



## University of Alabama at Birmingham Early Head Start Annual Report 2021-2022





The **University of Alabama at Birmingham Early Head Start Program (UAB EHSP)** is based on the program operation cornerstones outlined in the Head Start Program Performance Standards to promote school readiness of enrolled children through:

- education and child development,
- health, and
- family and community engagement.

The UAB EHSP uses these cornerstones as the foundation for providing high quality, comprehensive services to infants, toddlers and pregnant women. The overarching goal of the UAB EHSP is to provide the highest quality early learning experiences (school readiness) and child health services to infants and toddlers who live in high-risk environments. In order for these services to be maximally effective, family and community engagement services are provided to empower the families to focus on providing high quality early learning experiences for their children, enhancing family strengths, as well as addressing family needs.

**Mission:** The mission of the University of Alabama at Birmingham Early Head Start Program (UAB EHSP) is to form partnerships with families to support child development and family goals. Through continuous training and professional development and in collaboration with the community, we strive to enhance opportunities for children and families.

**Established:** The UAB EHSP was funded in 1998 to serve 88 infants and toddlers and their families or pregnant women challenged by poverty. The program currently provides services in Jefferson, St. Clair, and Walker Counties.

Please enjoy reading about all the wonderful and exciting work that the UAB EHSP has engaged in with children and families during this program year.

*Kristi Carter Guest*

Kristi Carter Guest, PhD

Director

UAB Early Head Start Program

## Program Highlights for 2021 – 2022

### ***Program Updates Relevant to COVID-19:***

- Head Start Forward campaign to fully resume in person services occurred on September 1, 2021.
- Health Policies and Procedures related to COVID-19 were approved by the Policy Council.
- UAB EHSP has provided intermittent Education Toolkits, Health Services Toolkits, Mental Health Toolkits, Tablets, and Family Meal Boxes to program families due to the pandemic.
  - **Socialization/Education Toolkit Item Examples:** *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, The Very Hungry Caterpillar, Tale of Peter Rabbit, Brush, Brush, Brush, & Head Shoulders Knees and Toes* books, Hungry Caterpillar and Brown Bear stuffed animals, crayons, coats and mittens for Winter Wonderland (coordinated by Shanté Hamm)
  - **Family Meal Boxes:** holiday meals prepared by Publix were given to feed families during the Thanksgiving holiday (coordinated by Shanté Hamm)
  - **Health Services Toolkits:** supplies were dropped off on families' porches who had been impacted by COVID-19. Supplies included contactless thermometers, disinfectant spray, disinfectant wipes, hand sanitizer, gloves, and masks (coordinated by Shanté Hamm).
  - **Mental Health Toolkits (families and staff):** Mercury notebook with stylus pen, stress relieving adult coloring book, colored pencil pack, stress relief ball; armband with self-care isn't selfish (just staff) (coordinated by LaTanya Dawson).
  - **Tablets:** every program family that desired to have a tablet to use during their time with our program was loaned a tablet. These were purchased with COVID funding from the Office of Head Start (coordinated by Kristi Guest).
  - The UAB EHS program is continuing to use our Facebook page as a mechanism to provide online resources to families. Shante' Hamm is leading these efforts.
- **THANKS to ALL STAFF and FAMILIES for your patience as we fully resumed in-person services this program year.**

### ***Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment & Attendance (ERSEA):***

- **Eligibility:** 67% of enrolled participants were income-eligible for the program; 11% qualified as receiving Public Assistance (*SNAP/SSI/TANF*); 4% were foster children; 13% were homeless; and 5% were over-income.
- **Recruitment:** The program maintains an active waiting list to replace any dropped participants. August 2022, we transitioned 30 and ended the program year with seventeen eligible participants. This was an ERSEA staff transition year for recruiting, but with the assistance of a Public Health intern, our Excel waiting list got a 100% functional overhaul.

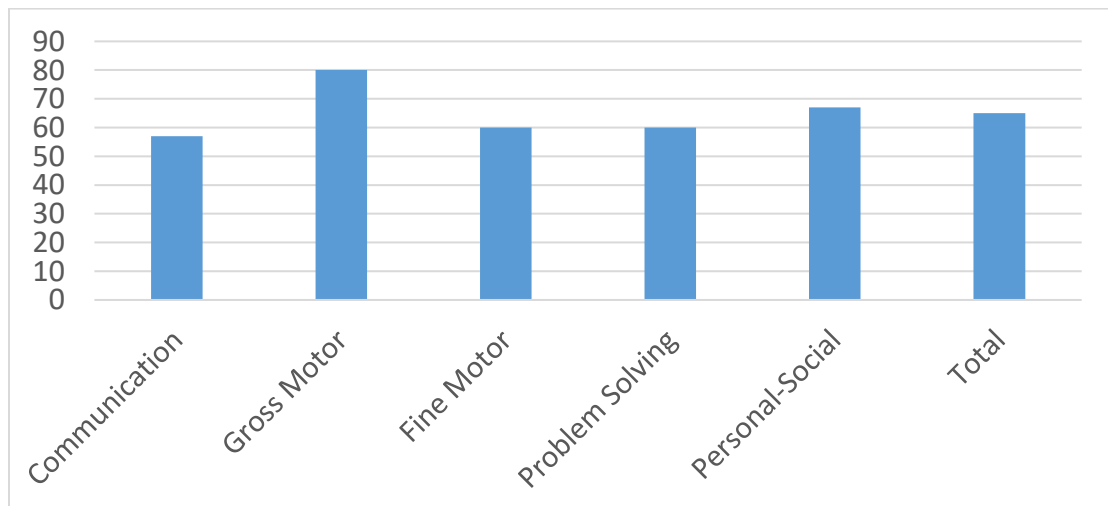
- **Selection:**
  - Selection Criteria ranking format approved by both the Governing Body and Policy Council in October 2021.
  - The average number of selection points for an eligible participant remains at 60.
- **Enrollment:**
  - Funded to serve 88 participants total, 80 home-based and 8 center-based.
  - September 2021 Head Start Enterprise System (HSES) Enrollment Report - 69; October 2021 HSES Enrollment Report – 72; November 2021 HSES Enrollment Report – 80; December 2021 HSES Enrollment Report – 84; January-February 2022 HSES Enrollment Report – 85; March 2022 HSES Enrollment Report – 87; finally reaching full enrollment (88) in April 2022!
  - Cumulative enrollment reported on the Program Information Report (PIR) for 2021-2022 was 111, fifteen pregnant women and 96 children.
  - Bilingual Family Partner maintained a full caseload of dual language learners (DLLs): 14 children cumulative; 14 children receiving services at the end of the program year.
- **Attendance:**
  - Jasper Area Family Services Center’s (JAFSC) overall average daily attendance from September 20, 2021, to July 22, 2022, (w/three COVID closures) was 79%, which is a 6% decrease from the previous program year and 6% below the Head Start Program Performance Standards (HSPPS) mandated minimum.
  - The total number of dropped participants for the entire program decreased by 12.5% since last program year (16 for previous program year compared to 14 for this program year).

***Education (Curriculum, Screening & Assessment, and School Readiness):***

- Our program takes a holistic approach with each child, and we individualize and meet children where they are in their development. Family Partners and Teachers continue to form partnerships with parents to establish individual children’s goals that are in alignment with Head Start’s Early Learning Outcomes Framework (ELOF) and the UAB EHS school readiness plan.
  - 81% of program children had a Preliminary Individualized Development Plan (IDP). The eight center-based children did not have an IDP with new teaching staff in training
  - 87% of program children had Midyear IDPs
  - 91% of program children had End-of-Year IDPs
  - 100% of all IDPs are aligned with ELOF
- 100% of Weekly Lesson Plans (home-based and center-based) incorporate pre-literacy.

- Program staff are equipped to work with all children to individualize home visits and incorporate early intervention services for children with disabilities.
- Staff training on using our home-based curriculum, *Partners for a Healthy Baby* to fidelity is ongoing.
- Continued coaching interactions during monthly Family Partner meetings to include opportunities for group planning time and peer-to- peer coaching.
- Assessment Update: In accordance with our Focus Area One review recommendation, our proposed implementation of *MyTeachingStrategies™ GOLD®* online assessment platform was January 2021.
  - *GOLD®* utilizes 38 research-based objectives for development and learning that directly align to the *ELOF* and will help our program to support the whole child.
  - *GOLD®* assists in making meaningful, data-driven decisions that in turn lead to improved child and family outcomes.
  - With the addition of two new Family Partners in January and a need for their introductory *GOLD®* training, we did not fully utilize the tool for mid and end of year checkpoints as scheduled.
- Overall mastery average of the annual ASQ-3 screener was 65%. The average by domains was as follows:
  - Personal-Social 67%
  - Communication 57%
  - Problem Solving 60%
  - Gross Motor 80%
  - Fine Motor 60%
  - Total 65%

- **ASQ-3 Annual Screener Mastery Average Figure**



- 100% of home visitors, teachers, and coordinators model positive and nurturing parent/child interactions
- 100% (n=22) of socializations are completed for the program year.
  - Socializations offered virtually and as in person due to the COVID-19 pandemic; they are fun and beneficial to families.

***Parent Involvement Activities:***

- Offered UAB EHSP families the opportunity to participate in 22 socialization activities throughout the program year, such as the parent involvement activities below
  - Welcome Socialization along with our Health Fair/Screening Day at the Birmingham Zoo
  - Virtual Storytime with the Birmingham Public Library (craft materials and books were provided to families before the sessions)
  - Fall Festival Drive-Thru Parade at UAB Early Head Start. Age-appropriate activities, games, and crafts were provided to the families.
  - Meal of Thanks drive-thru parade where families received frozen holiday meals prepared by Publix. Families also received educational activities to complete at home.
  - Winter Wonderland Socialization at Railroad Park, where program children received coats and gloves. Families also had the opportunity to decorate ornaments and engage in a pretend snowball fight.
  - Egg Hunt at Railroad Park where families hunted for eggs, took pictures with the bunny, and rode the train.
- UAB ESHP families were offered eight parenting sessions utilizing the Partners for a Healthy Baby Curriculum and collaborating with community partners. Topics included:
  - "Financial Wellness" with Operation Hope
  - "Language and Literacy" with Kristie Ford (Sparks) and Raven Johnson (Birmingham Talks)
  - "Play, Learning, and Cognition" with Emilie Stahlhut (Mitchell's Place)
  - "Emotional Wellness"
  - "Fatherhood" with David Dada
  - "Nutrition"
  - "Parenting and Guidance: The Five Love Languages"
  - "Hot Fun in the Summertime" with Childcare Resources

***Health Services:***

- 100% of program children (n=96) have ongoing, continuous health care.
- 99% of program children (n=95) have health insurance.
  - 98% of program children (n=94) have Medicaid.
- Medical/well child visits data indicated:



- 67% of program children (n=64) were up-to-date on Alabama Medicaid EPSDT periodicity schedule for well-child check-ups at the *end* of the program year.
- 33% of program children (n=32) were behind Alabama Medicaid EPSDT periodicity schedule for well-child check-ups at the *end* of the program year.
- Due to COVID-19, our number of children up-to-date on medical/well child visits were lower than previous years.
- Immunizations data showed:
  - 80% of program children (n=77) are up-to-date on the CDC recommended immunizations schedule.
  - 20% of program children (n=19) are behind on the CDC recommended immunizations schedule.
  - Due to COVID-19, our number of children up-to-date on immunizations were lower than previous years.
- Dental services and dental screenings data revealed:
  - 64% of children over 1 year of age (n=47) received a dental exam.
  - 36% of children over 1 year of age (n=26) did not receive a dental exam.
  - Due to COVID-19, our number of children receiving dental screenings were lower than previous years.
- Medical insurance for 15 Pregnant women served this program year revealed:
  - 100% (n=15) have Medicaid health insurance
- Oral Health data for 9 Pregnant women served this program year showed:
  - 20% report receiving dental care (n=3).
  - 80% did not report receiving dental care (n=12).
  - Due to COVID-19, our number of pregnant women receiving dental care were lower than previous years.
- Continued to encourage access to dental homes with list of providers for families regarding dental services available in their community and continued collaboration with UAB Pediatric Dentistry to provide education and screening services.
- Program continued collaboration with a nutrition consultant, Lauren Dodd, who is a Registered Dietician with UAB Civitan-Sparks Clinics for all nutritional screenings.

***Mental Health:***

- Maintained and utilized Ages and Stages Questionnaire: Social-Emotional-2 (ASQ:SE-2) screenings annually to identify children at risk for socio-emotional difficulties and in need of further services (as recommended by Head Start and the American Academy of Pediatrics).
  - 96 infants and toddlers have at least one ASQ:SE-2
  - Of all screened, 9 children had to be rescreened due to social-emotional concerns
  - Mental Health Coordinator followed up with families or home visitors to address concerns unless the child had a disability and already received EI services.
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- Continued to promote the mental health and wellness of mothers
  - 74 completed Beck Depression Inventories-2 (BDI-2) with program mothers
    - 8 women had depression concerns
    - 8 women are receiving counseling services
  - 25 completed Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale with women (completed each trimester and postnatal)
    - 5 women had depression concerns
    - 4 woman is receiving counseling services
- Mental Health consult regarding 9 children for child behavior concerns
- Mental Health Checklists were not completed in the classroom nor during socializations due to COVID.

***Disability Services:***

- 96 children have screenings for developmental progress with the Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ-3).
  - Of all children screened, 15 children (16%) were identified as needing a developmental screening recheck.
- During the year, we served 17 (18%) children with documented disabilities.
  - Of those 17 children, eligibility was determined prior to the program year for 11 (65%) and within the current program year for 6 (35%) children.
  - All 17 children are receiving special services.
    - 16 (80%) children with IFSPs (Early Intervention)
    - 4 (20%) children with IEPs (School Services)
- Additionally, we served 2 more children with disabilities through The Bell Center.
- We consistently meet and exceed the required 10% service to children with disabilities.
- Classroom environment is based on individual needs of each child to help every child grow and develop at their own pace.
- Family Partners, Teachers, and Disability Services Coordinator continued to have an excellent collaborative relationship with local early intervention programs.
  - Staff include IFSP/IEP goals with program education goals and often share visits with early intervention service providers.
- Staff regularly attend IFSP, IEP, and/or therapy meetings.
- We have a strong network of community resources for children with disabilities.
- Timely referrals were made for children in need of developmental services.
- The Disability Services Coordinator serves on the Alabama Early Intervention District Council, serves on the Alabama Early Intervention & Preschool Conference Planning Committee, and is a member of the Stake Holders in Foster Care for Young Children with the Child Welfare System.
- Continue to make referrals and help families navigate the intake packets for UAB Civitan-Sparks Clinics for children who need more comprehensive developmental evaluations. Updated our Interagency Agreement with Civitan-Sparks Clinics on March 10, 2022.



### ***Family Engagement Services:***

- During the program year, UAB EHSP served 78 families.
  - 64% of families are single-parent families
  - 36% of families are two-parent families
  - 47% of families report being unemployed, retired or disabled at time of enrollment; this number decreased to 30% at the end of the program year
  - 53% of families report at least one parent is employed, in job training, or in school at enrollment; this number increased to 71% at the end of the program year
- 100% of home visitors and teachers support parents as the primary teachers of their children.
- Strong parent involvement occurs in choosing individual goals for their children for their Individual Development Plans.
- UAB EHSP assists and empowers parents and caregivers in defining, setting, and accomplishing their family goals.
  - 96% of preliminary family Strengths and Needs Assessments were complete
  - 95% of mid-year family Strengths and Needs Assessments were complete
  - 92% of end-of-year family Strengths and Needs Assessments are complete
  - Preliminary and Mid-Year data revealed the same top 3 areas of need:
    - 1) Employment
    - 2) Leadership and Advocacy
    - 3) Financial Security
  - End-of-year data revealed these top 3 areas of need:
    - 1) Employment
    - 2) Leadership and Advocacy
    - 3) Financial Security
- To address these needs, the UAB EHSP provided the following services the most often to families:
  - Parenting education
  - Health education
  - Child development education
  - Mental health services
  - Housing assistance
- Homelessness impacted 19% (n=15) of families in the UAB EHSP during the program year and 46% (n=7) of those families acquired housing during the program year.
- A small percentage of children enrolled are in foster care (5%) this program year.

### ***Community Partnerships:***

- Continued partnering with Mitchell's Place for professional development for home-based and center-based staff regarding children's behavior. Emilie Stahlhut with

Mitchell's Place was added to our home-based coaching team in addition to continuing to perform center-based coaching.

- Continued partnership with Jasper Area Family Services Center for our center-based services; partnered with Operation Hope, Lee Community Center, Childcare Resources, Birmingham Public Library, and Birmingham Talks for socialization and parenting activities/information.
- Continued to work with other Head Start programs in Jefferson and St. Clair Counties to facilitate smooth transitions from UAB Early Head Start to Head Start. Formed a great partnership with Jasper Area Family Services Center who was funded to provide Head Start services in Walker County to facilitate smooth transitions from UAB Early Head Start to Head Start there. Added an Interagency Agreement with CDI Head Start Serving Jefferson County, Alabama.
- Staff serve on multiple community boards and provide awareness of program services and community trainings:
  - Coordinators attend meetings including the Medicaid Assistants Meeting, CDI Head Start Serving Jefferson County Health Services Advisory Board, Children's Policy Council Early Care and Education Work Group, Children's Policy Council First Friday Forum, National Alliance of Mental Illness Monthly Education Meetings, First Five Alabama State Association for Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health, Jefferson County Department of Human Resources Community Resource Fair, Alabama Department of Human Resources Stakeholders for Foster Care Children, Alabama Early Intervention Conference Planning Committee, Alabama Early Intervention District Coordinating Council, Alabama Early Intervention District Coordinating Council Training Subcommittee, Alabama Early Intervention Returning to Families Homes Subcommittee, Alabama Head Start Association Quarterly meetings, and AHSA Training Subcommittee.
- Updated our Interagency Agreement with UAB Civitan-Sparks Clinics.
- Maintained our collaboration with BirthWell Partners community doulas for pregnant mothers.
- Families are informed of great community resources by program staff.
  - Many general resources as well as COVID-19 resources have been shared with home visitors for families and posted to our program Facebook page for families to access.

**Communication:**

- Team approach to services is a strength. Staff has a team of coordinators to help with any questions or concerns.
- Management team revamped the incentive plan for staff:
  - The Treasure Basket was created and nominees from staff receive incentive gifts for doing a great job during staff meetings.
  - All staff have been given meals throughout the program year following multiple staff meetings as incentives for everyone's hard work.

- Home visitors focus on the family to show our long-term investment to support children and families. There is strong continuity with the families we serve. Parents in our program are very investing and engaging with their children. The literacy program enhancements with books and activities have really helped with parent engagement as well.
- Governing Body praised our program for the great leadership skills demonstrated and great communication skills evidenced with the Governing Body.
- Maintained and advertised our UAB Early Head Start Program Facebook page to enhance public awareness and communication with program families about program and community events.
- Continued updates of the UAB Early Head Start Program website, which includes the Program's Annual Report.
- Conducted regular and ad hoc staff and coordinator's meetings to address areas of concern.

**Record Keeping and Reporting:**

- ChildPlus has continued to be utilized for data tracking and staff are using UAB EHS and ChildPlus reports for ongoing monitoring.
- Conduct bi-monthly family/child reviews of all enrolled children and their families.
- Conduct monthly reviews at the center with teachers reviewing all center-based children with coordinators.
- Attendance sheets are completed for each meeting held to document.

**Financial Audit/Annual Audit:** There were no findings in our annual A 133 fiscal audit conducted by PricewaterhouseCoopers for the year ending September 30, 2021.

**Funding awarded by ACF for 2021-2022: \$1,166,385**  
**Program Budget for the 2021-2022 fiscal year**

<u>Budget Category</u>	<u>Funds Budgeted</u>
Cell Phone Charges	\$6,000.00
Conference Travel	\$1,500.00
Disability Services	\$1,000.00
Educational Supplies	\$6,000.00
Health Services	\$500.00
Family Services	\$500.00
Local Travel	\$35,000.00
Mental Health Services	\$500.00
Nutrition/Food for Events	\$13,580.00
PIPA	\$8,000.00
Supplies//Soc. Supplies	\$23,338.00
Child Services Consultant	\$18,000.00
TA/Training	\$24,192.00
Walker County Subcontract	\$136,653.00
Salaries and Wages	\$596,919.00
Fringe Benefits	\$186,573.00
<b>Total Direct Cost</b>	<b>\$1,058,255.00</b>
<b>Indirect Cost</b>	<b>\$108,130.00</b>
<b>Account Total</b>	<b>\$1,166,385.00</b>

**ACF Funds for the UAB EHSP (Total award \$1,166,385 for 2021-2022)  
Program Funds expended for the 2021-2022 fiscal year**

<u><b>Budget Category</b></u>	<u><b>Expended</b></u>
Cell Phone Charges	\$6,000.00
Conference Travel	\$1,500.00
Disability Services	\$654.42
Educational Supplies	\$6000.00
Health Services	\$500.00
Local Travel	\$31,612.30
Family Services	\$500.00
Mental Health Services	\$500.00
Nutrition/Food for Events	\$11,577.33
PIPA	\$5,419.92
Supplies/Soc. Supplies	\$23,338.00
Child Consulting Services	\$15,437.00
TA/Training	\$24,192.00
Walker County Subcontract	\$120,557.42
Salaries and Wages	\$519,348.82
Fringe Benefits	\$162,320.81
<b>Total Direct Cost</b>	<b>\$929,458.02</b>
<b>Indirect Cost</b>	<b>\$96,256.49</b>
<b>Account Total</b>	<b>\$1,025,714.51</b>

Local Travel - staff mileage (home visitors and coordinators travel)

Nutrition Services - food for socializations, policy council, and health advisory committee meetings

Parent Committee funds - taxi service to parent functions, parent trainings, parent mileage reimbursements, etc.

Supplies – supplies needed for socializations, office supplies, postage, etc.

**UAB's financial contribution (in kind and match): \$307,458.47**

**Total program funds expended: \$ 1,345,046.49**