



## Countdown to Kindergarten

Countdown to Kindergarten is a summer program for children entering kindergarten and their families to experience fun and educational activities throughout the community. The program raises awareness of the importance of early childhood learning and of local organizations that offer educational programming. Countdown to Kindergarten aims to create enthusiasm toward early childhood and lifelong learning.

### How it all began

The Lexington community is fortunate to have multiple organizations working toward the same cause: providing quality early childhood education in the community. Through various partnerships and commitments, 13 local organizations have joined forces to create a community project to enhance the educational experiences of preschool children and their families. The project is called “Countdown to Kindergarten” and is partially funded and spearheaded by liaisons from four groups: PNC Bank, Fayette County Public Schools, United Way of the Bluegrass and the Child Care Council of Kentucky.

**PNC’s “Grow Up Great”** was launched in the Lexington community in September 2010. This 10-year, \$100 million investment in early childhood education is committed to help prepare children from birth to age 5 – with a focus on underserved children – for success in school and life. Founded by The PNC Financial Services Group, Grow Up Great is the most comprehensive corporate-based school readiness program in the nation committed to helping produce stronger, smarter and healthier children, families and communities.

**Fayette County Public Schools’ “Delivery to Diploma”** strives to provide opportunities for students to grow and excel. FCPS and its community partners say “It’s About Kids” learning through this broad-based initiative that aims to ensure all families receive resources to support their children’s development from Day 1. The umbrella concept will offer multiple projects, activities and materials emphasizing the importance of lifelong learning.

**United Way of the Bluegrass** improves lives by mobilizing the caring power of communities by helping children and youth achieve their potential, promoting financial stability and independence, and ensuring the community access to healthcare. Early childhood education is a focus through the **Success by Six** initiative. United Way understands that nurturing, stimulation and good health during the preschool years lay the foundation for success in life, and investment in a child’s early years pays dividends for the future community. Early childhood development benefits an entire community, not just one segment of the population.

The **Child Care Council of Kentucky** is a visible community resource committed to offering access to affordable, quality care and education. CCC pledges to promote, expand and enhance services that improve the quality of life for all children, families and early care professionals in the Bluegrass. Some of the council’s goals include developing and maintaining a child care information and referral service available to all families in the Bluegrass Area Development District, promoting quality child care and serving as a regional coordinator for child care services.

### 2011 partners:

Child Care Council of Kentucky  
Explorium of Lexington  
Fayette County Public Schools  
Lexington Children's Theatre  
Lexington Ballet  
Lexington Legends  
Lexington Philharmonic

Lexington Public Library  
Living Arts and Science Center  
Parks and Recreation  
PNC Foundation  
United Way of the Bluegrass  
YMCA

### 2011 funders:

PNC Foundation – \$13,000  
United Way of the Bluegrass – \$1,500  
Child Care Council of Kentucky – \$1,500

### Countdown to Kindergarten contacts:

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