

# Tribune Chronicle

## Kids learn about school Glimpsing into a kindergarten classroom

Local News

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Staff photo / Chris McBride Danielle Stokes of Vienna is all smiles as her 5-year-old son, Zachary Stokes, focuses on coloring his stencil at the creative arts station during the Kindergarten Transition Fair at the Warren Public Library on Saturday.

WARREN — Preschoolers nervous about making the jump to kindergarten got to ease their anxieties during an activity-filled day at the Warren Public Library on Saturday as the library opened its doors for the Kindergarten Transition Fair.

This event was a return for the library following a hiatus because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Desiree Farragher, a clinical social worker and early childhood mental health consultant at PsyCare, described the fair as a crucial bridge for both children and parents.

*“Our committee serves to help bridge the gap for kids transitioning from preschool into kindergarten,”* Farragher said.

The fair, which started in 2015, had 10 interactive learning stations set up around the children’s section of the library. Each station had activities in alignment with Ohio’s early learning standards for kindergarten, offering activities and materials for parents to prepare their children effectively, Farragher said.

She said each station was crafted to aid parents in teaching crucial skills at home.

*“We give them a lot of the materials and resources they need to take it home and do it at home,”* she said.

The learning stations covered a range of topics, including math, literacy, science, motor skills, social-emotional learning and creative art. Special education information also was available, as was a resource book to further assist parents.

The importance of parental involvement was a key theme, with Farragher stressing the importance of giving parents tools to continue education at home.

*“We’re helping teach the parents how to socially and emotionally prepare their child for kindergarten,”* she said, noting the role parents play in easing their child’s potential anxiety or sadness about school.

The fair not only offered educational activities, but also provided each child with a hardcover book about starting kindergarten and a resource booklet outlining activities.

Farragher said funding and organizing the transition fair is a community effort involving a variety of area organizations. It also included giveaways, like math cards and sticker activities.

Parents shared positive feedback, appreciating the opportunity to meet face to face with the educators that will greet their children on day one.

*“It’s great that different groups come together for things like this,”* said parent Melanie Christie of Cortland.

Malik Molden, a Warren resident and parent of two, also attended the fair.

*“It’s a local event, and it’s just something great. We don’t have a lot going on in the winter, so this is a good time to come out,”* Molden said.

Already a seasoned veteran at prepping for kindergarten, Molden said the fair is a good support system, especially for parents who are new to the process.

Molden said his oldest child, already a student, helped set a positive example for his younger sibling, knocking down any fears about starting school.

*“My oldest son excels in school. And he loves it ... he just loves school in general,”* Molden said.

The fair, which did not require advance registration, was promoted through early childhood care centers, public school systems, the library and social media.

Farragher expressed hope that the fair would continue to grow and serve more families each year, helping to ensure that every child has a positive and empowering start to their educational journey.