



IMAGINE

A future created by
dreams rather than
circumstances.

PROJECT EAGLE

-2016-2017 Highlights and Early Head Start Annual Report-



Babies are learning from the minute they are born.

Children that spend the critical early years with parents and caregivers who love, nurture, and encourage them have more opportunities to develop important school readiness skills. When children are prepared for school, they have greater opportunities to achieve their dreams.

At Project Eagle, we want all children to experience healthy social and emotional development. We want them to learn to play with others, to have self-control, to cooperate, and to express their emotions in positive ways.

We want all children to have strong early language development. We want them to learn to communicate through crying, singing, babbling, and talking; to love books and reading; and to engage in back-and-forth communication with caregivers.

We want all children to develop problem-solving skills. We want them to develop persistence, creativity, concentration, and curiosity.

We want all children to be physically healthy and develop gross and fine motor skills. We want them to develop their senses and to explore, move, and grow.

What do you like most about your participation in Educare?

“That my children are in good hands and that while they learn they are having fun at the same time.”

– Educare Kansas City Parent

During the 2016–2017 program year, we provided Early Head Start Home Visiting services to 175 children; we provided full-day, full-year early education to 152 children in our Educare Kansas City school; and we identified 105 children for referral to early intervention services through our Connections program and Early Head Start program.



Parents are the number one influence on the lives of their children.

Parents from any backgrounds and circumstances can do incredible things for their children to support school readiness and accomplishment of dreams. Programs at Project Eagle strengthen the capacity of parents to be even more incredible than they already are.

At Project Eagle, we believe every family is unique with its own customs, traditions, and values. There is not one way to be an engaged parent. The most important part of parent engagement is the positive, nurturing relationship between a parent and a child, which supports the child’s healthy growth and development.

Parent engagement is playing, reading, and singing to children at home and on the go.

Parent engagement is assuring children are safe and healthy.

Parent engagement is listening to children’s interests and likes and providing opportunities to learn and explore.

Parent engagement is meeting with a child’s teachers and home visitors.

Parent engagement is helping children be comfortable and have positive experiences when starting a new school, or meeting a new person, or trying a new activity.

Parent engagement is seeking out the resources and supports that a child might need to learn and grow or that the parent might need to meet his or her own goals to foster family well-being.

“What I like most about my participation in Home Visiting is having leadership roles and having support to realize how good of a parent I am.”

“I like everything about the program, especially the trust I have towards my Home Visitor. I feel safe enough to tell my Home Visitor everything about my life.”

“The teaching and the learning that is focused for both the parent and child at the same time means a lot to me.”

-Early Head Start Home Visiting Parents

During the 2016-2017 program year, our Connections program screened and referred 617 families of young children to community resources; we grew our services for parents through the addition of the ABC Home Visiting program; and we expanded opportunities for parent growth and learning through Family Fun Nights, special events, parent-child socializations, and program leadership.



Project Eagle’s values emphasize innovation, reflection, and curiosity

in order to advance the field of early education. Project Eagle partners with others in the community that are also committed to high quality early childhood experiences, working with them to make this a reality for all children.

“This is the first semester the KCKCC TEC program students have had the opportunity to work with the teachers and staff at Educare Kansas City. These students are just getting started ...and I am so pleased that they are learning what quality care is from the very start. It is invaluable for students on a career path to have hands on experience in the field...and Project Eagle’s Educare Kansas City program gave us a place to observe, participate and learn what being an Early Childhood Professional is all about.”

-Kathleen McGowan, Associate Professor of Early Childhood Education, Kansas City Kansas Community College

At Project Eagle, we connect students and future professionals in the field to opportunities to learn more about the strengths and needs of pregnant women and families with young children in the community.

We increase awareness of issues related to young children and families.

We share knowledge of best practices in the field of early education and the lessons learned through our program.

We educate others about the importance of high-quality, birth to five early education for all children.

During the 2016-2017 program year, we offered 52 students placements for school internships in the fields of early childhood education, social welfare, nursing and medicine; we presented at 10 conferences at the local, state, and national level; we provided professional development to 100 early childhood professionals; and we participated in 55 local, state and national coalitions, workgroups, and meetings.



About Project Eagle

Our Vision and Mission

At Project Eagle we envision a community where children’s futures are determined by their interests and dreams and not by their circumstances.

We further this vision by responding to the particular needs of the community’s youngest and most vulnerable children and their families.

Our Services

Project Eagle has offered services in Wyandotte County, Kansas, for over 27 years. The University of Kansas Medical Center began the program for the purpose of providing early education and comprehensive family support services in Wyandotte County to low-income and at-risk children between the ages of birth to three, pregnant women, and their families. Project Eagle began in 1989 as a Comprehensive Child Development Program, which was the pre-cursor to Early Head Start. Project Eagle was a Wave I Early Head Start program funded in 1994. It was one of 17 Early Head Start evaluation sites across the country.

“Believing that we can and do make a positive difference in the lives of children and families is why we’re here- because there are people who don’t think it’s possible, but we do.”

-Project Eagle Staff Member

Project Eagle currently administers four programs.

- Connections Comprehensive Early Childhood Screening and Referral Program
- ABC Home Visiting
- Early Head Start Home Visiting
- Educare Kansas City

All of Project Eagle’s programs focus on the health and well-being of pregnant women and young children and aim to prepare children, engage families, and promote excellence in the broader field of early childhood education. Project Eagle impacts nearly 1,300 Wyandotte County children and their families each year.

Our Staff

Project Eagle employs over seventy highly qualified professionals with educational backgrounds primarily in the areas of early childhood education, child and family development, social work, and family studies. We work diligently to recruit and employ staff whose professional philosophies align with our agency values and our mission and vision and spend over one hundred hours per year focusing on professional development of our direct service staff to ensure high-quality services for the children and families we serve.

- 30% live in the community Project Eagle serves (Wyandotte County, Kansas).
- 24% are bilingual in English/Spanish.
- 23% have a Master’s Degree, 48% have a Bachelor’s degree, and 20% have an Associate’s degree in their chosen field of study.
- 48% identify as Caucasian, 33% identify as African-American, and 19% identify as Latino/a.
- 10% are current or former Early Head Start or Head Start Parents.



Our Community

Project Eagle’s annual community assessment highlights the increased likelihood for young children in Wyandotte County to experience one or more risk factors that make them susceptible to experiencing a significant number of these seven adverse childhood experiences (ACEs):

1. Physical, sexual or emotional abuse.
2. Physical or emotional neglect.
3. Household mental illness.
4. Household with substance abuse.
5. Divorce/separation.
6. Domestic Violence.
7. Incarceration of household members.

Risk factors for children living in Wyandotte County include:

- 60% of Wyandotte County children under the age of five in female headed households live in poverty (U.S. Census Bureau, 2015)
- 58.5% of births in Wyandotte County in 2015 were to single mothers (Kansas Department of Health and Environment, 2015)
- Forty-four percent of children placed in foster care in Wyandotte County are placed due to physical/sexual abuse or parental substance abuse (Kansas Department for Children and Families, 2016)
- The crime rate in Wyandotte County is higher than the state average (Kansas Bureau of Investigation, 2015).

These risk factors, coupled with persistent challenges and barriers to adequate and quality services and interventions, can lead to lower levels of school readiness, poor health outcomes, lower levels of parental engagement, and dismal long-term outcomes.

Our “Why”

The circumstances and experiences during the earliest years of a child’s life can lead to a gap in academic readiness and outcomes by kindergarten entry. A variety of conditions, and in particular household income, contribute to this gap, which is known as the achievement gap.

For example, there can be a large gap between the vocabulary of children from lower-income households and their peers from higher-income households by age three. This is often referred to as the Thirty Million Word Gap. If this vocabulary gap exists at kindergarten it becomes magnified as children progress through school, affecting reading achievement and longer-term academic success.



2016-2017 Early Head Start Services

Enrollment

During the 2016-2017 program year, Project Eagle Early Head Start served 325 families, which included 417 children and forty-eight pregnant women. According to the program’s 2016-2017 Community Assessment, this is approximately five percent of the children in Wyandotte County who would be eligible for Early Head Start services. Project Eagle’s average monthly enrollment was 96.5%.

Early Head Start Family Demographics

Total Families Served	325
Single-Parent Families	145
Two-Parent Families	180
Ethnicity	
Hispanic or Latino Origin	53%
Non-Hispanic or Latino	47%
Race	
White	61%
Black or African American	26%
Biracial/Multiracial	5%
Asian	8%
Primary Language Spoken	
English	46%
Spanish	44%
African Languages	3%
Middle Eastern/South Asian Languages	5%
East Asian Languages	2%

Health and Dental Services

Percentage of Children Up to Date on Immunizations	75%
Percentage of Children up to date with dental screenings	67%
Percentage of Children up to date with EPSDT visits	29%*

* EPSDT percentage is based on the medical provider’s determination, as verified by the medical record. Parent reported compliance with the recommended schedule is higher. Barriers for Project Eagle families in this area include difficulties in obtaining lead testing, a component of the 12 and 24-month visits, and cost and timeliness in acquiring medical records.



School Readiness

Project Eagle has an internal leadership group committed to School Readiness. This group, in partnership with parents, established School Readiness Goals in the Head Start Early Learning Domains of Social and Emotional Development, Language and Literacy, Approaches to Learning and Cognition/General Knowledge and Physical Development and Health. In addition, Project Eagle works with parents and their children in a variety of ways to support future school readiness:

- Use of evidence-based curriculums: during the 2016-2017 year, primary curricula included *Growing Great Kids* for the home-based option and *HighScope* for the center-based option.
- Weekly lesson plans for home-based children that support parent and child interaction and promote the child's development of fine and gross motor skills, early language and literacy skills, cognitive skills such as problem solving and experimentation, and social-emotional development. In all areas, support is provided for dual language learners.
- Classroom schedules, activities, and environments that include time for daily gross motor play, foster language and literacy development, promote cognitive development through explorative play and problem-solving activities, and encourage healthy social-emotional development through the primary caregiver model. Again, in all areas support is provided for dual language learners.
- Individual child data is shared by teachers and home visitors with parents and informs the individual child and family goal-setting process.
- Support for parents in assuring that children are current with well-child visits, immunizations, and dental visits.
- Co-case management meetings and shared home visits with Infant Toddler Services for children receiving Part C services.
- Arts programming to support learning in the Educare School.

Parent and Family Engagement

Project Eagle is committed to effective and innovative ways to foster parent engagement in the lives of children. Project Eagle has a leadership group dedicated to developing strategies and measuring progress in the area of Family Engagement. Parent engagement and involvement opportunities for both mothers and fathers during the past year included:

- Opportunities to participate in Policy Council, Parent Committee, program advisory boards, the Project Eagle Governance Committee, Kansas Head Start Association meetings, and state leadership and advocacy trainings.
- Opportunities to participate in the interview process for program staff.
- Opportunities to train future Home Visitors by participating in Growing Great Kids Curriculum training four times per year.
- Parent-child socializations (playgroups) occurring two times per month.
- Center-based parent and child activities throughout the year that support family wellness, language and literacy, and parent-child attachment.
- Participation in parent/teacher conferences conducted throughout the year.
- Opportunities to volunteer in the classroom by reading, sharing a skill, or administrative support.
- Referrals to programs throughout the community to support family well-being, parental education and employment, and other supports.



2016-2017 Early Head Start Budget

<i>Awarded Budget</i>	<i>Federal EHS</i>	<i>Kansas EHS Home Visiting</i>	<i>Kansas EHS Child Care Partnership</i>	<i>Total</i>
Personnel/Fringe	2,219,856.00	230,155.00	232,240.00	2,682,251.00
Evaluation Contract	160,666.00	-	-	160,666.00
Other Costs	437,419.00	56,795.00	44,335.00	538,549.00
TOTAL DIRECT COSTS	2,817,941.00	286,950.00	276,575.00	3,381,466.00
Indirect Costs	334,224.00	45,912.00	44,252.00	424,388.00
TOTAL BUDGET	3,152,165.00	332,862.00	320,827.00	3,805,854.00
Non-Federal Share	788,041.00	-	-	788,041.00
TOTAL COST	3,940,206.00	332,862.00	320,827.00	4,593,895.00

<i>Expenditures</i>	<i>Federal EHS</i>	<i>Kansas EHS Home Visiting</i>	<i>Kansas EHS Child Care Partnership</i>	<i>Total</i>
Personnel/Fringe	2,128,921.34	196,433.71	217,267.07	2,542,622.12
Evaluation Contract	114,280.34	-	-	114,280.34
Other Costs	398,444.47	42,421.53	38,522.31	479,388.31
TOTAL DIRECT COSTS	2,641,646.15	238,855.24	255,789.38	3,136,290.77
Indirect Costs	327,524.00	38,216.81	40,894.28	406,635.09
TOTAL BUDGET	2,969,170.15	277,072.05	296,683.66	3,542,925.86
Non-Federal Share	742,292.54	-	-	742,292.54
TOTAL COST	3,711,462.69	277,072.05	296,683.66	4,285,218.40

Project Eagle’s ERSEA and Fiscal Monitoring Review was held in April 2016. The program had no findings or areas of non-compliance in this review. The fiscal agent for Project Eagle is the University of Kansas Medical Center Research Institute, Inc. which is audited annually. The audit is available upon request.

Thank you to those entities who make our work possible:

Buffett Early Childhood Fund

Children's Campus of Kansas City

DHHS/Administration for Children and Families/
Office of Head Start

Early Education Funders Collaborative

Kansas Department for Children and Families

Kansas State Department of Education

Kansas Department of Health and Environment

Juniper Gardens Children's Project

REACH Healthcare Foundation

The Family Conservancy

The Ounce of Prevention Fund

United Way of Greater Kansas City

University of Kansas Medical Center

Wyandotte Health Foundation

