

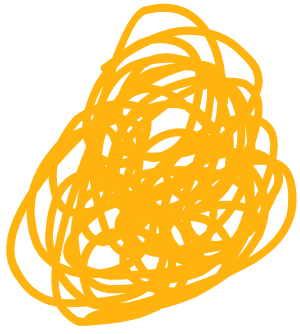
Young Children Priority One (YCPO) Guide

Florida Kiwanis Foundation



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What is Young Children Priority One (YCPO)?

Young Children Priority One (YCPO) is an ongoing community service program of Kiwanis International that addresses the needs of early childhood (pregnancy to age five). All clubs are encouraged to carry out at least two YCPO projects per calendar year, though many clubs are able to do more—serving children, families, and communities. Young Children Priority One focuses on four key areas:

- maternal and child health
- childcare and development
- parent education and support
- safety and pediatric trauma



*More information found on [Kiwanis International's website](#)

HOW DID IT BEGIN?

From 1990-1991, Dr. Wil Blechman served as the President of Kiwanis International. Dr. Wil spent his life dedicated to medicine, but Rachel Blechman, his amazing wife, influenced and fueled Dr. Wil's passion for early childhood. Rachel's college background and ongoing interest in early child development inspired Dr. Wil to craft and ignite a new worldwide program focusing on these critical years. This initiative is called Young Children Priority One!



WHY DOES EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT MATTER?

The early emotional, physical, and social development of young children directly affects their overall growth and will ultimately become an influential factor in the adult they become. This alone makes it extremely critical to invest time, energy, and resources in order to encourage young children and develop successful future leaders.



WHY IS EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION IMPORTANT?

Early childhood education is the key to successful human development. This cannot be emphasized enough!

Today there is an overwhelming amount of research supporting early childhood education and emphasizing its importance to overall development and success. The earliest years of childhood create the foundation for his or her future development. Social, emotional, cognitive, and physical skills develop during these essential years. This is why it is so important that we support early childhood education and make an impact when it may matter the most.

IS YOUR CLUB INTERESTED BY NOT SURE WHERE TO START?

Today Kiwanis Clubs and Divisions internationally create and implement projects to fill identified early childhood needs. Below are examples of projects:

- Weekly in-person or zoom reading for young children
- Book drive for a class or school
- Diaper party for families in need
- Car seat education workshops
- Santa Claus programs providing a live Santa and presents for communities
- Hosting in-person and virtual education seminars for Kiwanians and/or the general public about the crucial importance of early development and its influence on the future success of children
- Supporting a mobile dental clinic for children in low-income areas
- Providing support to families of young children with information and resources for parenting, health maintenance, and/or nutrition
- Developing and/or maintaining playgrounds

Your club may have a great project to begin or expand. As you plan and fundraise, make sure to research funding opportunities available to your Florida District of Kiwanis Clubs and Divisions.

IS THERE FUNDING FOR YOUNG CHILDREN PRIORITY ONE PROJECTS?

Yes! The Florida Kiwanis Foundation proudly offers Wil and Rachel Blechman Grants for Florida Kiwanis Clubs and Divisions. Grants from this fund support Kiwanis projects that will have a significant impact on children in the 0-5 age group based upon identified needs.

While programs will vary widely from community to community, these programs may include:

- Scholarships to fund education for administrators and teachers in early learning centers about effective methods to enhance the development of young children.
- Hosting in-person and virtual education seminars for Kiwanians and/or the general public about the crucial importance of the early years in children's development and their future success and participation in society.
- Creating and implementing reading programs for children in early care, education facilities, and non-traditional sites.
- Providing books to families in low-income areas and educating parents about the importance of reading to children.
- Supporting a mobile dental clinic for children in low-income areas.
- Providing support to families of young children with information and resources for parenting, health maintenance, and/or nutrition.
- Developing and/or maintaining playgrounds.

IS THERE FUNDING FOR YOUNG CHILDREN PRIORITY ONE PROJECTS? (CONT.)

Grant applications are approved in two separate cycles. Cycle I cutoff is December 15 so that the Grant Committee has time to review the applications in time for the mid-winter board meeting (usually held in February). Cycle II cutoff date is June 15 so that the Grant Committee has time to review the applications in time for the District Convention Board Meeting (usually in August). Download our Wil and Rachel Blechman Fund Grant guidelines and application today, www.floridakiwanisfoundation.org/grants.

In addition, find below the first three grants awarded by the Wil and Rachel Blechman Fund.



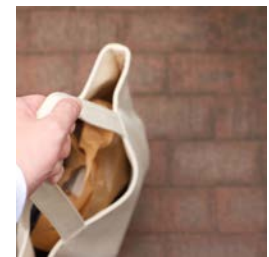
Play with Purpose Zoom Hands-On Workshop

The Florida Kiwanis Foundation proudly presented the first Wil & Rachel Blechman Grant to the Kiwanis Club of Melbourne for their Play with Purpose Zoom Hands-On Workshop!



Community Library Project

In August, the Florida Kiwanis Foundation proudly awarded the second Wil & Rachel Blechman Grant to the Kiwanis Club of Lakeland for their Community Library Project.



Young Children: Priority One Care Kits

August was a busy month! FKF also awarded the Kiwanis Club of Big Lagoon Pensacola a Wil & Rachel Blechman grant for their Young Children Priority One Care Kits!

GRANT AVAILABLE FOR KIWANIS INTERNATIONAL

Since 1940, the Kiwanis Children's Fund has helped Kiwanians extend their impact – in their own hometowns and around the world. They do this by developing resources that transform the goodwill and vision of Kiwanians into programs that serve the children of the world. One of the ways we make it happen is the Club Grant program.

For the Children's Fund, a grant does more than fill a funding gap. It's a collaboration. Grant funding helps address an unmet need of children through a project that provides long-term benefits sustained by a club.

Clubs interested in applying for a grant should review the program material carefully to learn about the Kiwanis Children's Fund as a potential funding partner.

Learn more today, kiwanis.org/childrens-fund/grants/club-grant-program

*Kiwanis International information directly from Kiwanis International website noted above

PARTNERS

The Florida Kiwanis Foundation believes partnerships are a critical element in our mission to enable caring individuals, clubs, and divisions to combine their resources of time, talent, and funds to create a greater impact on the needs of children and families in Florida. Only together can we create a legacy for our future leaders.

Below are organizations excited and willing to collaborate with Kiwanis Clubs and Divisions, especially on early childhood development (or Young Children Priority One) based projects and programs.

Also we welcome partnerships that align with our mission. If you are interested in partnering or being listed below, please contact our office at info@FloridaKiwanisFoundation.org.

LEARNING OPPORUNITIES

We believe that our future is tied directly to the children of today. Equipped with the knowledge to create solutions, we strive to make tomorrow brighter and better than today. Together we are stronger and only when working together can we learn how to best offer opportunities for success to the children of Florida.

The Jubilee Webinar Series: Young Children Priority One was launched in 2021 to discuss topics essential to early childhood development and to educate about programs and possibilities that will positively impact the youth. The series was offered in four parts with esteemed guest speakers, educators, and presenters. Watch them today!

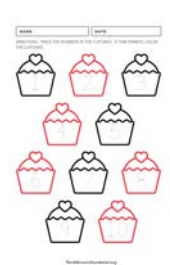
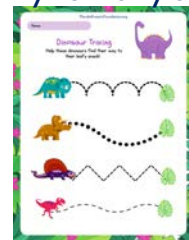
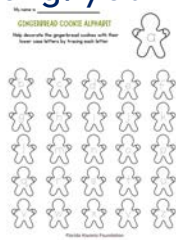
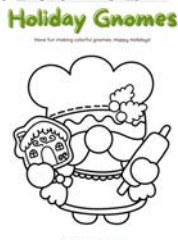
In honor of the Wil & Rachel Blechman Fund, we host a monthly Zoom Meet + Greet focused on Young Children Priority One (YCPO). The Florida Kiwanis Foundation's Meet + Greet is a thirty-minute meeting held monthly via Zoom at 7 p.m. Don't miss out as we delve into important topics concerning early childhood development. Email today for the upcoming dates, info@floridakiwanisfoundation.org.

FREE RESOURCE- ACTIVITY SHEETS

There is no doubt COVID has changed our world. With the constant changes, Florida Kiwanis Clubs and Divisions are quickly adapting. An easy and affordable way to stay connected and support local early childhood programs is to provide schools near you with activities sheets.

Florida Kiwanis Foundation has a wide variety of FREE early childhood worksheets! These are designed to encourage and enhance essential skills. Explore these worksheets to help learn important skills such as: alphabets, phonics, numbers, colors, shapes, matching, symmetry, coloring, and more! You can download any or all sheets on our website today.

floridakiwanisfoundation.org/young-children-priority-one-ycpo



GIVE BACK

What is a community without common unity? We hope to build a community of servants, educators, donors, and parents who can work together to further these profoundly important programs and educational strategies targeting children five and under. This progress is not possible without donors like yourself. Individuals who believe in changing the world today can create a better tomorrow, ensuring that our children will be our most important legacy. Will you help us build this community and leave an enduring impact? Give today and help us shape our future together.

Ways to Give



MAIL

Donate by mailing a gift to
Florida Kiwanis Foundation
1001 Mayport Road, #331433
Atlantic Beach, FL 32233



ONLINE

Donate now at
<https://secure.qgiv.com/for/wrbf/>



PHONE

Donate by calling
904-242-6776

Note for all Young Children Priority One designated gifts, please note YCPO or the Wil and Rachel Blechman Fund on your gift. Please make all donations out to Florida Kiwanis Foundation. Thank you for making a difference in the lives of Florida children.

HOW TO REACH US

Florida Kiwanis Foundation Office
1001 Mayport Road
PO #331433
Atlantic Beach, FL 32233

Phone: 904-242-6776

info@floridakiwanisfoundation.org