

Miami County Community Foundation Preschool Scholarships

The NICF is in the third year of a partnership with local preschools, schools and other organizations, to offer preschool scholarships for the children of Fulton, Miami and Starke Counties.

The goal of the program is to make one year of preschool education affordable to every child in our counties. Need-based scholarships are available to families of four-year-old children.

Many people underestimate the importance of preschool education. The expectations of what a child entering kindergarten should know have risen dramatically in recent years and local children who arrive for kindergarten unprepared often have difficulty catching up to their peers.

Eighty-five percent of a child's brain growth happens by the age of five, and children who attend preschool are more likely to read at grade level, graduate from high school, and continue on to secondary education.

Rigorous studies have shown that for every dollar invested in early childhood education programs for low-income children, between \$4 and \$9 is returned to the community.

These financial returns come in the form of reduced special education costs, less grade repetition in schools, better job preparedness and a greater ability to meet future labor force demands, higher incomes due to higher educational attainment, fewer welfare payments, and lower criminal casualties and prison costs.

"It's clear that investing in early childhood education leads to long-term community benefits that would be unwise to ignore," says NICF Executive Director Jay Albright.

For more information about the scholarship program, contact corinne@nicf.org. To contribute, visit the Giving Connection to invest in the Preschool Scholarship Program for Miami County children.

