

Operation Shoestring: An Overview

By Teaching Children and Inspiring Families,
Operation Shoestring Ensures We All Rise Together.

Our Purpose

Operation Shoestring provides year-round academic, social and emotional support to children in central Jackson from pre-K – 12th grade, while supporting and providing resources to their families. The aim is to empower the children and families we serve to create their own success, and that of their community, so we can all rise together.

Our Story

Founded in 1968 in response to the social struggles of that era, Operation Shoestring was born out of a desire by faith-based leaders to put their faith into action by uplifting children and families in our central Jackson service community, especially in the areas of education, health and economic self-sufficiency. Since then, Operation Shoestring has been at the forefront of efforts to improve the lives of the children and families we serve through afterschool and summer programs for kids, needed services and support for their parents, and more. Our core service community consists of the Georgetown and Mid-City neighborhoods bordering the southern end of Bailey Avenue in central Jackson, Mississippi.

Our Programs

All of our programs are centered around the children we serve. Through our work with our children's families, their schools, and other community partners, we work together to ensure their academic and personal success. Families are inspired, individuals are empowered, and the community rises, all around the needs of the child.

Afterschool/Summer Programs

Our afterschool and summer programs for pre-K – 5th graders help young people rise to their own best potential. Certified teachers, volunteers and community partners offer academic, social and emotional support to help our students find their way along the path of educational success and personal development.

Project Rise: Elementary

In partnership with Galloway and Brown Elementary Schools, our afterschool and summer program for pre-K - 5th graders provides academic enrichment using fun, hands-on activities and one-on-one tutoring. Shoestring's certified teachers and staff work with students' school day teachers and administrators to ensure we're meeting each child's specific needs in the most helpful way possible. Arts and cultural activities are woven throughout, with the ultimate goal of creating a solid foundation of caring and confidence that will support children as they grow.

Project Rise: Beyond Graduation

In partnership with Jackson Public Schools and ChildFund International, we provide administrative leadership and programming support for the JPS Academies of Jackson that serve 9th - 10th graders district-wide. By supporting the academies, we're able to ensure that our high schoolers receive the best college- and career-readiness training

possible through hands-on, small group learning activities that connect their strengths and passions with contemporary, viable career paths.

Youth Civic Engagement and Leadership Program

In partnership with Jackson Public Schools and ChildFund International, we're helping to cultivate young leaders through a civic engagement and leadership training program for a select group of middle and high school students from across the district. Through weekly meetings, intensive workshops, and field experiences such as participating in and facilitating community events, students learn to identify, organize and create constructive responses to obstacles in their lives, schools and communities.

Family Support Services

It's not enough to invest only in our children. To truly impact a child's future you must invest in their schools, their families and their community as well. This is what makes our work stand out from many others in our field. We get to know the families of the children that we serve, and develop individualized plans of action for helping to meet their needs. Programming for our families includes financial counseling, educational forums, workshops, social services and more.

Community Outreach

Operation Shoestring depends on partnerships with people and organizations from across Jackson to offer resources and expertise we can't provide on our own, especially in areas of healthcare, financial planning and social services. We're also a founding partner in the MS Statewide Afterschool Partnership that is being organized to support afterschool efforts across our state, and a partner in the city-wide Alignment Jackson initiative aimed at bringing together businesses, nonprofits and other community resources to support the success of Jackson Public Schools, so that all of Jackson's children can rise.

MS Afterschool Network

Operation Shoestring, serving as fiscal agent, is currently in the formative stages of leading the creation of a statewide afterschool network—the first of its kind in Mississippi—in order to establish standards, best practices and collaboration on a level never before achieved in our state.

Our Impact

How do we know what we're doing is working? It's often a tough task for nonprofits like ours to show definitive proof that our programs are making a difference, but here at Shoestring we take this challenge seriously. That's why we measure our results, whether that means using hard data like test scores, or personal feedback through surveys. We're constantly working to expand and improve how we measure our outcomes.

98% of Project Rise elementary students were promoted to the next grade level during the 2015-16 academic year.

93% of Project Rise 3rd graders passed the 'Third Grade Reading Gate' test during the 2015-16 academic year.

Our Funding

Operation Shoestring relies 100% on the financial support of generous donors and partners. The majority of our donations are private dollars from individuals, businesses, foundations, and houses of worship. We also receive some public dollars from government grants and sources.

How to Get Involved

Visit www.operationshoestring.org to sign up for weekly emails, get our newsletter, make a gift, and learn about volunteer opportunities.

Make an investment in the children and families we serve with a gift to Operation Shoestring.

Follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#) to see the daily impact your support makes on the lives of the children and families we serve.