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CAPITOL VISIBILITY EFFORT TO HIGHLIGHT EXISTING NEED FOR HIGH-QUALITY PRE-K EDUCATION IN PENNSYLVANIA

HARRISBURG, Pennsylvania - Trying Together staff and advocates will travel to the Pennsylvania State Capitol in Harrisburg this April to bring attention to the unmet needs of young children statewide for *Month of The Young Child*.

Currently, 106,000 income-eligible 3 and 4-year-olds lack access to publicly funded pre-k programs throughout the Commonwealth.

On Wednesday, April 18, 2018 constituents will visit with State Legislators and ask visitors to decorate paper stacking blocks in the East Wing Rotunda.

“Everyone has an early care or education story to tell,” said Trying Together Executive Director Cara Ciminillo. “[As principal members of the Pre-K for PA Campaign](#), we are committed to bringing those stories to policymakers’ attention to ensure every child attends a high-quality pre-k program and enters kindergarten ready to succeed.”

Participants will be able to add Polaroids, draw pictures, write their stories, and decorate with stickers on the blocks. The blocks will then be stacked to visually represent the expansive impact early childhood programs have on constituents. To learn more about *Month of The Young Child* events hosted by Trying Together (formerly The Pittsburgh Association for The Education of Young Children, a.k.a. PAEYC) visit tryingtogether.org.

[Those interested in joining other legislative visits should submit a form at tryingtogether.org.](http://tryingtogether.org)

ABOUT TRYING TOGETHER

Vision

Trying Together envisions a future in which all caregivers feel valued.

Mission

Trying Together supports high-quality care and education for young children. Trying Together provides advocacy, community resources, and professional growth opportunities for the needs and rights of children, their families, and the individuals who interact with them. Trying Together works regionally (in Southwestern Pennsylvania) and takes its expertise and models to statewide and national audiences.

Strategic Plan

In pursuit of its vision and consistent with its mission, by 2022, Trying Together will be:

- A national leader offering its expertise in coordinating and connecting systems at the neighborhood, local, and regional levels to support early childhood development and early learning.
- The premier provider of in-person and online professional growth opportunities for home, center, and school-based professionals to ensure that every child has access to high-quality early childhood and early learning experiences.
- A 'go to source' for families to aid them in making well-informed decisions regarding their child's early experiences.
- An expert policy resource in western Pennsylvania and a leading advocate for high-quality early care and education in the state, mobilizing its network to take action on issues important to young children and their families.

Timeline

- 1963 - Early care and education professionals volunteer to create the Pittsburgh Area Preschool Association (P.A.P.A.).
- 1983 - P.A.P.A. affiliates with the National Association for The Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and becomes The Pittsburgh Association for The Education of Young Children (PAEYC).
- 2003 - PAEYC moves from a volunteer-based model to a full-time staff.
- 2017 - Five-year strategic plan and rebrand approved by PAEYC Board of Directors.
- 2018 - PAEYC rebrands as Trying Together.

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