

School Companion Guide and Toolkit

Supporting Families to Activate and View Their Child's NYC Scholarship Account (Building Block 1)

About the Save for College Program and the “3 Building Blocks”

The Save for College Program: The [NYC Kids RISE Save for College Program](#) is a scholarship and savings program designed to make college and career training more accessible for all NYC public school students— regardless of family income or immigration status. Through the Program, every kindergarten student enrolled in a NYC public school (including participating charter schools) automatically receives an NYC Scholarship Account with an initial \$100 allocation on their behalf, unless their parents/guardians “opt out” of the program. Families can earn up to \$200 of additional scholarship funds toward this account in rewards, and communities can contribute additional money to groups of these NYC Scholarship Accounts to demonstrate their community’s support for every child’s success.

Schools are at the center of a neighborhood and are the entry point for families and students into the Save for College Program. The Program is meant to be a tool for elementary schools to advance their goals of college and career readiness, family empowerment, and strong family-community ties. The Save for College Program is also rooted in the principle that each community is unique and must have ownership in shaping the ways in which it interacts with the platform. For these reasons, the Save for College Program is designed not as an add-on or outside program that NYC Kids RISE “provides” and schools “host.” Rather, schools can incorporate the Program as a core component of their day-to-day operations and customize to meet the needs and desires of their own school community.

The “3 Building Blocks”: Once a student is enrolled in the Save for College Program, their family is provided with information to take three steps that will lay the foundation for how we all work together to build assets for their child’s future. These foundational steps are called the “3 Building Blocks,” and families earn a \$25 reward toward their child’s NYC Scholarship Account for taking each one:

- **Building Block 1:** Activate + View their child’s NYC Scholarship Account that has the initial \$100 allocation
- **Building Block 2:** Open + Connect a college and career savings account that they own for the benefit of their child
- **Building Block 3:** Make the first \$5 deposit into their connected account

After a family takes all three steps, they become eligible for additional rewards, including a “Savings Match” starting on the first day of 1st grade.

How to Use This Guide

Schools play a key role in implementing the Save for College Program by **supporting participating families to take the very first foundational step of activating and viewing their children’s NYC Scholarship Accounts (Building Block 1)**. It is our shared goal that every participating family activate and view their child’s NYC Scholarship Account by the end of their child’s 5th grade year, with 50% of families doing so during their child’s Kindergarten year.

Schools supporting families can occur in many ways, including:

- Sharing information about Building Block 1 and instructions for completion
- Supporting families 1:1
- Supporting families in small (or large) groups

This toolkit contains resources that schools can use to:

- Understand Building Block 1
- Support families to complete this foundational step
- Share directly with families so they can take this step on their own

A link to this toolkit is available on the [School Partners page](#) of the NYC Kids RISE website, where you will find other information and multilingual resources for school staff.

Important Reminders Before Using the Resources in This Toolkit

Additional Support from NYC Kids RISE

If a family has a question or concern that you cannot answer on your own, you can always encourage them to call the NYC Kids RISE hotline at (833) 543-7473 or to email us at info@nyckidsrise.org. The hotline and info email are resources for you as well. Please note: the hotline is operated Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday from 9AM to 5PM and Thursdays from 9AM to 8PM, not including holidays. NYC Kids RISE hotline staff speak multiple languages and also have access to interpretation services to support parents/guardians in their preferred language.

Keeping Student and Family Data Safe

In-Person Interactions

- Ensure parents/guardians use either your organization’s computer or their own personal device to complete the online process. Do not encourage parents to use each other’s devices.
- Use Incognito mode on the device’s web browser.
- Do not write down passwords and discourage families from writing down passwords.
- Do not look at the computer screen or keyboard at any point in the process during which the parent/guardian is entering or viewing personally identifiable information.
- Make sure families log out of their account before leaving the event.

- Close the web browser after you are done working with a family and open a new one for the next family.
- Ensure that only those with DOE Security Clearance have access to lists of Student ID Numbers.

Remote Interactions

- Make sure you verify the adult’s identity prior to sharing any information about the child.
- Adhere to your school’s policies when distributing student ID numbers.
- **Never complete Building Block 1 on behalf of a parent.** You can walk them through the steps, but you should not be creating a profile or completing the introductory survey for them in Savings Tracker using information provided to you by the parent.

The first two tools below - Building Block 1 Completion Checklist and Demo Video - can be shared directly with families. The additional tools on pages four and five are intended as tools for school staff as they provide ongoing support, education and outreach for families to complete Building Block 1.

Tools To Share With Families	
Tool	Description
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Building Block 1</u> <u>Completion</u> <u>Checklist</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>PDFs in 10 languages</i></p>	<p>This short document provides a list of steps for completing Building Block 1. You can insert it into a text message or email for families, or you can hand it out directly at an event. This checklist is also provided in the Welcome Kit that all participating families receive from NYC Kids RISE.</p> <p>This document is also accessible via: https://nyckidsrise.org/downloadable-resources/</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Building Block 1</u> <u>Demo Video</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>YouTube videos in 10 languages</i></p>	<p>Using visuals from the NYC Kids RISE website and Savings Tracker, this 7-minute demo video walks the viewer through each of the steps to completing Building Block 1. School staff can view this for their own understanding, and provide the link directly to parents to help them complete Building Block 1 on their own.</p> <p>These videos are also accessible via: https://nyckidsrise.org/get-started/activate-account/</p>

Tools for School Staff	
Tool	Description
<p><u>Building Block 1 Training Site</u></p> <p><i>Password: NYCKR2021</i></p>	<p>We have created this “training” website to give school staff hands-on practice with completing Building Block 1. Have the Building Block 1 Completion Checklist handy when you’re ready to practice, and walk through the steps on the training site.</p> <p>Please note the training website was created only for the purposes of practicing the steps to completing Building Block 1 so, other buttons and links on the site will not be active. Please do not share this site with parents.</p>
<p><u>Building Block 1 Troubleshooting Guide</u></p>	<p>This document was created as a tool for school staff supporting families through the technical aspects of completing Building Block 1. Read the instructions for tips and answers to common questions and problems that families encounter when completing Building Block 1.</p>
<p><u>35 Minute Save for College Program Intro Presentation + Script</u></p> <p><i>PowerPoints and Word Docs in 10 languages</i></p>	<p>This 35-minute presentation and accompanying script has everything you need to hold your own “stand alone” event (virtual or in person) about the Save for College Program. It covers basic information about the Program including what it is and how it works, an explanation of the scholarship and savings accounts, and will help you walk parents/guardians through the foundational steps. The presentation ends with a demo of how to complete Building Block 1 and information about how parents can get support from you and/or members of the school community team to do so. This resource contains both a PowerPoint deck with the introductory video embedded into it and a script. Customize it based on your school community's needs. Follow up after the event with instructions for next steps using the email or text message templates provided below.</p>
<p><u>5 minute Save for College Program Intro Presentation + Script</u></p> <p><i>PowerPoints and Word Docs in 10 languages</i></p>	<p>This 5-minute presentation and accompanying script can be incorporated into a regularly scheduled event or meeting to remind families about the Save for College Program and to contact their Parent Coordinator or NYC Kids RISE to take the next step. This resource includes recommended talking points and text/links to include in the chat (for virtual events). Customize it based on your school community's needs. Follow up after the event with instructions for next steps using the email or text message template provided below.</p>
<p><u>Scripts + Templates for Supporting</u></p>	<p>This extensive multilingual document contains scripts and templates that can be adapted and used in various types of communications with families, to help them understand and complete Building Block 1. It includes:</p>

Families to Complete Building Block 1

- **Individual Call Scripts:** Use this sample script to call families about the Save for College Program and to support them to activate and view their NYC Scholarship Account.
- **Robocall Scripts:** You can send this robocall to all parents proactively so they have instructions for activating and viewing their NYC Scholarship Account.
- **Email Templates:** Sample emails included can be used to:
 - Send an email to all parents proactively so they have instructions for activating and viewing their child’s NYC Scholarship Account
 - Send a follow up note if you call a parent and they say they want information in writing or will complete the step on their own, or
 - Send families follow-up information after they attended an event about the Save for College Program and Building Block 1.
- **Text Message Scripts:** A sample text-message that can be used to:
 - Send a text message to all parents proactively so they have instructions for activating and view their NYC Scholarship Account.
 - Send a text message as a follow up if you call a parent and they say they want information in writing or will complete the step on their own.
 - Send a text message after parents attend an event about Building Block 1.

What’s next?

Once a family completes Building Block 1, NYC Kids RISE will follow up to share information about how they can take the next foundational step in the program (Building Block 2). School staff can also use the Building Block 2 toolkit that will be located on the [School Partners page](#), to introduce them to this step.