



About Our Speakers



Tim Bartik

Senior Economist, The Upjohn Institute for Employment Research
www.upjohninst.org/staff/bartik.html

Tim Bartik, author and senior economist at the Upjohn Institute for Employment Research, a nonpartisan think tank in Kalamazoo, will be a guest speaker at the Great Start Conference in March. Bartik's latest book, "Investing in Kids: Early Childhood Programs and Local Economic Development," presents the evidence that high-quality early childhood programs provide local economic development. The book has garnered praise from politicians and business leaders. Bartik earned a bachelor's degree from Yale University and a master's and Ph.D. in economics from the University of Wisconsin- Madison. He is also the author of "Who Benefits from State and Local Economic Development Policies?" and "Jobs for the Poor: Can Labor Demand Policies Help?"



Pennie Foster-Fishman, Ph.D.

Professor, Department of Psychology; Senior Outreach Fellow, University Outreach and Engagement, Michigan State University
<http://outreach.msu.edu/cerc/people/educators.aspx>

Pennie G. Foster-Fishman is a professor in the Department of Psychology at MSU. She received her Ph.D. in organizational/community psychology from the University of Illinois at Chicago. Her research interests emphasize systems change, particularly how organizational, inter-organizational, and community systems can better meet the needs of children, youth, and families. She has investigated human service delivery reform, multiple stakeholder collaboration, comprehensive community initiatives, coalition development, community organizing, and resident empowerment as vehicles for systems change. She has also worked with a variety of public sector agencies, not-for-profit organizations, and community and state-wide coalitions, aiming to improve their organizational capacity and efficacy. She has conducted process and outcome evaluations of systems change and systems of care efforts, comprehensive community initiatives, and coalitions. She often incorporates innovative (e.g., GIS mapping, social network analysis) and participatory (e.g., Photovoice) approaches in her research and evaluation efforts.



Harriet Meyer

Strategic Initiatives, The Ounce of Prevention Fund
<http://www.ounceofprevention.org/home/index.php>

Harriet Meyer served as president of the Ounce of Prevention Fund in Chicago for 20 years. She has long believed that improving opportunities for low-income children during the earliest years is the best way to strengthen our economy. Meyer is credited with leading the push in Illinois to expand preschool opportunities and investments in early childhood. She fought for the passage the state's Preschool for All, which made Illinois the first state in the country to offer quality preschool for all 3- and 4-year olds. Through her work, Harriet Meyer has gained national recognition for shaping public policies and creating innovative programs that help young, at-risk children and their families. Currently she is the head of Strategic Initiatives at the Ounce and works with advocacy groups across the nation to improve early childhood programs and policies.