

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



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### MESSAGE TO PARENTS: "YOU GOT THIS"

(Grand Rapids, Mich., August 12, 2020)— In an effort to raise awareness and support for early childhood wellness and education, **First Steps Kent** has launched a campaign to give parents of young children the confidence and understanding they need during the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond.

The last few months have upended many – if not most – of our routines. That is especially true for parents, who suddenly had to balance the closure of schools, preschools, and child care centers with all their other responsibilities for work and home. It can all be overwhelming.

First Steps Kent and other community partners want to help reassure parents with "You got this!" A social media campaign has been launched with simple tips to help parents and caregivers nurture their child's learning and development and support their overall mental health.

The first part of the campaign is based on scientific research that shows the first few years of life – between birth and kindergarten – is when the most rapid brain development occurs. *Little interactions* during everyday moments make a *big difference* in helping young children learn and grow. The campaign includes ideas from early childhood experts about how to turn seemingly mundane tasks, like folding laundry or making lunch, into learning opportunities that will help children pick up new words, practice counting, and identify shapes and colors.

The campaign will also focus on ideas to support social/emotional development and strengthen bonds between parents and young children. There are also suggestions for self-care, a recognition of the importance of parents taking care of their own needs as well as the needs of their children.

Many of the ideas and recommendations will be activities parents already do every day, affirming they are their children's first and most important teachers. Parents may also find some new suggestions that don't cost anything and can easily be incorporated into their day.

You can get more information about the "You got this" campaign at [www.firststepskent.org/yougotthis](http://www.firststepskent.org/yougotthis) and by following First Steps Kent on social media.

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*About First Steps Kent: First Steps Kent is an independent nonprofit organization that works with parents, service providers, funders, advocates, and other stakeholders to build a comprehensive early childhood system in Kent County. Our community vision is that every young child in Kent County will enter kindergarten healthy and ready to succeed in school and life. First Steps Kent is working with our community partners to make that vision a reality. Learn more at [www.firststepskent.org](http://www.firststepskent.org).*