



**Collaboration for
Early Childhood**
Strong Start, Bright Future

Historical Context

In 2003, all six of Oak Park's governmental agencies joined to initiate, fund and guide the Collaboration for Early Childhood, a unique public/private partnership designed to improve local early childhood resources. With more than 90 agencies participating, the Collaboration works to overcome the fragmentation and scarcity of services endemic to the early childhood field by integrating all of our community resources to better meet the needs of the youngest children and their families. Our work is focused around four strategic priorities: 1) the advancement of high-quality preschool for all children, 2) professional development for early childhood providers, 3) parent information and support, and 4) developmental screening. Additionally, we are committed to continuous quality improvement and to engaging in extensive data collection to support short-term evaluations and longitudinal analyses that inform this work.

Mission

We champion high-quality early childhood care and learning experiences and support for families so all children develop their full potential.

Vision

A community where every child thrives.

Values

- C. Collaboration (connection)
- A. Action
- R. Results
- E. Excellence

Foundational Principles

- *Whole Child.* We advocate a comprehensive strategy to support all aspects of every child's development: physical, social, emotional, cognitive and aesthetic.
- *Every Child.* We work to support every child with a special focus on children with greater needs.
- *Cultural Competence.* We value diversity and affirm the importance of cultural competence and sensitivity to our effectiveness.
- *Inclusiveness.* We are an open organization that welcomes the active engagement and voice of all agencies and people.
- *Integrity.* We adhere to high personal and professional principles by a commitment to honesty, confidentiality, trust, respect and transparency.
- *Accountability.* We are committed to measuring our impact on children, families and services by publicly reporting our progress on outcomes and adjusting our strategies to ensure continuous improvement.
- *Equity.* We are committed to creating a comprehensive, coordinated system of high quality services and supports for young children and their families designed to reduce disparities in outcomes associated with gender, race, and socioeconomic status.