

Way to Grow™



**Great by Eight
Program Development
Campaign**



Why Third Grade (Age 8) Matters

Experts increasingly agree the early childhood development window extends beyond kindergarten to third grade. Research has confirmed that third grade achievement is highly predictive of future academic, social and economic success—and that students who cannot read proficiently by grade three, age eight, are at risk for not finishing high school, much less attaining a college education.

“If we don’t get dramatically more children on track as proficient readers, the United States will lose a growing and essential proportion of its human capital to poverty, and the price will be paid not only by individual children and families, but by the entire country.”

– Annie E. Casey Foundation, *EARLY WARNING! Why Reading by the End of Third Grade Matters*



Great by Eight Campaign Objectives

For more than two decades Way to Grow (WTG) has worked successfully with Minneapolis families to ensure the health, wellbeing and school readiness of their children from birth until kindergarten. Now we are launching the Great by Eight Campaign: a five-year initiative with the support of Minneapolis Public Schools that will expand our successful and statistically proven home-visit model to include children from birth (or before) through third grade, age eight. We are seeking to raise \$2.5 million over the next five years to support this watershed project.

\$2.5 million in program support will enable us to:

- Continue services with over 900 children from birth to kindergarten.
- Extend services to additional kindergarteners each year while continuing to work with students who have moved on to first, second and third grades.
- Recruit, hire and train additional program staff, including Family Educators and certified Elementary Education Teachers.
- Develop and conduct evaluation processes in tracking participant progress, outcomes and program effectiveness.
- Develop and coordinate transformational educational process to inspire systemic change within 26+ schools in Minneapolis and first-ring suburb schools.
- Create individualized plans for each child and family to achieve established academic, health and social development goals.

Expected Outcomes

We anticipate the following outcomes of this initiative:

- More children will be ready for school.
- Students will pass the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCA) at the end of the third grade.
- Students will maintain higher grade point averages and score higher achievement in standardized tests.
- Students will test as “proficient” in reading at each grade level.
- School attendance by students will increase.
- Parents will increase their own participation with the children’s school.
- Systemic and constructive participation and partnerships between the public schools and other organizations, businesses and corporations will grow and flourish.

We expect to track and observe the following long-term, systemic outcomes among the participants in Great by Eight:

- A lower percentage of children under 15 will be arrested.
- High school graduation and college enrollment rates will be higher.
- A lower percentage of teens will experience pregnancy.
- A lower percentage of families will require assistance from welfare.

Testimonials

Parent

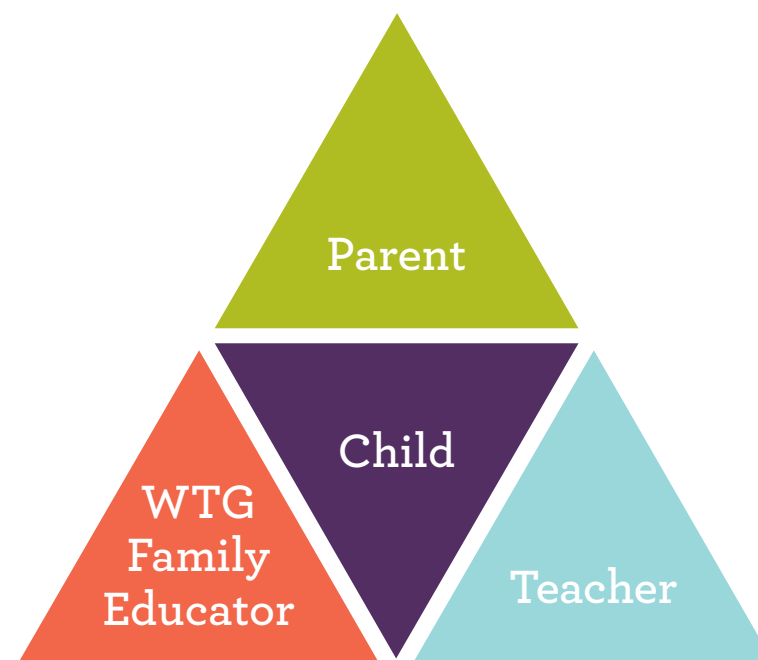
“Way to Grow made my life better because I have a Family Educator who understands my language and that is a great plus for me and my children, too. Without Way to Grow my child would not be ready for school. Now my daughter knows how to read and write and more. My favorite part about our Family Educator’s visits is how she teaches my children and me, too. We attended the open house of the school...and next month, we will go to the parent teacher conference together.”

Teacher

“Way to Grow is a great program. Family Educators are an important connection to explaining school expectations in the parents’ home languages. I model teaching to the Family Educator and then they help the parents teach their child at home. It helps deliver a consistent message, and the more the parent understands, the better. Way to Grow kids then perform better.”

Way to Grow Family Educator

“Working with this family has been a great experience. The mother and her two children now have a stable home, and I have been working with the oldest child on reading. As a four-year-old, she scored in the highest group of Way to Grow children in the IGDI Reading Assessment. Now she is in kindergarten and I assist the mother in advocating for her child by attending school activities and monitoring her child’s progress.”



“Through Way to Grow’s holistic approach of working with the parent, child and teacher, we are able to have a significant impact on Minneapolis children by playing an integral role in preparing children of our community for future success in high school, college, the work force and the rest of their lives.”

Carolyn Smallwood, Way to Grow Executive Director