



## **NCFL Family Learning expands to seven Louisville sites**

### **African-American fathers a focal point via \$1.5 million in local grants**

**LOUISVILLE, Ky. (May 23, 2017)** – Deraldo Hall didn't have much support growing up, but he's working hard to make sure that's not the case for his five children. Hall, his wife, and kids – four girls and one boy ranging in age from 1 to 6 years old – are attending weekly NCFL Family Learning meetings at 2NOT1. Hall's family signed up for the program so that Hall could learn to be a more engaged parent in his children's education, to build family bonds, and to learn workforce skills that could widen his job prospects.

"I'm learning how to better support my kids and be a better teacher to them. I've been working on math with my 4-year-old and she can now add numbers up to 10," Hall said. "We're getting to know our kids better, and even more importantly, to understand them."

For Hall, it's another step to reaching his goals to be there for his kids and provide the life that he didn't have. He's earned his GED® and several certifications and is now planning to take classes to become a certified nursing assistant (CNA). Someday, Hall wants to be a business owner and is currently working to start an anti-violence non-profit aimed at teens and young adults. He strives to keep himself and his family around the positive so they may thrive.

The Halls are among dozens of Louisville families who now have the opportunity to learn together to better meet their potential academically and economically thanks to an expansion of NCFL Family Learning. The innovative, two-generation family literacy model – pioneered by Louisville-based National Center for Families Learning (NCFL) – is a solution to many of the educational challenges facing low-income and ethnically diverse families. It is being offered at five new sites in west and south Louisville: McFerran Elementary, Americana World Community Center, the Louisville Urban League, 2NOT1, and the Academy of Music Production Education and Development (AMPED). Two additional sites will be added this fall.

The move is a collaborative effort of the community, seven funders, advocates, program sites, and civic leaders. Together, the James Graham Brown Foundation, PNC Bank, C.E. and S. Foundation, Gheens Foundation, Lift a Life Foundation, William R. Kenan, Jr. Charitable Trust and an anonymous donor have provided more than \$1.5 million to expand NCFL Family Learning in the Derby City.

"To see so many in our community coming together to help Louisville families improve their lives through literacy efforts like this reinforces our position as a compassionate city, committed to seeing our

fellow citizens thrive,” said Mayor Greg Fischer. “The program aligns with our Cradle to Career initiative by helping set the stage for better academic outcomes for our children, in addition to providing parents with the workforce skills they need to get a job or get a better job.”

The model leverages technology as parents and children learn together and serve their communities through Family Service Learning projects, Parent Time, and Parent and Child Together (PACT) Time®.

“NCFL’s two-generation family literacy model empowers parents with the skills and confidence to improve their life situations and can often elevate them from living in poverty,” said Sharon Darling, NCFL founder and president. “Participants are able to change the trajectory of their lives, providing a lasting impact on their family and the community that will be felt for generations.”

The free program is already underway at 2Not1 with more than 15 families enrolled. Programming will begin soon at the other sites, and families are encouraged to sign up. Each site is expected to serve about 50 families during the first year of programming. 2Not1, AMPED, and the Louisville Urban League will focus the program on African-American fathers, though mothers are also welcome to participate. This move is part of a local and national movement to provide more opportunities for African-American men from cradle to career.

“Only those with antiquated information would insist that we can improve educational outcomes without addressing the needs of the family. No child can feel safe if their caregiver doesn’t feel empowered to protect them,” said Sadiqa Reynolds, Esq., president and chief operating officer of Louisville Urban League. “NCFL Family Learning is a two-generational empowerment model. The benefits are academic, financial and social. Creating stronger families changes communities and in partnership with NCFL, that is exactly what we will strive to do.”

Parents and their children spend time throughout the week learning together; in addition to gaining skills to help their children succeed in and outside the classroom, parents also build important technology, language, literacy, and job skills. In fact, the AMPED location will offer parents computer training, including A+ certifications.

“When parents are more engaged in their children’s education, we see greater successes in our classrooms and our community,” said Dr. Donna Hargens, Jefferson County Public Schools superintendent. “NCFL Family Learning helps strengthen the educational foundation for our students so they may excel. This starts well before children enter the classroom.”

Several donors, including PNC Bank, William R. Kenan, Jr. Charitable Trust, C.E. and S. Foundation, Gheens Foundation, and the James Graham Brown Foundation have previously partnered with NCFL to bring family learning programs to families in Louisville and across the country.

“C.E. and S. Foundation is proud to partner with NCFL, community partners, and other local funders to invest in improving the lives of families in Louisville,” said Tess McNair, executive director, C.E. and S. Foundation. “Data shows this innovative program is helping families get on a path to success. By building

meaningful connections to the community and strengthening the literacy and academic skills of families, this program will improve the standard of living for our community for generations to come."

Results of an independent evaluation from Penn State University of participants graduating from NCFL Family Learning in 2016 show 94 percent became a better parent. Additional results include:

- 79 percent improved their English skills
- 47 percent upgraded skills to keep current job
- 40 percent got a better job
- 28 percent obtained the knowledge necessary to pass the U.S. citizenship test
- 29 percent earned a GED® certificate or high school equivalency

The seven sites announced today are in addition to two Toyota-funded sites that launched in Louisville in 2015. This is NCFL's largest program expansion to date. With nine total sites, it's also the biggest footprint NCFL has in one city.

Toyota Family Learning parents attend GED® and English classes at the Main Branch of the Louisville Free Public Library and Okolona Elementary, in addition to engaging in PACT Time® and Family Service Learning projects with their children. Those sites just wrapped up their second year of programming and have served more than 100 families in that time. Programming will start back in the fall.

More than 2 million families across the country have participated in family literacy programs through NCFL since 1989. In that time, NCFL's two-generation programs have been brought to life in more than 100 communities in 38 states.

#### **ABOUT NATIONAL CENTER FOR FAMILIES LEARNING**

The National Center for Families Learning (NCFL) is a national nonprofit organization dedicated to helping adults and children learn together. NCFL creates and deploys innovative two-generation programs, strategies, and online learning solutions that support learning, literacy, and family engagement in education. From the classroom to the community to the digital frontier, NCFL collaborates with educators, advocates, and policymakers to help families construct hotspots for learning wherever they go. For more information on NCFL's 28-year track record, visit [familieslearning.org](http://familieslearning.org).

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