



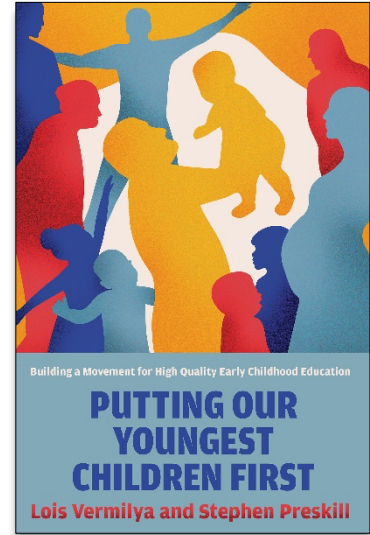
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NEWS RELEASE

New Book Offers Proven Strategies for Mobilizing Family and Community Advocacy

ALBUQUERQUE— [*Putting Our Youngest Children First*](#) is a new book that showcases what can happen when a large and dedicated group of people come together to do what is best for the well-being of children. Focusing on the history of the [Family Development Program \(FDP\)](#), an initiative in the University of New Mexico's College of Education and Human Sciences, this book chronicles FDP's 40 years as one of New Mexico's most powerful advocates for high quality early education and care. Understanding that a community cannot flourish unless a strong system of early learning prevails, the leaders of FDP played a prominent role in shaping a statewide early childhood system that is community-based, family-driven, and well-funded for all young children. FDP's approaches for engaging grassroots leadership set a powerful and transformational example for other states to consider as they strive to build comprehensive early childhood systems of their own that truly work for the people using them.



Putting Our Youngest Children First offers a clear and hopeful path forward, first by demonstrating how to create the kind of early care programs that children, families, and communities deserve, and second, by showing how to build the political will to give high quality programs unambiguous support. Each chapter of the book describes an initiative, program, or innovation that proved central in FDP's effort to make New Mexico one of the nation's early childhood leaders. These examples consider each topic in a larger, more inclusive sense as well, with clear implications for how to apply the lessons learned and adapt them to other places.

Lois Vermilya was the director of the Family Development Program at the University of New Mexico for twenty years and is the author of many publications on equity and social justice. Stephen Preskill is a professor emeritus of education at Wagner College. He is the author of *Education in Black and White: Myles Horton and the Highlander Center's Vision for Social Justice*.

Putting Our Youngest Children First: Building a Movement for High-Quality Early Childhood Education is available in [paperback and ebook from University of New Mexico Press and major book retailers](#).

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