



Helping children succeed Success By 6 invests in children

Success By 6 programs in some 200 communities across the country are preparing preschool children to succeed in school.

By PATTY COURTRIGHT

Investing in the well-being of children before they enter school pays off throughout their lives.

This is the philosophy of Success By 6, sponsored by United Way of America since 1989. Success By 6 programs nationwide advocate fostering early childhood development, especially for at-risk children and their families, as a key to providing these children with a successful future. The program's catch-phrase is "helping all children succeed for life."

Begun in 1988 as an early childhood initiative at the United Way of Minneapolis, Success By 6 programs now help preschool children and their families in more than 200 communities across the country.

Now, a \$10 million donation from the NationsBank Foundation will further expand the initiative. The money, pledged to United Way of America, will support growth of its Success By 6 programs into all of NationsBank's franchise areas — potentially bringing the program into 22 states, including those now served by BankAmerica. NationsBank and BankAmerica are expected to merge later this year.

"NationsBank shares with United Way the belief that emphasis on early child development will ensure a brighter future for the entire community and our country," says Laura Foxx, foundation president.

United Way of America will

administer the new funds, making them available to local United Ways. Administrators are sending requests for proposals to the 22 states, with plans to announce the new and expanded programs in January.

"The contribution from NationsBank marks the first significant (Success By 6) program funding that we can put directly into the local communities," says Karen Smiley, director of Success By 6 for United Way of America.

How it began

"Part of the thinking, when the initiative was being developed, was to make sure kids were ready for school when the schools were ready for them," says Byron Laher, managing director of labor service and community affairs for United Way of Minneapolis.

To accomplish this, the Minneapolis United Way board convened a group of community leaders — those from the private, nonprofit and government sectors — and posed the question: What was preventing children from having a successful life experience?

"The first thing everyone agreed on was that there was a crisis in early childhood development," Laher says.

So the agency began creating public awareness of the problem, first to generate community support, then to bring needed services to a larger number of people and encourage organizations to work together.

The original Success By 6 initiative tackled the problems of low

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Participants in Charlotte's Success By 6 program

Charlotte program has family focus

By PATTY COURTRIGHT

Since 1991, Charlotte's Success By 6 program has focused on creating a healthy environment for children considered at-risk.

As a first step, the Johnston YMCA — a resource for eight neighborhoods — established a community development program, providing case management for families with young children who were most in need of additional resources.

"We intentionally started with the most difficult families," says Lynn Otzman, director of community investment for United Way of Central Carolinas, "and we did this with lots of partners, using staff time and decision-making input from the community."

"Seven years ago, there wasn't

a lot of discussion about early childhood, so the program really was on the cutting edge of a focus on the development of young children," she says. "We were doing some pioneering."

The theory was, Otzman says, that providing families with young children the things they needed to be successful as a family would, in turn, improve the lives of the children and give them a healthier start in school.

"That was our original intent and what we carried out," she says. "The focus is on the whole family, not just the children."

Next, the program focused on health care. In conjunction with Carolina Medical Center, Success By 6 established a clinic in the YMCA building to send a nurse

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One-fifth of population faced poverty

Welfare changes aren't reflected in the study and several charities say they're caring for as many, if not more, homeless and hungry.

By JOAN ALFORD

A new U.S. Census Bureau report says poverty usually is a temporary condition. But many charities report they are finding more people than ever are looking to them for long-term help.

Using data from 1993 to 1994, the Census Bureau study says approximately 55 million people — about 21 percent of the country's population — experienced poverty for a least two straight months. One-half of that number managed to escape poverty in less than five months.

But the figures were calculated before Welfare Reform legislation was enacted, so the report may not accurately reflect the 1998 poverty picture, say managers of some groups that help the poor.

"With changes in welfare, we're seeing 10 percent more people seeking help after being cut off from government-sponsored programs," says John Simmons, executive director of Central City Concern, Inc. in Portland, Ore. "There's a lot of fear and confusion out there."

The Portland nonprofit supports 1,100 housing units for those who would otherwise be homeless. It also operates an alcohol detoxification program for about 3,000 people annually.

The Cathedral Shelter of Chicago is feeling the crunch of welfare changes, too.

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Learning center a collaborative effort

Kids, families in public housing get boost

Public and private groups are working to provide skills to youngsters and families living in public housing.

By TODD COHEN

Raleigh

Nearly 4,000 families, including 8,000 children, or 10 percent of the total enrollment in the Wake County public schools, live in public housing. And, less than 30 percent of children living in public housing graduate from high school.

Now, youngsters and parents living in public housing will have an easier time learning basic educational and job skills, thanks to a new center that is a collaborative effort involving 15 nonprofit and governmental entities.

The Community Learning Center, located at the Heritage Park public housing complex just south of downtown, features three learning hubs — focusing on technology, literacy, and tutoring and mentoring.

The collaborative effort is spearheaded by the RHA Scholarship Fund, which was created in 1989 by

the Raleigh Housing Authority to provide scholarships to students living in public housing.

The new center will feature programming provided by the participating organizations, says Paige Holland, the scholarship fund's executive director.

"We'll avoid duplication of services," she says.

Similar centers are planned at other public housing complexes in Raleigh, and the new center also could be a model for the development of other centers throughout the state,

Holland says.

"I want to have three more up [in Wake County] in the next two years," she says.

The center is located in a building donated by the Raleigh Housing Authority and equipped with contributions from local businesses. An adjacent building will be built with \$100,000 in public and private funds. In addition, participating agencies will contribute volunteers and programming worth about \$250,000 a year.

Co-chairs of the center's steering

committee are Raleigh Mayor Tom Fetzter and state Sen. Eric Reeves.

Other participating organizations are Arts Together, Capital Area YMCA, city of Raleigh, Communities in Schools of North Carolina, Communities in Schools of Wake County, Greater Raleigh Chamber of Commerce, Inter-Project Council, Motherhead, Raleigh Housing Authority, Raleigh Jaycees, state of North Carolina, Triangle Family Services, Wake County and Wake County public schools.

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BRIEFLY

Food Bank official resigns

Anne G. Arella, deputy director of the Food Bank of North Carolina, has resigned. Arella, who joined the Food Bank two years ago as director of development and public relations and served as acting executive director earlier this year, will become a consultant to nonprofits on fundraising and public relations.

Duke nonprofit program names coordinator

John Williams, director of the nonprofit development program for the Mountain Resource Center at Western Carolina University in Cullowhee, has been named senior program coordinator for Duke University's certificate program in nonprofit management.

Williams will handle the program's day-to-day operations. For four years, he has been the program's site coordinator for a 28-county area in Western North Carolina. He will report to Don Wells, the program's director, who is giving up responsibility for day-to-day operations.

Fundraising software introduced

Nonprofits using the fundraising software The Raiser's Edge™ can get consulting help from software developer Blackbaud. The company will aid both new and longtime users of The Raiser's Edge, software designed to organize and store donor information and giving history.

Food bank receives \$140,000

The Second Harvest Food Bank of Northwest North Carolina benefited from \$140,000 generated by the Aug. 11 Lowes Foods Golf Tournament. Since the tournament was established in 1992, it has raised more than \$700,000 for the food bank.

Smithsonian Institution considers pitfalls of donor perks

The Smithsonian Institution is guarding itself against corporate donors who might try to influence the content and exhibitions of the 16-museum complex. Corporate giving made up 41.3 percent of the Smithsonian's \$49.5 million in gifts the museums received in 1997.