

With PNC Foundation Grant, TMW Center for Early Learning + Public Health will Provide More Personalized Support to Help Parents Build Children’s Healthy Brains

Chicago, Feb. 10, 2025 – Today, the PNC Foundation and University of Chicago’s TMW Center for Early Learning + Public Health announced a new phase of their long-standing partnership. Since 2014, PNC, through its early childhood education initiative, PNC Grow Up Great[®], has supported the TMW Center’s efforts to empower parents and caregivers in their important role as brain architects. Through individual interventions, group learning programs, free online resources and community partnerships, the TMW Center has provided more than 12,000 parents and caregivers with the science that proves they can build children’s brains through talk and interaction – along with simple strategies, known as “the 3Ts,” (Tune In, Talk More, Take Turns) to put that science into practice every day.

Beginning in 2025, thanks to a \$2.5 million grant from the PNC Foundation the TMW Center will pilot a new approach to bringing the 3Ts and the transformative, brain-building power of nurturing interactions to even more families. Using a wearable technology on children that allows parents to measure and understand their child’s language environment, this new approach to education and community building will allow parents to receive personalized guidance and real-time insights they can act on immediately. Importantly, the technology is designed with user privacy as a central tenet and has built-in measures to protect child and family identity and privacy.

In addition to real-time data, parents will have access to a corresponding app that includes a library of on-demand, evidence-based educational content created by the experts at the TMW Center to help them understand their child’s developmental trajectory and the crucial role parents play as brain architects.

This technology-assisted approach to supporting parents is the result of more than a decade of rigorous research, program development and evaluation, technology creation and innovation at the TMW Center. It also represents an important evolution of the Let’s Talk group program that has been implemented in 10 communities across the country in recent years.

“Thanks to generous support from the PNC Foundation, we have been able to offer our Let’s Talk educational group program to more than 450 parents,” said TMW Center Co-Director Dana Suskind. “In the process, we have evaluated and fine-tuned our curricula and are thrilled to now offer this proven program in a more scalable, flexible and personalized format that allows parents to access data and information that is tailored to their child any time of day.”

Recognizing that community has a more powerful role than ever in ensuring parents feel supported, this program will be piloted in partnership with select Head Start centers as part of their family engagement programming. Small groups of parents from each center will be given opportunities to learn, reflect and share with one another in person and online.

“Through our longtime partnership with the TMW Center, we’ve been thrilled to support them in bringing innovative resources to parents and caregivers around the country,” said Sally McCrady, chair and president, PNC Foundation. “This latest evolution of the Let’s Talk program draws on the power of community to create another novel approach to engaging and empowering families of young children in building the language and cognitive skills that last a lifetime.”

Equipped with insights and learnings from this three-year pilot program, the TMW Center plans to make its technology available to parents across the country through a wide variety of channels and partnerships.

The PNC Foundation, which receives its principal funding from The PNC Financial Services Group, Inc. (NYSE: PNC), actively supports organizations that provide services for the benefit of communities in which it

has a significant presence. The Foundation focuses its philanthropic mission on early childhood education and community and economic development, which includes the arts and culture. Through PNC Grow Up Great®, its signature cause that began in 2004, PNC has created a bilingual \$500 million, multi-year initiative to help prepare children from birth to age 5 for success in school and life. For more information, visit <http://www.pncgrowupgreat.com>.

The TMW Center for Early Learning + Public Health, an interdisciplinary research institute at the University of Chicago, develops, tests, and disseminates evidence-based, parent- and caregiver-directed interventions that promote children's cognitive, language, and social-emotional development. To be effective, the organization uses feedback cycles to improve programs and inform scaling. With science driving its efforts, the TMW Center seeks to advance a public health approach to early learning: focus on prevention, rather than remediation, place parents and caregivers at the center of their child's education, embed proven practices into existing education and health systems, use research to drive innovation and impact at scale. A joint venture between University of Chicago's Biological Sciences and Social Sciences Divisions, the TMW Center is led by Dana Suskind, MD and Professor John List. Learn more at tmwcenter.uchicago.edu.

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