



Four Actions New Hampshire Leaders Can Take

- ✓ Spread the Word
- ✓ Connect to Spark NH
www.sparknh.org
- ✓ Take a Stand
- ✓ Support
and Spur
Innovation



Vision All New Hampshire children and their families are healthy, learning, and thriving now and in the future

Mission To provide leadership that promotes a comprehensive, coordinated, sustainable early childhood system that achieves positive outcomes for young children and families, investing in a solid future for the Granite State

Focus Expectant parents as well as children from birth through grade 3 and their families

Spark NH

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Children:

The Bedrock of the
Granite State



These banners tell the story of every child's development and will be on display in venues across our state to explain why children's development matters to all of us and how children can best be supported to achieve positive outcomes. The banners were created by Spark NH, the state's governor-appointed Early Childhood Advisory Council, as part of its work to improve public understanding of the importance of supporting the healthy development of New Hampshire children.

Spark NH is a public-private partnership that provides the leadership to promote a comprehensive, coordinated system of programs and services for young children and families. To be successful, we'll need the support of families, community and business leaders and policy makers.

To find out more about our work, about programs in your community, or to become a champion for children in New Hampshire, contact us or visit our website at

www.sparknh.org



Why do we care?

The Bedrock of the Granite State

The future prosperity of New Hampshire depends on our ability to steward the next generation who will live, work, and lead in our state. We now know that is directly related to positive early childhood experiences. Capable children are the bedrock of a strong and prosperous Granite State. Our future depends on their healthy development.





What develops?

The Brain's Architecture

Like a house, the brain is built from the bottom up. Early experiences set the foundation for the architecture of the maturing brain, establishing a sturdy or fragile base for all the learning, health, and behavior that follows.



How?

Serve and Return Relationships

The key to forming strong brain architecture is the “serve and return” relationships young children have with supportive adults in their lives. When children reach out for connections and communications with adults, and adults reciprocate, this back-and-forth process continues, literally wiring the brain with the connections needed for healthy development.



What derails development?

Toxic Stress

Unlike mild, short-lived stress that can be good for growth, certain types of stress can weaken the brain's architecture. Experiences such as abuse, neglect or exposure to violence can cause toxic stress responses in the brain, with lifelong consequences in health, learning and behavior.



What's the solution?

Innovation in the Early Years

When we create strong foundations for the brain's future growth, invest in early experiences that maximize serve and return interactions, and reduce toxic stress, we are building the kind of system that makes sure all of New Hampshire's children and their families are healthy, learning and thriving now and in the future.

