



CITY OF BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS  
Office of the Mayor  
**Thomas M. Menino**

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## **Mayor Menino's Early Childhood Initiative Receives City Livability Award from US Conference of Mayors**

*National award goes to neighborhood-based early childhood initiative*

Mayor Thomas M. Menino today accepted the Outstanding Achievement City Livability Award from the US Conference of Mayors and Waste Management, Inc. for Thrive in 5, part of the city's Boston Children Thrive initiative. Mayor Menino accepted the award at the USCM annual conference in Orlando, Florida alongside Thrive in 5 Executive Director Jane Tewksbury. Thrive in 5 is led by a public-private partnership between the City of Boston and United Way.

"Boston is a city of neighborhoods and Thrive in 5 is transforming our neighborhoods into opportunity-rich communities for our city's youngest children and their families," Mayor Menino said. "I'm honored to accept this award on behalf of Thrive in 5 and all of the Boston Children Thrive partners."

Launched in 2010, Boston Children Thrive is Thrive in 5's on-the-ground effort to engage parents as their children's first teachers and as neighborhood-wide change agents for school readiness. In Allston/Brighton, East Boston, South End/Lower Roxbury, Dudley, and Fields Corner, Thrive in 5 and its partners have created networks of parents, community organizations, and neighborhood businesses that plan and carry out activities and provide opportunities that support young children's healthy growth, development and school readiness.

"Through Boston Children Thrive, we have created leadership pathways for parents that put parents at the forefront of school readiness efforts in their neighborhood," said Jane Tewksbury, Thrive in 5's Executive Director. "Research shows that investing in the early years of life offers enormous returns for the child and for society. The City Livability Award is a recognition of the critical role that parents play in the Boston Children Thrive communities."

"We're proud that the City of Boston and Thrive in 5 are being nationally recognized for creating enriching experiences for young children and their families that lay the groundwork for their future learning and success," said Michael K. Durkin, President of United Way of Massachusetts Bay and

Merrimack Valley. "Our future economic prosperity depends on building a strong foundation for this next generation."

Strategies in each Boston Children Thrive neighborhood reflect the community's unique characteristics and diverse parent voices; however, four successful, common strategies have emerged:

- Parent Ambassadors – Boston Children Thrive neighborhoods have hired 23 parents from 15 countries to conduct peer-to-peer outreach at playgrounds, bus stops and other places where families go regularly.
- Business Partnerships – 53 local businesses have partnered with Boston Children Thrive to distribute resources, reach out to families, and create on-site early learning activities.
- Community-Wide Activities – Boston Children Thrive neighborhoods have engaged families and local residents through workshops, field trips and neighborhood events.
- Mini-Grants – Boston Children Thrive neighborhoods have expanded learning opportunities for parents and children by supporting new services and expanding capacity of successful, existing programs such as play groups.

The lead organizations, or "hub agencies", for the five Boston Children Thrive neighborhoods are Family Nurturing Center – Allston/Brighton; East Boston Community Partnerships for Children Cluster – East Boston; United South End Settlements – South End/Lower Roxbury; Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative – Dudley; and Dorchester House Multi Service Center – Fields Corner. Boston Children Thrive is supported by grants from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation and Partners Healthcare. For more on Thrive in 5 and the community-based agencies receiving funding please visit: [www.thrivein5boston.org](http://www.thrivein5boston.org).

About Thrive in 5: Thrive in 5's mission is to ensure that children of all races, ethnicities, incomes, abilities, and languages have the opportunities and support they need for success in school and beyond. Boston Mayor Thomas M. Menino and the United Way of Massachusetts Bay and Merrimack Valley launched Thrive in 5 with the goal of ensuring universal school readiness for Boston's children. Designed through a year-long community planning process involving a diverse team of 65 professionals and 35 parents, [Boston's School Readiness Roadmap](#) outlines the vision and strategies that drive Thrive in 5's work. For more information, visit [www.thrivein5boston.org](http://www.thrivein5boston.org).

About United Way of Massachusetts Bay & Merrimack Valley: One of the region's largest nonprofits, United Way's work ensures that children enter school ready to learn, youth stay engaged in school so they graduate with options for the future, and parents attain financial stability. No other single organization has the scope, expertise, and influence to bring together hundreds of human services agencies, government, businesses, private foundations and dedicated volunteers around a common vision of creating maximum impact and achieving long-lasting results.

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