

THRIVE AND GROW

All children need strong families,
good health, quality learning
opportunities and supportive
communities in order to thrive and
become productive adults.



2020-2021 ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT

United Way Miami
Center for Excellence in Early Education



VISION

All children will have access to the highest quality early care and education, so they can have the best possible start in school and in life.

MISSION

Elevate the quality of early care and education in Miami-Dade and beyond.

Three guiding principles support the Center's mission:



Educate

empower individuals working with children



Demonstrate

model evidence-based practices



Advocate

offer a platform for policy change

FROM OUR LEADERSHIP

Dear friends, colleagues, supporters and other champions for children,

As we prepare to celebrate the 15th year of the United Way Center for Excellence in Early Education in 2022, we look back with pride at the Center's work during the 2020–2021 academic year, and look ahead with excitement to the next 15 years of investing in high-quality early care and education.

One in three young children in Miami-Dade is not prepared to succeed in school when they start kindergarten. The Center aims to change that.

Last year, Center staff and volunteers continued to rise to the challenges posed by COVID-19, demonstrating incredible resilience and flexibility. They created new ways to engage with children remotely. They ensured that our education professionals could access training and resources. They maintained direct contact with the families we serve, helping them address their needs. Adaptability was paramount.

Our work has never been more important. COVID-19 particularly affected Miami-Dade's minority communities, with 29% of Hispanic and 31% of Black households with children experiencing three or more hardships. For instance, one in five Black or Hispanic households with children didn't have enough food to eat.

We know these hardships have the potential to negatively affect a child's learning and development, both immediately and later in life. The Center's team, the programs the Center serves and the professionals the program educates work to provide positive educational and care experiences that can mitigate some of these hardships.

Thank you to each of our staff members and volunteers, to the early child care and education professionals and staff who strive to provide quality opportunities to young children, and to the families who helped their children thrive.

And thank you to all of our supporters for everything you continue to do to help all children in our community access quality early learning.

Lilia DiBello, Ed.D.

Chair, United Way Center for
Excellence in Early Education

Joe Zubizarreta,

President & CEO, United Way Miami

RESEARCH

Making the case for high-quality early education



Set a strong foundation.

Decades of research have shown that high-quality education in the earliest years of a child's life has a significant positive impact on success in school and in life.



More than 1 million new neural connections are formed every second during the first two years of life.

These connections build the foundation upon which all learning, behavior and health depend. They are formed based on a child's early life experiences and environment. Quality early learning experiences influence the brain much more easily than later attempts to rewire it.



Early education is an important opportunity.

At **18 months**, disparities in vocabulary begin to appear, spurred by disparities in early learning opportunities.

By **age 4**, a child from a low-income home will have **heard only 2 words for every 7** that a child in a higher-income home has heard.

Children have a **90%–100%** chance of development delays when they experience significant adversity early in life.



Just one year of high-quality, center-based early education changes a child's life.

After one year of enrollment, at approximately age 2, low-income toddlers in such programs have:

- Significantly higher English language skills
- Fewer parent reports of problem behaviors
- More positive parent-child interactions



Early investment pays long-term dividends.

Every **\$1 invested** in early education programs for low-income children typically yields **\$4–\$9 in returns** to society.

BY THE NUMBERS

When children receive high-quality early education, they are:

31%

less likely to need special education classes

4.6

times more likely to have earned a college degree by age 30

1/2

as likely to have served jail time by age 40

18%

more likely to be employed

24%

more likely to own a home

25-year-olds who participated in early education as high-risk children reported **less depression and more perceived competence** than those who did not.

Children who attended early education programs are significantly **more likely than their peers to be employed** at age 27 and at age 40.

LAST YEAR, THE CENTER:

- Improved the skills of **783** professionals
- Provided **1,924** hours of professional learning
- Improved quality of services in **114** early education programs
- Impacted the lives of **5,894** young children

EDUCATE

Empowering educators to elevate early education quality

The United Way Center for Excellence in Early Education is a hub for professional learning about early education. Early childhood professionals, families, community leaders and others all benefit from skills-building courses and knowledge-building resources. They can then better understand and deliver high-quality early care and education to Miami-Dade children.



Early Head Start – Child Care Partnership Training & Technical Assistance Program

Through this federal grant, we are able to provide innovative educational and professional learning initiatives dedicated to elevating the quality of early care and education. Through professional learning programs, the Center shares those practices with adult learners including families, educators and early care and education providers.

	PD Hours Offered	Participants
Teachers	68	162
Directors	18.5	20
Staff	23	27
National CDA	120	15 Teachers 11 Parents/Guardians
Total	229.5 Hours	235 ECE Professionals

Educare Best Practices

Strong parent-child relationships improve children's development and school readiness. The Center offered a new training in intensive family engagement, part of the Educare Best Practices Training series. Trainers from United Way's Center for Excellence in Early Education and Educare Miami shared the latest research and approaches for intensive family engagement. These practices can ultimately lead to improved education, health, social and economic outcomes for the families served.

Connecting Assessments with Intentional Teaching (CAIT)

The Center manages, coordinates and delivers high-quality assessment training and implementation support to early childhood educators and administrators through CAIT. Professionals working in low-income areas of Miami-Dade receive training on how to use assessment results to improve students' outcomes and progress. CAIT is part of a four-year, \$1 million-a-year grant from The Children's Trust.

During 2020, CAIT renewed its contract with The Children's Trust and expanded services to 29 additional sites.

CAIT served a total of **66** sites and managed **3,987** Teaching Strategies GOLD portfolios.

United Way Miami Pathways to Quality

To elevate the quality of classroom instruction, United Way Pathways to Quality works with early care and education professionals in 20 early childhood programs across Miami-Dade. United Way provides professional learning opportunities and coaching that enhance the skills of early care teachers and program administrators. Pathways to Quality leverages United Way Miami funding and the expertise of the United Way Center for Excellence in Early Education to curate intentional professional development.



Comcast Early Learning Technology Program

Through hands-on experience, this program gives early learning professionals training and support to integrate technology into their classrooms. They learn instructional strategies that incorporate traditional and emerging technologies and digital media tools. This English and Spanish program, provided with support from Comcast, includes resources participants can share with colleagues and immerses them in a supportive community of early child care educators.

DEMONSTRATE

Modeling best practices through the Center for Excellence in Early Education Demonstration School, Educare of Miami-Dade

Children ages 6 weeks to 5 years old attend the CFE Demonstration School, Educare of Miami-Dade. This mixed-income model environment allows the Center for Excellence in Early Education to implement and observe research-based practices in early learning.



Since its founding in 2007, the Demonstration School has transitioned **428** young children to kindergarten.

The Demonstration School builds its curriculum on 10 key practices:

- ▶ Meaningful interactions and environments that let a child know they are safe, they belong and they are valued.
- ▶ Continuity of care, with each child in the same group for their first three years of life, minimizing transitions during this critical development period.
- ▶ Dual-language learning to expose children to a second language.
- ▶ Early literacy experiences with books and stories.
- ▶ Family engagement to promote and enhance relationships and share strategies and information that will help promote the child's learning at home and in school.
- ▶ Inquiry-based learning guided by an investigation or questions posed by the children.
- ▶ Scientific and mathematical thinking, including promotion of nature as a context for learning and offering learning opportunities in science, math, ecology, biology, art and horticulture.
- ▶ Social-emotional development through an evidence-based curriculum that promotes and develops skills such as attention to oneself and others, tolerance for differences, and the capacity for each person to grow.
- ▶ Technology as an additional medium for solving problems, communicating and researching, as well as for documenting the learning process.
- ▶ Wellness, including school menus that help address nutrition-related health problems, nutritional consulting with families and health trainings.

New Educare Governance Council

During 2021, Gladys Montes, group vice president, United Way Center for Excellence in Early Education, joined the new Educare Governance Council. The council expands Educare sites' ability to help advance Educare's work and impact the early education field.



Early Head Start – Child Care Partnership (EHS-CCP)

EHS-CCP helps early child care centers, early education centers and family child care homes elevate the quality of their infant and toddler programs so children are prepared to successfully transition to preschool.

The federal government’s Office of Head Start completed a successful audit of the Center’s EHS-CCP program. It recognized several program innovations that have improved early care and education in Miami-Dade.

*Last year, the partnership raised the quality of early care and education for **520** children at **19** partner sites in high-need, low-income Miami-Dade neighborhoods.*

Program Administration and Operation

The Center administers early childhood programs and day-to-day operations at these EHS-CCP sites:

- Ethel Beckford/Richmond Elementary
- Lillie C. Evans
- Carol City Elementary
- Lotus Village

EHS-CCP Sites:

SOUTH DADE COUNTY

Florida City

Mitchell Large Family
Child Care Home

Homestead

Tiny Kingdom Learning Center

Richmond/Perrine

Ethel F. Beckford/Richmond
Primary Learning Center

CENTRAL DADE COUNTY

Coconut Grove

St. Alban’s Child Enrichment
Center / Coconut Grove

South Miami

St. Alban’s Child Enrichment
Center / South Miami

Little Havana

Bright Steps Academy
Las Americas Learning Center

NORTH DADE COUNTY

Allapattah

Easterseals South Florida

Brownsville

A New World Academy III

City of Opa-Locka

Osman Family Day Care Home

Miami Gardens

Carol City Elementary School
Easterseals (Ophelia Brown)
Tiny Kingdom II

Norland

A New World Academy II

Overtown

Lotus Village Early Care and
Education Program

West Little River

A New World Academy
Clements Family Day Care Home
Lillie C. Evans K–8 Center

“When 2-year-old Elizabeth began attending the EHS-CCP program at Easterseals South Florida, it was a challenge for her to focus and follow direction. During her first year, she got to know and recognize her teachers and her classmates. She learned how to follow a daily routine filled with activities, nap time and a regular eating schedule.

“During her second year, Elizabeth’s education included manipulatives, textures, art, music, reading and science activities.

Today, she communicates effectively with her peers and teachers. She energetically participates in activities, free play and playground groups. She is on track to successfully complete her third and final year in the United Way Miami Early Head Start program.”

– Christine Sainvil,
Social Worker, Child Development Center, Easterseals South Florida



Early Head Start Home-Based Program

The Center helps children and families experiencing homelessness through visiting programs and group socialization opportunities that improve long-term educational outcomes.

ADVOCATE

Moving the needle on early education and family support issues

Working with 28 United Ways in Florida, as well as other local and national early care and education partners, the Center for Excellence in Early Education aims to improve the lives of young children and their families. All children should have access to high-quality early care and education, health care, and family support services.



Florida Legislative Actions

The most extensive early childhood reform in years passed unanimously in the Florida legislature. It reformed the governance structure of early learning in Florida, moving the Florida Office of Early Learning into the Department of Education and formally creating the Division of Early Learning. The legislature's commitment to accountability and alignment of standards across the early learning system in Florida is expected to be an enormous positive change. This alignment has been bolstered by reforms to standards in assessment, aligning them from voluntary prekindergarten through eighth grade.

The Florida Legislature fully funded United Way Miami's priority health issue: providing Medicaid coverage for postpartum women for a full year after giving birth. Previously, both mother and baby had only two months of coverage under Medicaid.

Parent Ambassadors

Within the constraints of the COVID-19 pandemic, members of the Parent Ambassadors, a program sponsored by the Educare Learning Network, met with Florida state representatives to advocate for high-quality early learning for all children. They particularly emphasized that opportunities offered to families in federally funded Head Start and Early Head Start programs are not available to those in state-funded school VPK programs.

Funding Partners

Drew Altman
ArtesMiami, Inc.
Barney Barnet – Reading Pals
The Batchelor Foundation
Manuel J. Becerra
Yolanda and Jeffrey Berkowitz
The Children's Trust
City of Miami
Laura Coulter-Jones
Annelies Da Costa Gomez
Dosal Tobacco Corporation
Edward Easton
Andreas Ehlebracht
Norma E. Fernandez
Fisher Island Philanthropic
Florida Blue
Florida Power and Light Company
Claudia Grillo
Helios Education Foundation
Kennebec Valley Community
 Action Program – Parent Ambassador
Kislak Foundation
Elizabeth Leight
Lotus Village
Judith and Robert A. Maynes
Miami-Dade County Public Schools
Kerin McCarthy
Kimberly Mendelson
Lisa Mendelson
NBC Universal Telemundo Enterprises
Start Early (previously The
 Ounce of Prevention)
Padron Family Foundation
Jorge Perez
PNC Foundation
Claudia Puig
Betsy and George Sherman
Start Early – Red Nose
Jo and John Sumberg
University of Miami – Jump Start
Randi Wolfson

Program Partners

Allied Therapy Professionals Inc.
Behavior Aid Solution
Behavioral Family Solutions
Borinquen Medical Center of Miami-Dade
ChildPlus
Chrysalis Health

Conscious Discipline
Dr. Joy Galliford – Music Partners
Dr. Michelle Hernandez – PsycMiami
Early Discovery Program
Early Steps North Dade Program “UM Early Steps”
Epilepsy Foundation Florida
Family Central – Parenting Curriculum:
 The Incredible Years
Fatherhood Task Force of South Florida, Inc.
FIU Center for Leadership
Florida Asthma Coalition
Florida Department of Health in Miami-Dade County
Florida Occupation Protection and Resource Center
 (Florida OPRC)
Florida Shots
Fruity Veggie
Iheoma U. Iruka, Ph.D. – RACCEE
Jessie Trice Community Health System
Kids Life Solutions
La Fuerza de Creer Family Engagement Workshops
 for Families
Leading for Children
Learning Genie
Like Minds
Miami Dade College – Mission North Star
 – Expanding Opportunities for Young Families
Nicklaus Children's Hospital Dental Mobile
Outreach Communities – New Life Resources Inc.
Pro Solution Training
Push Hard CPR
Quality Consulting & Research Group
Sandra Ampudia – Sabiam Consulting
Sertoma Speech & Hearing Foundation of Florida, Inc.
Shawn Brown – Role Model Professional Development
Southernmost Coast Early Steps Program
Spiridis Consulting
Start Early (formally The Ounce of Prevention Fund)
Teachstone
The Children's Movement of Florida
The Children's Trust – The Book Club
The Children's Trust-Miami Dade Grade Level Reading
 Campaign Ready, Set, Go Miami! Early Literacy Initiative
The Trauma Resolution Center
Together for Children
Trauma Resolution Center
UConn| University of Connecticut – National Family
Development Credential (FDC) Program
University of Miami and The Center for Autism and
Related Disorders (CARD)
University of Miami Pediatric Mobile Clinic
University of Miami, Families First Parenting Groups
University of South Florida, College of Public Health
Yes Institute

United Way Center for Excellence in Early Education Committee

Lilia DiBello, Chair
Lisa Mendelson, Co-chair
Miriam Altman
Arielle Ashkenazi
Michael Burke
Natalia Cap
Annelies Da Costa Gomez
Marisol Diaz
Luis Hernandez
Elizabeth Leight
Judith Maynes
Christina Perez
Christine Hughes Pontier
Maite Riestra Quintero
Bevone Ritchie
Paola Roman
Terry Rutherford
Brent Saiontz
Rachel Spector
Randi Wolfson
Pamela Vasquez (EHS-CCP Policy Council Rep.)
Kimberly Mendez (Policy Committee Rep)

United Way Miami Center for Excellence in Early Education



United Way Miami

@unitedwaymiami



unitedwaymiami.org