



Press Release

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Children's Home Society of Washington to Serve 108 More Children through Early Head Start Expansion Grant

New funds will reach children in underserved areas, improve childcare centers, build partnerships, create jobs

SEATTLE – January 27, 2010 – The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services recently announced the awarding of \$933,171 in funding to early head start programs provided by Children's Home Society of Washington (CHSW) across the state. The grant resulted from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 that called for Early Head Start Expansion to better serve our country's most vulnerable children and families. CHSW is now able to serve 108 more children statewide (312 children total). This is the first time since 1999 where early head start services have expanded.

The grant will expand services to children and families in North King County, South King County, and Walla Walla, all target communities with a significantly high percentage of children who live below the federal poverty level (23% in Walla Walla, 17% in South King County, and 9% in North King). The percentage of families who do not meet the self-sufficiency standard – a no frills, basic needs budget – is on the rise as well in these communities (in Walla Walla, 30% of families do not earn enough for basic needs, 22% in South King and 14% in North King do not make a living wage). The expansion of Early Head Start to these communities will go a long way at providing children with the building blocks for future success in school.

"We are overjoyed at the news of being able to serve 108 more children statewide through Early Head Start Expansion funding," states Cathy Garland, CHSW Director of Early Learning. "The grant will allow CHSW to enhance child development and social competence in children at homes and at childcare centers. Since a strong parent is critical to the success of a young child, the programs also support family development and promote long-term self-sufficiency and capability of parents."

CHSW will initiate services in North King County currently unserved by Early Head Start and will serve 50 children and their parents through home visiting and center-based care. In South King County, 24 more slots have been added to the existing home visiting based model. In

Walla Walla, 18 additional children will be able to be served through home visiting, and 16 additional children of pregnant and parenting teens will be served at an on-site childcare center in Walla Walla's alternative high school, Lincoln High School. In addition to serving 108 more children, the Early Head Start Expansion, 14 new jobs were created in the target communities to properly care for and serve the children and families.

The expansion effort was developed with the help of the EHS Policy Council and Parent Committees, North FACES, South FACES, SOAR (an early learning and family support coalition) and Walla Walla Valley Early Learning Coalition, and United Way of King County. New partners in service delivery to the new children/families include Wonderland Developmental Center, Center for Human Services, and Shoreline Community Colleges.

With the help of new partners in the target communities across the State, Children's Home Society of Washington will start to serve children and families by the end of February 2010.

About Early Head Start

Early Head Start is a federally funded program for children (infant – 30 months) and women that are pregnant that provides comprehensive education, health, nutrition, and parent involvement services to low-income children and their families. All participation is voluntary. The goal of Early Head Start and its sister program, Head Start (for children 3-5 years) is to prepare children for success in school while supporting the family as a whole. Nationally, only 2-3% of families that are eligible to receive Head Start are enrolled in the program, though by 2010, President Obama hopes to serve five times the amount of families. Similarly, in Washington State, 69,000 families are eligible to receive Head Start, and only 2.3% are enrolled.

About Children's Home Society of Washington

Children's Home Society of Washington (CHSW) is Washington's largest statewide non-profit children's organization, serving over 39,000 children and their families through early learning, adoption, out-of-home care, family support, child and family counseling, and advocacy programs. CHSW's mission is to develop healthy children, create strong families, build engaged communities, and speak and advocate for children. To learn more, visit childrenshomesociety.org.

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