

# Buffalo•Toronto Public Media



## MEDIA NEWS

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## Building Blocks: A School Readiness Initiative

To ensure that all children are ready for a successful school experience, Buffalo Toronto Public Media (BTPM) has developed a school readiness initiative, Building Blocks for Learning, targeting low-income families with children ages 3-5, including those who are learning English as a foreign language.

This initiative is supported by research-based, high-quality educational materials that are free and easily accessible. *Eighty-nine percent of adults agree that PBS KIDS helps prepare children for success in school and life, compared to other commercial networks.* Using trusted content from resources such as PBS KIDS and Sesame Street, BTPM is creating toolkits that include engaging activities and checkoff important, age-appropriate milestones as well as help early learners prepare for new routines and educational environments.

Building Blocks for Learning prioritizes accessibility by including a web presence, physical copies of materials, multilingual translation of materials, and hands-on workshops that include interpreters and a multilingual facilitator, for participating families. The goal of the workshops is to educate parents and caregivers about their role as their child's first teacher and things to expect when their child enters school for the first time. With this understanding, they will become empowered to utilize physical, cognitive, and socio-emotional resources to support school readiness.

For this initiative, BTPM has partnered with Jewish Family Services (JFS). Their trained facilitators will help translate resources, as well as facilitate parts of the key workshops in Dari, Burmese, Arabic, and Swahili. This partnership will ensure the value of the resources and distribution to those families who need them the most.

"We are hopeful that Building Blocks for Learning will help families navigate those early years of learning that can be confusing and difficult before adding in the challenges of learning English and a whole new culture," said BTPM's Director of Learning and Engagement Beth Fronckowiak.

Building Blocks for Learning's connection with service providers and community partners allows us to distribute information that gives adults directions about where to find early education services and empowerment tools they may need. Our hope is that this initiative will become a sustained project that will continue to assist low-income families transition their young learners from learning at home to learning in the school system.

For more information about Building Blocks for Learning, contact Beth Fronckowiak at [bfronckowiak@wned.org](mailto:bfronckowiak@wned.org).

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#### **About Buffalo Toronto Public Media**

Buffalo Toronto Public Media engages with our communities through exploration and entertainment –everywhere. Our member-supported services include WNED PBS, WBFO (NPR) (88.7 in Buffalo, 91.3 in Olean, 88.1 in Jamestown), WNED Classical (94.5 in Buffalo, 89.7 WNJA in Jamestown), WBFO The Bridge (88.7 HD2 and 94.5 HD2 in Buffalo), WNED Create, and WNED PBS KIDS. WNED PBS is also a national producer of award-winning documentaries. Additional information about Buffalo Toronto Public Media can be found at [wned.org](http://wned.org).