

# August marks Moonshot Radio's first anniversary



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**Vero Beach, FL** - The Kindergarten Readiness Collaborative (KRC) along with the Moonshot Moment Literacy Movement of Indian River County, The Learning Alliance, Planet Vero and PNC's Grow Up Great initiative collaborated to develop a radio program that features early childhood education champions who disseminate information to help parents during the first few years of their children's lives.

The show's mantra "where every moment is an opportunity to learn" was showcased as Dr. Nivea L. Torres, KRC Executive Director, hosted guests from around the community to engage in discussions with local experts on topics ranging from parenting resources, services, education and childcare tips during 45 unique interviews.

"We were so grateful to have two opportunities to be on Moonshot Radio," shared Jessica Schmitt, Literacy Services of Indian River County's Executive Director. "We were able to share our mission with a diverse audience, and the recordings have been wonderful to share with our donors and tutors to illustrate their impact. The awareness it brought to the community of our mission also helped bring in new support. KRC's partnership has been vital in serving families in our community with needed services."

KRC was founded when community partners began to realize that many local children were not ready for kindergarten. This lack of readiness directly correlated with a corresponding lack of focus on social/emotional, physical health and well-being along with cognitive, communication, and adaptive learning between birth and kindergarten. Research shows that childhood development between birth and age 5 is crucial as billions of neuron pathways are being formed in children's brains.

Torres noted that when she came to Vero Beach nearly two years ago, she observed the fantastic work going on in the community but realized that part of the community conversation needed focus on how to create synergy and eliminate duplicated services among these organic partnerships.

KRC is the direct result of conversations that began during the Moonshot Community Action Network (MCAN) gatherings in support of The Learning Alliance's mission to ensure that all children in the county can read on grade-level by the third grade.

“We call it Moonshot Radio because we’re partners of the Moonshot Moment, and we are extending the conversation for many partners beyond MCAN. We’re bringing it live to people, and we’re thinking about ways where we can better serve the early childhood sector in the communities and the families that we serve,” explained Dr. Torres.

“Moonshot Radio & TV is an exciting platform to shine the spotlight on local agencies, programs and services that make up Indian River County’s robust early childhood system,” said Shannon Maitland, Moonshot Radio & TV Executive Producer. “We are thrilled at the positive responses we’ve received from listeners and featured guests – with a reach of over 36,000 in our first season!”

“Our support of Moonshot Radio is a strategic investment in the future of Vero Beach preschoolers,” said Cressman Bronson, PNC regional president for Southeast Florida. “Bringing awareness about the importance of early education to this community is essential. Studies have shown the measurable impact school readiness has on the success of at-risk children in school and life. By providing instructive and thoughtful solutions for parents, caregivers and local organizations through Dr. Torres’ radio show, we’re supporting a solid foundation for the growth and success of local children, their families and ultimately, our economy.”

Looking to the future, Maitland said, “Moonshot Radio & TV is a win-win. Families and partners get information about things happening in their community, and it helps KRC fulfill our role of being a connector, a clearinghouse of information and an advocate for children. Season 2 will dive deeper into the great work being done locally, as well as the tremendous number of resources available for children and their families. With our forces combined, we are all making the future stronger for the next generation.”

While the program was initially geared toward parents in the lower socio-economic group, it became apparent that the information the KRC was sharing through Moonshot Radio benefits all parents, no matter the zip code.

“The message we’re sharing resonates with everybody in the community about the importance of early childhood education,” noted Torres. And that’s why the focus for the second season is to give parents a voice.

Be sure to listen for exciting news about KRC’s work in the Gifford community. Last year the nonprofit hosted its Learn to Play parent training sessions in Fellsmere and is now launching this element of its Family Engagement initiative in Gifford.

“We want to highlight and celebrate what’s happening at Dodgertown Elementary School, where they have created pathways from pre-school and VPK to kindergarten and beyond. It’s a thriving school, and we want to celebrate that,” shared Torres.

To learn more about the Kindergarten Readiness Collaborative, visit [www.krcirc.org](http://www.krcirc.org) or call 772-617-4350. Tune in every Thursday at 3 p.m. and Saturday at 7:30 p.m. on 107.9

FM, 101.7 FM and 1370 AM. Videos of all shows are available on [Livestream](#) and through the [KRC YouTube Channel](#).

### **About KRC**

The Kindergarten Readiness Collaborative is a local nonprofit working with over 50 partner agencies to help prepare children and their families for school and life. We proudly partner with the Moonshot Moment, transforming the next generation in Indian River County by having 90 percent of all students reading on grade level by the third-grade. For more information, visit the Kindergarten Readiness Collaborative website at <https://www.krcirc.org/> or call 772-617-4350.

### **About PNC Foundation**

The PNC Foundation, which receives its principal funding from The PNC Financial Services Group (pnc.com), actively supports organizations that provide services for the benefit of communities in which it has a significant presence. The foundation focuses its philanthropic mission on early childhood education and community and economic development, which includes the arts and culture. Through Grow Up Great, its signature cause that began in 2004, PNC has created a bilingual \$350 million, multi-year initiative to help prepare children from birth to age 5 for success in school and life. For more information, visit <http://www.pncgrowupgreat.com>.

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