



nextdoor

Educational Programs

Next Door's birth to five school offers both center based program options and home based program options for children ages 0-5. Our goal is to work with students in a birth to five model so they receive consistent, high-quality services during these key developmental years. All of our programs provide access to health and dental care, as well as special education and mental health services. We know that healthy students are more likely to be successful in school.

Center Based Program

We provide early education services to children from six weeks to five years at sites throughout the city. Our classroom programs feature highly-qualified staff, who work hard to ensure our excellent outcomes. We emphasize a comprehensive focus on each child's healthy growth and development, including their social emotional development, their language development and their physical development. This kind of individualized attention ensures each child gets what they need to be ready for school - and for life!



Educare

This year-round program is part of a national early learning network of 21 schools. Milwaukee was the third city in the country to open an Educare school. A 2017 study out of the Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute - a leading early childhood research center - found that children attending Educare have stronger language skills, more positive parent-child interactions and less challenging behavior. Next Door is proud to be part of this network, offering best practices in early childhood education.

Home Visiting Program

Our program starts with expectant moms and can continue until the child is five years old. Home visitors make sure that parents understand their child's development process, help foster a safe and healthy living environment and ensure that children are up-to-date with medical and dental check-ups.

We encourage our home-based families to meet each other and provide opportunities for their children to interact with their peers in play groups twice a month and at other family events during the year. We also offer family field trips to support positive parent-child interaction and help build children's vocabularies as they learn about the big world that surrounds them!

Family Resources

At Next Door, we understand a family's path to success goes beyond the child's classroom. We offer a variety of programs and resources to help our families thrive.

Health & Wellness

Next Door is not only an educational home for children but a healthcare home, too. On-site nurses from Children's Hospital of Wisconsin attend to the needs of our students while they are with us. Our family advocates work closely with parents to ensure they have resources for doctors, dentists and immunizations. Mental health and special needs services are available as well.

Books for Kids

One of Next Door's most popular programs is Books for Kids. Through community donations, we collect and distribute new or "gently-used" books to our students and to children living in the central city. Since the program started in 1990, we have distributed close to 2 million books.

Twice a month, Next Door students visit our libraries for story time sessions with volunteers and receive a free book to take home to grow their home library and enjoy reading with their families. In addition, teachers and community members can visit our community library weekly and select books for their classrooms and home libraries.

Adult Education

Next Door's Adult Basic Education Program welcomes parents and other adult learners from the community. Certified instructors and volunteer tutors engage our adult students in activities that improve their basic skills and job readiness, prepare them for GED or HSED 5.09 and help them transition to a job or higher education. Our team supports these students on their paths to success.

Fatherhood

Knowing fathers are important role models for their children, Next Door offers a nationally recognized Fatherhood program. Our Fatherhood Specialists lead innovative and interactive programs to help dads become engaged in their children's lives. They also connect fathers to the resources they need to support their families and become productive citizens.

How to Get Involved

Help us give Milwaukee's children a bright future!

Come make your mark at Next Door as we work to position central city families on a path to success. We can't do it without the continued support of businesses, community leaders, foundations and volunteers. Whether it's in time, dollars or skills, we would welcome your contribution so we can bring together the educational and supportive services that our students and families need.

Become a Volunteer

Next Door volunteers are some of our greatest resources! Every year, they contribute more than 8,000 hours of service. Opportunities include reading with our children, helping teachers in the classroom, volunteering for our annual Walk for Children and tutoring our adult learners. For more information, check out the "Get Involved" tab at www.NextDoorMKE.org, or call (414) 999-2529.

Book Drives

Help bring the love of reading into a child's home! We welcome individual and community book drives to help us collect new and "gently-used" books for central city children. These drives are part of the Books for Kids program at Next Door, and are perfect opportunities for schools, congregations, youth groups or companies who want to make a difference in a child's life. For more information, check out the "Get Involved" tab at www.NextDoorMKE.org, or call (414) 999-2543.

Make a Gift

Many children in Milwaukee's central city are at risk of falling behind in their education before they've even started. Many don't have access to books, and many face additional health and emotional challenges and a general lack of resources. Your generosity helps ensure that Milwaukee's children and families have the tools they need for bright futures ahead!

Our Development team can work closely with you to select a giving option that best suits your interests. For more information, check out the "Donate Now" tab at www.NextDoorMKE.org, or call (414) 999-2574.





Welcome from our President

We are doing the most important work in Milwaukee at Next Door - making sure that our youngest learners are prepared for success in school - and in life! We know that most of a child's brain growth occurs before the age of three, so it is critical that they have the support they need in their early years. Research shows that babies' brains are making connections at an incredible rate - up to 700 per second! These connections are essential for developing the pathways that will help children succeed in the future. The research also shows a promising 13% return on investment in high-quality, birth-to-five early education.

Our children thrive in Next Door's language-rich environment and through the daily interactions with highly-qualified, nurturing professionals. We know, however, that parents are a child's first teacher, so we make sure to partner with them closely. We offer parents resources to strengthen their skills, like adult education and fatherhood programming. We believe, through this holistic approach, the entire family will enjoy a bright future!

I hope that you will consider supporting the work of Next Door - whether it's volunteering to read with our students, sponsoring a book drive or making a financial contribution. It's crucial to the future of our children and our city.

Tracey Sparrow, Ed.D.
Next Door President

Our Vision:
Next Door's vision is to position neighborhood children and families for long-term success.



Our history and who we are today

Our story began in 1969, on Milwaukee's near west side. Next Door opened as an outreach ministry of Our Savior's Lutheran Church at 30th Street and Wisconsin Avenue. Our name comes from being in the house right "next door" to the church. Initially, Next Door served youth and young adults, offering everything from after school homework assistance to outpatient alcohol and drug treatment services.

In the 1990's, the agency transitioned to a more child-focused mission and moved its headquarters to the Metcalfe Park neighborhood. Next Door continues to serve children and families there today, along with two additional central city locations. We are a birth to five school with a center based program option and a home based program option. Plus, our staff provides community resources to support the family.

Our reach goes even further into the community by leading a partnership program with ten early childhood organizations in Milwaukee and Ozaukee counties. Next Door staff offer teacher coaching and curriculum training at each of the partner locations. We believe, by working together, that we can increase access to safe, high-quality infant and toddler care. Between our own sites and the partner agencies, we currently serve close to 2,000 children and their families.



Our mission is to support the intellectual, physical, spiritual and emotional development of children so they become self-sufficient, contributing members of the community.



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2545 N. 29th St.
Milwaukee, WI 53210
414.562.2929
www.NextDoorMKE.org



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— Stronger Families Through Education —