

2020 VOICE for Children



Ms. Spina earned her MA in Early Childhood Education at Chestnut Hill College in Philadelphia, PA and is currently working towards her doctorate at the University of Pennsylvania. As the founder and executive director of Kinder Academy, Leslie's founding mission has been to deliver high-quality early childhood education to the diverse neighborhoods and families of Philadelphia.

In 2013, Ms. Spina founded and is the Co-Chair of Philadelphia for Early Childhood Education (PECE). This collaboration of early childhood advocacy groups and community members has the expressed goal of supporting additional high-quality early childhood educational opportunities for all Philadelphia's children. Leslie's support of and advocacy work with the United Way, Keystone Stars, Pre-K Counts and Pennsylvania Child Care Association continues to demonstrate her commitment to the children and families of Philadelphia.

Leslie has described the Kinder Academy philosophy as understanding and recognizing the value that the children, their families and the staff each bring to the equation and to celebrate the diversity that binds all of us together here in Philadelphia. Leslie firmly believes that this philosophy creates growth opportunities for not just the children, but also for the staff, the families and the community at large.

Leslie, and her Kinder Academy team have served thousands of families in Northeast Philadelphia and employ over one hundred teachers and staff. Her continued dedication and involvement in the City of Philadelphia and the State of Pennsylvania demonstrates that high-quality is not just a passing fad, but a societal imperative and responsibility that we collectively owe to our young children.

Everyone that has ever asked Leslie Spina about her work in early childhood education, has heard these passionate words each time. *"I love what I do!"*

