In February 2015, the US Department of Health & Human Services awarded The Ohio State University a five-year Early Head Start Child Care Partnership (EHS) grant to create a model program that would improve the well-being of children, particularly those at risk, six weeks through age four. Since then, we’ve formed robust partnerships between higher education, community agencies, eleven child care centers, and eight family child care providers to improve the quality of early childhood education and provide comprehensive services for 160 infants and toddlers in Columbus’ most vulnerable neighborhoods.

And it’s working. In 2019, a new grant was awarded to continue our efforts through 2024. What have we done over the past year? We’ve leveraged existing community services that provide medical, dental, hearing, vision, mental and behavioral health, nutrition, and early intervention services. We provided tailored, practiced-based coaching to improve teacher/child interactions in the classroom. We improved learning spaces through creative hands-on environments where new approaches are encouraged. We supported educators to further their careers with certifications, professional development, and funding resources. We’ve connected families to resources including housing stability, workforce development, continued education, and financial security. The staff at The Ohio State University remain committed to innovation and continue to use data to drive decision making in their work to support children, families, and communities on their path to success.

I’m pleased to share this profile of who we are and what we’ve accomplished. We are deeply mindful that we could not have achieved all we have in 2019 without the expertise, counsel, and support of our many university and community partners. We are grateful for these gifted and dedicated colleagues. They make our work more effective, more rewarding, and more exciting. We also are grateful to the child care centers and family child care providers who provide exceptional care and continue to strive to do better. Finally, the guidance of our Policy Council and Governing Board provide great direction and oversight for the program.

As we look ahead to the challenges and opportunities in the coming program year, we’re encouraged to know that we are not just teaching children the basics of early childhood education to prepare them for school... we’re teaching them the basics to prepare them for life. Together, we will continue to help caregivers struggling with poverty ensure that their children engage in life-long learning while strengthening their stability and economic outcomes.

Sherrie Sutton, M.Ed. LPCC, Director
The Ohio State University Early Head Start Partnership Program
about the program

MISSION:
Through robust partnerships with university and community agencies, we improve the quality of early childhood education and comprehensive services for infants and toddlers in Columbus’ most vulnerable neighborhoods.

VISION:
To ensure that all caregivers engage their children in life-long learning while strengthening their stability, economic outcomes, and well-being.

GOALS:
- Increase opportunities for parents to become partners to encourage greater involvement in the program and their child’s learning.
- Maintain existing community and university partners to provide high quality comprehensive services as well as identify any gaps to leverage new partnerships.
- Create a professional development framework based on developmentally appropriate best practices to enhance classroom quality and student achievement.
- Implement data-driven decision making for continued quality improvement and growth.

DID YOU KNOW?
The Bipartisan Policy Center in Washington, D.C. ranks The Ohio State University’s program model among the nation’s 12 best within Early Head Start Child Care Partnership grantees to innovate and solve local problems.
provider success

**Child Care Centers**
- Columbus Early Learning Center – Champion, 4 stars
- Columbus Early Learning Center – Main, 5 stars
- Creative Child Care – East, 5 stars
- Creative Child Care – North, 5 stars
- Fresh Start – Broad, 4 stars
- Fresh Start – Vaughn, 5 stars
- Kid’s Care Academy, 5 stars
- Schoenbaum Family Center, 5 stars
- South Side Learning Center, pending review
- Starting Point, 5 stars
- YMCA Future Scholars Learning Center, 4 stars

**Family Child Care Providers**
- Teri Allen, 3 stars
- Trina Averette, 2 stars
- Alana Barnett, 3 stars
- Hattie Hudson, 5 stars
- Esther Jefferson, 5 stars
- Marcia Jones, 3 stars
- Cheryl Odom, 5 stars
- Lori Wilson, 4 stars

**Step Up To Quality**
Child care quality, accessibility, and affordability are critical concerns for families, especially those experiencing poverty. In Ohio, child care quality is regulated and monitored through Step Up To Quality, a tiered rating system that compensates providers with additional funding as they earn more stars (1-5). A star rating ensures that a provider offers a safe, caring, nurturing environment for children. By July 2020, all state providers must be star rated in order to receive Publicly Funded Child Care funds from the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services. We’re proud that 95% of our EHS providers maintained or improved their ratings in 2018-2019, a testament to their overall quality.

**Practice-Based Coaching**
Our child care centers and family child care providers are best when they apply an always learning, always growing mindset. And it’s paying off. In 2018-2019, teachers received practice-based coaching to improve their skills. Coaches collaborated with teachers, supporting them in improving or refining their teaching practices. Together, they assessed needs, set goals, and created action plans. EHS teachers’ scores in social-emotional support improved from 68% to 83%.

**Ready for School**
The EHS approach to school readiness means that children are ready for school, families are ready to support their children’s learning. Physical, cognitive, social, and emotional development are all essential ingredients of school readiness. These goals are aligned to the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework, Ohio’s Early Learning and Development Standards, Creative Curriculum®, and the Quality of Caregiver-Child Interaction for Infants and Toddlers.

**Caregiver-Child Interactions**
The Quality of Caregiver-Child Interactions for Infants and Toddlers (Q-CCIIT) is a research-based, observational tool that measures the support that caregivers provide. On a scale from 0-7, our EHS teachers scored:
- 6.55 for social-emotional
- 6.41 for language and literacy
- 6.44 for cognitive development

83% of EHS classrooms have teachers with a Child Development Associate Certification or higher

89% of EHS providers have a 3-star rating or higher (on a scale of 1-5)
2018-2019 SCHOOL READINESS GOALS

- **Approaches to Learning – 84% met or exceeded**
  Goal: Child develops coping strategies to manage feelings when playing with other children.

- **Social & Emotional Development– 84% met or exceeded**
  Goal: Child understands their own and others’ feelings, regulates emotions appropriately, builds relationships with others, and interacts in groups.

- **Language & Literacy – 88% met or exceeded**
  Goal: Child enjoys listening to books and speaking their ideas and feelings with others.

- **Cognitive – 96% met or exceeded**
  Goal: Child independently discovers problem solving as they interact with materials and people.

- **Perceptual, Motor and Physical Development – 93% met or exceeded**
  Goal: Child gains control of their body and meets physical needs, such as feeding and dressing themself.

**Training and Translation**
In October 2019, EHS held a Getting in Tune teacher training on responsive caregiving with infants and toddlers. Teachers learned the ability to recognize, read, and interpret cues from children; how to respond positively to a child’s needs; and how to help each child build tolerance for stimulation and new experiences gradually.

Quorum E-Learning memberships were purchased for EHS teachers which included over 140 hours of high-quality, interactive professional development trainings available 24/7 to meet Step Up To Quality standards and personal career goals. Over 100 courses were completed by 20 EHS teachers.

Early childhood educators are hungry for professional development. In June 2019, EHS partnered with Ohio State’s College of Education and Human Ecology’s Schoenbaum Family Center for their annual Summer Institute, a professional development event for educators and administrators serving children birth to age five. Our teachers benefited from national speakers, breakout sessions, interactive activities, and an end-of-day appreciation event.

Creating high-quality classroom conversations are all in a day’s work for EHS Education Coaches. Stacy Orbaker presented *Coaching in ECE: Impacting Teacher Practice through the Partnership Lens* at the Ohio Association for the Education of Young Children conference in April. Attendees explored why relationships are key to impacting teacher practice in the coach role.

**Child-Led Learning**
Last summer, Reggio-inspired outdoor spaces were created at Marcia Jones’ family child care home. The new hands-on environment validates students’ work and supports each child to discover themself and the world around them through art, music, and play.
Ensuring that infants and toddlers have equal access to early childhood education and comprehensive services, takes more than one organization. That’s why the heart of our model is a strong collaboration with many partners. During 2018-2019, these partners provided vital services to EHS families:

- **Action for Children** – offers training and technical assistance to child care providers and assists Family Child Care providers pursuing Step Up To Quality rating. Assists families with finding child care.
- **Center for Healthy Families** – provides comprehensive services for pregnant and parenting teens. Refers parenting teens to EHS for child care.
- **Children’s Hunger Alliance** – assists family child care providers in meeting and maintaining the nutrition requirements for Ohio Healthy Programs designation.
- **Columbus Public Health** – assists child care centers in meeting and maintaining the nutrition requirements for Ohio Healthy Programs designation.
- **Community Properties of Ohio (CPO)** – provides subsidized housing and supportive services to their residents including linkage to EHS for child care.
- **Directions for Youth and Families** – provides social workers who recruit, enroll and offer support to EHS families by connecting them to community resources including housing stability, workforce development, continued education, and financial security.
- **Franklin County Board of Developmental Disabilities** – assists in early intervention and support of children with developmental delays. Provides training and technical assistance to EHS providers.
- **Franklin County Department of Job and Family Services** – assists families in applying for and maintaining Publicly Funded Child Care (PFCC). Provides training for EHS directors, agency partners, and staff to support families.
- **Franklin County Family and Children First/Help Me Grow** – assesses children with developmental concerns and creates plans to help families find a successful learning environment for their child.
- **Moms2B** – provides comprehensive support for pregnant and parenting mothers and fathers through their child’s first year of life. Works with EHS to gain the trust of families to encourage enrollment in child care.
- **Nationwide Children’s Hospital School Health and Mobile Care Units** – provides children access to well-child checks, immunizations and sick visits through twelve Primary Care Centers located in the neighborhoods where our families live. Offers two mobile units to go to the EHS child care centers to keep infants and toddlers healthy and up to date on well-child checks and immunizations.
- **Nationwide Children’s Hospital Dental Clinic** – provides EHS children with complete dental exams every six months along with parent education regarding oral health.
- **New Directions Career Center** – provides comprehensive workforce development and career counseling for women.
- **Ohio State University College of Education and Human Ecology** – places undergraduate students in EHS classrooms to help them gain classroom experience and learn about the effects of poverty. Also pairs dietetic interns with child care centers and family child care providers to assist with family engagement surrounding nutrition.
- **Ohio State University College of Nursing** – reviews children’s health histories to assure they are up to date and not in need of any follow up.
- **Ohio State Department of Speech & Hearing** – provides EHS children with hearing exams and follow up.
- **Ohio State University Nisonger Center** – provides developmental screenings for infants and toddler suspected of having a delay, serves as a child development resource, and supports families through the referral and evaluation process.
- **St. Vincent Family Center** – provides early childhood mental health assessment and referral services to EHS providers and families.
Comprehensive Care
Children have their teeth brushed daily in EHS classrooms. In addition, a Nationwide Children Hospital dentist and/or dental hygienist provide comprehensive dental exams every six months for children enrolled in EHS. Since the dental exams began in 2016, data shows a much lower incidence of cavities and need for treatment with children enrolled in EHS (5%) compared to children of the same age that visit the NCH Dental Clinic (30%). With the help of a grant from Delta Dental, NCH Dental Clinic staff, Beth Noel and Carlo Corral’s 2019 delightful book, *Early Start to a Healthy Smile*, describes the dental exam process for EHS children and their parents. This year, the book will be translated into Spanish with plans for a wider distribution.

Parent Resources
Ohio State’s College of Nursing received a grant from the Hillman Foundation to pilot The Chicago Parent Program at Fresh Start Learning Academy. Training was provided for 25 educators and social workers. The 12-week evidence-based parenting program is designed to meet the needs of a culturally and economically diverse audience.

Clearer Futures
According to the American Optometric Association, comprehensive eye exams are recommended beginning at six months of age to ensure infants and toddlers have healthy eyes to see and learn. Our developing partnership with Ohio State’s College of Optometry ensures that children will have a clearer and brighter future. The pilot program will begin in the fall of 2019 with optometrists providing thorough eye exams for EHS infants and toddlers.

Student Investment
EHS internships give the College of Education and Human Ecology’s dietetic interns the chance to test-run the knowledge they’ve gained while learning new skills in the process. Through the guidance of college nutrition experts, Children’s Hunger Alliance, and Columbus Public Health professionals, nine dietetic interns spent last fall and spring semester working with center and home providers reviewing weekly menu selections and creating family engagement activities to better educate EHS parents on healthy meal choices at home.

**ABOUT CHILDREN IN THE OSU-EHS PROGRAM:**

- **195** received well-child checks*
  *some received more than one
- **0%** infant mortality rate within the OSU-EHS program
- **78%** of infants and toddlers received dental exams
- **96%** completed hearing exams
- **10%** had developmental delays
- **286** number of children and families served*
  *represents 1% of eligible children
- **1%** of Franklin County’s 20,000 eligible children served
- **100%** average monthly enrollment

*Dr. Gail Whitelaw, Clinical Associate Professor, Director of Ohio State’s Speech-Language-Hearing Clinic*

Last year, we were able to provide hearing exams to 96% of children enrolled in Early Head Start. The referrals from our exams addressed medical and audiological issues. Since conductive hearing loss has a significant role in speech, language and literacy delay, early exams are critical for developmental progress. We know the more children hear, the more they learn.

“Dr. Gail Whitelaw, Clinical Associate Professor, Director of Ohio State’s Speech-Language-Hearing Clinic”
Our comprehensive approach finds us not only working with children—but also with their caregivers. It’s one reason why EHS parents serve on committees, participate in classes and workshops on child development, and volunteer in the program. Policy Council is made up of parents who have children enrolled in program along with community representatives. These members are directly involved in decisions that improve overall program operations and gives them the opportunity to build leadership skills and advocacy experience in the field of early childhood education.

> Last year, EHS parents volunteered 8,341 hours to the program. <

The Conscious Discipline Parent Education Curriculum strengthens the school-home connection by enabling our centers and family child care providers to offer caregivers solutions for social-emotional learning, discipline, and self-regulation challenges. It is a proven, research-based, comprehensive approach that empowers parents with skills that create a happier, safer, and healthier home environment.

Jennifer Johnson, EHS Parent Ambassador traveled to Washington, D.C. and spoke to legislators on the importance of high-quality, affordable early childhood education. In its sixth year, the Head Start ambassador program encourages parent advocacy and leadership through participation in events, training at a local, state, and national level so caregivers can be a voice for their children and others.

As a single mother with a toddler and preschooler we faced many challenges last year including a death in the family, homelessness, incarceration, low-income, and financial insecurity. I didn’t know how I was going to pay for rent, food, and child care expenses.

Then I heard about the Early Head Start Program. They connected me with family care child provider Alana Knox-Barnett, and social workers through Directions for Youth and Families. The program provided my family with financial assistance along with access to community support. They invested in us as a “whole,” focusing on our emotional, physical, and mental well-being.

I had peace of mind of knowing my children were receiving high-quality child care. I felt empowered because despite my struggles, they were in a stable learning environment where they were being nurtured and loved.

– EHS parent, Dana Little
the team

Leadership

Michelle Dunlap, Grant and Fiscal Manager
Don Fuzer, Principal Investigator
Latoya Jackson, Education Coach
Stacy Orbaker, Education Coach
Sherrie Sutton, Director
Melanie Tracy, Service Integration Coordinator
Lisa Welsh, Lead Educational Specialist
Jessica Woodruff, Data Analytics & Compliance Manager
Erin Woodson, Data and Project Coordinator

Yolanda Burgess, Chair
Former OSU EHS Parent
Executive Assistant, SPPlus Corporation

Bernadette Mazurek Meany, PhD, RN, CPNP/PMHNP, FAANP, FNAP, FAAN
The Ohio State University College of Nursing, Associate Vice President for Health Promotion, University Chief Wellness Officer, Dean and Professor, College of Nursing, Professor of Pediatrics & Psychiatry, College of Medicine

William J. Martin II, MD
The Ohio State University College of Public Health Dean and Professor

Rondal (Ron) L. Ransom
Nationwide Financial Vice President, Business Performance Excellence

Roger A. Rennekamp, Co-Chair
The Ohio State University College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences Associate Dean, Director

Dennis J. Sykes
The Ohio State University Early Childhood Quality Network Director (Retired)

Policy Council

Allyson Eads, Chair
Kamiyah Mitchell, Co-Chair
Mariyah Mitchell, Secretary
Jennifer Johnson, Community Representative

Board

Melissa Martinez Bondy, LLP
Bricker & Eckler, Partner
Senior Attorney, Education Law

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Over half of the EHS annual 3.1 million budget was distributed last year to our providers. These locations received funding for classroom environments, education curriculum and materials, books, toys, and playground equipment to improve the quality of education they offered.

Audit Opinion on Each Major Federal Program
An Independent Auditor’s Report, submitted through the Office of Sponsored Programs by PricewaterhouseCoopers concluded that The Ohio State University complied, in all material respects, with the types of compliance requirements referred to in the OMB Uniform Guidance that could have a direct and material effect on each of its major federal programs for the year ended June 30, 2019.
To assess our work and continually improve, the Early Head Start staff facilitated a meeting in January 2019 to include community and university partners, child care providers, policy council, governing board, and parents. We discussed what was working well, challenges in the program, and suggestions for the coming year. University partner, audiologist and Director of Ohio State's Speech-Language-Hearing Clinic, Dr. Gail Whitelaw shared her experience with EHS while parents spoke about the positive impact the program had on their families. A few months later, EHS staff held a planning retreat to energize and focus our efforts. As we look to the next grant cycle through 2024, we continue to strive for excellence, using data to drive our decisions. Our team’s work is accomplished with the thought that every child deserves high-quality early education and access to comprehensive services, regardless of their zip code.
The Ohio State University
Early Head Start Partnership Program

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