



Center for Early Learning
+ Public Health

St. Louis Families Embrace their Power to Build Kids' Brains with the 3Ts

At a time when many are facing unprecedented challenges, nearly 30 St. Louis families have nevertheless decided to embrace a unique opportunity to learn the science of early brain development. They are participating in a 10-week program designed to empower parents and caregivers with knowledge and skills to develop their children's intellectual and educational potential.

The 3Ts Let's Talk program, which was created by the [TMW Center for Early Learning + Public Health](#) at the University of Chicago with support from PNC Grow Up Great, is being piloted with groups of families from three early learning programs in the Normandy school district.

Local non-profit United 4 Children (U4C) is overseeing the program's implementation and has enlisted the support of other community leaders as well. S.T.A.R. Nonprofit Organization for Early Educators, a coaching and training institute that was founded by two community members and child-care center operators, is providing facilitation for the group sessions. St. Louis Black Authors of Children's Literature partnered with U4C to ensure that the 10 books provided to each participating family are culturally relevant and inclusive.

"We couldn't be prouder to be working alongside these community leaders to bring the 3Ts Let's Talk program to deserving St. Louis families," said U4C Executive Director Deanna Finch. "In the face of COVID-19, they have gone above and beyond to ensure that participants have a rich, transformative, and safe experience, pivoting seamlessly toward virtual facilitation."

The 3Ts Let's Talk program (adapted from the TMW Center's flagship, rigorously evaluated home visiting program) teaches parents and caregivers about the critical role their talk and interaction play in their children's foundational brain development. The heart of the program is the "3Ts," TMW Center's approach to creating a rich early language environment: **Tune In** by being in the moment with your child; **Talk More** by using a variety of words; and **Take Turns** by engaging your child in conversation. Each Let's Talk group session will include guided practice and goal setting to help families integrate the 3Ts into their everyday lives.

"Within every parent and caregiver lies the power to shape his or her child's learning capacities," said TMW Center founder and co-director Dana Suskind, MD. "I am thrilled that so many St. Louis families are harnessing that power."

If you would like to learn more about this program, or speak with anyone involved, including, potentially, participants, please contact Liz Sablich at lsablich@bsd.uchicago.edu.