NAZ FAMILY ACADEMY

Infant and Toddler Program

Family Academy is a foundational component of the NAZ “cradle to career” pipeline. NAZ families can enroll in the Family Academy program that fits their goals and the needs of their children. The program design bridges evidence-based content with the peer expertise of the Engagement Team to deliver high-impact strategies that parents use to build a culture of achievement at home.

The Family Academy: Infants and Toddlers model teaches concrete parenting strategies that promote children’s language development and positive parenting for families with children age zero to three. The parenting strategies are presented in ways that are relevant to lives of NAZ families and that value parents’ unique strengths. The knowledge conveyed by the curriculum comes to life in the families’ ongoing goal planning process with their Engagement Team.

The Infants and Toddlers program is designed to reach families as early as possible in their child’s development. The curriculum empowers parents to get their kids ready for kindergarten and on the pathway to college and lifelong success. Classes work to engage parents and focus on skills such as: building positive relationships, promoting language development, praise and encouragement and positive discipline.

The NAZ Promise Neighborhood is a collaboration of over 50 organizations and schools who work with children and families in a geographic area, or “Zone” of North Minneapolis to build a culture of achievement so that all youth graduate college ready. Families and children move through a “cradle to career” pipeline that provides comprehensive support from pre-natal through age 18.

the-naz.org
1200 W. Broadway #250 | Minneapolis, MN 55411 |
Program Components

• Three-hour sessions that meet for 15 weeks
• Parent education curriculum (strategies, empowerment, cultural considerations, discussion)
• High-quality classroom settings for children
• Early childhood assessments offered for all children, with results given directly to parents
• Transportation, a healthy breakfast, stipends, sibling care and early childhood supplies
• The program is embedded within the NAZ education continuum, ensuring ongoing support

Goal: To Support Positive Parenting on the Road to Kindergarten Readiness

• Recruit and engage the hardest-to-reach families by overcoming traditional barriers to access
• Promote parents’ use of practices that support children’s language development
• Promote positive discipline strategies that support children’s socio-emotional development

Parent Education Curriculum*

Week 1: The importance of early childhood
Week 2: Child directed play
Week 3: Early language and literacy
Week 4: Social emotional coaching
Week 5: Praise and incentives
Week 6: Separations and routines
Week 7: Communication
Week 8: Discipline—Setting limits and problem solving
Week 9: Discipline—Natural consequences and stress management
Week 10: Discipline—Time out and ignoring
Week 11: Discipline—Dealing with challenging behavior
Week 12: Discipline—Parent’s choice
Week 13: Field trip
Week 14: Closure and evaluation
Week 15: Graduation

*Curricular content combines practical experiences of families in the NAZ zone with research-based early childhood strategies and theory. The curriculum features component pieces of published curricula, such as the Incredible Years™ as well as content designed by the Family Academy team and shaped by input from NAZ families.

Partner Roles

NAZ delivers the Family Academy, conducts all recruitment activities and oversees program delivery logistics. The Engagement Team removes barriers to attendance, links classroom work with family goals, and ensure that families receive ongoing services from the NAZ continuum.

The Minneapolis Public Schools provide school facilities, licensed early childhood teachers and support staff, and children’s classroom curriculum. The Family Academy model will be replicated at additional NAZ early childhood partner locations as NAZ scales up.

The University of Minnesota’s Center for Early Education and Development at the Urban Research Outreach-Engagement Center (CEED@UROC) supports the Family Academy model development team; and they are conducting a validation study, funded by Brady Education Foundation. They combine practical family experiences with research-based early childhood strategies and theory.

For more information on NAZ Family Academy, contact Andre Dukes, NAZ Family Education Leader at adukes@the-naz.org; or Dr. Lauren Martin, UROC Family Academy Principal Investigator at mart2114@umn.edu.