

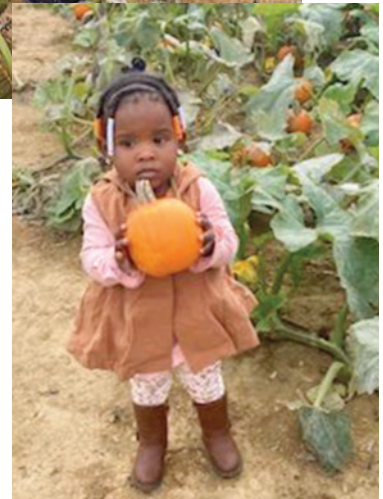


Family Foundations

Early Head Start

ANNUAL REPORT

2021 - 2022



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 25 years. The program provides intensive home visiting services to 310 expectant families and families with children ages 0-3 years. Services support development and health of infants and toddlers; and the promotion of the parent’s abilities to support their child’s social readiness in order to prepare the child to enter a Head Start classroom or preschool program. 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.

During the 2021-2022 program year Family Foundations Early Head Start program returned to full in-person services; including home visits, socializations, parent committee meetings and policy council meetings. Staffing and enrollment challenges continued during the 2021-2022 program year. Despite those challenges the program Home Visitors, Child Development Specialist, Parent Engagement Specialists, Mental Health Therapists, Program Coordinators and other staff continued to provide the highest quality service to children, families, and communities.

Partnering with Peers:

Family Foundations EHS has a new professional development initiative. Partnering with Peers (PWP) is a professional learning community created to support Family Foundations Early Head Start staff in developing their knowledge base of Infant Mental Health through guided lectures, community sharing and real-world applications.

Recently, 13 Home Visiting staff engaged with one another to learn about Infant Mental Health (IMH) from program

experts and how it improves Home Visiting practices. The staff were provided opportunities to share and reflect on the content that included Family Engagement, Child Development in Relationships and Trauma Informed Care to name a few of the twelve-week sessions.

The feedback about the experience was positive as it helped staff to better understand IMH in their work and to build relationships with other Home Visitors from other sites. This experience will be offered to Home Visitors on a continual basis. We are anxious to begin the next group in Spring 2023.

Financial Report

The FY21-22 budget includes \$4,570,980 Federal Funds. \$3,400,216 is budgeted for four sub awards for six sites. This includes the following:

- **Focus on Renewal** – \$488,532
- **Community Human Services Corp** – \$941,857
422,688 Hill District and \$519,169 North Side
- **The Consortium for Public Education** – \$1,431,915
\$860,472 Clairton, \$474,387 East End, Training & Technical Assistance \$97,056
- **Turtle Creek Valley Services** – \$537,912 Triboro/Braddock

The remainder is budgeted for OCD compensation, supplies, travel and space rental \$1,170,764

In April 2021 we received American Rescue Plan funds totaling \$464,215. \$323,962 of the funds were spent during FY21-22. The end date for the funds is 3/31/2023. These funds were budgeted for the six sites based upon funded enrollment numbers.

Annual Report—School Readiness Data 2022

During the 2021-2022 grant year, the program collected ASQ-3 screening data on 126 children and ongoing assessment data for 180 children. The ongoing assessment indicates that over 90% of these children are at low or no risk for social-emotional problems. In addition, the ongoing assessment indicates that over 65% of these children are at low or no risk for developmental delays in communication and language, physical, approaches to learning, and cognitive domains.

In Fall 2020, the program implemented the collection of the Ounce as an additional ongoing assessment tool for the program. Nearly 200 children received an ongoing Ounce assessment during the 2021-2022 grant year. The ongoing assessment indicates that over 75% of these children are developing as expected across all Ounce domains.



Highlights

Health 2022

- In 2021-2022, 98% of the children enrolled had a medical home and 82% had medical insurance. During this year, 86% of the children received immunizations but of these children 36% of them are past due according to the EPDST schedule.
- The Health Team was very active at reengaging with our families as the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic slowed down. The nurses performed home visits with expectant mothers. They provided education and guidance as to what to expect before and after giving birth. The nurses would make referrals to our Mental Health Specialist anytime they had concerns that a mother had postpartum depression or scored high on the CES-D screening. We hosted several events to support our mothers and expecting mothers throughout the year. One of the events, the nurse and the Health Coordinator celebrated and educated expectant mothers for two sites in the program. Another event at the site, we provided education and support to new mothers with babies a year old and under. At that event the nurse taught the mothers the importance of therapeutic touch by having them perform massages on their babies. At another event, the Health Team which consists of Registered Dietician, Nurse, and Mental Health Specialist for that site educated expectant mothers on the importance of eating healthy, medical support during and after the birth of their baby, and mental well-being. At this event, there were also presenters from the Maya Organization that educated the families about doula services and the services that they provide.
- As FF/EHS moved back to in person home visits in 2021 – 22, the Child Development Specialist also began in-person hearing and vision screenings. In preparation for the hearing screenings, an All-Staff OAE (Otoacoustic Emission) training was provided to all the staff of FF/EHS to educate them on the importance of hearing loss prevention. An additional hands-on training was provided to the nurses, Child Development Specialist and a few other FF/EHS staff on the OAE equipment that is used by the program.
- In 2021 – 22, FF/EHS continue their collaboration with Children’s Hospital of Pittsburgh – Dental Department in efforts to ensure that children have access to a dentist as soon as a child has erupted teeth. A collaboration with Golden Onsite Dental which is a mobile dental unit was established providing more dental exam opportunities to FF/EHS families. 71% of the children enrolled in FF/EHS had dental examinations over the course of the year.
- In the height of the COVID-19 pandemic we learned how valuable virtual meetings could be. In 2021 – 22 there were two virtual Health Services Advisory meetings. During the first meeting, the Director of Maternal Infant Health of Allegheny Health Network shared with our Health Services Advisory Committee (HSAC) about the programs offered to mothers and babies. The second meeting was a discussion around Father Engagement presented by the Outreach and Engagement Specialist/Trainer of Allegheny Family Health Network. Both events were well attended and very informative.
- FF/EHS started a new partnership with the Maya Organization. This organization provides doula services to pregnant moms at little to no cost. It’s mission to serve pregnant moms in communities of the underserved and marginalized works hand in hand with the families in FF/EHS.



“BRAVE— Hope and Greatness to Accomplish Dreams”

B.R.A.V.E group is a collaboration between the MH Team and Health Services. Each letter represents a word that symbolize hope and greatness in our participants. **B** – Bold, **R** – Resilient, **A** – Aware, **V** – Victorious, **E** – Excellence.

The collaboration wanted to create a way to support families in our Early Head Start program affected by personal losses during the pandemic and families who were feeling isolated, alone, and many without support.

The collaboration focused on the physical, emotional, and mental health of our families during COVID-19. We had conversations with families who shared how they felt overwhelmed with caring for children being home schooled, to the lack of having no adult conversation during the day. Through those conversations, the collaboration created the B.R.A.V.E group, a peer-to-peer support group based on families' need for connection during the pandemic.

We started out with small virtual groups that consisted of 3 participants and grew into in-person groups consisting of almost 20 participants across all six sites.

Participants engaged in therapeutic group activities and discussions that were powerful and insightful. As the participants began sharing, lasting connections were made. The participants were laughing together, crying together, and creating a sense of family and friendship, that for some has transformed into an added support person outside of the group.

Some of the group topics discussed were – Surviving COVID-19, Who Am I Inside and Out: 3-part series on Trauma, and Vision Boards. The group meets bi-monthly, 11am – 1pm. FF/EHS provides transportation and childcare for those who need it and a nutritious lunch. Also, participants created a B.R.A.V.E tee-shirt that many of them wear during the group.

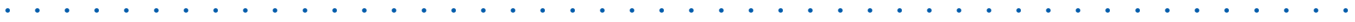
We have gotten positive feedback from the group participants as they share what they are learning in the groups with their Home Visitors, other families in the programs, their own families' members, and Policy Council. They have expressed excitement and anticipation for the next schedule group. We even have a participant who went to Bali and was determined to take a photo with her B.R.A.V.E tee-shirt on, to show her personal growth.

We are hoping as we continue the B.R.A.V.E groups that the participants continue to grow personally, gaining insight into their lives and generating healthy changes that inspire and create positive habits for them that their children will imitate. Also, our hope is that the connections that have been formed are lasting and utilized when challenging times happen in their lives. Lastly, the impact from the discussions will be a catalyst that each participant uses to move throughout this world knowing that they are more than B.R.A.V.E enough to accomplish their dreams. ■





Family Foundations Early Head Start Families





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.



Early Head Start is a grantee of the University of Pittsburgh Office of Child Development. It is administratively housed in the University of Pittsburgh School of Education and is located at:

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