



Gulf Regional
Early Childhood Services

2018 ANNUAL REPORT

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A MESSAGE FROM GULF REGIONAL EARLY CHILDHOOD SERVICES' PRESIDENT

GRECS works in some of the poorest areas of our community, where it is hard to miss signs of neglect and dwindling resources. Many times, the children who live in these communities carry the burden of generations of poverty, often compounded with poor health and limited education. Still, we see children and families find the strength and seize the opportunities to beat the odds every day.

The greatest successes occur at the intersections of our programs – when we combine best practices from a wide range of services to maximize the positive impact. This means that children's health isn't isolated, but embedded in our educational programs. It means that high quality early learning experiences aren't reserved for a select few. As complex as poverty can be, we are diversifying and combining innovative solutions so children and families can fight back.

GRECS also has many opportunities to work with families and programs that are fortunate enough not to be stricken by poverty. This work has validated what early childhood educators have long known - ALL children are born learning and what they learn in those first few years can change the course of their lives. From brain development and school readiness to economic impact and the support for working families, the benefits of early childhood education can not be overstated. Regardless of economic status, race, or gender, high-quality early care and education is a crucial component of a child's healthy development.

Because of the unique intersections between our programs, we've grown as a trusted partner with state agencies, local early childhood education programs, foundations and companies looking for innovative solutions to Alabama's evolving social challenges. In the following pages, discover and celebrate the ways that children and families have overcome complex challenges with your support. The future looks bright for our community's vulnerable children and families thanks to the intersections of hope, ingenuity and expert care.

Sincerely,



Wendy McEarchern, President





2018 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

EARLY HEAD START - Comprehensive services for infants and toddlers of families who live in poverty

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS - Face-to-face workshops and training events; Online and distance learning courses for CEU credit; Quarterly newsletters; Reproducible resources for parents and early childhood education professionals

THE RESOURCE PLACE - A lending library of developmentally appropriate materials, teacher workroom and reusable resource materials

ALABAMA PATHWAYS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT REGISTRY - Support services for state-wide professional development registry for those programs eligible to participate in Alabama Quality Stars

CARING FOR THE CAREGIVER - Programs to prevent the abuse and neglect of children

READING IS FUNDAMENTAL - Early literacy initiative that provides books and resources to over 2,000 children annually

2018 Early Head Start Policy Council

Charlene Atkins

Candice Bend

Senita Cole

Sophia Cross

Carolyn Douglas

Rosa Epps

Jessica Griffin

Cheryl Gwin

Gloria Hill

Joneice Johnson

Sommerlyn Johnson

Kristen Kuzia

Diane McCaskey

Rosa Monteiro

Shanice Millhouse

Karis Moore

Shanadia Quinnie

Shannon Richardson

Courtney Robinson

Kierra White

Early Head Start Partner Centers

Dearborn YMCA Center Tot Time

Goodwill Easter Seals
Child Development Center

Highpoint Christian School & Daycare

Lighthouse Academy of Excellence #1

Lighthouse Academy of Excellence #2

Mt. Ararat Learning &
Development Center

Nina Nicks Joseph
Child Development Center

Small Wonders
Childcare & Learning Center

Soaring Eagles
Child Development Center

Starlight Learning Center

Stork's Nezt Preparatory
Child Development Center



Family Success Story -

From EHS Parent, To EHS Teacher

"I felt as if I was at the end of this tiresome, bumpy road. I was weary and frustrated from all of the stumbling blocks I had encountered. As a single mom working a full-time minimum wage job and raising my children, I knew that I needed to make a change, but how? "

One morning, as I dropped my son off in his Early Head Start classroom, with tears in my eyes, you could see the exhaust and frustration all over my face. When my son said, "Mommy I wish you could hang out in my classroom like my friend's mommy does", emotions took over my body. It was at that very moment that I knew I had to make a change for the better. I was constantly working long, hard hours at endless jobs, which left limited time for me to take part in my child's formative years. I broke down crying and explained my circumstances to the educational staff. The EHS center director and my son's EHS teacher pulled me aside, encouraged me and directed me on more positive aspects in life.

The Center Director, Mrs. Shytiria Barnes forwarded me information about how to obtain my GED. I am forever grateful for Mrs. Barnes and the EHS teacher Mrs. Tracey Payne. Those ladies stayed on me until I obtained my GED. It had been a decade long process for me trying to reach this goal. The two "cheerleaders" in my corner stayed on me until I enrolled in the course, studied and took the GED exam. I felt like a weight had been lifted off my shoulders. This was the first obstacle that I had overcome. The GED instructor informed me that not only did I pass the GED exam, but I had the highest scores on the exam.

The next time I entered the classroom with tears in my eyes, they were tears of joy. I began to see the light that was shining at the end of my cold, dark tunnel. My EHS support team or as I like to call them my cheerleaders encouraged me and told me it does not end here. I am now enrolled in CDA courses and I will not stop there once I obtain my CDA. This current grant year is my first year as an EHS teacher. I am enjoying every moment in the classroom and of course the time I have available to be a part of my children's life.



*LaTressa McMillian,
Mt. Ararat Learning & Development Center*

Ms. McMillian's story is an inspiration to us. We first met her as an Early Head Start parent at Mt. Ararat Learning & Development Center. As a single mother working full time, she did everything in her power to be involved in her children's lives. Through her volunteer position as a Policy Council Representative, we could clearly see her drive and commitment to provide a better life for her family from the very beginning.

From obtaining her GED to securing a job that offers upward mobility, higher wages, and better hours, Ms. McMillian's story is truly one of great success. We are proud to be a part of this story and others like it through the work we do with children and families.

Early Head Start Child & Family Demographics

Number of Funded Enrollment Slots - 192

Total Cumulative Enrollment - 245

Enrollment	Number	Percentage	Age of Children	Number	Percentage
African American	183	75%	Under One Year	76	32%
Asian	6	2%	One Year Old	95	39%
Biracial / multi-racial	15	6%	Two Years Old	70	29%
White	40	16%			
American Indian / Alaskan Native	1	1%			
Other	0	0%			

Total Families - 206

Family Composition	Number	Percentage	Family Incomes	Number	Percentage
Single Parent Household	182	88%	Eligible (at or below poverty level)	171	70%
Two Parent Household	24	12%	Foster	5	2%
Grandparent / Relative	8	4%	Homeless	16	7%
Foster	5	2%	Public Assistance	53	22%

The above figures are representative of two grants. Figures from the Alabama Partnership Grant are not represented .



100% of children enrolled in Early Head Start have an identified medical and dental homes.

Child Outcomes

On average, every GRECS EHS child met 87% of the developmental milestones for his/her age and stage of development during the 2017 - 2018 year. The chart below shows the percentage of milestones met, broken down by developmental domain across all child care partner sites.

Age: Birth to 1 year olds Domain	Average % of Children Meeting Expectation
Social Emotional	80%
Physical	90%
Language	75%
Cognitive	89%
Literacy	88%
Math	87%
Average	85%

Age: 1 to 2 year olds Domain	Average % of Children Meeting Expectation
Social Emotional	87%
Physical	95%
Language	78%
Cognitive	85%
Literacy	80%
Math	90%
Average	86%

Age: 2 to 3 year olds Domain	Average % of Children Meeting Expectation
Social Emotional	94%
Physical	96%
Language	82%
Cognitive	88%
Literacy	89%
Math	83%
Average	89%



*The benefits of
high-quality programs from
birth through age five do not
end with one child,
but instead extend to their
family, now and in the years
to come.*

Spotlight on Community Partners

GRECS EHS's differentiated family support approach requires that a diverse range of community partnerships are in place in order to meet the needs of the program's most vulnerable families, assure high quality evaluation and treatment, secure support for families of children with chronic health conditions and special needs, as well as assist families with self-identified self-sufficiency goals and aspirations. These community partnerships, at a minimum, are structured to facilitate families' referrals by EHS staff. Research shows that community partnerships:

1. Increase the earnings and assets of low-income families.
2. Improve health and educational outcomes, as well as link families to needed support and benefit services.
3. Improve community development, collaboration among service providers, and promote resident involvement in neighborhood affairs.

The chart below reflects a sample of the types of services EHS families received through the program's established community partnerships.

Number of Families with an Identified Need - 252

Number of Families who Received Services - 246

Sample of Services Received	Number of Participating Families
Parenting Education	120
Asset Building Services	113
Health Education	87
Job Training	30
Adult Education	11
Emergency or Crisis Intervention	11
Mental Health Services	8
Housing Assistance	7
Domestic Violence Services	5
English as a Second Language Training	2



Professional Development Events

Decades of research have proven it's important to capitalize on the small window of time when young children learn to talk, learn through play, and begin to develop social skills need to get along with their peers. During these critical early learning years, qualified early childhood professionals accelerate how our children learn, develop, and build the skills necessary to get along with others and succeed in school and in life.

A highly-qualified early childhood educator - one who knows how to create a dynamic, accountable learning environment - is at the center of a high-quality early learning experience. Research has shown that children who attend high-quality preschool are better prepared to be successful in school and in their future careers. The economic and community benefits of high-quality early learning and development experiences for all young children cannot be emphasized enough.

That is why GRECS is dedicated to supporting the continuum of quality across all areas of learning, by increasing the quality of early childhood education programs and of the secondary education programs that educate our workforce. Our professional development opportunities are designed to help educators master content, hone teaching skills and address challenges faced in the classroom all in accordance with developmentally appropriate practices. GRECS' educational programs meet the highest standards for continuing education and training, earning our agency the distinction of being awarded Accredited Provider status by the International Association of Continuing Education and Training, the accrediting organization for Continuing Education Training credit (CEU).

460

Credit Hours of Training Offered

561

Technical Assistance Visits in Early Learning Programs

5210

Issues of "Early Learning News" Newsletters Distributed

8300

Copyright-Free Resources Distributed to Parents & Educators

2830

People that Attended Training Events



Financial Overview

REVENUE

Early Head Start (Federal)	\$3,705,146	51%
Early Head Start (State)	\$1,273,808	18%
In-Kind	\$1,155,707	16%
Quality	\$ 607,582	8.4%
United Way	\$ 66,043	0.9%
Registry	\$ 55,000	0.8%
Caring for the Caregiver (CTF)	\$ 27,915	0.4%
Office of School Readiness Pre-K	\$ 105,950	1.5%
Other Contrib / Local Programs	\$ <u>206,690</u>	2.9%

TOTAL REVENUE \$7,203,841



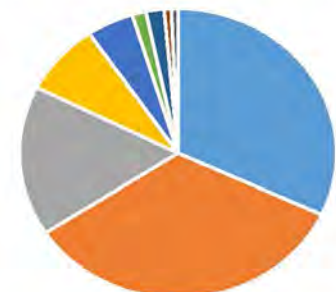
■ Early Head Start (Federal) ■ Early Head Start (State) ■ In-Kind
■ Quality ■ United Way ■ Registry
■ Caring for the Caregiver (CTF) ■ Office of School Readiness Pre-K ■ Other Contrib / Local Programs

EXPENSES

Salaries & Benefits	\$2,205,726	32%
Contractual	\$2,336,118	34%
In-Kind	\$1,155,707	17%
Supplies	\$ 554,181	8.0%
Occupancy/Rent	\$ 331,368	4.8%
Professional Development	\$ 97,698	1.4%
Professional Fees	\$ 127,779	1.9%
Travel	\$ 50,353	0.7%
Other	\$ <u>47,131</u>	0.7%

TOTAL EXPENSES \$6,906,061

Expenses



■ Salaries & Benefits ■ Contractual ■ In-Kind
■ Supplies ■ Occupancy / Rent ■ Professional Development
■ Professional Fees ■ Travel ■ Other



An annual A-133 financial audit was conducted by Smith, Dukes & Buckalew, L.L.P. in accordance with Government Auditing Standards and indicates no finding or questioned costs. As a result of the most recent monitoring review by The Administration for Families and Children, GRECS was designated as a program in good standing and had no findings of non-compliance with the Federal Head Start Performance Standards.



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