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## EDUCATION

# Big Little Adventure aims to improve kindergarten readiness with free online resource

By [LISA HORNUNG](#) | September 19, 2018 2:37 pm



Kids began learning at the launch party for My Big Little Adventure at the

## Americana Community Center Tuesday. | Courtesy of My Big Little Adventure

When it's time for kindergarten, only about 50 percent of Kentucky children are ready. In Louisville, that number is slightly higher at 55 percent, but that's still not close to good enough.

Some local agencies are working together to help parents and families address the issue with their own children through a new initiative called [My Big Little Adventure](#).

My Big Little Adventure is a free online resource with activities and learning opportunities for families with children from birth to age 5.

The initiative was a collaboration between the [Kentucky Science Center](#), the [Louisville Zoo](#), [Bernheim Arboretum and Research Forest](#), [StageOne Family Theatre](#), [4C](#) (Community Coordinated Child Care) and [Family Scholar House](#). It was funded with a grant from the [PNC Foundation](#).

The  
idea

Kids begin their learning at  
the My Big Little Adventure  
Launch on Sept. 18 at the  
Americana Community  
Center. | Courtesy of My Big  
Little Adventure

came out of a "think tank," where the agencies came together to find a way to help young families, said Jo Haas, CEO of the Kentucky Science Center.

The organizations, she said, spit-balled big ideas "to find ways that we could pull together as organizations and provide open-access material that really piggybacked online or connected families to everyday learning experiences with everyday material that they could very easily get their arms around and comfortably do at home, in the neighborhood and around the broader community."

My Big Little Adventure is not a way to get people to spend money at the local organizations, Haas said. But a way to help parents understand their child's learning needs.

“We know that 90 percent of the architecture of a child’s brain is completed by the age of 5,” Haas said. “I also recently heard a statistic about the neural networks that are being built right from the start — a million neural networks every minute, I think, in early years. I mean it’s just crazy the amount of growth and development happening and in very early ages.”

Nearly 82 percent of learning is done outside of the classroom, according to a study in 2010 by the [National Research Council](#), so My Big Little Adventure hopes to capitalize on that learning for small children.

## What’s in it?

The lessons are developed around themes that last three months. The first theme is [Change](#), followed by Make, then World and View.

With each theme, there is a suggested reading list and activities. Parents can sort activities by “free” and “not free” — access to My Big Little Adventure online is free, but some activities require purchasing supplies.

As part of the initiative, the Kentucky Science Center will offer some free playdates for users, and in October, Bernheim Forest is having ColorFest, which has some My Big Little Adventure-specific programming.

“There will be a way for My Big Little Adventure families to check in at My Big Little Adventure tent and get a souvenir collectible wristband, get access to more activities and some of the special activities at [ColorFest](#) that are designed just for that specific audience of ‘itty bitties,’ ” Haas said.

Toward the end of each theme, there will be some sort of event at one of the member cultural attractions that ties to the theme for families to learn from and enjoy.

Online, there are many activities for families to do together at home, and each tells you the time it takes, the cost of supplies, the mess level and difficulty level — and parents can filter those. For the Change theme, there are a growth chart you can make, a kids’ art gallery, sky changes activity, responsibilities tracker and more.



Six agencies joined forces to create My Big Little Adventure, a platform for parents to help their children be kindergarten-ready. | Courtesy of My Big Little Adventure

## Get involved

Anyone can access the [MyBigLittleAdventure.org](https://MyBigLittleAdventure.org) website, but they'd like participants to sign up to receive e-mails, which will let them know about upcoming activities and free and low-cost events.

The grant from PNC is a three-year grant, and Haas said the collaborative hopes more agencies will come on board and help build the program.

“We fully expect that there’ll be others that will begin to integrate into the mix, and the intent is for this to be a continually updated and ongoing, available, changing set of resources over time,” she said.

## LISA HORNING

Lisa Horning a native of Louisville and has worked in local media for more than 15 years as a writer and editor. Before that she worked as a writer, editor and photographer for community newspapers in Kansas, Ohio and Kentucky. She has a bachelor’s degree in journalism from the University of Georgia, and after a 20-year career in journalism, she obtained



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