specifically.

I called the number to see if there is daycare available and what the process was. From then on, my life started changing for the better! Amber connected me with some awesome, caring people, who helped me find daycare and allowed me time to look for a job. Yesterday, I received the great news that I had been praying for! I will be working at a bank with no experience making \$20 an hour! Most factory jobs don't start at that much pay! I am so stoked for this chapter in my life all thanks to you guys, caring about the little people! I don't know how to repay you for this huge help you've done. I just know that when I get on my feet running, I will help someone who is in my position. Pay it forward! Thank you for everything!!!

-- Wife, Mother of 4, and Bank Employee

EPEL IS HERE TO HELP!



Mendoza Starting Point

Laundromats are places where some of our hard-to-reach families frequent. EPEL meets families where they are to break barriers and bring access to resources and services that some families need. The Mendoza family met one of our early care bilingual teachers from EPEL partner, YWCA Elgin, at JetXpress laundromat and connected that the family through EPEL's 844-KID-INFO phone line. EPEL made referrals through IRIS, the new intake and referral system, to connect the family to services needed so mom could find work.

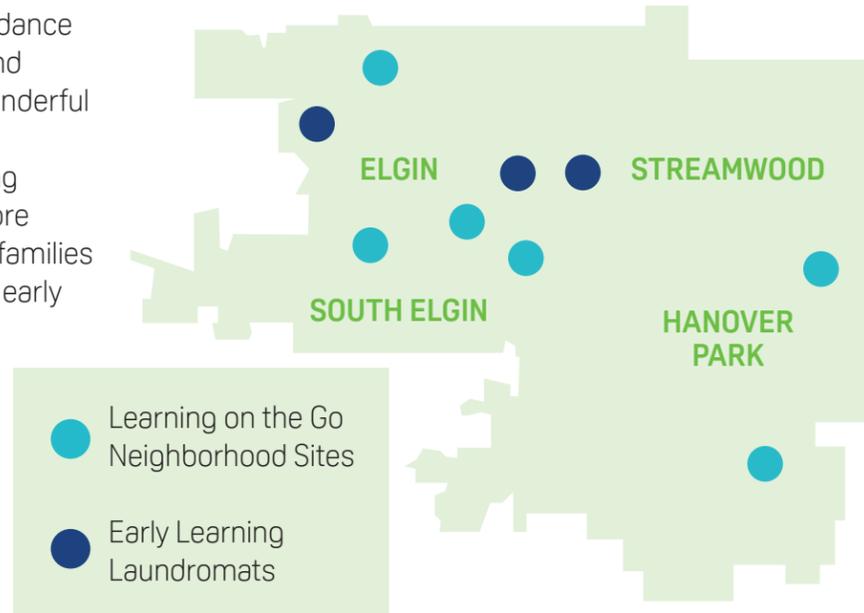


Parenting isn't easy. We are here to help you find support, resources, and early childhood programs for you and your family. Call us toll-free today!

1-844-KID-INFO (1-844-543-4636)

Together We Can!

As a small local non-profit, EPEL relies entirely on grants and donations to fund operating expenses. We want to thank our major funders who have been with us since our inception, The Grand Victoria Foundation, United Way, and School District U-46. These organizations provide stability and guidance for our organization. Elgin Township and Kiwanis Club of Elgin have become wonderful partners in supporting many specific programs. Our donations are increasing yearly as the community becomes more aware of the critical need for meeting families where they are and the importance of early learning in the first 2,000 days of a child's life. We are grateful for all who support EPEL with funds and also those who contribute materials and volunteer hours. Please consider ways you can support changing the early childhood system with our collaboration of partners.



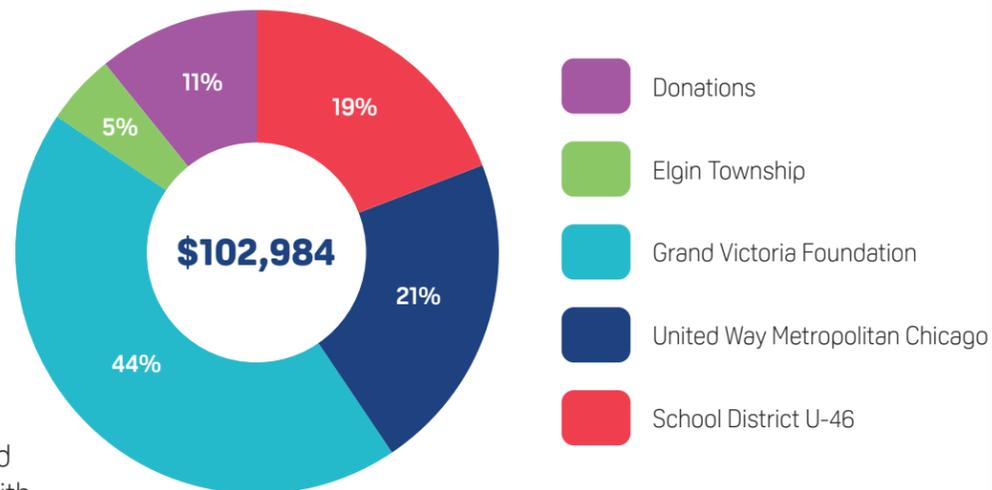
Your Donations Matter

Your Donations Support:

- Community outreach workers who connect families and children to resources and services
- New books to build children's brains and literacy skills
- Materials to strengthen school readiness

EPEL Needs:

- Funding to hire a bilingual family engagement specialist
- Funding to support neighborhood recruitment and enrollment specialist
- Partners who are like-minded to support and build the early learning system with EPEL
- Volunteers for Laundromats and family engagement



FUNDERS



2021-22 BOARD MEMBERS

Jennifer Bueche
Gail Borden Public Library
Director of KidSpace

Karina Nava (Board Co-Chair)
City of Elgin
Assistant City Manager

Patricia Chamberlain (Treasurer)
Chamberlain Education Consulting

Amber Peters
Elgin Partnership for Early Learning
Executive Director

Katie Cox
School District U-46
Director of Early Learning

Dr. Jennifer Schening
Next Generation Pediatrics
Owner/Pediatrician

Michael Issacson
Kane County Health Department
Executive Director

Fran Teti-Teal
Advocate Aurora Health
Director of Family Birthing Center

Rodrigo Lopez
Elgin Community College
Assistant Dean of School Partnerships

Kris Young (Board Co-Chair)
YWCA Elgin
Director of Family Literacy

Lynne Bosley
*Former President/CEO of United Way Elgin,
Emeritus Board Member*

Bringing Collaborative Action with our Partners

We are thankful to the individuals and partners that have attended events, and participated in outreach to meet families where they are. Your in-kind donations of time and efforts don't go unnoticed. We have grown Elgin Partnership for Early Learning together and look forward to continued collaboration in supporting school readiness.

Advocate Sherman Hospital,
Board Member Fran Teti-Teal

Alignment Collaborative for Education

Altrusa of Elgin

Amita Health St. Joseph Hospital

Aunt Martha's Health Network Home Visiting

Bartlett Park District Preschool

Bartlett Public Library

Bethlehem Child Development Center

Blue Kangaroo Laundry

Boys and Girls Club of Elgin

Building Families Together

Centre of Elgin Preschool

Centro de Información

Chamberlain Educational Associates,
Board Member Patricia Chamberlain

Children of America Child Care

City of Elgin, Board Member Karina Nava

Community Organizing and Family Issues (COFI)

Community Crisis Center

Corbella Clinic

DayOnePACT

DCFS-Department of Children
and Family Services

Easterseals DuPage & Fox Valley

Elgin Academy

Elgin Area Chamber of Commerce

Elgin Community College,
Board Member Rodrigo Lopez

Elgin Community College Early
Childhood Lab School

Elgin Hispanic Network

Elgin Police Department

Elgin Township Funder*

Erikson Institute

Everything Clean Laundromat

Family Focus Healthy Families

Food For Greater Elgin

Gail Borden Public Library,
Board Member Jennifer Bueche*

Girl Scouts of Northern Illinois

Goddard School

Grand Victoria Foundation Funder*

Greater Elgin Family Care Center

Hamilton Wings

Harvest Christian Academy

Highland Christian Academy Preschool

iGrow Illinois

Illinois Action for Children

Illinois Department of Human Services

Illinois Governor's Office of Early Childhood
Development

Ivy Academy

Jerri Hoffman Center/Children's
Home and Aid

JetXpress Laundry

Kane County AOK Network

Kane County Health Department Board Member
Michael Issacson*

Kane County Regional Office of Education

Kids Above All Home Visiting

Kids First Pediatric Dentistry Elgin and Skokie

KinderCare Bowes Road South Elgin

KinderCare Brewster Bartlett

KinderCare Main Lane

KinderCare South Street

KinderCare Spring Street

Kiwanis Club of Elgin

Law Office of Steffen & Kelly, P.C.

Learning Tree East

Learning Tree West

Lion's Club of Elgin

Little Royals Preschool at Larkin High School

Next Generation Pediatrics,
Board Member Dr. Jennifer Schening

Northern Illinois Food Bank

One Hope United Elgin Child and Family
Resource Center

Poplar Creek Public Library Streamwood

SCARCE (School and Community Assistance
for Recycling and Composting Education)

School District U-46 Funder
and Board Member Katie Cox**

Seigle Foundation Funder*

South Elgin Parks & Recreation Preschool

Streamwood Parks and Recreation

Streamwood Park District Preschool

Summit Early Learning

The Learning Experience

The Ivy Academy

Two Rivers Head Start

U-46 Parents as Teacher

United Way Metro Chicago Funder

VNA Health Care, Board Member Irma Figueroa

VNA Healthy Families

Well Child Center

Women on the Brink

YMCA Taylor Branch

YWCA Elgin, Board Member Co-Chair Kris Young

YWCA Metropolitan Chicago





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