



**University of Alabama at Birmingham Early Head Start
Annual Report 2020-2021**





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 of the wonderful and exciting work that the UAB EHSP has engaged in with children and families during this program year.

Kristi Carter Guest, PhD
Director
UAB Early Head Start Program

Program Highlights for 2020 - 2021

Program Updates Relevant to COVID-19:

- On September 4th, 2020, UAB EHS Return to Operations Plans were approved for families to come to the UAB EHS office for screenings and enrollment if that was their preference.
- On September 9, 2020, UAB EHS Policy Council approved procedures for resuming “In-person Porch Visits” with program families.
- Our UAB EHS center at Jasper Area Family Services Center resumed in-person services on January 21, 2021! All went well and there were no COVID-19 related concerns.
- During the UAB EHS Policy Council meeting on March 10th, 2021 the council approved procedures to resume In-Person In-Home Visits with families for UAB EHS staff.
- UAB announced that full-time in-person work would resume on May 10th, 2021.
- During this program year, Family Partners used a combination of in-person and remote weekly visits with all program children through in-home visits, porch visits, or remotely through FaceTime, telephone calls, texts, etc.
- As always, Family Partners and Teachers continue to use lesson plans to guide their visits/services and individualize to child/family needs.
- Monthly family reviews resumed in September of 2020 (instead of the weekly email updates) with Coordinators, Family Partners, and Teachers through Zoom.
- **UAB EHSP has continued to provide Education Toolkits, Family Services Toolkits, and Family Meal Boxes to program families due to the pandemic:**
 - **Education Toolkit Item Examples:** farm animal puzzle, shape sorter bucket, construction paper, chalk, crayons, glue sticks, bubble wand, balls, and books (coordinated by Cassandra Muñoz and Shanté Hamm)
 - **Family Services Toolkit Item Examples:** candles, inspirational books, journals, paper towels, hand soap, healthy snacks, stress balls, disinfectant spray, toilet paper, children’s books, diapers (coordinated by Vikki Forte).
 - **Family Meal Boxes:** holiday meals prepared by Publix were given to feed families during the Thanksgiving and December holidays (coordinated by Shanté Hamm).
- The UAB EHSP is continuing to use our Facebook page as a mechanism to provide online resources to families. Shanté Hamm is leading these efforts.
- **THANKS to ALL STAFF and FAMILIES for your patience as we resumed services in-person.**

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

- *Eligibility:* 58% of enrolled participants were income-eligible for the program; 13% qualified on Public Assistance; 5% were foster children; 16% were homeless; and 8% were over-income.
- *Recruitment:* The program maintains an active waiting list to replace any dropped participants. August 2021, we ended the program year with thirty-five eligible waiting list participants.

- **Selection:**
 - Selection Criteria ranking format approved by both the Governing Body and Policy Council in December 2020.
 - Average number of selection points of an eligible participant is 60 points.
- **Enrollment:**
 - Funded to serve 88 participants total, 80 home-based and 8 center-based.
 - September 2020 Head Start Enterprise System (HSES) Enrollment Report - 77; October 2020 HSES Enrollment Report – 86; November 2020 HSES Enrollment Report – 88; December 2020-January 2021 HSES Enrollment Report – 86; February – June 2021 reported full enrollment (88) each month, because HSPPS allow thirty days to replace a dropped participant. July-August 2021 reported 84 and 83 for HSES Enrollment, respectively
 - Cumulative enrollment reported on the Program Information Report (PIR) for 2020-2021 was 111, nine pregnant women and 102 children.
 - Bilingual Family Partner maintained a full caseload of dual language learners (DLLs): 17 children cumulative; 14 children receiving services at the end of the program year.
- **Attendance:**
 - Jasper Area Family Services Center’s (JAFSC) EHS overall average daily attendance from January 21 to July 31, 2021, (delayed start/COVID) was 85%, which is a 10% improvement over the previous program year and meets the Head Start Program Performance Standards (HSPPS) mandated minimum.
 - The total number of dropped participants for the entire UAB EHS program decreased by 24% since last program year (21 for previous program year compared to 16 for this program year).

Education (Curriculum, 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.
 - 100% of program children had Preliminary Individualized Development Plans (IDPs)
 - 84% of program children had Midyear IDPs
 - 83% of program children have End-of-Year IDPs
 - 100% of all IDPs are aligned with ELOF
- 100% of Lesson Plans (home-based and center-based) incorporate pre-literacy skills.

- 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 includes opportunities for group planning time and peer-to-peer coaching.
- Assessment Update: In accordance with our Focus Area One review recommendation, we began implementation of *MyTeachingStrategies™ GOLD®* online assessment platform in 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.
- Continued to use the ASQ-3 developmental screenings annually with 100% completion. The ASQ-3 is a screening tool to identify children at risk or in need of further services (as recommended by Head Start and the American Academy of Pediatrics).
- Overall mastery average of the annual *Ages and Stages Questionnaire-3* screener was 69%. The average by domains was as follows:
 - Personal-Social 77%
 - Communication 62%
 - Problem Solving 64%
 - Gross Motor 88%
 - Fine Motor 57%
- 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 drive-thru parades 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 Back Drive-Thru Parade at ROSS Recovery Center where we welcomed new and returning program families
 - Virtual Emotional Color Wheel socializations offered in collaboration with ArtPlay where children and caregivers engaged in stories and arts and crafts each week, learning about various emotions and corresponding colors (craft materials and books were provided to families before the sessions)

- Fall Festival Drive-Thru Parade at ROSS Recovery Center where families drove past staff members' decorated cars and costumes and voted for their favorite. Age-appropriate activities, games, and crafts were provided to the families.
- Meal of Thanks and December holiday drive-thru parades where families received frozen holiday meals prepared by Publix. Families also received educational activities to complete at home.
- Virtual Vocabby socializations offered in collaboration with ArtPlay where children and caregivers engaged in Vocabby adventures, learning new words every week, group readings, movement activities, and crafts (craft materials and books were provided to families before the sessions).
- Dr. Seuss Storytime, Yoga, Oral Health virtual socializations along with several others
- UAB ESHP families were offered eight virtual parenting sessions utilizing the Partners for a Healthy Baby Curriculum and collaborating with community partners. Topics included:
 - "Financial Wellness" with Operation Hope
 - "Disaster Preparedness" (families received emergency preparedness starter kits) and "COVID-19" with American Red Cross
 - "Emotional Wellness"
 - "School Readiness" with Alabama Public Television (APT)
 - "Talking with Kids about Sexual Abuse Awareness" with Children's of Alabama - Children's Hospital Intervention and Prevention Services Center (CHIPS)
 - "Poison Control" with Children's of Alabama
 - "Hot Fun in the Summertime" with Childcare Resources

Health Services:

- 100% of program children (n=100) have ongoing, continuous health care.
- 98% of program children (n=100) have health insurance.
 - 97% of program children (n=98) have Medicaid.
- Medical/well child visits data indicated:
 - 68% of program children (n=69) were up-to-date on Alabama Medicaid EPSDT periodicity schedule for well-child check-ups at the beginning of the program year.
 - 32% of program children (n=33) were behind Alabama Medicaid EPSDT periodicity schedule for well-child check-ups at the beginning 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:
 - 69% of program children (n=70) are up-to-date on the CDC recommended immunizations schedule.
 - 31% of program children (n=32) 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:
 - 66% of children over 1 year of age (n=43) received a dental exam.
 - 34% of children over 1 year of age (n=22) 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 9 Pregnant women served this program year revealed:
 - 89% (n=8) have Medicaid health insurance
 - 11% (n=1) have private insurance
- Oral Health data for 9 Pregnant women served this program year showed:
 - 22% report receiving dental care (n=2).
 - 78% did not report receiving dental care (n=7).
 - 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 continues 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).
 - 83 infants and toddlers have at least one ASQ:SE-2
 - Of all screened, 2 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.
- Continued to promote the mental health and wellness of mothers
 - 81 completed Beck Depression Inventories-2 (BDI-2) with program mothers
 - 15 women had depression concerns
 - 5 women are receiving counseling services
 - 17 completed Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale with women (completed each trimester and postnatal)
 - 3 women had depression concerns
 - 1 woman is receiving counseling services
- Mental Health consult regarding 15 children for child behavior concerns

- Mental Health Checklists were not completed in the classroom nor during socializations due to COVID.

Disability Services:

- 85 children have screenings for developmental progress with the Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ-3).
 - Of all children screened, 9 children (11%) were identified as needing a developmental screening recheck.
- During the year, we served 20 (20%) children with disabilities.
 - Of those 20 children, eligibility was determined prior to the program year for 13 (65%) and within the current program year for 7 (35%) children.
 - All 20 children are receiving special services.
 - 16 (80%) children with IFSPs (Early Intervention)
 - 4 (20%) children with IEPs (School Services)
- Family Partners 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 (most of these occurred remotely this program year due to COVID).
- 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.

Family Engagement Services:

- During the program year, UAB EHSP served 88 families.
 - 61% of families are single-parent families
 - 39% of families are two-parent families
 - 45% of families report being unemployed
 - 55% of families report at least one parent is employed
- 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.

- 97% of preliminary family Strengths and Needs Assessments are complete
- 89% of mid-year family Strengths and Needs Assessments are complete
- 100% 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) Adult Education
- To address these needs, the UAB EHSP provided the following services the most often to families:
 - Parenting education
 - Health education
 - Emergency/crisis intervention (food, clothing or shelter)
 - Asset building services (financial education, debt counseling)
 - Mental health services
 - Housing assistance
- Homelessness impacted 16% of families in the UAB EHSP 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 and mental health for staff and families. Emilie Stahlhut provided the “Managing Stress and Reducing Staff Burnout” training as well as multiple center-based classroom observations with reflection and recommendations for teaching staff.
- Partnered with Jasper Area Family Services Center for our center-based services; partnered with ArtPlay, Operation Hope, Mitchell’s Place, American Red Cross, and Children’s of Alabama for socialization and parenting activities.
- 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 recently received Head Start funding for Walker County to facilitate smooth transitions from UAB Early Head Start to Head Start in that county.
- Staff serve on multiple community boards and provide awareness of Program services and community training.
 - Coordinators attend meetings at DHR focusing on the JOBS program, medical providers meeting and a resource fair; Alethia House (substance abuse) Advisory Board, JCCEO Family Services Advisory Board, JCCEO Grandparents Support Group member/Advisory Board, Recovery Organization of Support Specialists

(ROSS) Monthly Meetings, Medicaid Assisters Meeting, JCCEO Health Services Advisory Board, Children's Policy Council Early Care and Education Work Group, Children's Policy Council First Friday Forum, 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 (AHSA) Quarterly meetings, and AHSA Training Subcommittee.

- Maintained our collaboration with BirthWell Partners community doulas for pregnant mothers.
- Families are informed of great community resources by program staff.
 - Many COVID-19 valuable and informative resources are posted to our program Facebook page for families to access.

Communication:

- The First Lady of the United States, Dr. Jill Biden, planned a visit to tour our UAB EHS center at the Jasper Area Family Services in March of 2021. Unfortunately, due to the devastating tornados in our state that occurred the day before, her tour of our center was cancelled. Dr. Kristi Guest, Mrs. Donna Kilgore, and Dr. Suzanne Snow were invited to meet Dr. Jill Biden in Birmingham in lieu of her touring the UAB EHS center. It was our honor and privilege to meet with The First Lady, Dr. Jill Biden. We appreciate President Biden's "Help is Here" tour and the additional funding to support Head Start/Early Head Start Programs.
- To address racial challenges faced by our nation and community, UAB EHS developed a UAB EHS Racial Diversity and Inclusion Subcommittee to discuss and implement ways our program can address issues of racism. Further, UAB EHS staff attended virtual trainings offered by the Office of Head Start, UAB, and other organizations to gain knowledge on racism are ways to address systemic racism.
- Management team continued to utilize the incentive plan to address three areas:
 - 1) Attendance—Home visitor with the highest percentage of weekly completed HV per month receive an education incentive prize.
 - 2) Paperwork—Home visitor(s) with all completed paperwork (on time and to fidelity) per month receives an education incentive prize.
 - 3) EHS Event Participation—Home Visitor who is on-time to most staff events and have the most parent participation at events per month receive an education incentive prize.
- During staff meetings, an announcement was made of the incentive winners and those recognized picked educational prizes from a variety of choices (i.e., children's books, puzzles, etc.).
- The Director recognized coordinators and the office manager with a small gift of appreciation for the job that they do for our program.

- Home visitors and teachers are recognized annually during the National Teacher Appreciation Week with small gifts of appreciation.
- 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 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, 2020.

Funding awarded by ACF for 2020-2021: \$1,152,618
Program Budget for the 2020-2021 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
Local Travel	\$35,000.00
Mental Health Services	\$500.00
Nutrition/Food for Events	\$15,834.00
PIPA	\$8,000.00
Supplies//Soc. Supplies	\$47,693.00
Child Services Consultant	\$8,000.00
TA/Training	\$24,192.00
Walker County Subcontract	\$135,188.00
Salaries and Wages	\$573,907.00
Fringe Benefits	\$185,573.00
Total Direct Cost	\$1,048,887.00
Indirect Cost	\$103,731.00
Account Total	\$1,152,618.00

**ACF Funds for the UAB EHSP (Total award \$1,152,618 for 2020-2021)
Program Funds expended for the 2020-2021 fiscal year**

<u>Budget Category</u>	<u>Expended</u>
Cell Phone Charges	\$4,426.67
Conference Travel	\$560.00
Disability Services	\$360.69
Educational Supplies	\$3,379.61
Health Services	\$498.35
Local Travel	\$25,863.08
Mental Health Services	\$500.00
Nutrition/Food for Events	\$2,963.98
PIPA	\$5,254.04
Supplies/Soc. Supplies	\$25,301.31
Child Consulting Services	\$1,944.66
TA/Training	\$22,680.32
Walker County Subcontract	\$135,131.25
Salaries and Wages	\$557,264.62
Fringe Benefits	\$170,618.17
Total Direct Cost	\$956,746.75
Indirect Cost	\$98,321.20
Account Total	\$1,055,067.95

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, etc.

Supplies – supplies needed for socializations, office supplies, postage, educational supplies

UAB's financial contribution (in kind and match): \$313,554.01

Total program funds expended: \$ 1,368,621.96