

LEARNING FOR ACTION

The LA Partnership sparks connections among public and private funders to catalyze investments in Los Angeles County's youngest children

LOS ANGELES COUNTY'S EARLY CHILDHOOD CONVENING LANDSCAPE

With more than 10 million residents and a budget greater than \$35 billion, Los Angeles County is one of America's most complex counties. It includes 88 cities and over 400 neighborhoods. Add the enormous web of public, private and community sectors addressing social justice issues, particularly early childhood, and the county can be challenging for funders both inside and outside the county who want to invest there.

For those who work on other social issues like workforce development, homelessness, crime and education, understanding the significant role early childhood development plays is critical to reducing the injustices they aim to solve. Having a place to learn about early childhood development, make connections across sectors and have a guide for high-impact investments is essential for elevating early childhood issues and identifying solutions in Los Angeles County.

THE NEED TO MEET

Until a few years ago there were few if any places for funders to learn about early childhood development; the importance of investing in children's youngest years; connecting with the public, private and community sectors; and where to invest for the greatest impact. In essence, there was a vacuum for early childhood investments and little cross-sector alignment and collaboration to create an environment for children from low-income communities that best serves them and their families. Early childhood was often an afterthought or took a backseat to other problems.

Funders wanted and needed a place to learn about early childhood development, connect with and learn from each other, and hear from foremost experts on the topic. Most of all, they needed clear action steps for investing in early childhood in LA County.



"The LA Partnership's meetings are an opportunity to collaborate with funders, to build relationships and engage with the public and private sector while learning about critical emerging issues in early childhood."

- MICHELE SARTELL, LOS ANGELES COUNTY OFFICE FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION

WHERE THE RUBBER HITS THE ROAD: LEARNING FOR ACTION

From its earliest days, the LA Partnership saw a need in the early childhood community to connect funders to the issue, to each other, and to the public and community sectors - and to do so around solutions and actions.

From its beginning, the LA Partnership – the only public-private organization focused on children 0-5 years in Los Angeles County – was a convening organization meant to spark investment in early childhood. Rich Atlas, founder of the LA Partnership, brought people together to learn about early childhood and how the early years influence a child's life and society writ large. Rich understood firsthand the irreplaceable value of loving and supportive early childhood experiences. As a philanthropist and former Goldman Sachs partner, and through his network, he also knew that funders wanted to connect to the early childhood world in Los Angeles County and with others to learn, share ideas and have an impact. In response, he created an inclusive forum to meet those needs, which the LA Partnership calls Learning for Action.



“The LA Partnership brings speakers who are leading the charge on early childhood issues – who are inspiring and accessible – and fosters intimate discussions with them.”

- PIPER KAMINS, THE RALPH M. PARSONS FOUNDATION

The LA Partnership meetings create an opportunity to cultivate relationships and engage with the public, private and community sectors via dialogue around critical emerging issues to build knowledge and catalyze investments. The LA Partnership is deliberate and strategic about the speakers it invites so attendees get a deep dive into early childhood and related topics and access to experts they might not have otherwise. Speakers share their insights and introduce funders to the importance of early childhood development and prospects in LA County. Featured speakers have included Dr. Nadine Burke Harris, California's inaugural Surgeon General; Eric Garcetti, Mayor of Los Angeles; Ann O'Leary, former Chief of Staff of Governor Gavin Newsom; Holly Mitchell, Los Angeles County Supervisor; and Dr. Jack Shonkoff, Director of the Center on the Developing Child, Harvard University. Beyond connection and education, meetings give funders ideas and strategic, tangible ways to take immediate action with their investments. The meetings show funders where to invest for the greatest impact.

LEARNING FOR ACTION CHANGES LIVES

Attendees leave the LA Partnership's meetings inspired that they have the ability to remediate many of LA County's issues by helping children at the earliest stages of life. The LA Partnership will often have smaller follow-up meetings to dive deeper into issues and funding possibilities. It is through these continued conversations that the LA Partnership's Early Childhood Census 2020, Village Fund and investments in Family Engagement and KPCC were conceived and launched.

Over the years, the LA Partnership has continued to address funders' needs by keeping a finger on the pulse of the early childhood community and connecting them to the latest research and information, experts, each other and opportunities for investing in a child's earliest years. As the early childhood landscape of LA County continuously and rapidly evolves, so do the convenings - delivering expert insights, connections and investment recommendations to the private, public and community sectors where LA County's youngest children need it most.



If you would like to learn more about the LA Partnership and investing in children 0-5 in LA County, visit www.investinkidsla.org or contact us at Partnership@investinkidsla.org.