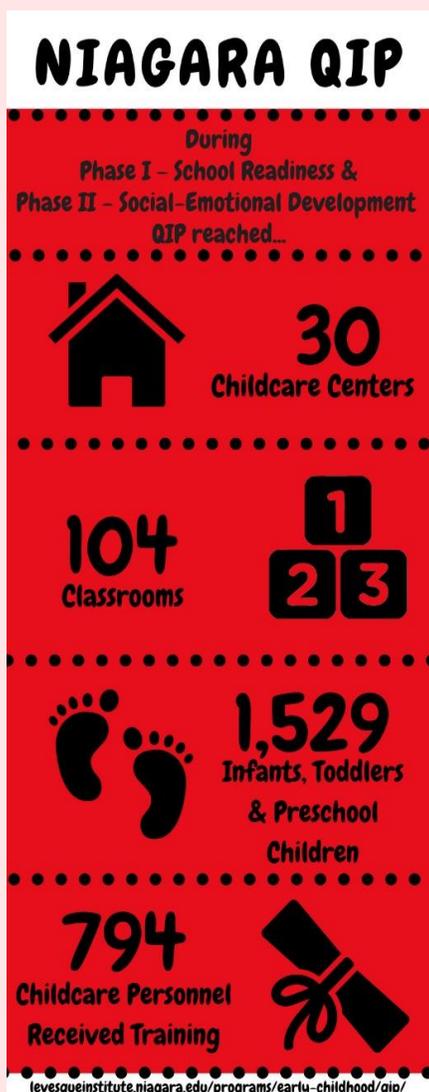


Early Childhood

The social emotional, cognitive and physical development of young children has a direct effect on their overall development. The Levesque Institute is committed to the need of investing in young children in order to maximize their future and overall well-being. Through Early Childhood initiatives such as: Niagara County Early Child Care Quality Improvement Project, Help Me Grow, and Books, Balls & Blocks, we seek to assist in the development of cognitive, emotional, social and physical potential for all children.

Niagara County Quality Improvement Project



Funded by the Peter and Elizabeth C. Tower Foundation, the Niagara County Early Child Care Quality Improvement Project (QIP) has elevated the quality of care and early education in classrooms around the county. Funding is also provided by The Children’s Guild Foundation for the QIP Mentor position.

Now in its eighth year, Niagara Phase III “Transition to Kindergarten” builds upon the key components of both, Phase I and Phase II by focusing on strengthening academic and social emotional transitions for children entering kindergarten from various early childhood preschool and prekindergarten settings throughout Niagara County.



Kindercamp

Kindercamp is a program specifically designed to ease the transition for children (and their families) entering kindergarten. Kindercamp, is embedded within a graduate course offered by the College of Education, and introduces children to various developmentally appropriate learning experiences and activities that build upon and strengthen skills necessary for kindergarten. **9 student** volunteers contributed a total of **325 hours** of service to Kindercamp since its inception.

\$18,750
Economic
Impact Value of
NU student
service

Parents/Families: On the final day, parents/families attend the Kindergarten Transition Parent Prep and Family Celebration.

Kindercamp Participants			
	2017	2018	Total
Children	55	64	119
Parents/Families	200	158	358
Teachers	4	6	10

Kindergarten Transition Summit 2018



As part of the Niagara QIP grant through the Peter and Elizabeth C. Tower Foundation, Niagara University brought together critical stakeholders in Niagara County's early childhood community to participate in their second annual Kindergarten Transition Summit on June 7, 2018. This was a unique opportunity to strengthen relationships with all stakeholders in the early childhood community.

74
attended including school superintendents, Pre-K & Kindergarten teachers & childcare representatives

Kindergarten Transition Summit Attendees	
2017	96
2018	74
Total	170

Through a post-summit evaluation, over **fifty percent** of the participants feel the summit deepened their knowledge of what systemic and integrated transitions to kindergarten look like and assisted in the learning process of how to strengthen current transition practices.

Pyramid Model – Social Emotional Competence

The Pyramid Model is a primary component of the QIP. Recently adopted by New York State, the Pyramid Model is an evidence-based framework proven to be an effective approach to building social and emotional competence in early child care and education.

The Pyramid Model training series is offered as professional development for child care center-based preschool teachers, as well as pre-kindergarten and kindergarten teachers in Niagara County school districts. Graduate level students were also offered the opportunity to enroll in a course that embedded the Pyramid Model modules, with specific course assignments and requirements.

Pyramid Model Participants	
2017 (Cohort 1)	31
2017 (Cohort 2)	23
2018 (Cohort 3)*	30

*Cohort 3 just started in August 2018

Developmental Screenings

A key component of the QIP is developmental screenings of children prior to entering kindergarten. The QIP has adopted the Ages and Stages Questionnaires (ASQ) which is the screening tool used by Help Me Grow WNY. Some early childhood programs use another development screening tool. We are in the process of transitioning these programs to use the ASQ and link them directly to our partners at HMGWNY. Screening figures to date are illustrated in the chart below.

Developmental Screening (N=401)	Total	Percentage
# Children Screened	356	88.78%
#Already Screened (receiving CPSE services)	45	11.22%
#Children Screened ASQ-3 & ASQ:SE)	220	54.86%
# Children Screened (other developmental tool)	136	33.92%
#Children Referred to CPSE/CSE based on screening results	20	4.99%
#Children monitored and provided with mid-level interventions (Pyramid Model evidence-based strategies, referral to ECDC, HMG, etc.) based on screening results to be rescreened upon entry into Kindergarten	49	12.22%

Help Me Grow Western New York

The Ralph C. Wilson Jr. Foundation awarded Niagara University a \$1.8 million dollar three year grant to serve as administrator of the Help Me Grow Western New York (HMGWNY) initiative. HMGWNY is an early childhood resource available free of charge for families and caregivers of children ranging from birth to age five, in all eight Western New York counties.

The goal of HMGWNY is to educate the community about the importance of early developmental while linking parents and caregivers to information, activities and local support systems that advance young children's health, well-being and school readiness. Four core components that characterize the HMG model: Centralized Access Point, Family & Community Outreach, Child Health Care Provider Outreach, and Data Collection.

- 5,555 children served in Erie and Niagara Counties
- 9,661 Ages & stages Questionnaire (ASQ) screenings completed.

97% of families desiring referral were successfully connected to a resource as defined by parent/guardian satisfaction with initial interaction and completed course of follow-up.

Books, Balls, and Blocks



Funded by the United Way of Great Niagara, Books, Balls, and Blocks events provide free early childhood and literacy screenings for youth ages 4 months to 6 years. Held in the Niagara Falls and Lockport Public Libraries, Books, Balls, and Blocks is set up in several stations with fun activities addressing literacy development for youth. In its first year, **174** children and **132** parents participated in Books, Balls and Blocks.

Developmental Screening: Niagara University undergraduate and graduate students facilitate early learning and literacy activities for children. Parents are provided with information about Help Me Grow WNY and are given the opportunity to administer a developmental screening using the Ages and Stages Questionnaires (ASQ) with the support of the Help Me Grow WNY team.

67
children received literacy screenings, **5%** were identified & received support

	# Children participated in early learning and literacy activities	# Children screened w/ ASQ-3	# Children screened w/ ASQ:SE-2	# HMG working w/parent to connect to EI/CPSE/Other*	# Already receiving services
Fall 2017	100	33	2	5	4
Spring 2018	74	31	2	4	3
TOTAL	174	64	4	9	7
%	100%	37%	2%	5%	4%

*EI = Early Intervention

*CPSE = Committee on Pre-K Special Education

Literacy Screening: Literacy screenings were made available at each Books, Balls, and Blocks events.

Learn more about our Early Childhood Initiatives:
levesqueinstitute.niagara.edu/programs/early-childhood/