



# BUILDING OUR FUTURE

COMMUNITY UNITES • STUDENTS SUCCEED • EVERYONE PROSPERS

**Vision:** Everyone achieving personal potential from cradle to career.

**Mission:** Together we will engage our community to provide an environment in which all contribute and excel.

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 Building Our Future Kenosha



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## Even Start Equips Parents to Help Children

Building Our Future works with community partners to bring their efforts together and shine light on programs that are already doing great work. As part of getting children ready for school, our partners aid parents in becoming more skilled so they can gain better employment and empower them to give their children a stronger foundation in literacy and social skills. Even Start is a program that has exemplified this approach since 2001.

Eight years ago, Evalicia Almazan became a student at Even Start. Since then, she has earned her Associate's degree at Milwaukee Area Technical College in early childhood education and now works at Even Start part-time.

Patricia Demos, community school relations coordinator for Kenosha Unified School District (KUSD), says this is no coincidence. In fact the 16-year-old program currently run by KUSD seeks to employ parents that were former Students. "[These parents] provide mentoring and role modeling for other parents currently enrolled in the program," she explains. "Through Even Start education, we offer parents an opportunity to participate in early childhood education classes, interactive home visits, and learning activities while developing English skills." These classes take place Monday through Thursday at Wilson Elementary School, 3520 33rd Ave., and are open to parents with children ages 0-5 and individuals looking to strengthen their English skills.

Evalicia Almazan says most children who complete the program are ready for kindergarten. Back in the classroom, Evalicia beams while she reflects on her experience at Even Start. "They opened the door for me to do something else," she says. "I love my job. I love teaching the kids."

To receive more information on the Even Start Family Literacy Program, please contact Hansel Lugo at 262-359-7944 or [hlugo@kUSD.edu](mailto:hlugo@kUSD.edu).

## Start at Home

The Even Start Family Literacy program offers parents many ways to help their children develop at home. Consider trying one of the interactive activities with your child:

- Create a "me bag" that expresses your child's interests and share it with someone, include items such as a favorite book, family trip or pet photo.
- Read a book and do a related craft. For example, reading "Brown Bear, Brown Bear" and then creating a paper bag bear.

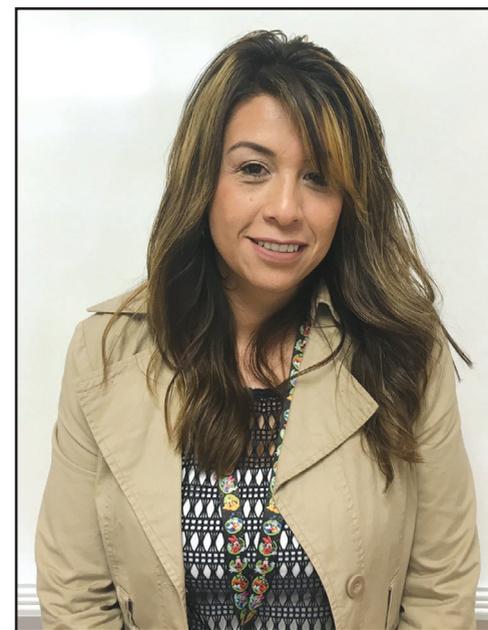
## How to Get Involved

Readying the county's children for their first day of school starts with you. Building Our Future is a partnership of families, practitioners, educators, CEOs, government officials and administrators focused on creating an equitable future for our children.

If you're already engaged in this work and want to join our partnership, send us an email at [info@buildingourfuturekc.org](mailto:info@buildingourfuturekc.org) to get involved.

Parents and/or guardians can be involved by connecting with us on social media, spreading the word about Building Our Future, and most importantly, asking your doctor about developmental screening for your children.

Our current areas of focus are Kindergarten Readiness and Community Engagement. Take a look at <http://www.buildingourfuturekc.org> for more information.



**Evalicia Almazan**

Former Even Start Student, current part time employee