

# 2023 Report to the Community



nextdoor



# All-In for Children

## Dear Next Door Community,

Over my first year at Next Door, I have watched and learned a great deal from our dedicated staff, all while getting to know our inspiring children, families, community partners, donors and volunteers. Next Door is comprised of so many critical contributors, like you – and we are grateful for that support.

To continue moving our mission and organization forward, we are developing our new Strategic Plan, driven by our “All-In for Children” focus. The framework is shared below.

Being “All-In for Children” ensures all stakeholders are committed to ensuring our children receive the very best start – in life, in education, and in opportunities. Access to an exceptional early educational experience is where our work begins, as we know this is the brain’s peak time of development and that a strong early foundation matters.

Our Next Door team works hand-in-hand, together with our children’s families and the community, creating positive outcomes for over 50 years now. One of the best things to hear from an adult in the community is, “I was a Next Door kid!”

Through our Strategic Plan and the daily realities of providing an excellent early childhood experience for approximately one thousand of Milwaukee’s amazing children each year, it is our fervent hope that you will continue to support the good work of Next Door – and be “All-In for Children,” too!

You can learn more within these pages, and, as always, reach out with any questions – or come visit us at Next Door.

*Heather Mehring Grams*

**Heather Mehring Grams**  
Next Door President



Throughout my son's journey at Next Door, the teachers have been nothing less than amazing. I mean, from encouraging him, motivating him, loving him, and most of all just being great leaders. I couldn't ask for a better start for my child. Thanks for making this experience awesome!

Atonia Harris, mother of Zy'Haire



## High-Quality Programs and Services

### Our Center-Based Program

Children come to our vibrant 29th Street and Capitol Drive campuses, starting as young as six weeks old. Our programming continues through K4, providing a “first school” experience for children that is focused on building academic, social-emotional and physical development.

Their learning is enhanced across our centers with art and music education, robotics and virtual reality programming, library visits, nature-based playgrounds, and family engagement events.

Our families are engaged in their child’s education through daily connections with our teachers and Family Advocates, classroom volunteering, parent meetings, and special events. We further offer community resources to support families’ goals.



 **690**

children served  
across 2 campuses

 **60**

children connected  
to community resources for  
mental health/disability services

 **1,638**

screenings for hearing, vision,  
lead, and dental health

 **97%**

of children met or exceeded  
development expectations for  
their age in literacy

 **1,870**

direct parent-staff connections,  
including family goal-planning,  
classroom transitions, fatherhood  
connections, and crisis situations



Ms. Bershet sure had Kadynce and Teon focused on their math exercise! Using a pan balance, they were learning to quantify numerals in math by matching the amount of monkeys to the number on one side. Our center-based programming features daily periods of instructional time for core academic areas, including math, literacy, and writing. Our children receive small group instruction to help achieve maximum impact through learning. Opportunities within lessons build important life skills, such as problem-solving and collaboration.



# High-Quality Programs and Services

## Health and Early Intervention Services

Next Door's health team ensures we conduct screenings for hearing, vision, lead, and dental health for our children. We provide referrals to doctors and dentists and host on-site health fairs with resources for families.

Our early intervention team provides positive behavior support and strategies, helps identify developmental delays, and provides additional support to children, complementing the strong work of our instructional staff across Next Door.

Data proves that when we intervene at this early stage of life, we can empower children with solid resources and strategies to overcome challenges, preparing them for the next level of learning and overall success in life.



## Jayceon's Music Success

Legs up and a grin from ear-to-ear captures the excitement of Jayceon during a music education class delivered by the Wisconsin Conservatory of Music.

Educators from the Conservatory lead the Smart Start program across all Next Door classrooms on a weekly basis. The international and research-based program works to build children's cognitive skills through the power of music. Next Door is one of the first early childhood centers in Wisconsin to offer this program.

Jayceon's teachers report his engagement has increased significantly over the past year. After showing low participation at the beginning, he transitioned to singing verses of songs like, "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star," and exhibiting greater clarity in his speech. He has also increased participation in day-to-day classroom experiences in music.





## High-Quality Programs and Services

### Our Home-Based Program

Our Home-Based Program extends our reach in the community with year-round prenatal services for pregnant mothers and parenting and child development support for families – all in the comfort of their own home.

Our team of Parent Educators meet with families weekly to help parents become strong teachers for their children and connect families with community resources to meet basic needs. We invite families to Next Door for socialization events throughout the year – providing opportunities to connect with other families.



 **255**

pregnant moms + families  
with children served

 **417**

screenings for hearing, vision,  
lead, and dental health

 **4,304**

home visits and  
socialization events

 **8**

languages including Burmese,  
Chin, English, Hmong, Igbo, Karen,  
Rohingya, and Spanish

 **3,900+**

household items provided to  
families, including diapers, wipes,  
and feminine hygiene kits



It's story time with Ms. Jaclyn for children and parents enrolled in Next Door's Home-Based Program. They were enjoying the book "Rain Before Rainbows" in our Books for Kids Library. These library visits are part of socialization events we host at Next Door for Home-Based families during the year. Children get a chance to take home free books to build home libraries and participate in curriculum-based activities. Parents gain further resources from Parent Educators and special guest speakers covering topics such as healthy eating or life-changing events like a new baby at home. In the 2022-2023 school year, we hosted 30 events for families.



# Maximizing Access and Impact

## Our Child Care Partnership Program

Within our buildings and beyond, Next Door helps ensure under-resourced children and their families have access to high-quality early learning experiences. One of the ways we extend access and our impact throughout Milwaukee is through our Child Care Partnership (CCP) program.

We lead the largest CCP program in Wisconsin – working to improve the quality of learning at multiple early childhood centers in under-served areas of the city.

Our team of Next Door Instructional Coaches support teachers at the partnership sites with one-on-one coaching and professional development trainings. Additionally, Next Door Family Advocates, Health Advocates and Early Intervention Specialists all support families with goal-setting, access to having basic needs met, healthcare options, and connections to behavioral services.



Coaching/Professional Development support for **155** teachers

**4** JumpStart teacher conferences hosted by Next Door

**327** children directly served at CCP sites

**647** screenings for hearing, vision, lead, and dental health

**3,469** direct parent-staff connections, including family goal-planning, classroom transitions, and crisis situations.



Cruz is one of our Next Door Family Advocates who works with children and parents in our Child Care Partnership (CCP) program. Every week, she travels to her assigned partnership sites – including Jo’s Learning Academy, pictured here – and visits classrooms to help support children’s learning. Here she is working with Joemely on color recognition and building skills. Cruz works closely with parents as well, supporting them in areas such as enrollment, family goals, community resources, and family engagement in their children’s education. Family Advocates like Cruz serve in all of our 11 partnership sites.



## Commitment to Staff

There is no greater asset at Next Door than the people serving our children and families every day across our two campuses, Home-Based Program and Child Care Partnership sites. We must invest in our team members to help them reach their best at Next Door and to be in “All-In” of support of our children and families.

Our commitment to staff includes our Workforce Development Department, which helps employees advance their education, meet professional and personal goals and remove barriers to success.

Here’s a look at our extensive coaching network:

### Instructional Coaches

- Supporting teachers in and outside of classrooms by building skills in curriculum implementation, assessments, and student education plans



### Family Services Coaches

- Supporting Family Advocates and Parent Educators by building skills to strengthen family connections and grow resources to serve families

### Professional Development Team

- Supporting staff by organizing monthly training days for teachers and agency-wide trainings in areas, including, CPR, crisis intervention and trauma-sensitive care

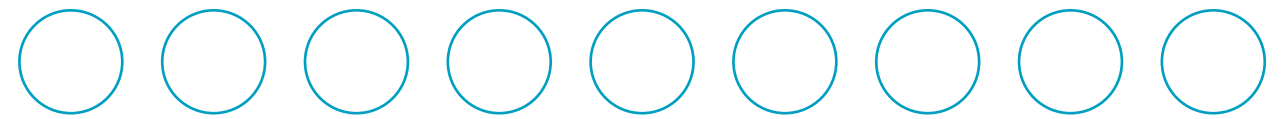


### Success Coaches

- Supporting all staff with action plans and community resources in areas, including, financial wellness, housing and career growth

### Wellness Specialist

- Supporting all staff by delivering on-site programming, including, gentle exercise, meditation and health screenings



### Meet AC and her Family

This photo captures my family in front of our first home! I am pictured in the back row, second from the right.

Next Door helped us achieve this goal in September 2023, with support from my Success Coach, Dorian. She provided community resources for homeownership and helped me navigate lots of requirements. Now, I’m just so happy and so relieved. I can finally say, “I can go to my home and have something that is mine.”

Dorian further supported me in advancing my education as a Parent Educator in our Home-Based program. I enrolled in Next Door’s Pathways Program and earned an Infant/Toddler Certificate at Milwaukee Area Technical College. I also received a Family Development Credential this year to further enhance my skills.

This was a challenging year for me, and many times I was feeling down. But Dorian was always there for me as a pillar of strength and inspiration. I’m just very happy to have partnered with her on my journey.



## Commitment to Staff

### Our Pathways Program

We further elevate our commitment to early childhood educators with our Pathways Program.

Working with community partners, Pathways helps counter the teacher shortage in our industry. We do this by developing new teachers and offering educational advancement opportunities for our current teachers to become Lead Teachers. The work includes on-the-job training for newcomers, as well as both on-site and campus-based college coursework – all free to participants.



Brittany and Alayna completed the Pre-Apprenticeship Pathway and are now Assistant Teachers at Next Door.

### Our Pathways lead to:

- Early Childhood certifications
- Infant/Toddler Badge
- Early Childhood Educator Technical Diploma
- Associate's and Bachelor's degrees
- Leadership, administrative and pre-school credentials

### Pathways remove barriers to success by:

- Coordinating classes
- Providing free tuition, fees and books
- Arranging for paid release time to attend classes or complete homework
- Offering hardship stipends and community resources for personal challenges, as needed

### Pathways Success

- 57 individuals have completed a single pathway; one teacher has completed two pathways.
- 16 Assistant Teachers hired
- 8 employees promoted to Lead Teacher positions
- Expanded on-site coursework in 2023 from Milwaukee Area Technical College
- Added two new pathways for specialized credentials through the Wisconsin Registry and for the Infant/Toddler Badge

## A Sense of Belonging at Next Door

We continue to embed programming of inclusion and belonging into our agency culture because it helps foster a supportive and culturally-responsive workplace for our team of 230+ employees. By ensuring diverse voices and backgrounds are heard and honored, we move our organization forward with greater cohesiveness, joy and passion for the critical work we do with children and families.

In October 2023, we formed a new team to create a roadmap for Next Door and launch our next steps forward with inclusion and belonging programming for staff. The team, pictured below, includes teachers, coaches, Family Advocates, and Parent Educators. Our President, Vice President of Human Resources, Director of Human Resources and Program Coordinator serve as team advisors.

The team's priorities include representation of staff diversity, creating equitable opportunities and fair treatment, and building a sense of belonging at Next Door.

### Our Steps Forward in 2023

Hired a DEIB Program Coordinator to organize year-round programming for staff; including office hours, group conversations, and cultural celebrations.

Hosted an agency-wide community-building day with activities to enhance staff teamwork and relationships.

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging programs from local consultant, Beth Ridley, for two all-staff events.



Here is our new team leading our work in this area.



# Our Trauma-Sensitive Approach

We understand that traumatic life events can impact everyone and can manifest in many different forms. We also know that trauma can dramatically impact the success of our children, families and staff. With this in mind, we strive to create a culture of trauma-sensitive care, embracing our entire Next Door community.

Our work in this area expanded in 2020 after members of our team completed training in a Trauma-Sensitive Schools model with Wellpoint Care Network of Milwaukee. Since then, we have created a Trauma-Sensitive School sub-committee to lead our work in this important area.

The sub-committee is comprised of staff from across our organization. The group leads trainings agency-wide, promotes empathy-building, and supports a host of services, as highlighted below.



# Community Engagement

We understand that we cannot do our critical work alone, and that is why we partner with numerous local and national organizations to enhance our programming and services.

Together, our partners provide valuable expertise to expand our academic programming, support children with special needs, deliver critical health services, empower our staff with career advancement, and provide community resources for families' needs.

- ACTS Housing • American Family Institute for Corporate and Social Impact
- AmeriCorps • Carroll University • Children's Wisconsin
- City of Milwaukee Office of Early Childhood Initiatives • Clayton Early Learning Academy – EMBRACE
- Community Health Internship Program through Wisconsin Area Health Education Centers
- DentaMed • Educare Learning Network • Employ Milwaukee • Familia Dental
- Fathers Making Progress • First Stage • Heal the Hood • Hunger Task Force
- Ignite Child Development Services • LENA • LISC Milwaukee
- Marquette University Service • Marquette University Speech and Language Department
- Medical College of Wisconsin School of Pharmacy • Milwaukee Area Technical College
- Milwaukee Coalition for Children's Mental Health (part of Mental Health America of Wisconsin)
- Milwaukee Justice Center Mobile Legal Clinic • Milwaukee Public Schools
- Milwaukee Succeeds • New Threads of Hope • Next Step Clinic • Novir • Parenting Network
- School Community Partnership for Mental Health (part of Children's Wisconsin)
- The Literacy Lab and Leading Men Fellows • United Way of Greater Milwaukee and Waukesha County
- University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee • University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh
- UPAF Connect • Wellpoint Care Network
- Wisconsin Conservatory of Music • Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development



## Partner Spotlight: Novir

- A healthcare partner since 2020
- Administers year-round, on-site clinics for children and staff
- Lead testing for children
- Vaccinations (flu, Covid-19) for both children and staff
- A free service for all participants



# Community Engagement

We are grateful for the generous financial contributions of our donors, including individuals, families, community foundations, and corporations. Your gifts supported our high-quality early childhood education programming, family support services, and workforce development initiatives. Here we recognize all new gifts and pledge installments made between January 1 and December 31, 2023.

## \$500,000+

Greater Milwaukee Foundation  
Barbara Brumder Buzard Fund  
Bonnie R. and Carl A. Weigell Fund  
Charles Edgar Albright and Laura Uihlein Albright Fund  
Edmund J. and Nancy C. Vojtik Fund III  
ELM II Fund  
Hal and Joyce Kuehl Fund  
Jack and Mary Geilfuss Fund  
Nile and Carol Soik Family Fund  
Robert A. "Bo" Brandt Fund

The Anita Mankowski Educational Fund  
Walter and Olive Stiemke Fund

## \$250,000+

Buffett Early Childhood Fund  
Bader Philanthropies

## \$100,000 - \$249,999

Brook and Robin Lopez and the National Basketball Players Association Foundation  
Helwig Carbon Products  
United Way of Greater Milwaukee and Waukesha County

## \$75,000 - \$99,999

Northwestern Mutual Foundation

## \$50,000 - \$74,999

Herzfeld Foundation  
The Family of Mike Mastroianni

## \$25,000 - \$49,999

Brady Corporation Foundation  
Herb Kohl Philanthropies  
Joan and Fred Brengel Family Foundation  
Mary and Ted Kellner  
Molly and Michael Shapiro Family Foundation

PwC Charitable Foundation  
Red Nose Day Fund at Comic Relief US  
Richard and Anna Teerlink  
Walbec Group

## \$10,000 - \$24,999

A Friend of Next Door  
Donald and Donna Baumgartner  
Four-Four Foundation  
Greater Milwaukee Foundation  
Catherine and Walter Lindsay Foundation Fund  
Kathy's Parenting Fund  
Hepburn "Bootstrap" Foundation

## Help Support the "Be Like Mike" Fund

Mike Mastroianni loved being an early childhood educator. He worked in the field locally, having served in Milwaukee Public Schools, the Jewish Community Center, The Nurturing Nook, and the United Community Center.

Tragically, Mike's life was taken in November 2022 when he was struck by a car while riding his bike. In honor of his spirit of kindness and passion for teaching, his family created the "Be Like Mike" Fund at Next Door. So far, the fund has collected more than \$90,000 in donations. The hope is to grow this into a long-term, sustaining fund that can provide annual grants.

This fund is designated for the support and development of male early childhood educators at Next Door. We are striving to increase our team of male teachers, understanding how important they are as role models for our children.



Scan the QR code to give today, or contact Cristina at 414.999.2592 or [ccrogan@NextDoorMKE.org](mailto:ccrogan@NextDoorMKE.org).

Make a Gift



Hydrite Chemical Co.  
Hydrite Milwaukee  
Jane Bradley Pettit Foundation  
Kathy and Ian Lambert  
Lynn Nicholas  
Brenda and Matthew Levatich  
Ann Pieper Eisenbrown  
PNC Foundation  
Ralph Evinrude Foundation  
Shirley M. and Roger H. Schroeder  
The ROS Foundation  
U.S. Bank Foundation  
Bob and Brenda VanHimbergen  
We Energies Foundation  
Weiss Family Foundation  
William Stark Jones Foundation

Greater Milwaukee Foundation  
Chris M. Bauer Fund  
Hope H. Anderson Fund  
Mainman Family Fund  
Linda and Michael Groth  
Harley-Davidson Foundation  
Elizabeth Hauske  
Peter Hitler  
Alice Marchione  
Friends and Family of Mike Mastroianni  
Drs. David Shapiro and Jane Hawes  
William N. and Janice V. Godfrey Family Foundation Trust  
Wisconsin Medical Society Foundation  
James and Yvonne Zierner  
Zurn Foundation

## \$5,000 - \$9,999

A.O. Smith Foundation  
Kay and Fred Austermann  
Ginny Bowen  
Charles D. Jacobus Family Foundation  
Sigrid Dynek  
Foley Family Foundation  
Claire Fritsche

## \$2,500 - \$4,999

Joan Aker  
Bartolotta Restaurants  
Care-A-Lotta Program  
Meg Brzyski Nelson  
Michael Carter  
Christin Cleaver  
Joanne Danforth and Stewart Edwards

Sue and Thomas Doyle  
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Christine Radiske and Herbert Quigley  
Terri and Neil Siegel  
Timothy and Nancy Speaker  
Florence Steinberger  
Townsend Foundation  
John and Lisa Wilson  
Zurn Elkay Water Solutions

## Read for Children

In May 2023, Next Door launched its inaugural Read for Children event to promote youth literacy and raise funds for our Books for Kids program. Here are our first-year results.



 **5,927**  
books collected for our children

 **53,527**  
minutes of reading to our children by families, staff and volunteers

 **\$50,000**  
raised to support Books for Kids programming/operations



**\$1,000 - \$2,499**

A Friend of Next Door  
 Albert J. & Flora H. Ellinger Foundation  
 Kimberly Anderson  
 Thomas and Diane Arenberg  
 William and Marianne Arpe  
 Bank Five Nine  
 John Barrett  
 Cindy Benning  
 Boswell Book Company  
 Catholic Memorial High School  
 Charles D. Ortgiesen Foundation  
 Juliet Conlon  
 Mary and James Conlon  
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 Eileen & Howard Dubner Donor  
 Advised Fund of the Jewish  
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Edward and Joanne Filmanowicz  
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 Claudia Francis and Thomas Jensen  
 Greater Milwaukee Foundation  
 Asher and Susan Nichols Family Fund  
 Joan and Peter W. Bruce Fund  
 Randall Family Fund  
 Sterner Family Fund  
 Greater Milwaukee Association of Realtors Youth Foundation  
 Dr. Susan Gruber  
 Hammes Company  
 Hammes Family Foundation  
 Judy Hauser  
 Bradley Jansen  
 Neil & Terri Siegel Family  
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 Community Foundation of the  
 Milwaukee Jewish Federation  
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Jason and Terri Klein  
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 A.J. Star  
 Studio Gear  
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 Ms. Jennifer Verbrigghe and  
 Mr. Chris Engelken  
 Wauwatosa Savings and Loan  
 Foundation  
 Jack and Hester Werner  
 Weyco Group  
 Ann and George Whyte

**Thank you Volunteers!**

Here's a look at the amazing support of community volunteers during the 2022-2023 school year.



Scan the QR code to learn more about volunteering or contact Missy at 414.999.2529 or mhdzinski@NextDoorMKE.org.



**1,935**

hours preparing books for distribution to our children

**950**

Next Door students received holiday gifts from community donations

**670+**

items donated to our families, including school supplies, winter gear and household items

**652**

hours serving as classroom helpers

**\$500 - \$999**

Agapi's Friends Charitable Fund  
 David Allen  
 Baird  
 John and Maija Bentley  
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 Caren & Daniel Goldberg Donor  
 Advised Fund of the Jewish  
 Community Foundation of the  
 Milwaukee Jewish Federation  
 Walter and Aleta Chossek  
 David Colerez, Former  
 Next Door VISTA Volunteer  
 Rebecca Cook  
 Judith Croak  
 Cumberland School PTO  
 Daniel and Mary Czarnacki  
 Darren Davis and Bryna  
 Goeckner  
 Fred and Rosanna DeBoe  
 Stephen Fischer  
 Elizabeth Fitzsimmons  
 Carole and Adam Glass

Greater Milwaukee Foundation  
 Bechthold Family Fund  
 Bessie A. and Harold M.  
 Stratton Fund  
 Susan D. Mischler Fund  
 Greendale Community Church  
 Ginny Gribble  
 Nick Heger  
 Michele and John Hepp  
 Kenneth and Mary Lee Jacobs  
 Charitable Trust  
 Mark and Sara King  
 GG and VCM Kohlmann  
 Joseph Kohlmann  
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 Mathnasium of Whitefish Bay  
 Edgar Mayorga  
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 Joseph and Ann Wenzler  
 William and Gwendolyn Werner  
 Dr. James and Gracia Willis  
 Ken and Elaine Willis  
 Nancy Yttre

**Books for Kids**

We are grateful to our community volunteers who support our Books for Kids program. From hosting book drives to joining us for Read with Me, you all help children build home libraries and foster strong engagement in reading. Your contributions further allow us to bring more free books to children across Milwaukee through our Mobile Library and Community Library.



Scan the QR code to host a book drive or contact Jackie at 414.999.2509 or jshanti@NextDoorMKE.org.



**60,123**

books distributed to children at Next Door and the community

**121**

book drives hosted by companies, schools, congregations and service organizations

**1,896**

hours reading to our children in our libraries and classrooms during Read with Me



# Financial and Resource Stewardship

## 2022-2023 Operating Revenue

Year Ended June 30, 2023

Operating Revenues	Amount	Percentage
Federal & State	\$20,691,479	72.5%
Private Contributions	\$4,186,720	14.7%
Other	\$1,879,225	6.6%
In-Kind Goods & Services	\$1,775,929	6.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$28,533,353</b>	<b>100%</b>

## 2022-2023 Operating Expenses

Year Ended June 30, 2023

Operating Expenses	Amount	Percentage
Personnel	\$12,751,094	45.7%
Fringe Benefits	\$3,509,976	12.6%
Travel & Training	\$399,490	1.4%
Occupancy	\$1,901,815	6.8%
Equipment & Supplies	\$2,135,681	7.7%
Contractual	\$3,809,325	13.6%
Support Services	\$652,555	2.3%
Depreciation	\$649,961	2.3%
Interest	\$249,374	0.9%
In-Kind Goods & Services	\$1,775,929	6.4%
Other	\$87,572	0.3%
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$27,922,772</b>	<b>100%</b>



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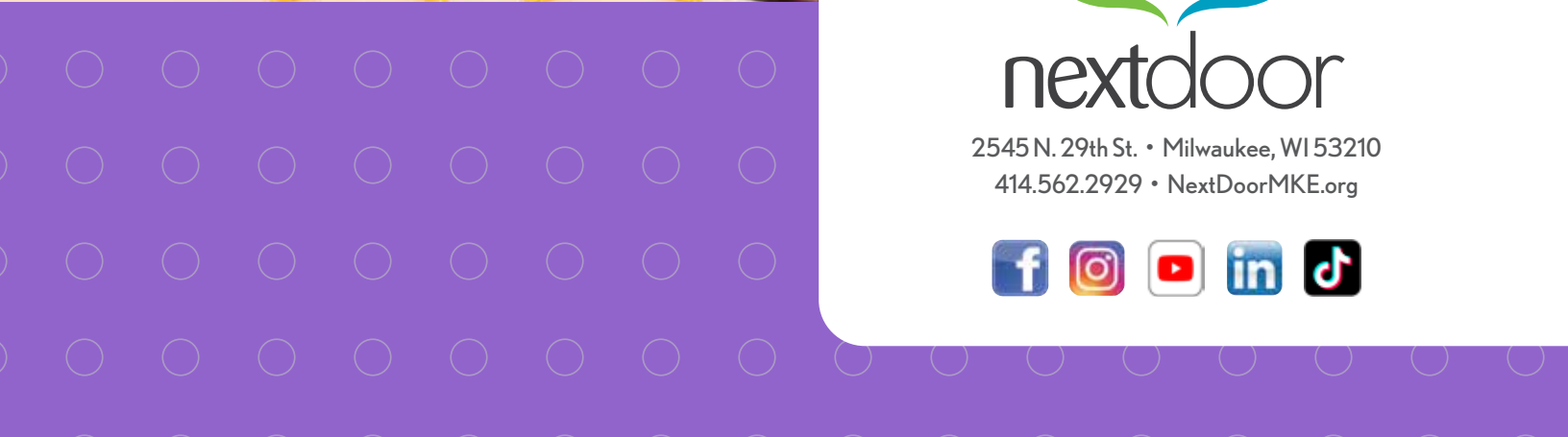






## Our Mission

Next Door supports the intellectual, physical and emotional development of children by partnering with their families for success in school and the community.



nextdoor

2545 N. 29th St. • Milwaukee, WI 53210

414.562.2929 • NextDoorMKE.org

