

# Young People Succeeding



## OUTCOME TEAM ROSTER

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Dayton Public Schools  
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**Dr. Percy Mack**  
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1/08 – 6/08

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## VISION

Children are well prepared for learning when they start school and receive support outside of the classroom for their efforts inside the classroom. Intellectual curiosity, skill development and achievement are valued. Young people receive mentoring, guidance and support as they develop the capacity to differentiate between positive and negative risk behaviors. Positive role models are plentiful, and others in the community talk to teenagers with candor and respect about the difficult choices they face. Students finish high school ready to compete successfully in the labor market and/or in continuing education and skills development.

## YOUNG PEOPLE SUCCEEDING OUTCOME TEAM REPORT

A child's early years are a time of remarkable growth with ninety percent (90%) of brain development taking place by age five. Young children develop social, emotional, and decision making skills and self-confidence, the foundation needed for success in school and throughout their adult years. With this critical opportunity in mind, the Young People Succeeding (YPS) Outcome Team maintained its focus on the continued implementation of the Montgomery County Early Care and Education Initiative, now known as ReadySetSoar. The vision behind ReadySetSoar is that every child in the Miami Valley will be school ready by the time they enter kindergarten.

ReadySetSoar was launched with initial funding from the Montgomery County Family and Children First Council and The Frank M. Tait Foundation to improve the overall quality of early care and education in Montgomery County. The Montgomery County Educational Service Center began providing in-kind and consulting support in the third and fourth quarters, respectively.

This initiative supports professional development and technical assistance for providers and ongoing coordination of resources and programming. It also provides opportunities for families to learn about and access quality care and education.



ReadySetSoar's first year of work involved the following strategies:

- ✦ Establishing an early care and education system in Montgomery County.
- ✦ Facilitating the implementation of Ohio's Step Up To Quality rating system.
- ✦ Maximizing investments in quality early childhood opportunities in our community.
- ✦ Advancing the early childhood profession through high-quality professional development.
- ✦ Making high-quality early learning available to more children.
- ✦ Supporting parents and families in promoting their children's early social, emotional, physical, and academic development.

Funding received from the Family and Children First Council was used to:

- ✦ staff ReadySetSoar;
- ✦ provide technical support and incentives to selected early care centers, "focus sites," for achieving a star rating under Ohio's Step Up To Quality system; and
- ✦ bring additional funding to Montgomery County for early care and education.

**Staffing** of the early care and education initiative during 2008 was accomplished through the efforts of a part-time consultant with significant contributions made throughout the year by representatives from 45 organizations. These committed individuals formed the Action Task Force. The majority of the work accomplished by the Action Task Force occurred in three areas: Family and Community Engagement,

Linkages and Support, and Professional Development.

The Family and Community Engagement Subcommittee reached out to parents and community leaders with important information about supporting the healthy development of children from the earliest stages. Efforts included creating and distributing multiple communication pieces and collaborating with the Boonshoft Museum of Discovery and Five Rivers MetroParks on "Voyages on the Parkway"—a family event offering fun, hands-on educational activities.

The Linkages and Support Subcommittee developed strategies to increase opportunities and awareness of Ohio's Early Learning Initiative, Help Me Grow, and State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP).

In order to move the quality of early care and education forward, attention must be given to the professional development of caregivers and teachers. The Professional Development Subcommittee is working to maximize the limited resources available to meet professional development needs.

**Focus sites** were identified through an open request for participation. The following 11 centers are receiving individually tailored technical assistance grants of up to \$16,000 and a one-time quality achievement award of \$4,000 to aid in their pursuit of a star rating through the State of Ohio's Step Up To Quality rating system:

- ✦ A&D Daycare and Learning Center (Jefferson Township)
- ✦ All Kids: An Easter Seals Child Development Center (Dayton)
- ✦ Childtime Learning Center (Centerville)
- ✦ Clara's Heart Child Care Center (Trotwood)
- ✦ Dayton Christian Center (Dayton)
- ✦ Kinder Care Learning Center (Huber Heights)
- ✦ Miami Valley Family Care Center (Dayton)

- ✦ The Nurturing Nest (Butler Township)
- ✦ The Point YMCA Early Childhood Center (Butler Township)
- ✦ Seven Dwarfs Childcare Center (Miamisburg)
- ✦ YWCA Childcare (Downtown)

The sites were chosen based upon a broad representation of geography, program type, demographics of students, and a need for technical assistance. The technical assistance was provided through a contract with 4C for Children, Miami Valley, the region's resource and referral provider for early care and education. Two full-time technical assistance specialists support the focus sites as they work their way toward a star rating. The first of the 11 centers has received a star rating and others are making steady progress!

In its first year, ReadySetSoar has experienced a \$6 to \$1 return on investment to our community.

ReadySetSoar staff fought policy changes that would have limited or decreased the Early Learning Initiative enrollment in Montgomery County. In the end, there had been a sixty percent (60%) increase in the local Early Learning Initiative enrollment, resulting in an additional \$2,546,872 in state and federal dollars for early care and education of children in Montgomery County.

Step Up To Quality rated programs receive quality achievement awards from the State and are eligible to receive additional funds for subsidized child care. This translates to an estimated minimum annual increase of \$300,000 in state and federal dollars for quality early care and education in Montgomery County. This figure will increase as more programs receive their star rating.

Lastly, the National Center for Research on Early Childhood Education chose the Dayton region as part of their research on professional development. The study is designed to

improve the quality and effects of early childhood education. It brings an estimated value of almost \$200,000 in college course work, cash and in-kind resources to the area. In total, ReadySetSoar, together with its Action Task Force partners, has secured over \$3 million in non-local funds to support high-quality early care and education of children in our community.

Historically, the Young People Succeeding Outcome Team has monitored progress of two programs implemented as a result of prior FCFC initiatives. The following sections briefly describe each program and their respective successes.

#### FAST FORWARD CENTER

Since 2001, when the school dropout rate in Montgomery County was 25%, Fast Forward Center has been a beacon of hope for many young people. Administered by Sinclair Community College, the Fast Forward Center unites public and charter school systems to help out-of-school youth who want to complete their high school education by assessing their reading and math skills and connecting them with appropriate educational resources. In addition, Fast Forward participates in the development and funding of programs and schools and assesses their effectiveness.



Montgomery County has experienced a significant decrease in the dropout rate which, for 2007, was 11.6%. This is attributed to efforts of the 16 public school districts, Fast Forward Center and its partner charter schools. There have been 1,619 high school graduates who earned their diploma as a direct result of the Fast Forward partner schools. Troubled lives are being converted to productive lives.

This success and the critical services delivered by Fast Forward have received national attention in recent years. Most recently, the Youth Development Research Fund highlighted the program in the National Education Association publication: Answering the Call-Addressing the Dropout Crisis.

For additional information about Fast Forward Center, call 937-512-3278 or go to <http://www.sinclair.edu/organizations/ffc>.

#### THE MENTORING COLLABORATIVE

The Mentoring Collaborative of Montgomery County has been networking with and providing technical support to youth mentor agencies since 2001. The Collaborative works to raise community awareness of the critical need for mentors; provides agency training, mentor training, mentee training and background checks; and sponsors the Mentor

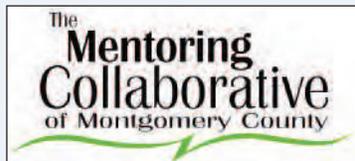
of the Year Awards and Super Mentor Saturday events.

In 2008, the Collaborative began providing Agency Certification Training using the Elements of Effective Practice in partnership with MENTOR/National Mentoring Partnership. To help partner agencies create the most successful experiences for their mentors and mentees, the Collaborative provides a full resource center

with tips, advice and the most current best-practice information. Forty-one (41) partner agencies were certified in this first year.

The Mentoring Collaborative has a total of 51 partner agencies which provided mentor services to 25,206 youth during 2008. There are still another 2,032 children waiting for caring adults to mentor them.

Five individuals were selected to receive the annual Outstanding Mentor Award in 2008. For the first time, the Collaborative presented their first Group Mentor Award to ACE-E/Parity, Inc./Wright Patterson Air Force Base (ACE-E/Parity/WPAFB). The selected individuals and group displayed extraordinary commitment to assisting young people in achieving their full potential by guiding them toward making positive life choices.



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#### Recipients of Outstanding Mentor Awards were recognized by the Montgomery County Board of County Commissioners.

Kim Gambrell - Mentoring Collaborative staff, Kathy Bates - Miamisburg Schools Mentor Program, Peter Mosley - ACE-E/Parity/WPAFB, Commissioner Deborah Lieberman, John Allerding - Montgomery County Juvenile Court Reclaiming Futures, Allen Booker - ACE-E/Parity/WPAFB, Krystal Thomas - ACE-E/Parity/WPAFB, Commissioner Dan Foley, Mark Baker - Mentoring Collaborative staff

Mentoring Award Recipients Not Pictured: Kathy Baldrige - Life Resource Centre, Freddie Fields - Jefferson Jr./Sr. High School Mentor Program, Kelly Schweickart - Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Greater Miami Valley

To become a mentor or for additional information about the Mentoring Collaborative, call 937-236-9965 or go to [www.mentoringcollaborative.org](http://www.mentoringcollaborative.org).