

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FROM: Jennifer Odenweller, executive director, United Way, 397-5721

RE: Let's Get Ready to Learn

DATE: February 8, 2010

Calling All Parents of Children Ages Birth to Five!

Every parent wants to ensure that their child gets a good start in life, and is learning, growing and on the right track. Children, however, do not come with instruction booklets, and the youngest children don't have the words to tell us what they need. Let's Get Ready to Learn offers parents a chance to have fun with their child by learning new games, songs and activities to engage their child and to support healthy development of infants, toddlers and preschoolers; to meet local early care and education professionals and to learn where to get answers for questions or help when needed. Expectant parents can get a head start on learning what their babies need and also becoming familiar with community resources for families.

Please join us at the Let's Get Ready to Learn event on Saturday, February 20 from 10 a.m. until 1 p.m. at the New Hope Early Education Center in Mount Vernon. New Hope Early Education Center is located next to the Knox County Health Department at 11700 Upper Gilchrist Road in Mount Vernon. Families will enjoy a free spaghetti lunch, along with a free children's book and information packet. Gift card drawings will occur at the end of the event.

Come learn first aid for babies and young children with the American Red Cross, learn how to prepare healthy snacks on a budget with WIC, enjoy music and movement activities with Knox County Head Start preschool teachers, and story time with local celebrities. Infant/toddler massage and sign language demonstrations will be provided as well as maternal depression screenings.

"Let's Get Ready to Learn" is coordinated by the Early Childhood Coordinating Committee, a collaborative group of area educators, health and social service providers. The free event is made possible by funding from the United Way of Knox County, Kiwanis, and the Ohio Children Trust Fund, through the Knox County Family and Children First Council. Support from these organizations allows us to open this event to all Knox County families, recognizing that all parents have questions about raising their children, including families who choose not to send children to preschool or child care. All families will gain new ideas for supporting children's learning and healthy development. Our community benefits when we let families know about the important role they play in preparing their children for healthy and successful lives, and inform families about the helpful resources available in Knox County! For more information contact Monica Hite at (740) 393-6980.

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