



Hope  
starts  
HERE

DETROIT'S  
EARLY CHILDHOOD  
PARTNERSHIP

Detroit's Community Framework for **Brighter Futures**

November 2017 / Summary

# Hope starts right here.

**H**ow might we inspire wide-scale, positive change for Detroit's young children and their families?

We asked ourselves that question in late 2015. Detroit had recently exited bankruptcy and signs of resurgence were evident, yet we knew the city's success would be incomplete if young children and families did not thrive as a result. If Detroit's upsurge was creating opportunities for business and other sectors, shouldn't its youngest residents – any city's most precious resource – experience the same kind of benefits?

We joined forces because we believed that Detroit could emerge as a leader in creative investments to strengthen children's futures. And we recognized that our two organizations could play a pivotal role in that process. Together the W.K. Kellogg Foundation and The Kresge Foundation bring a wealth of experience based on many decades of investing in cities and early childhood education. In collaboration with a wide array of contributors – a vibrant community of parents and caregivers, and Detroit's dedicated leaders – we placed the well-being and future of the city's young children at the center of our combined efforts.

**Hope Starts Here** grew from that commitment.

Today we are an alliance of advocates and champions for early childhood systems in Detroit. Hundreds of partners have shaped this endeavor, and thousands have shared their insights, observations and deep desires for children in the process. After a year of dedicated listening,

imagining and learning together, we are proud to share this document – a framework for changing the futures of Detroit's young children. Hope starts inside each of us when we recognize how and where we can be contributors. The information and Community Framework offered here invite your participation.

The Community Framework described in the following pages marks the end of our initial community engagement phase. We hope it inspires you to join Hope Starts Here in the next phase of learning, listening and action on behalf of young children and their families in Detroit.



**La June Montgomery Tabron**  
President and CEO  
*W.K. Kellogg Foundation*



**Rip Rapson**  
President and CEO  
*The Kresge Foundation*



## Our Vision:

By 2027, Detroit will be a city that puts its young children and families first.

# Why focus on early childhood?

The first eight years of a child's life have a huge impact on their development and set the stage for their future success. A large number of developmental milestones fall within this period. If we make sure children have a strong first eight years, we set them up to continue growing and thriving. If we don't, we risk leaving them behind. Luckily, having positive experiences during this time can dramatically change a child's life — and have big impacts on their family and community.

**The first eight years provide a critical window of opportunity to change children's lives — and our communities — for the better. We need to seize it.**

# What is early childhood like in Detroit?

Early childhood starts **BEFORE BIRTH.**

**9%** of Detroit moms get late or no prenatal care.

**80,000** children 8 and under live in Detroit.

**13%**

of Detroit babies are born **too early**, compared to nine percent nationally.

**13%**

of Detroit babies are born **too small**, compared to eight percent nationally.

Both of these can have significant long-term effects on a child's health and development.

**Detroit ranks near the bottom in child well-being.**

**MORE THAN 60%** of Detroit's children 0-5 live in **poverty.**

(That's more than in any of the country's 50 largest cities.)

Kids who grow up in poverty are at higher risk for health and academic problems.

Detroit has one of the highest infant mortality rates in the **country.**

13.5 out of every 1,000 babies born in Detroit dies before their first birthday. That's more than **twice** the national number.

**African American babies have a 40% higher infant mortality rate than white babies in the city.**



**90%**

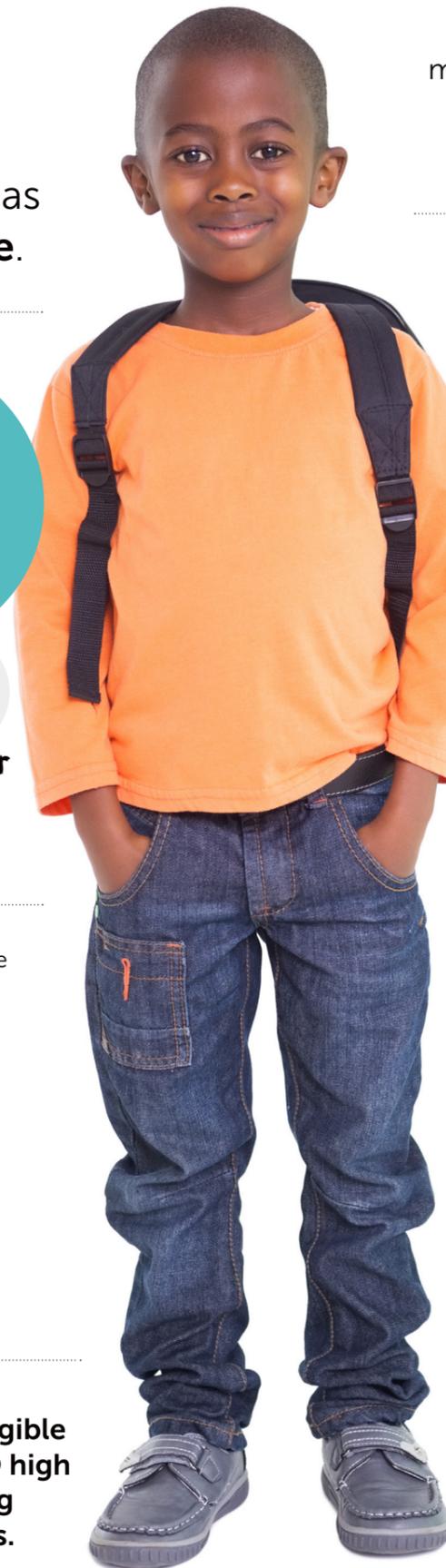
of a child's brain has formed by **age five.**



Many families aren't receiving the services they need because of:

- poor transportation
- confusing eligibility requirements
- long waiting lists
- limited funding for services & programs

**Nearly 30,000** of our eligible young children have **NO** high quality early learning or child care options.



All of those factors combined mean young children in Detroit are starting kindergarten at a **disadvantage.**

26 Detroit K-12 schools rank in the **lowest performing** 5% of schools in Michigan.

If students are not reading at grade level by third grade, they are **four times more likely** to drop out of school.

Starting in the 2019-2020 school year, a new Michigan law means that 3rd graders not reading at grade level could be held back and would have to repeat 3rd grade.

**86.5%**

of Detroit's third graders are **not** reading at grade level.

That number provides the final shocking evidence that **we are failing our children in their early years.**

# What is Hope Starts Here?

## WHO WAS PART OF THE PLANNING PROCESS?

More than **18,000** DETROITERS DIRECTLY CONTRIBUTED

GUIDED BY A **23 MEMBER** STEWARDSHIP BOARD



FRAMEWORK CREATED BY **SIX** STRATEGY TEAMS  
MADE UP OF MORE THAN **240** COMMUNITY MEMBERS & EXPERTS

**2 Million**

PEOPLE EXPOSED TO HOPE STARTS HERE THROUGHOUT THE PROCESS

**A**s we work to create a brighter future for our city, young children remain our unfinished business. Hope Starts Here was born out of the belief that Detroit won't reach its full potential until our kids reach theirs – all of them. This **one-year community engagement process** launched in fall 2016 with three goals:

1. **Create a vision** for early childhood in Detroit that gives every child a strong start
2. **Develop a Community Framework** to make that vision a reality
3. **Inspire people** across the city to bring that Community Framework to life

Since then, thousands of Detroiters have come together to chart a new course for the city's children and families, providing ideas, brainstorming solutions, and sharing their hopes for our youngest citizens.

Hope Starts Here launched with a public event at the Michigan Science Center on November 10, 2016. Over the following months, the process brought together thousands of Detroiters to develop a vision for early childhood in Detroit, to create a blueprint to achieve that vision, and to mobilize people across the city to bring that blueprint to life. More than 18,000 Detroiters directly contributed to Hope Starts Here's planning process: families and caregivers, child care providers,

educators, health care professionals, community advocates, business leaders, policy makers, funders, and a diverse range of other stakeholders.

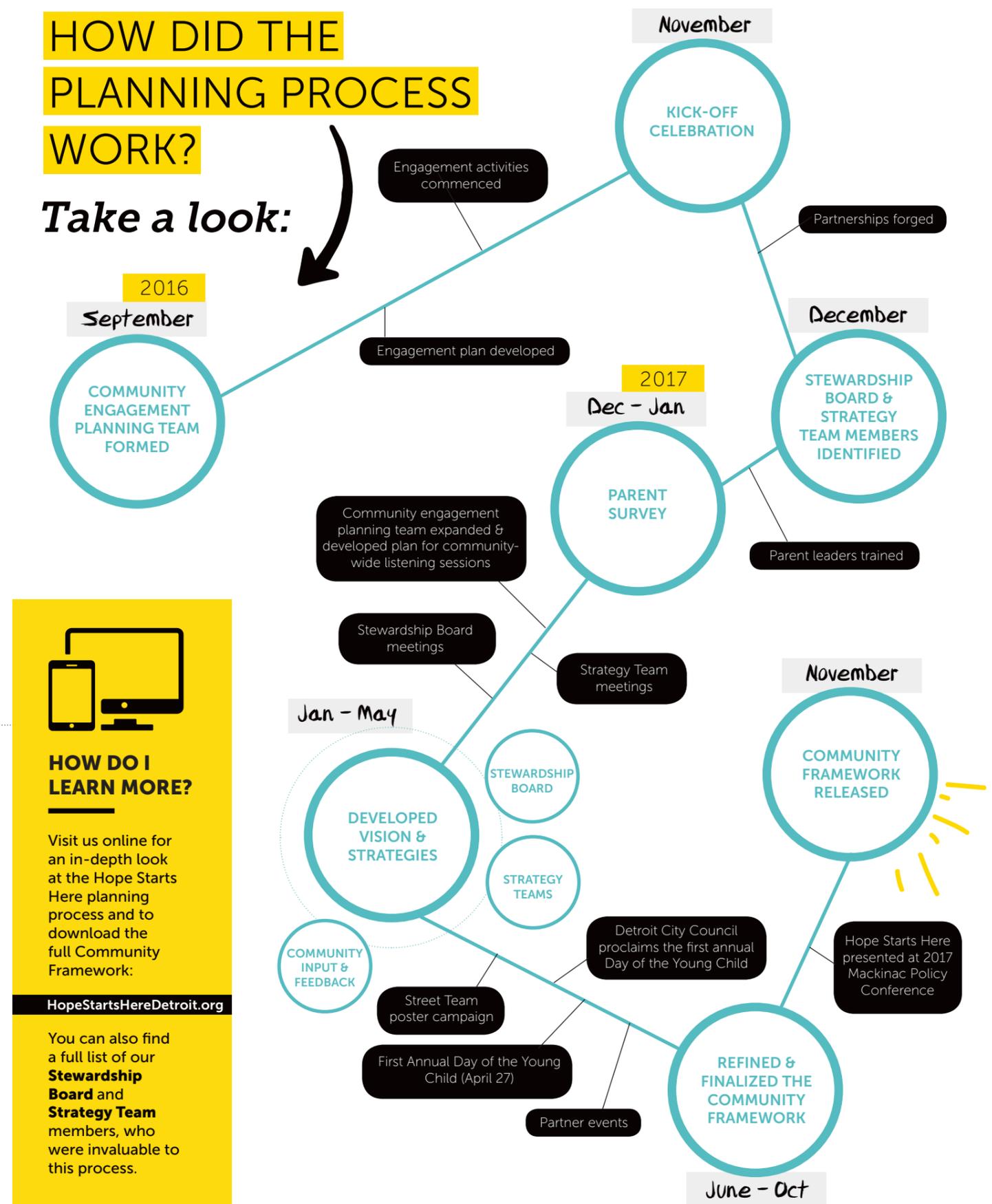
Hope Starts Here was guided by a **Stewardship Board** made up of parents, child care providers, early childhood educators, health care providers, local and state government representatives, as well as business, community and philanthropic leaders.

Six **Strategy Teams** took on the big task of understanding the many challenges children and families face in Detroit, then coming up with ideas to address them. More than 240 parents, caregivers, early childhood professionals, and others made up the Strategy Teams.

**Detroit residents** provided input, ideas and feedback through a citywide community engagement process that informed the work of the Strategy Teams and Stewardship Board. This included the formation of a dedicated Community Engagement Planning Team, a parent survey that reached caregivers in every neighborhood in the city, 125 listening sessions that brought people together to discuss their ideas and hopes for our youngest citizens, Detroit's first Day of the Young Child, as well as digital and traditional media campaigns. More than two million people were exposed to Hope Starts Here through this work.

## HOW DID THE PLANNING PROCESS WORK?

Take a look:



### HOW DO I LEARN MORE?

Visit us online for an in-depth look at the Hope Starts Here planning process and to download the full Community Framework:

[HopeStartsHereDetroit.org](http://HopeStartsHereDetroit.org)

You can also find a full list of our **Stewardship Board** and **Strategy Team** members, who were invaluable to this process.

# Our Vision:

By 2027, Detroit will be a city that puts its young children and families first.



Detroit will be a city where **all children are healthy and thriving**, and have high quality experiences that help them grow and develop.



Detroit will be a city where **families feel supported** raising their kids and use their power to make sure their children have high quality early childhood experiences.



Detroit will be a city where the **professionals who care for our children are valued**, well-trained and respected.



Detroit will be a city with many high quality **spaces and places where children can learn**.



Detroit will be a city where **everyone understands that the first eight years of a child's life are important**, and that efforts to help our kids help *all* of us.



Detroit will be a city where the systems that affect early childhood have the **funding they need** to make an impact, and **work with each other** to do the most they can do.



## Our Values:

Our work is guided by four important beliefs:

### Equity

Every child in Detroit deserves the same chance to grow up and be successful.

### Proven Practices

There are great ideas in Detroit, and there are great ideas outside of Detroit. We can and should learn from and use both to create a path forward that is *by* and *for* our city.

### Family-Focused

Healthy families mean healthy kids, so our work to make Detroit a better place for children must include families, too.

### Community Leadership

Every Detroiter has a role to play in making our city a great place for children. Achieving our vision will require everyone to roll up their sleeves and lead in some way.



## MAKING OUR VISION A REALITY

# The Hope Starts Here FRAMEWORK

**6 IMPERATIVES:**  
what we must do to make  
Detroit a city that puts our  
young children and families first

**15 STRATEGIES:**  
recommended  
actions to achieve  
our vision by 2027

### IMPERATIVE #6:

Find new ways to fund early childhood, and make better use of the resources we have

- **Strategy #14:** Increase state and local funding
- **Strategy #15:** Better coordinate philanthropic giving

### IMPERATIVE #1:

Promote the health, development and well-being of all Detroit children

- **Strategy #1:** Support the first 1,000 days of a child's life
- **Strategy #2:** Establish a comprehensive health and developmental screening system

### IMPERATIVE #5:

Create tools and resources to better coordinate systems that impact early childhood

- **Strategy #11:** Create a central coordinating body to lead early childhood efforts
- **Strategy #12:** Use one integrated data system to increase information sharing across systems
- **Strategy #13:** Ensure systems adjacent to early childhood also take children into account

### IMPERATIVE #2:

Support parents and caregivers as children's first teachers and champions

- **Strategy #3:** Support the role of families in children's development
- **Strategy #4:** Improve the processes, programs and systems that support them
- **Strategy #5:** Create a team of advocates to champion early childhood

### IMPERATIVE #4:

Guarantee safe and inspiring learning environments for our children

- **Strategy #9:** Improve facilities quality across Detroit
- **Strategy #10:** Align, increase, and better leverage existing resources

### IMPERATIVE #3:

Increase the overall quality of Detroit's early childhood programs

- **Strategy #6:** Develop common standards, and support providers with professional development opportunities
- **Strategy #7:** Attract, better compensate, and retain the early childhood workforce
- **Strategy #8:** Align the early childhood and K-3 systems



# HOPE starts with THEM

WE ASKED  
DETROIT KIDS:  
**WHAT ARE  
YOUR HOPES  
& DREAMS?**



**DANIELA**, age 8

"I want to be a doctor.  
An **animal doctor!**"



**BRAXTON**, age 5

"Sometimes I build things,  
and I get happy. When  
I get big, I want to be a  
**construction man.**"



**NALA**, age 5

"I want to be a **frog**. I like  
to jump around like frogs  
do. And swim. I know  
how to swim."

As parents,  
what would  
make a  
difference  
to you?

We talked with  
parents across  
the city about  
their experiences  
raising children  
here. We asked  
**what they need**  
to raise children in  
Detroit.



**WANT MORE?  
VISIT US ONLINE:**

[HopeStartsHereDetroit.org](https://www.HopeStartsHereDetroit.org)

Hear from LaToya, Esmeralda,  
Ora, James, and other parents  
as they discuss their parenting  
experiences: what's going  
right, challenges they're facing,  
and why they're hopeful about  
the future.



**LATOYA KIMBROUGH**

*Lives with her parents, her son,  
and two nieces on the  
east side of Detroit*

"My son will be going to  
kindergarten soon, and I'll have  
to take him to school outside  
of my community. I would like  
the convenience of being able  
to take him around the corner.  
My nieces don't go to **school in  
our neighborhood**...because we  
don't have any schools."



**ORA WILLIAMS**

*Lives in Brightmoor  
where she raises  
her grandchildren*

"Keep moving that blight. Just  
**making it safe for children** to  
walk, safe for people to catch  
buses, just making it safe period.  
These abandoned houses, the  
weeds that are tall as me, there's  
so much that can happen."



**ESMERALDA TORRES**

*Lives in Southwest Detroit  
with her husband  
and three children*

"I would love to see **more  
support for parents**. I didn't  
realize there were certain  
resources for parents until my  
little girl was in kindergarten. If I  
would have known about these  
resources when she was freshly  
born, it would have made a  
difference in her education."



**JAMES HILL**

*Lives in Grandmont-  
Rosedale with his wife and  
three children*

"A **solid early childhood education**  
made all the difference in our boys  
being able to adjust to school.  
We consider ourselves informed,  
but there needs to be more  
information available to all Detroit  
families on enrolling in preschool."



## USING POLICY CHANGE TO PUT **CHILDREN & FAMILIES** FIRST

**H**ope Starts Here's Framework requires policy changes at every level – institutional, local, state and federal – to ensure Detroit is a city where children and families come first. During the Hope Starts Here listening and planning phase, thousands of Detroiters shared how difficult it can be to obtain services for their family members, and hundreds of strategy team members spoke about the red tape and hurdles providers face when helping those in need. **Let's change this.**

Hope Starts Here's policy priorities offer public officials, the business community, community-based organizations and citizens a place to start. And in many cases, the change can happen right

now. The recommendations focus on supporting financial stability, creating a stronger connection between early childhood, health, K-12, and regional food systems, and identifying resources for higher quality early childhood programs and services.

To foster change and help Detroit children and their families thrive, the recommendation in this section offer a wide range of possibilities to consider. Recommendations marked with an asterisk (\*) indicate policies and practices that companies and other community-based organizations can advance on their own, with or without the implementation of the recommended policy change.

# Our Policy Priorities:

### IMPERATIVE #1:

Promote the health, development and well-being of all Detroit children

- Implement a universal screening and referral system
- Support policies and programs that increase access to fresh food\*
- Support policies and programs that reduce food insecurity\*

### IMPERATIVE #2:

Support parents and caregivers as children's first teachers and champions

- Increase public and private health care payers' focus on preventive and integrated care for children and mothers
- Streamline application requirements for child care subsidies, as well as other social services such as WIC and Medicaid
- Consider the feasibility of increasing Michigan's Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)
- Explore creative funding options such as a Michigan Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit'
- Implement a family leave policy\*
- Promote living wage initiatives\*
- Promote policies that increase the predictability of employee schedules\*
- Support local transportation system improvements that increase mobility for families
- Support efforts to maintain or increase health care coverage for low-income families and children

### IMPERATIVE #3:

Increase the overall quality of Detroit's early childhood programs

- Adapt higher education degree programs to meet the needs of Detroit's early childhood workforce
- Increase access to and affordability of higher education through financial aid programs and scholarships
- Expand and improve citywide early childhood coaching models to support impactful teacher-child interactions
- Increase compensation and benefits of early childhood educators

- Implement a statewide Kindergarten Entry Observation
- Develop formal partnership agreements between the early childhood and K-12 systems

### IMPERATIVE #4:

Guarantee safe and inspiring learning environments for our children

- Allocate funding specifically for improving Detroit's early childhood facilities

### IMPERATIVE #5:

Create tools and resources to better coordinate systems that impact early childhood

- Create a public or public-private coordinating mechanism for early childhood in Detroit
- Integrate early childhood data collection, analysis, and utilization\*

### IMPERATIVE #6:

Find new ways to fund early childhood, and make better use of the resources we have

- Create a local public funding mechanism for early childhood in Detroit to supplement state and federal resources
- Raise child care subsidy reimbursement rates and change reimbursement policies
- Expand Great Start to Quality
- Ensure Michigan pursues and leverages all available federal resources, such as the Preschool Development Grants
- Allow automatic eligibility for child care subsidies for all residents of low-income neighborhoods, following the example of the school lunch program

### LEARN MORE ONLINE:

[HopeStartsHereDetroit.org](https://www.hopestartsheredetroit.org)



Visit our website to find more details on the policy priorities outlined here.

# HOPE starts with YOU!

Take the pledge to be an

**early childhood champion**

at [HopeStartsHereDetroit.org](http://HopeStartsHereDetroit.org)

Every Detroiter has a role to play in making our city a great place for children. **It's time to roll up our sleeves and get to work.**

  
DETROIT'S EARLY CHILDHOOD PARTNERSHIP

is a joint initiative of:



W.K.  
KELLOGG  
FOUNDATION



All sources for this document can be found at [hopestartsheredetroit.org/sources](http://hopestartsheredetroit.org/sources)

