

BirthtoThrive Online

by Thrive by Five Washington

[Home](#) [Archive](#) [Contact](#)



Sep
22
2011

<< [The Potential Flaw in the Argument that Benefits of High-Quality Early Ed Fade Out | A Roadmap to a Pre-K-12 System, with Lessons from Early Learning](#) >>

Early Learning Joins NBC's Education Nation with Help from Washington State

by Paul Nyhan | 1 Comments

One of the nation's biggest public forums on education kicks off Monday, and for the first time it will tackle early learning thanks to some help from Washington state.



This will be the second year of the [Education Nation Summit](#), an ambitious effort by NBC News to improve the dialogue about education in America and come up with solutions. But it's the first year early learning will be meaningfully included in the conversation.

We know an achievement gap can be spotted in children as young as 18 months old. And we know that by kindergarten, wealthier children have heard 30 million more words than their peers in poverty.

If efforts like Education Nation are serious about closing the achievement gap and building better schools, their conversations need to focus on the impact of children's early experiences and learning on children's success in school and life. That's what Seattle-based [Bezos Family Foundation](#), a sponsor of this year's event, and [Thrive by Five Washington](#) told organizers.

"We need more people to understand that the first five years of life really do matter," said Molly O'Connor, director of communications for Thrive by Five Washington. "If we want to solve many of the challenges in our schools, we need to look at what's happening for children before they even enter school."

Organizers agreed, and, this year, the Summit will start with presentations on what's been learned about the brain in those first few years and what it means for learning. Leading up to the event, The Bezos Family Foundation and Thrive by Five Washington helped Education Nation shape its early learning work by suggesting content and experts, such as world-renowned brain researchers Drs. Patricia Kuhl and Andy Meltzoff, co-directors of the [University of Washington's Institute for Learning & Brain Sciences \(I-LABS\)](#). Kuhl and Meltzoff along with Alison Gopnik of UC Berkeley and Jack Shonkoff of Harvard will help get the meeting rolling Monday with presentations on "Brain Power: Why Early Learning Matters." (Check out Kuhl's [guest blog](#) and a [video](#) of her talking about the "linguistic genius of babies")

NBC has pulled me in, too, to help with the Summit. You can ask me questions about early learning and education at Education Nation's "Ask an Expert" site.

To help summit organizers broaden their education debate, The Bezos Foundation and Thrive by Five Washington explained why early learning matters, highlighting that every dollar spent on early ed returns at least \$7 to society in the form of fewer students in special education, lower incarceration rates, less money spent on social services and other reduced costs.

They walked Education Nation leaders through what it means to be ready for school, the critical role parents play during those first years, and that early learning is far more

Paul Nyhan

I am a dad who made his living for 21 years as a working journalist, with long stints at Bloomberg News, the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* newspaper (RIP) and *Congressional Quarterly*.



So far, I have split my career between the two Washingtons, spending half in the nation's capitol and the other 10 years in Seattle. During those years I covered a lot of territory, reporting on Congress, the Federal Reserve, lobbying, public housing policies and even those derivatives now wreaking havoc with our economy. In Seattle, I wrote about the economy, aerospace, organized labor, disability, taxes, working poverty, family news and the broken economics of child care.

My most satisfying beat, though, was my last as a family reporter, since it allowed me to work on my most important job — parent of a five-month-old baby, a daughter in preschool and a son in kindergarten — while still working as a journalist. My newspaper is now closed, but I am still on the beat. Since 2009, I have been writing about early learning for Thrive by Five Washington and covering family trends and news for various publications.

Enter search term
 Include comments in search

Tag Cloud

assessment autism behavior brain budget california child
child care children congress cuts development early
education **early learning** eeceap
economy education family family based federal funding
governor grant gregoire head start health international
k-12 kindergarten kindergarten readiness language learning
learning for life literacy math national news obama
obesity online parent parenting parents play polich
policy poverty pre-k prek-3rd preschool programs qris
quality race to the top reading recession reform

than preschool and pre-kindergarten, it's everything that happens until kindergarten, and in some ways through third grade.

It is not a surprise Washington leaders helped. Since 2004, the state has emerged as a leader in key areas of early education, with a pilot child care quality rating and improvement system, development of model schools that integrate pre-kindergarten with the first grades of elementary school and a comprehensive plan to build a better early learning system over the next 10 years.

Tune in Monday morning and join the conversation over at [Education Nation](#).

Currently rated 5.0 by 2 people

Tags: [education nation](#), [bezos](#), [i-labs](#) | Categories: [Business & Community Leaders](#), [Early Learning Professionals](#), [General](#), [Parents and Caregivers](#)

Share it: [Send to a friend](#) | [Stumble it!](#) | [Kick it!](#) | [DZone it!](#) | [del.icio.us](#)

Related posts

[Washington Business Leaders Call for Early Learning Investment to Narrow Job Skills Gap](#)
One of the biggest problems facing the Washington state economy is that there are not enough skills...

[Washington Wins Federal Race to the Top Grant, Establishing State as a Leader in Early Learning](#)
Washington won one of only nine federal Race to the Top grants this morning, a victory that will n...

[Washington Makes Early Learning Leap: National Model for High-Quality Child Care Opens in Seattle Area](#)
What: Grand opening celebration. Where: Educare Early Learning Center, 625 SW St., Seattle WA 9...

Comments

Steve Held 

9/23/2011 10:22:21 AM

I am the longest appointed member of the New York State Early Intervention Coordinating Council. Early Learning is so important and i applaud you for highlighting the benefits and the need. Please don't forget the value of early intervention for the hundreds of thousands of young children who are served in Part C and preschool part B of IDEA. As State's confront their financial challenges much needed and entitled services has come into question Nationally

Add comment

Name*

E-mail*

Website

Country

[Not specified] 

b i u quote

Comment Preview



Notify me when new comments are added

[research](#) [school](#) [school readiness](#) [science](#) [senate](#) [sleep](#)
[special needs](#) [state](#) [success](#) [support](#) [teachers](#) [thrive](#) [tv](#)
[video](#) [washington](#) [watch](#) [week in review](#)

Categories

[Business & Community Leaders \(524\)](#)
[Early Learning Professionals \(614\)](#)
[General \(537\)](#)
[Parents and Caregivers \(637\)](#)

Share & Link

Recent Posts

[In The News: Challenges of Race to the Top and Play as an Anti-Poverty Tool](#)

[Birth to Thrive Online Holiday Hiatus](#)

[Holiday Reading: Race to the Top Analysis and Stories of the Year](#)

[How Looming Across-the-Board Cuts Would Affect One Program](#)

[Congress Wraps Up Its Annual Spending Bills and Gives Early Education a Boost](#)

[A Guide to What a Race to the Top Win Means](#)

[Washington Wins Federal Race to the Top Grant, Establishing State as a Leader in Early Learning](#)

[U.S. Families Lost All Economic Gains of the Last 35 Years: New Report](#)

[Five of the More Interesting Early Learning Studies of 2011](#)

[Moving Forward With Proven Early Learning Improvements in Education Reform](#)

Blog Roll

[Children's Alliance](#)
[League of Education Voters](#)
[MomsRising](#)
[Motherlode \(The New York Times\)](#)
[On Parenting \(The Washington Post\)](#)
[ParentMap](#)
[Ready 4 K](#)
[The Early Ed Watch Blog](#)
[The Early Learning Community](#)
[The Juggle \(Wall Street Journal\)](#)
[DEL Connect](#)
[Eye on Early Education](#)
[Preschool Matters...Today!](#)

Washington State & Federal Resources


[Child Care Bureau](#)
[Center for Law and Social Policy: Child Care and Early Education](#)
[Child Care & Early Education Research Connections](#)
[Head Start/ECEAP Washington](#)
[Institute for Learning and Brain Sciences](#)
[National Association for the Education of Young Children](#)
[National Institute for Early Education Research](#)


PEPS (Program for Early Parent Support)
Administration for Children and Families (ACF)
UW Center on Infant Mental Health &
Development
Washington State Child Care Resources and
Referral Network
Within Reach (Health Tips)
Zero to Three
Click here Thrive's full list of early learning
resources.
Department of Early Learning


Parenting Media


Learning for Life
ParentMap
MSNBC's Kids and Parenting
Parent Hacks
Seattle Child


Thrive on Twitter


 January 3. 13:10
In The News: Challenges of Race to the Top
and Play as an Anti-Poverty Tool
<http://t.co/qCHKdpHo>

 December 22. 13:40
Holiday Reading: Race to the Top Analysis and
Stories of the Year: <http://t.co/YOVX4PkK>

 December 21. 15:06
How Looming Across-the-Board Cuts Would
Affect One Program: <http://t.co/qDcWOs7h>

 December 20. 16:14
Congress Wraps Up Its Annual Spending Bills
and Gives Early Education a Boost:
<http://t.co/beiEiL9F>

 December 19. 16:22
A Guide to What a Race to the Top Win
Means: <http://t.co/uobzzorI>

 December 16. 14:44
Washington Wins Federal Race to the Top
Grant, Establishing State as a Leader in Early
Learning <http://t.co/Xft2IESq>

[Follow me on Twitter](#)

[Technorati Profile](#)
[Add to Technorati Favorites](#)

[Sign in](#)