

# Governor's Early Childhood Initiative

## A Message From The Governor And First Lady

*The first years of a child's life are a time of incredible growth and development. There may not be another issue in which a modest investment can have such a tremendous and lasting effect as the early care and education of our youngest children.*

*Path breaking research demonstrates that early learning experiences can last a lifetime. A better start for our children not only increases the likelihood they will attend and graduate college, it also improves their prospects for enjoying a wide range of positive outcomes as adults including home ownership and good health.*

*Unfortunately, too many children in Ohio face a poverty of resources and a poverty of experiences in their first years that do not fully prepare them to succeed when they enroll in kindergarten. With a commitment to providing more children access to high quality early care and early learning, we can make sure our youngest Ohioans get a fair start in life.*

*We have about 1,800 days to nurture, educate and prepare Ohio's children for their first day of kindergarten. We must use that time wisely.*

**Ted and Frances Strickland**

## Initiative Vision

- Every child is socially, emotionally, physically and intellectually ready for school and is prepared to use his or her capabilities to succeed as a learner.
- All families recognize that they are their children's primary teachers. They ensure that their nutritional needs are met and give guidance on activities needed for healthy social and emotional development.
- All early learning settings and schools are prepared to support the learning, development and school readiness of young children.

All communities work toward meeting the needs of young children and their families. Community and business leaders recognize their obligation to promote family-friendly work places and to publicly advocate for effective and affordable family services related to physical health, mental health and early learning.