



www.ToolsoftheMind.org

The LEGO Foundation

www.legofoundation.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Barbara Wilder-Smith
Phone: 720.541.9597
Email: press@toolsofthemind.org

Tools of the Mind®: Tools@Home Initiative

Funded with the support of the LEGO Foundation

An innovative response to the disruption of early childhood learning due to COVID-19

July, 26, 2020

Title: [The LEGO Foundation](http://TheLEGOFoundation.com) funds [Tools of the Mind's](http://ToolsoftheMind.org) Tools@Home Initiative to address disruption of early childhood learning due to COVID-19

Location: Across the United States

Timing: July, 2020 – March, 2021

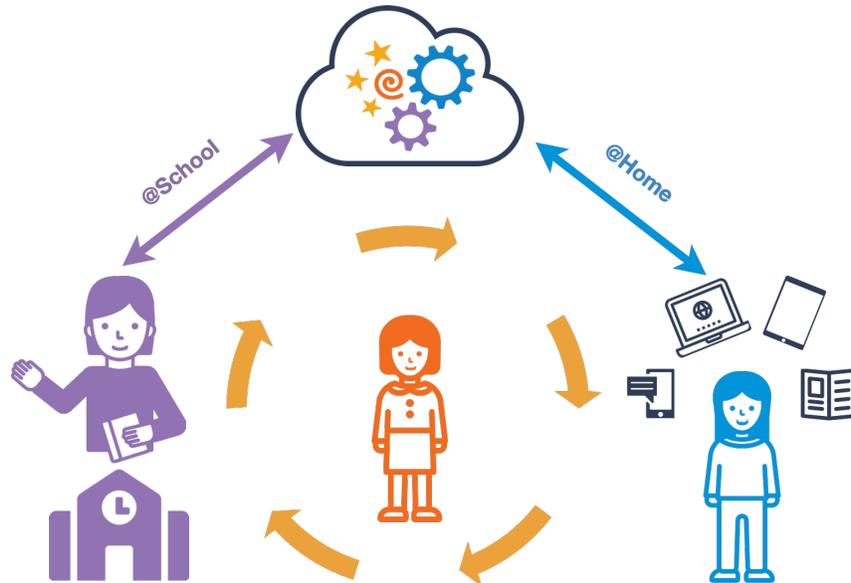
Donor: The LEGO Foundation

Sector: Pre-K and K education

Focus: Creating an innovative approach to improving outcomes for young children ages 3-6 by strengthening school:family partnership in supporting play-based learning intentionally designed to develop social-emotional, cognitive and self-regulation skills in school and at home; creating new systems of teacher professional development.

Challenge:

COVID-19 has led to unprecedented school disruption, with at least 55.1 million students learning at home in the U.S. All indications suggest this disruption will continue, with many public school districts planning for a return to school this fall that incorporates hybrid or distance learning models.



Solution:

To mitigate the educational impact of this disruption, which will be most pronounced for already-disadvantaged students, an integrated school:home system of support, centered around each child is needed to ensure every child's social, emotional, and cognitive well-being. This system must support teachers by developing learning resources for use at home that are coordinated with learning in the classroom, and seamlessly provide data to teachers about children's development and learning both at home and at school. It must also include a streamlined platform that facilitates an effective, responsive partnership between teachers and parents to maximize the likelihood of positive outcomes for children's development and learning at home, leveraging teachers' knowledge of each child's developmental trajectories to customize and scaffold learning both at home and at school.

Goal:

In the face of this global crisis, Tools of the Mind, a program with over 25 years of experience in the field of early childhood education, seeks to offer a new approach for teachers who want to support whole child development including an integrated school:home shared focus on social emotional development, self-regulation development, learning how to learn, and core academic skills. Our mission engages us in a set of commitments that drives our focus on maintaining what is essential for children's growth and development: make-believe play and playful learning -- both at home and in school. The challenge of these times can be met with the resiliency of children, guided by teachers and parents who forge partnerships in children's best interests. With this innovative approach, our goal is to improve child outcomes and accelerate progress toward closing the achievement gap, even after COVID-19.

School and Program Partners:

Tools of the Mind partner programs across the United States

Approach:

1. Develop a scalable platform for teacher:parent partnership and communication that represents a new paradigm to support children's learning and development at home while building parent self-efficacy. This platform will be designed so that it can be scaled in multiple ways, creating the ability to expand beyond Tools of the Mind's core PreK & K programs to other settings, including summer school, after-school and direct-to-parent. We envision it serving as a model to inform development in the field to drive the reconceptualization of school:home learning.
2. Develop a new feasible approach to supporting teachers as they take on the work of facilitating learning in the classroom and learning at home, developing new capabilities partnering effectively with parents, increasing teacher satisfaction with their ability to support learning at home, the quality of relationships between teachers and parents and parent confidence and ability to support their child's learning.
3. Redesign of Tools of the Mind's core literacy apps to work cross-platform to support equity and improve accessibility for classrooms and families, and provide continuity between learning at home and in school for all children. This will extend the embedded support of self-regulation development in literacy activities to homes and provide teachers real-time visibility into each child's learning at home via the Tools@Home platform, enabling direct teacher:child in-app scaffolding, as well as micro-coaching between teachers and parents to coordinate individualized scaffolding of each child's development at home and in school.
4. Launch this approach to reach 15,000+ children in the 2020-2021 school year, and build our organization's capacity to scale this initiative to reach upwards of 30,000 children in 2022.

For more information on this, contact: press@toolsofthemind.org or (720) 541-9597.