



Together, We are Building Momentum.

REFLECTIONS ON 2020
AND OUR PLANS FOR 2021.



Groundwork Ohio is a committed, nonpartisan public-policy research and advocacy organization that champions high-quality early learning and healthy development strategies from the prenatal period to age five, that lay a strong foundation for Ohio kids, families and communities.





Dear Friends,

At this time last year, I sat down to write a letter like this sharing our bold plans for 2020 with one clear theme: ENGAGE. While the past year unfolded in a way none of us could have predicted, I am humbled and honored to share that the persistence, passion, and flexibility of our team at Groundwork allowed us to deliver on that plan in a way that exceeded even our own expectations.

Over the course of the year, we responded to unprecedented challenges, adapted to new technologies, and expanded our ability to engage with families, early childhood professionals, diverse stakeholders, and local, state, and federal policymakers. We quickly pivoted ensuring families and providers had access to the most up-to-date information as the pandemic quickly unfolded through timely news alerts, resource pages, and webinars. We invited stakeholders to share their stories through surveys, virtual meetings with policymakers, and videos. Through this virtual engagement, we expanded our own network exponentially, more than tripling our reach.

In 2021, we are building on that momentum.

With the state budget right around the corner and our child-serving systems in crisis, the Groundwork team is ready to hit the ground running. We will be increasing our capacity to both expand our reach to new stakeholders and deepen our engagement with current supporters. We'll be working to more authentically and powerfully elevate the voices of those most impacted by our state's policies and investments.

Despite the challenges that lie ahead, we aren't shying away from BIG plans again in 2021. We hope you see your passions and your work reflected in the work outlined in this report and that you will join us in the weeks and months to come as we build on this momentum to create a brighter future for young children and families in Ohio.

Warm personal regards,



Shannon Jones

Executive Director, Groundwork Ohio



By the Numbers:

Engaged with
3 counties
to expand the Safe Babies Court Team™ Approach in Ohio.

Expanded our staff capacity by
20%.

Released
24 reports, fact sheets, & toolkits
AND local data snapshots for all 88 Ohio counties.

Hosted
27 webinars
for stakeholders.

Provided public comment, testimony, and written recommendations on
28 state & federal issues.

Facilitated our first cohort of the Groundwork Ohio Early Childhood Leadership Fellowship with
28 fellows completing the program.



Launched the
Ready, Set, Soar
Ohio campaign
with

97
organizational
coalition
members.

Sent thank you
cards to more than

2,000
pandemic child
care providers

who stepped up
to support families
during the earliest
months of the
pandemic.

Supported over

4,000
stakeholders

in sending more than

19,000
messages to
elected officials.

The Importance of Prenatal to Age 3

READY, SET
SOAR OHIO

Early Investments, A Lifetime of Success.



This year Groundwork established Ready, Set, Soar Ohio, a diverse statewide coalition of early childhood, education, health, advocacy, philanthropy and business organizations, community leaders, policymakers and families. This coalition is committed to ensuring that more pregnant women, infants, toddlers and their families have access to the support they need to be ready, set and soar to their full potential.

»» Building Momentum in 2021

Leaning in on Maternal & Young Child Health

This year, Groundwork will be expanding our capacity to impact health outcomes in Ohio by laying the foundation to transform systems that improve maternal and young child health, promote health equity, and prioritize prevention through policy development, research, and collaboration.

Strengthening Partnerships

As Groundwork continues to elevate the importance of investing in the prenatal-to-three period, we will be deepening relationships with our partner organizations in order to expand our stakeholder network and further amplify our strong PN-3 agenda.

Ohio Early Childhood Race & Rural Equity



Groundwork recognizes that supporting children in our state who have the most barriers to success, especially children of color and those who live in rural regions, is crucial to ensuring that all Ohio children have the opportunity to succeed. After the release of our initial report and two years of conversations with stakeholders to listen and learn, this year Groundwork shared a follow-up report, *Drafting a New Blueprint for Success*, that highlights our learnings and next steps.

»» Building Momentum in 2021

Engaging with Families

One of the key findings from our 2020 report was a need to engage authentically with families in order to inform policy discussions and elevate the voices of those most directly impacted by Ohio's child-serving systems. This year Groundwork will be leaning in to this recommendation by exploring innovative models to center family voice in local and statewide policy conversations.

Continuing Our Commitment to Disaggregated Data

In order to truly advance equitable policies and investments in Ohio, it is crucial to understand the disparate outcomes and impact our systems have on families of color, living in poverty, and residing in Ohio's rural regions. Over the course of the year, Groundwork will continue collecting, analyzing, and sharing disaggregated data to inform our work.

Engaging Ohio's Early Childhood Professionals



Ohio's early childhood professionals—the dedicated individuals who support the health, development, and early learning of Ohio's young children and families—are building our state's future. This year, Groundwork released *The Workforce Behind the Workforce* report highlighting the major challenges facing early childhood educators in child care programs as a starting point for conversations in the state.

»» Building Momentum in 2021

Fostering Strong Advocacy Leaders

Groundwork is excited to launch the second Early Childhood Leadership Fellowship cohort this year. Throughout 2021, these passionate fellows will engage in a unique curriculum consisting of keynote speakers, online learning experiences, discussions with policymakers, networking opportunities, technical assistance, and small group capstone projects.

Learning from Early Childhood Professionals

Over the past year, Groundwork has substantially increased our network of engaged early childhood professionals. In 2021, Groundwork will continue to expand and leverage that network to solicit feedback from professionals in the field, elevate these powerful voices for change, and offer opportunities to engage more deeply in our work.

Advocating for Ohio's Youngest Children



Groundwork educates policymakers on the importance of investing in the prenatal-to-five period, elevates the voices of families and providers who are impacted by our child-serving systems, and seeks to advance system-level changes that improve outcomes for Ohio's youngest children and their families. This year, Groundwork made immense progress engaging new stakeholders in the advocacy process through virtual roundtable discussions, toolkits, and a new platform for contacting policymakers.

»» Building Momentum in 2021

Timely Updates & Opportunities to Engage

As we enter Ohio's FY 22-23 State Budget process, Groundwork remains committed to sharing timely updates on state policy and investment developments and offering easy and accessible ways for stakeholders to engage in the process through social media and direct communication with state policymakers.

Elevating Voices through Powerful Storytelling

In addition to our commitment to expanding the network of early childhood advocates engaged in the state budget process, Groundwork will also be engaging families, early childhood professionals, and other stakeholders more deeply through creative storytelling in videos, meetings with policymakers, public testimony, and opinion pieces.



Thank You!

Groundwork Ohio Advisory Committee:

ROBYN LIGHTCAP
Committee Chair
Learn to Earn Dayton

MELISSA BACON
OCALI

PAT BEBO
Ohio State University Extension

DAWN BLALOCK
Little Miracles EDC

TIFFANY BLUMHORST
OCCRRRA

MARGARET CLARK
Every Child Succeeds

LAURA DICOLA
Summit Education Initiative

REBEKAH DORMAN
Invest in Children

RYAN EDWARDS
United Way of Central Ohio

MARY FIALA
Diocese of Youngstown

CHARA FISHER JACKSON
Cincinnati Preschool Promise

JUSTIN FOGT
*Nationwide Children's Hospital -
Center for Family Safety
and Healing*

**TWINKLE FRENCH
SCHOTTKE**
Moms2B

VANESSA FREYTAG
4C for Children

LISA GAROFALO
*Southwest Ohio Association for
the Education of Young Children*

PATTI GLEASON
Learning Grove

GEORGE GODDARD
*Corporation for Ohio
Appalachian Development*

ROZLYN GRANT
*Centers for Families and
Children*

LISA GRAY
Ohio Excels

CONNIE GRIFFITH
Hartcus Head Start

MICHAEL HARLOW
Council for a Strong America

BARB HAXTON
Ohio Head Start Association, Inc.

CAROL HAYNES
*Kiddie Academy of
Reynoldsburg*

CLAUDIA HERROLD
Philanthropy Ohio

ERIC KAROLAK
Action for Children

KATIE KELLY
PRE4CLE

SARAH KINCAID
*Ohio Children's Hospital
Association*

ERIN LUCAS
Hopewell Health Centers, Inc.

ASHON MCKENZIE
CelebrateOne

ALEX MILLER
Ohio AAP

MIKE MOROSKI
Cradle Cincinnati/CPS

TRACY NAJERA
Children's Defense Fund - Ohio

MISTI NORMAN
*Heavenly Kids Center for
Learning*

EMIA OPPENHEIM
Oppenheim Consulting, LLC

WILBERT OWENS
*Our Kidz Early Childhood
Center*

WILL PETRIK
Policy Matters Ohio

ANGEL RHODES
Future Ready Columbus

MARY ANN RODY
OACCP

SHERRY ROUSH
*Toledo Public Schools Early
Childhood Program*

THOMAS SEDDON
Warren County Foundation

ADAM SHANK
Boys & Girls Clubs Ohio Alliance

PEG TAZEWELL
Knox County Head Start, Inc.

Dr. JONATHAN THACKERAY
Dayton Children's Hospital

KIMBERLY TICE
*Ohio Association for the
Education of Young Children*

MARY WACHTEL
PCSAO

Groundwork Ohio Major Funders:

Alliance for Early Success

Anonymous Funder

The Bruening Foundation

The Cleveland Foundation

The George Gund Foundation

Mt. Sinai Health Care Foundation

Pritzker Children's Initiative

Sisters of Charity Foundation of Canton

Sisters of Charity Foundation of Cleveland

United Way of Greater Cincinnati

W.K. Kellogg Foundation

Women's Fund of Central Ohio



OUR TEAM:

Shannon Jones

Executive Director

Lynanne Gutierrez

Policy Director & Legal Counsel

Julia Hohner

Communications & Development Director

Abby McMahon

Director of Policy & Advocacy

Julia Jackels

Policy Associate

Kelsey Hopkins

Policy Associate



GroundworkOhio.org

4041 N. High Street, Suite 204 • Columbus, Ohio 43214
Groundwork Ohio is a fiscally-sponsored project of Community Initiatives

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@GroundworkOhio