

Invest in Early Embrace



Early Embrace is designed to facilitate healing and restorative practices at the earliest stages of the child's life. Early Embrace sees investments in the holistic well-being of young children and their families as the key to building a strong foundation for healthy communities.

Early Learning is one of the best investments we can make as a community and yet it is one of the most underfunded areas of education, especially for communities of color. As Nobel Laureate James Heckman explains, there is a 13% return on investment for every dollar spent on early learning. Investing in children and families as early as possible means that our communities can have better life, health, and economic outcomes in the future.

Plant a seed for this vision and help us reimagine what is possible for high-quality, equitable early learning. Please visit <https://raphah.org/give/> or contact ericka@raphah.org

NASHVILLE AS A SITE FOR CHANGE

Our work is rooted in Nashville because the city offers unique opportunities to make meaningful impacts in early childhood education and to create a model that can be replicated nationally.

- **Systemic racial disparity:** The 37208 zip code in Nashville has the highest incarceration rate in the US as of 2018.
- **Child poverty:** 67% of children living in the 37208 zip code live below the federal poverty line.
- **Crisis in childcare availability:** According to the Center for American Progress, Nashville's entire childcare market only has enough spots to serve 45% of children under the age of 5.
- **Poor K-12 outcomes:** 80% of Black 3rd graders in the Metro Nashville Public School district are not reading at grade level.

OUR WORK IS SHAPED BY 7 TRANSFORMATIVE PRACTICES:

1. Listening to children and families through a child-centered pedagogy

As a Reggio-inspired program, educators partner with children and families to design the curriculum each school year. This collaborative approach to curriculum development disrupts traditional top-down models of education and demonstrates to children that their voices matter, their ideas are important and their contributions are necessary.

2. Leveraging family and community bonds

Love and care are what help us face challenges, heal from trauma, and release stress. We facilitate spaces for families to heal relationships, restore bonds, and build upon existing legacies of love using an assets-based approach.

3. Prenatal Through Pre-K

Nobel Laureate Economist James Heckman's research explains that programs for children and families are most effective when they start as early as possible. We use healing circles to create a network of support for families during such an important time.

4. Cradle to Homeownership Pipeline

We offer comprehensive family empowerment programs so that children can have strong foundations and stable households. We partner with other local nonprofits to connect families to resources for their financial well-being.

5. Nurturing a beautiful and healthy built environment for learning

Research demonstrates that time spent in nature plays an important role in physical and psychological well-being. However, many early learning centers have no green spaces and little relationship with nature. The Early Embrace Center's physical space is designed to facilitate learning that reconnects children and families to the healing power of nature.

6. Increasing access to community resources

Public museums, cultural centers, parks, and libraries help children develop a love of learning and a sense of community. Our family field trip programs will support families in actively engaging with community resources throughout the Nashville area. We also offer a vibrant volunteer network and invite community members to participate in the learning experiences of its youngest community members.

7. Investing in Educators

Early childhood educators are amongst the lowest-paid workers in the country. Investing in the people who nurture and educate children improves the quality of the entire program. Investing in educators includes training programs, instructional coaching, and emotional wellness programs.