



## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **What is Columbus Kids?**

Columbus Kids is a free, new initiative and the first of its kind in the country to identify strengths and potential learning delays among all preschoolers within the Columbus City Schools district and to help them get the services they need to be ready to learn from the first day of school.

### **Who is running the program?**

Columbus Kids is a collaborative effort led by the United Way of Central Ohio that involves more than 30 community partners. It is funded by the Columbus City Schools, the Columbus City Schools Education Foundation, the Franklin County Board of Commissioners, JP Morgan Chase Foundation, The Limited Foundation and individual donors.

### **When will services begin?**

In January 2010, Columbus Kids will begin to identify preschoolers living within the first two targeted neighborhoods: Weinland Park and the Central City areas. New neighborhoods will be added until the program serves all Columbus City Schools preschoolers from two and one half to four years of age.

### **Why is this service necessary?**

Nearly 40 percent of incoming kindergarteners in the Columbus City Schools require interventions because they lacked foundational skills. Many students never catch up.

### **How does Columbus Kids work?**

Columbus Kids will reach out to parents and families through early learning professionals, health and human services organizations, government, neighborhood

associations, area businesses and faith-based groups to offer Learning Check Ups to children from two and one half to four years of age in the CCS district. Columbus Kids will:

- Locate parents of pre-school aged children
- Provide a fast and easy Learning Checkup consisting of the Ages & Stages Questionnaire (ASQ) for parents to complete
- Help parents find any services their children need to get off to a strong start
- Follow their progress until they reach kindergarten

### **Does Columbus Kids offer an incentive for participating?**

Yes, early learning programs will receive a significant financial incentive for each Learning Check up that they collect, score and enter into the Columbus Kids' database. Parents will receive a \$20 gift card each time they complete and turn in a Learning Checkup and their children will receive a free book.

### **Will Learning Checkups be available for children who are not in a pre-school or child care setting?**

Learning Checkups will be available at a variety of community locations, including early care and education programs and Columbus Metropolitan Library branches. Families will receive information through a variety of sources, including community outreach and mailings directing them to the resources they need.

### **How will the program follow progress?**

GroundWork Group has created a web-based data management system which will maintain a variety of information, including ASQ scores, referral information and demographics.

### **Will the program be evaluated?**

The Voinovich School of Leadership and Public Affairs at Ohio University will evaluate the short and long term goals of the initiative.

### **How will families be reached?**

Columbus Kids will reach out to parents through early learning professionals, health and human services organizations, government, neighborhood associations, area businesses and faith-based groups.

### **Who can I contact for more information?**

Please call Cindy Sturni at 614-227-2700 if you have additional questions about Columbus Kids or want to get involved.