

way to grow

2008–2009 Progress Report

Vision

Together, we will ensure that every child has an equal opportunity to succeed in school and life.

Mission

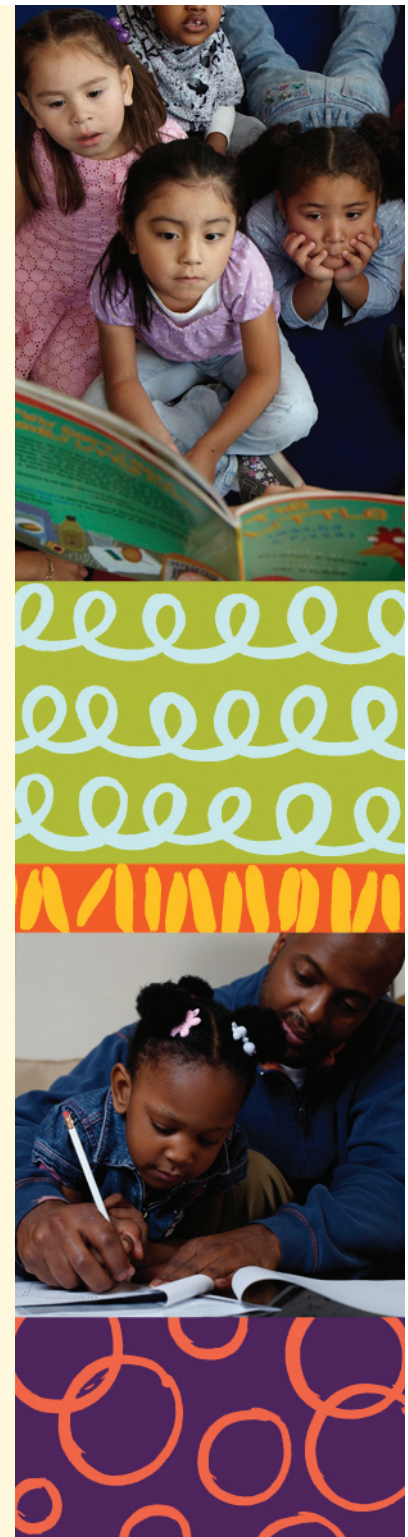
Working closely with parents and communities, we ensure that children within the most isolated families are born healthy, stay healthy and are prepared for school.

Family Support

We make strong connections for better care.

Effective early learning must start in a stable home. When a family's living situation is in jeopardy, it directly affects education efforts. And while Way to Grow parents are committed to helping their children succeed in life, overwhelming economic and social barriers often block their way. Our resource advocates work closely with parents to address and help overcome any challenge. Through Way to Grow, parents learn to advocate for themselves and develop the skills they need to nurture their families.

During Way to Grow home visits, our resource advocates and family educators learn about each family's situation and any challenges they have in accessing resources or services. When a family needs help with housing, food, clothing or employment services, resource advocates connect them to one of our 50+ partners. This helps parents build a stable home—enabling children to develop the skills and knowledge they need for kindergarten.



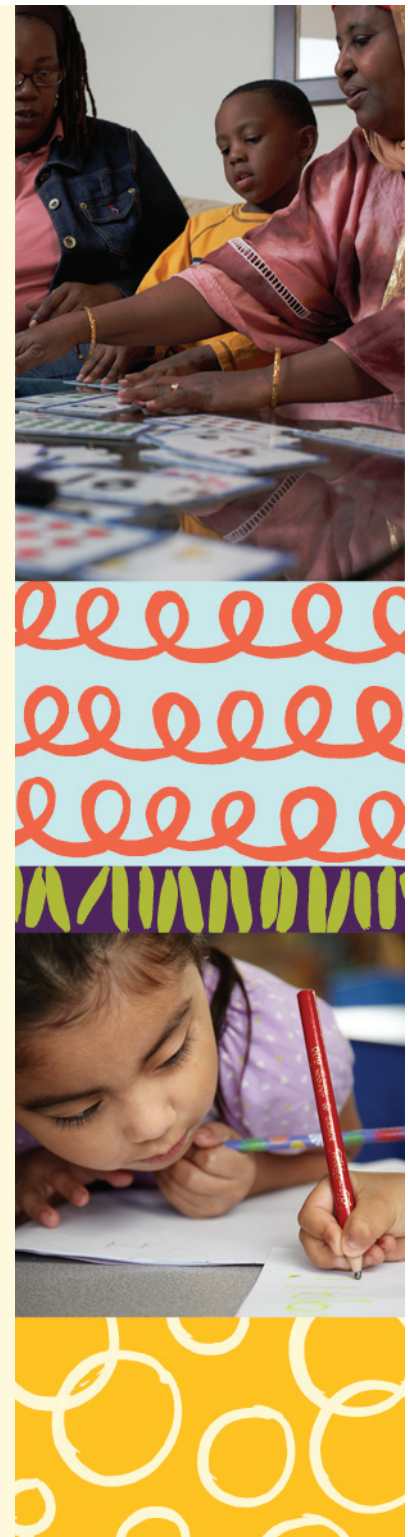
Health & Wellness

A happy life happens in a healthy home.

That's why Way to Grow is focused on making sure every child is born healthy, stays healthy and is ready to succeed.

Research proves that when children are born healthy, they have fewer developmental delays through their formative years. Our in-home health-and-wellness programming teaches parents about prenatal care, nutrition, immunizations, well-child checkups and safety to ensure all children are healthy, strong and prepared to learn. When necessary, our resource advocates refer families to our appropriate health and dental care partners. Two of our most prominent partnerships are with the Minnesota Visiting Nurse Agency and Women, Infants and Children.

This complete health-and-wellness programming enables Way to Grow parents to access health services and develop skills to work effectively within the healthcare, school and social-services systems.



Early Learning

Success starts well before the first school bell.

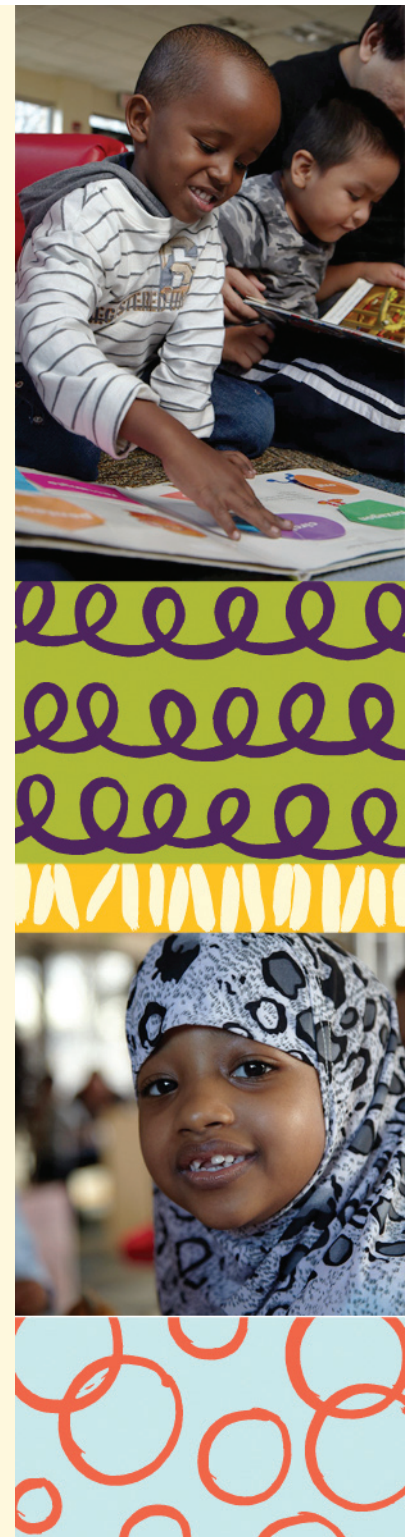
Studies prove that if a child receives support in developing physical, cognitive, social and emotional skills before age 5, he or she is more likely to succeed later in life—reducing the chances the child will drop out of school, receive welfare benefits or commit crime.

Our family educators engage parents in their children's education—showing them how to teach through everyday interaction and play. Through home visits, our Preschool Pals classes and Play, Learn and Grow center-based programming, we unlock parents' potential to be strong, positive role models.

Learning at home and away.

During home visits, family educators use the Sprouts curriculum to teach parents how to develop vocabulary, conversation, sound awareness and alphabet knowledge with their infants and toddlers from ages 0 to 2. For children ages 2 to 5, family educators utilize the Read Together, Talk Together curriculum to begin preparing children for school and to continue teaching them the big-five early literacy skills: vocabulary, alliteration, rhyming, letter naming and letter sounds.

Beyond the home, Way to Grow offers two center-based programs: Preschool Pals and Play, Learn and Grow. Preschool Pals is our free preschool offered three or four days a week to children ages 3 to 5 at two Minneapolis locations. Play, Learn and Grow focuses on parents and their 0- to 5-year-old children learning together. Both programs utilize the Opening the World of Learning curriculum and teach oral language and early literacy skills through mathematics, science and social studies.



Teen Parents

Giving love is as important as receiving it.

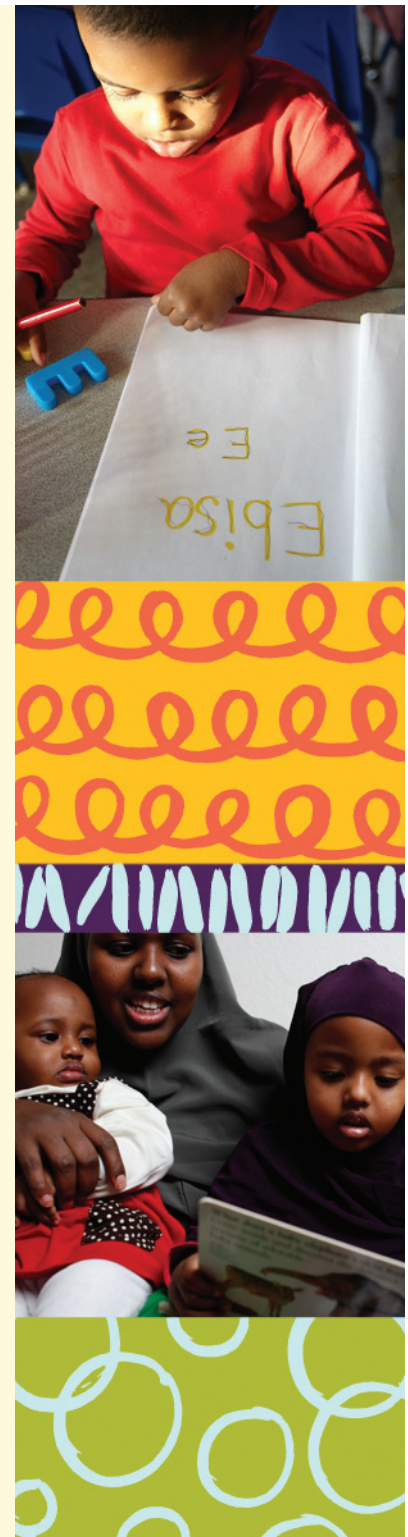
Though teen parents face many obstacles and struggles, the Way to Grow Dream Tracks® curriculum helps educate and prepare them for a successful life. As part of a three-year commitment, teen parents receive home visits twice a month, academic tutoring, guidance in career development, and participate in evening group sessions.

Dream Tracks works specifically with mothers ages 15 to 21 who are attending or willing to enroll in high school/GED programs and are committed to their education and career goals. The program is broken down into three phases:

Phase 1: parenting, motivational empowerment and academic engagement;

Phase 2: career adaptability modules with a culture-centered career development curriculum; and

Phase 3: reciprocal community involvement, giving teens the opportunities to develop leadership skills, give back to the community, and mentor younger participants.



2008 Service Statistics

- 3,043 unduplicated clients served (1,682 children and 1,361 parents)
- 8,649 home visits completed
- 3,081 referrals to agencies to access food, clothing, affordable housing and other supportive services
- 190 children graduated Way to Grow and started kindergarten prepared to learn

Early Learning

- 119 children ages 3 to 5 received quality early-learning programming through Preschool Pals classes
- 158 children ages 4 and 5 were assessed using the nationally recognized Individual Growth and Development Indicator

Health & Wellness

- 280 pregnant mothers received individualized prenatal home visits
- 92% of pregnant mothers served had a healthy birth outcome

Teen Parents

- 32 teen mothers enrolled in Phase I of Dream Tracks
- 29 additional pregnant and parenting teens attended weekly workshops at area high schools

2009 Service Statistics

- 2,902 unduplicated clients served (1,753 children and 1,149 parents)
- 9,076 home visits completed
- 3,064 referrals to agencies to access food, clothing, affordable housing and other supportive services
- 177 children graduated Way to Grow and started kindergarten prepared to learn

Early Learning

- 89 children ages 3 to 5 received quality early-learning programming through Preschool Pals classes
- 137 children ages 4 and 5 were assessed using the nationally recognized Individual Growth and Development Indicator

Health & Wellness

- 325 pregnant mothers received individualized prenatal home visits
- 96% of pregnant mothers served had a healthy birth outcome

Teen Parents

- 17 teen mothers enrolled in Phase I of Dream Tracks
- 10 teen mothers enrolled in Phase II of Dream Tracks
- 40 additional pregnant and parenting teens attended weekly workshops at area high schools

Our Impact

85%

of Way to Grow children will be prepared for kindergarten in 2011

vs. 59% of children deemed kindergarten ready in Minneapolis in 2008.

85%

of Way to Grow parents without a high school diploma read to their children

vs. 41% of parents without a high school diploma, nationwide.

85%

of Way to Grow teen mothers will graduate from high school

vs. 64% of teen mothers nationwide.

96%

of Way to Grow newborns will be born at a normal birth weight or above

vs. 92% of all Minneapolis children.

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Community Partners

348-TOTS

500 under 5

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Minnesota Visiting Nurse Agency

MPS Health Related Services

Neighborhood Achievement Zone—NAZ

North High School

NorthPoint Health & Wellness Center

Office of Multicultural Services—
City of Minneapolis

Partnerships

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Powderhorn Cultural Wellness Center

Pratt Community Education

Ready 4 K

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way to grow

To learn more about Way to Grow, see our community impact, or to read our success stories, please visit www.mplswtg.org.

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