

MEDIA CONTACT:

Amy Foster Parish
Director, Communications
Cell: 703-472-5997
aparish@familieslearning.org



NCFL, PNC Grow Up Great Team Up to Pilot Outdoor Learning Program for Families

Let's Learn Together Outside launches this summer in Kentucky and Alabama; Texas planned next year.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (Aug. 13, 2025) – Children and families in several cities have new opportunities to learn and play together this summer thanks to PNC Grow Up Great® and the National Center for Families Learning (NCFL). Through PNC Grow Up Great, the company's signature philanthropic initiative focused on early childhood education, the PNC Foundation recently awarded NCFL a \$765,000 grant to pilot an updated version of NCFL's Let's Learn Together Outside (LLTO) program in select PNC markets over the next three years.

Let's Learn Together Outside is a four-week, research-based family engagement program designed to take place in natural environments. LLTO supports families with strategies and activities focused on the importance of nature-based play and early literacy skills for children ages 3 to 5. NCFL supports implementation by providing local organizations with the training, program curricula and coaching to facilitate the program.

Let's Learn Together Outside programming launched this summer in three cities: Louisville, Ky., with local partner [Play Cousins Collective](#); Birmingham, Ala., with [Birmingham Public Libraries](#); and Huntsville, Ala., with [Village of Promise](#). Programming in Austin, Texas, is expected to launch in 2026 with selected community partners.

Outdoor learning and play [are shown](#) to have a variety of positive outcomes for children, including improved problem-solving skills, enhanced memory retention and better social skills. In addition, children who spend regular time outdoors demonstrate lower rates of obesity, improved motor skills and better physical coordination. By combining outdoor learning with early literacy, LLTO harnesses these benefits while also providing parenting adults with the resources they need to ensure their children are kindergarten-ready.

"Since the start of PNC Grow Up Great over 20 years ago, we've counted NCFL as one of our earliest collaborators in building brilliant futures for our youngest learners," said Sally McCrady, chair and president, PNC Foundation. "We're excited to see Let's Learn Together Outside engage children and their families together in the wonder of outdoor learning, fostering deeper connections to nature and one another."

“NCFL’s commitment to early learning extends beyond our work in collaboration with schools and early childcare settings,” said Felicia Cumings Smith, NCFL president and CEO. “We also believe that young children should have access to early literacy and learning opportunities that enable outdoor exploration.

“Through programs like Let’s Learn Together Outside, NCFL and PNC Grow Up Great are providing families with the tools to explore multigenerational learning at the park, in the backyard or on the playground. When parenting adults and children learn together, the whole family benefits.”

For more information about LLTO or any of NCFL’s family learning programming, visit familieslearning.org. For information on how to be part of LLTO programming in Kentucky or Alabama, contact the local partners listed above.

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About the PNC Foundation

The PNC Foundation, which receives its principal funding from The PNC Financial Services Group, Inc. (NYSE: PNC), actively supports organizations that provide services for the benefit of communities in which it has a significant presence. The Foundation focuses its philanthropic mission on early childhood education and community and economic development, which includes the arts and culture. Through PNC Grow Up Great®, its signature cause that began in 2004, PNC has created a bilingual \$500 million, multi-year initiative to help prepare children from birth to age 5 for success in school and life. For more information, visit <http://www.pncgrowupgreat.com>.

About the National Center for Families Learning (NCFL)

NCFL is a national nonprofit that has worked for more than 35 years to eradicate poverty through education solutions for families. We believe education is a shared, nonpartisan responsibility and that collaboration among families, schools, and community members can lead to powerful learning experiences. NCFL’s vision is to establish coordinated and aligned family learning systems in 60 communities, built with and for families, to increase education and economic outcomes and create thriving communities. For more information on NCFL, visit familieslearning.org. To learn more about our vision or become a Family Learning Community™ partner, visit familieslearning.org/60x30.