About the Program

University of Pittsburgh Office of Child Development Early Head Start Family Foundations (EHS/FF) has been serving families in low-income communities in the city of Pittsburgh and Allegheny County for over 19 years. Due to the Federal Sequestration, the enrollment decreased from 310 to 300 for the 2013-2014 program year. The program provides intensive home visiting 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.

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

- 100% of enrolled children are up-to-date on their immunizations, have a medical home and have a health insurance provider.

Through continuing collaborations with Children’s Hospital Dental clinic and the State Dental Health Van, all families have access to early dental exams and care.

- 45% of age eligible children received dental exams. This is an increase from last year’s 39%. The program will to continue to work with families, dentists and communities to ensure all children at the age of 12 months / 1 year have access to dental care.
- 100% of enrolled children received a dental screening ad have a dental home.

As is shown in research, oral health is essential for the health and success of expectant families, infants and toddlers.

Financial Report

The FY 13-14 budget includes $3,774,702 federal funds and $213,728 through the generous support of the Heinz Endowments. $3,083.97 is budgeted for sub awards for six sites. The remainder is budgeted for OCD compensation, supplies, travel, and space rental.

Positive Interactions

Toddlers often seek verbal or physical approval from parents. This little girl is obviously pleased by the positive interaction with her father and the unspoken acceptance of her autonomy. Parents, too, are affirmed in the pleasurable responses received from their children. Such interactions support attachment and help children accept the norms and values presented to them by their parents as they search for their place in the world.

Read Early and Often

Even at this young age the baby is very engaged in looking at the picture book. Early literacy experiences give the foundation for later learning to read lessons in more formal early learning classrooms. And studies have also shown that storybook ready influences the attachment between parent and child. These shared experiences give them a common frame from which to view the world, have something to talk about or refer to, and most of all, enjoy the togetherness such events bring about.
Share a Snack
This family is able to take time out from a busy day to share a family snack together. Early Head Start provides healthy snacks during socializations. Children will often try new foods when others are eating them. Group snacks also dilute some of the battle of wills young children might engage in around food experiences. Parents can also get ideas about new ways to present snacks, and get to watch their children enjoy this eating event.

Role Playing
This young three year old looks very serious as she plays ‘going to the doctor’ with her mother. The doll stands in for her to get the shots and other treatment associated with medical care. This turns the little girl’s role from the passive ‘receiver’ now to the more active ‘doer.’ This ‘mastery’ experience is one of the values of role play. It also helps children better understand social and helper roles and provides a model for interactions with adults and community helpers in their world.

Children Take Social Cues from Parents
An unfamiliar adult enters the scene and the child is wary. The mother mediates this social event by offering a welcoming smile. The child feels the security of the mother’s arms, and is ready to give a welcoming smile, but watches for a while. Soon the child will notice the smile on the mother’s face and take her cue in welcoming the person.
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.
Our Families

University of Pittsburgh Office of Child Development
Family Meals Grant

In 2014 Family Foundations applied and was awarded a Family Meals Grant award funded by the Head Start Collaboration Office. This grant was awarded to five Head Start and five Early Head Start programs in Pennsylvania.

The project is intended to reach families with children under 5 years of age and enrolled in either the Head Start or Early Head Start programs. Registered Dietitians and the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Foundation developed the project materials.

The Family Meals Workshop is a cooking workshop for parents. Each workshop weaves in key messages of the Family Nutrition and Physical Activity survey. Our Family Foundations registered dietitian conducted four of these cooking workshops in 2014. The workshop entitled Family Meals, Making Easy Choices helped our families learn how to make a dinner in twenty minutes or less with typical items from their fridge and pantry. Also as a group the families and registered dietitian talked about the everyday struggles that families have such as, making sure that each child has a healthy breakfast, incorporating fruits and vegetables into meals and limiting sweets and candy and ideas for overcoming those struggles.

When looking at the surveys, most families have felt they were able to learn something new to incorporate healthy eating for their family after participating in this workshop.