



First 8 Memphis 3-Year Progress Report: First 8 Years Early Care and Education Plan for Memphis and Shelby County

The Need

In 2018, as the Preschool Development Grant (PDG) ended, Memphis and Shelby County were at risk of losing over 1,000 Pre-K seats.

The Solution

In 2019, First 8 Memphis became the fiscal agent providing oversight for former PDG and former County Commission classrooms.

About First 8 Memphis

First 8 Memphis (F8M) works to ensure every child in Memphis and Shelby County can reach their full potential by building a strong start during the first 8 years of life. We are leaders, conveners, and advocates working to implement, scale, and improve the early care and education system for young children during their most critical developmental ages. This includes support for nurturing early learning and care environments, high-quality Pre-K programs that prepare children for Kindergarten and beyond, and two-generation services, such as home visitation, early childhood mental health, and more.

F8M's early care and education systems building work is conducted in collaboration with the F8M Leadership Council and other stakeholders. Success in the first eight years leads to success for a lifetime. Learn more at first8memphis.org.

Mission

First 8 Memphis leads and convenes our community in advocating for investments that nurture and educate our youngest learners.

Vision

First 8 Memphis envisions a community where every child has the resources to thrive.

Values

- Integrity
- Service
- Authenticity
- Courage
- Equity

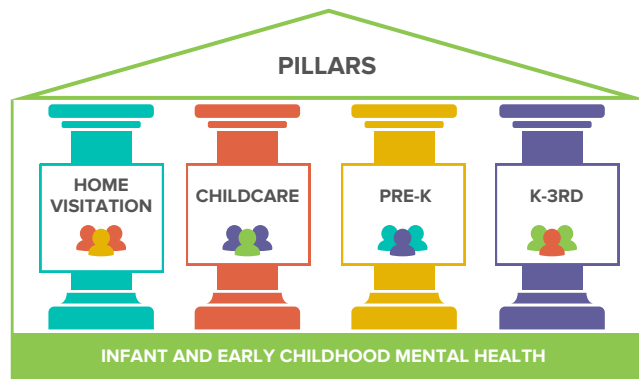
Importance of ECE

A child's foundations in life and learning are essential to lifelong success.

Before age five, 90 percent of a child's brain development occurs. Children in nurturing educational environments with wraparound supports during these critical years gain the foundational skills to learn in a classroom and the confidence to navigate life and solve problems.

System Pillars

These five pillar constitute the main elements of the system and are where First 8 Memphis supports practitioners in the direct service of the care and education of young children.



Strategic Plan

Strategic Plan | 2022-2025



GOAL: Support and Continue to Build the Early Care and Education System

KEY LEVERS:



Quality



Access



Alignment



Advocacy & Awareness



GOAL: Build Internal Systems and Capacity

KEY LEVERS:



Organizational Purpose



Infrastructure



Training & Capacity



Accomplishments Over the First 3 Years

PRE-F8M

- 2015: Preschool Development Grant* (PDG) began
- 2018: PDG ended — Memphis and Shelby County were at risk of losing over 1,000 Pre-K seats

2019-20

- Shelby County Early Childhood Education Plan developed and the creation of First 8 Memphis
- Public private partnership formed (Maycomb, Seeding Success, Urban Child Institute, City and County Government)
- **Pre-K initial expansion - 1,340 seats**
- Hired a full-time Executive Director
- Received Ballmer grant to expand organizational capacity

2020-21

COVID-19 Pandemic

- Received CARES Act to fund devices for Pre-K students
- Issued COVID relief fund to Pre-K operators
- Expanded First 8 Memphis team
- **Additional Pre-K expansion - 1,480 seats**

2021-22

- **Invested \$1 million in NEXT Memphis to improve the quality of childcare seats**
- Developed new organizational mission, vision, and values
- **Joined the new [TQEE Bright Start Partnership](#)**
- Adopted a new [Leadership Council Charter](#) and established robust working groups with specific focuses: Prenatal-3 age group, Pre-K age group, K-3 age group, and Policy and Advocacy
- Identified data measures to monitor, collect, and report outcomes for a Community Report Card on Early Childhood
- Joined Memphis-Shelby County Schools Strategic Partners for Literacy collaborative
- **Completed organization's first [Strategic Plan](#)**
- Hosted first, First 8 Years Speaker Series event
- Led the RFP process for the South City Early Childhood Education Center
- **REACHED Universal Needs based Pre-K seats: 8,500 county-wide (1,600 F8M seats)**



"We've been trained to think education starts at kindergarten, but research shows, and many families know, that children begin learning much earlier, in fact prenatally."

— Kandace Thomas, F8M Executive Director



The Impact: Home Visitation, Childcare, K-3rd

Home Visitation

Impact: Plan created to increase home visitation programs

Lead: Early Success Coalition Network



190

prenatal mothers served



252

live births in 2021



680

postpartum mothers served



870

total families served

What is Home Visitation?

Home visitors help families in their homes. Through screenings, counseling and training to support optimal birth, health and growth for children.

Childcare

Impact: Invested \$1 million in NEXT Memphis

Lead: NEXT Memphis, Porter-Leath

Through center development, NEXT Memphis impacted:



1,592

children



1,392

families



82.4%

center that saved money as a NEXT Memphis Partner



605

facilities projects completed during 2021-2022



\$45,000-\$108,000

range of dollar amounts saved by Partners

See [NEXT Memphis' full 2021-22 report](#) for more details.

Kindergarten-3rd Grade

Impact: Aligning Early Literacy efforts across Memphis and Shelby County

Lead: Literacy Mid-South, Stand for Children, First 8 Memphis - Early Literacy Consortium

Memphis Early Literacy Community Partnership Plan

- Developed in partnership with the Early Literacy Consortium (ELC) and Memphis Shelby County Schools (MSCS)

Kindergarten Readiness is a marker of elementary school success. It is defined at the 50th percentile of a normed national sample.

2020-2021
School Year

45%

of students assessed were deemed ready for Kindergarten

2021-2022
School Year

54%

▲ 9% increase from 2020-21 year



The Impact: Pre-Kindergarten

Operating Partners

2019-2020 (Year 1)

2020-2021 (Year 2)

2021-2022 (Year 3)

10 Pre-K partners across Shelby County

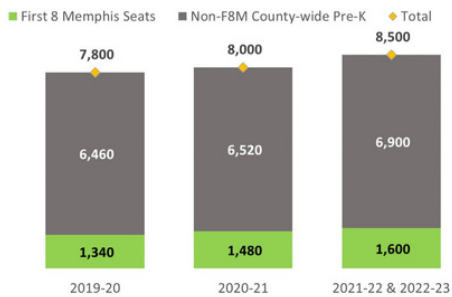
12 Pre-K partners across Shelby County

15 Pre-K partners across Shelby County

Pre-K Seats

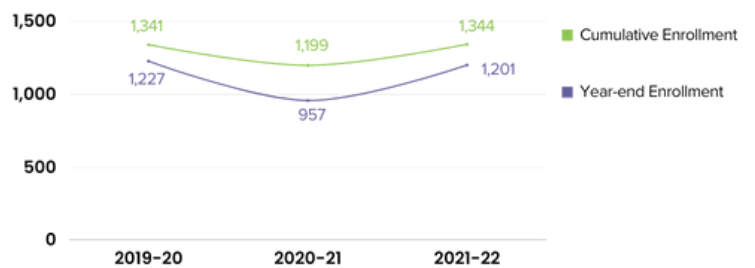
Achieved county-wide needs-based Pre-K capacity in 2021-22.

- **School Year 2019-2020:** 7,800 Pre-K seats
- **School Year 2020-2021:** 8,000 Pre-K seats
- **School Year 2021-2022:** 8,500 Pre-K seats
- **School Year 2022-2023:** 8,500 Pre-K seats

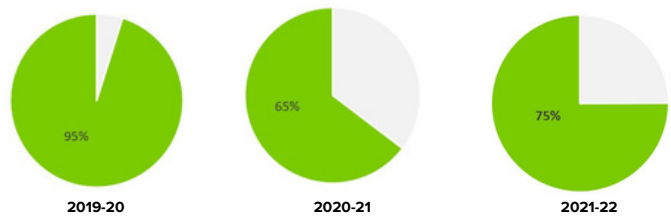


Enrollment

2019-20 Through 2021-22 F8M Pre-K Enrollment



Capacity (percentage of available seats filled by students)



Attendance

Percentage of F8M Pre-K students met satisfactory at attendance goal

2019-2020 **84%**

2020-2021 **68%**

2021-2022 **84%**

Investment

\$9.87M Total 2019-20 F8M Pre-K Budget	\$7,500 Investment Per Child
\$11M Total 2020-21 F8M Pre-K Budget	\$7,500 Investment Per Child
\$14M Total 2021-22 F8M Pre-K Budget	\$7,550 Investment Per Child

100% City of Memphis and Shelby County Government



Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health (IECMH)

Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health (IECMH) is officially defined as the capacity of a young child to experience, express, and regulate emotions, to form close relationships with peers and adults, and to explore and learn in the context of family, community, and cultural expectations. Over the past 20 years, there has been a national and international effort to infuse the science of child development and IECMH in the Early Childhood Education (ECE) system. Systems building efforts require comprehensive assessments and data to understand the current landscape and past, present, and future efforts and needs.

Realizing this importance as an organization working to align the care, education, development, and overall well being of our youngest citizens, we knew that gathering information about our community's resources, access, and needs in this area was important. First 8 Memphis was awarded a \$100,000 grant in 2022 to begin this work. The Memphis and Shelby County IECMH Landscape analysis project will begin the summer of 2023.



90% of brain development occurs before age 5.

Children in **nurturing** educational environments with **wraparound supports** during these critical years gain the **foundational skills** to learn in a classroom and the **confidence** to navigate life and solve problems.

Acknowledgements

First 8 Memphis would like to express gratitude to the [Leadership Council](#) partners, [Pre-K operators](#), City and County Government, [Seeding Success](#), [Maycomb Capital](#), [Urban Child Institute](#), and a host of many other individuals and organizations.

We would also like to thank the First 8 Memphis Board of Directors who have been instrumental in the formation and growth of First 8 Memphis. Lastly, we would like to thank the First 8 Memphis staff for working relentlessly toward the progress of achieving our mission and vision for Memphis and Shelby County's youngest learners.

First 8 Memphis Staff

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First 8 Memphis Board of Directors

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