About the Program

University of Pittsburgh Office of Child Development Family Foundations Early Head Start (FF/EHS) has been serving families in low-income communities in the city of Pittsburgh and Allegheny County for over 20 years. The program provides intensive home visiting services to expectant families and families with children ages 0-3 years. Services include health and development for infants and toddlers; and the promotion of the parent’s abilities to support their child’s cognitive, social, emotional and physical development in order for the child to be ready for school. The program continues to enhance its expertise in infant mental health, promoting healthy parent-child relationships, and preparing families and their children for success in school. The program has completed the fourth year of our five year grant project. In the spring of 2018 the program will begin the noncompetitive application process for our new five year grant project. In the past year we have fully implemented the research-based curriculum, Partners for a Healthy Baby. This new curriculum provides information to parents to work with their child between home visits. The curriculum also enhances the learning abilities of children to form a secure attachment with their parent, expand their curiosity and imagination, and improve language and communication skills. A healthy lifestyle for children and expectant moms is practiced as well as playing and learning in a safe home environment. As a child approaches transition from our program to a new preschool environment the child will have an understanding of what to expect based on the skills covered from the curriculum.

Highlights

Health and development of enrolled expectant families and children aged 0-3 is the primary goal of the FF/EHS program.

- 100% of enrolled children have a medical home and have a health insurance provider and 98% of enrolled children are up-to-date on their immunizations.
- Through continuing collaboration with Children’s Hospital Dental Clinic and Big Smiles of Pennsylvania 43 of our eligible 1 year old children received dental exams this year. All families and children enrolled in the program have access to a dental home and dental screenings.
- FF/EHS has recently partnered with Allegheny Link, a referral and information line for county home visiting programs. This resource is for housing, homeless services and disability programs with specialists who can work with parents and expectant families regarding child development, health and lifestyle issues, developmental screenings and curriculum.

Financial Report

The FY16-17 budget includes $4,100,554 federal funds and $180,000 through the generous support of The Heinz Endowments. $3,396,466 is budgeted for four sub awards for six sites. This includes the following:

- **Focus on Renewal** – $462,064 McKees Rocks
- **Community Human Services Corp** – $978,796
  $440,743 Hill District and $538,053 North Side
- **The Consortium for Public Education** – $1,465,274
  $967,108 Clairton, $498,166 East End
  Training & Technical Assistance $97,056
- **Turtle Creek Valley Services** – $392,276 Triboro/Braddock

The remainder is budgeted for OCD compensation, supplies, travel and space rental $705,088.

Annual Report—School Readiness Data 2017

From December 2013-December 2017 the program has collected child outcome data on 576 children with at least two completed assessments (OUNCE PROFILES). Out of those 576 children, 350 (61%) maintained a developing as expected rating across all developmental domains. 122 children (21%) improved at least one domain over time and 129 (22%) declined at least one domain over time. The data shows that the Social-Emotional and the Language domains are the areas that consistently have the highest percentage of decline. These two areas continue to be the focus of the EHS program’s service delivery.
Read Early and Often

Children Take Social Cues from Parents

Exploring Nature

Reading Together

Sibling Playtime

Making Art Together

Wonderful Expectation

Building Traditions

University of Pittsburgh Office of Child Development
Our Families
Making a Difference

How Family Foundations Early Head Start Makes a Difference in Family Life

When a friend told Gloria Morris about Family Foundations Early Head Start, she thought it was going to be a family therapy program. She had given birth to three children already so having some help as she prepared for another seemed like a good idea. Little did she know, that this program would be different.

Upon enrollment, Gloria found herself eight months pregnant, caring for a two year old plus three school aged children. She felt uncertain about the future. She was initially shy, anticipating that this program, like others, may ask a lot of questions and judge her. But, quickly her Home Visitor began to show her the way. The program was better than she expected. They did fun things like baby yoga and took pictures to document the event. They cooed at her baby boy and traced the hands of her toddler. They visited the site for socializations to be with other babies and their families. Occasionally, they went on outings in the community. It was fun. Gloria began to feel at ease and mix in with other families and staff members.

Gloria heard from her Home Visitor often between weekly visits to see how they were doing. Sometimes, it was just the opportunity she needed to talk about something that happened in her day. It helped her calm down. It helped her feel connected. It helped her to grow her support system. Gloria calls Family Foundations her “second family” and says that she “grew up” there.

Gloria is an active member of Policy Council and Vice President of her site’s Parent Committee. She participates consistently and has come to think of herself as “a Mother to the group.” Her willingness to help others has created trusting relationships and encouraged leadership skills that she feels will last beyond her time in the program. “Everyone has their flaws,” Gloria exclaims as she thinks back to her early days in the program. She recognizes the value of a trusted helper whether it is a fellow program participant, Home Visitor or Program Administrator. No matter who she encountered, they were willing to help.

The weekly home visit and it’s experiences are worth her time. She wants other moms just like herself to take advantage of what Family Foundations Early Head Start offers. Gloria is proud that being part of the program supports the choices that she has made for herself and her family.

Today, Gloria contemplates what transition from the program will be like for her and her family. She has almost a year to go and wishes it was longer. But until her time ends, she will help spread the word about the program so that other families just like hers can come to know Family Foundations Early Head Start. Maybe, they too will be lucky enough to find a “second family.”

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School Readiness Goals

**Social and Emotional Goals**
- Children will establish a secure attachment to their parents.
- Children will begin to develop and demonstrate a positive sense of self and express their needs and wants.
- Children will begin to develop and demonstrate control of their feelings and behaviors.
- Children will begin to learn and integrate routines and directions.

**Language and Literacy**
- Children will use receptive and expressive language and communication strategies in their home language.
- Children will understand and use oral language to engage in conversations.
- Children will use words to describe what they are thinking and doing.

**Approaches Toward Learning**
- Children will demonstrate interest, curiosity and imagination in exploring their world.
- Children will demonstrate persistence in learning and discovery.

**Cognition and General Knowledge**
- Children will engage in stories and books.
- Children will use their senses to discover how to make things work, what objects and people do and how they can make things happen.

**Physical Well-Being and Motor Development**
- Children will develop control of large muscles for movement, balance and coordination.
- Children will develop control of small muscles for manipulation and exploration.

**Health, Nutrition and Safety**
- Children and their family will practice a healthy lifestyle.
- Expectant parents will participate in prenatal care and healthy nutrition to ensure the best possible outcomes for baby.
- Children will play and learn in safe home environments.

**Transition**
- Parents will have a relationship with the pre-school setting in their community or school district.
- Children will understand what to expect in their new environment.

All goals are culturally sensitive and adapted to meet the varying developmental needs of children.

The program will aggregate child assessment data quarterly during the program year, analyze the data, share the information from the data with parents and community members and revise/add to the school readiness goals as the data shows a need.