

Ohio

Columbus

The Ohio State University is an EHS-CCP grantee serving the Columbus area. Since receiving the grant in 2014, Ohio State has formed robust partnerships between higher education and early education, local government and the private sector, and health and social service systems. This truly integrated approach helps ensure that the 160 children they serve across 19 partner sites (eight homes and 11 centers) receive a high-quality early care and learning experiences as well as the comprehensive services they need to thrive.

FAST FACTS

160 Children Directly Benefiting	67 Children Indirectly Benefiting	19 Child Care Partners	1 metropolitan area Local Communities Affected	\$2.7M Total Grant Amount
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THE MODEL STANDOUTS

Community-Based Collaborations: At the heart of Ohio State’s partnership model is a strong collaboration with 18 community-based agencies that focus on health, education, housing, employment, and other family supports. These collaborations ensure that the EHS-CCP is aligned with and integrated into the broader early childhood system. It also leverages resources and maximizes the comprehensive services available to young children and their families, including health, mental health, dental health, audiology, nutrition, and family workforce development, among others.

Hubs: Ohio State employs a “hub model”: Four partners serve as resource centers and provide support to child care partners in their own neighborhoods. The hubs provide space for family engagement events, parent committee meetings, and staff professional development. Having an easily accessible physical location for resources and support is invaluable to partners.

Practice-Based Coaching: Workforce development is a top priority for Ohio State. After using the Quality of Child Caregiver Interactions for Infants and Toddlers measurement tool to assess the areas in which providers needed additional training and coaching, Ohio State hired two full-time infant/toddler experts to provide individually tailored, practice-based coaching. Coaches are now a regular presence in the classrooms and homes, helping to build trust and productive relationships with teachers and to improve practice.

Support for Credentials and Higher Education: Ohio State works with each individual provider to identify the best path to acquire a CDA or to support those already working toward a credential online.



Source: Photo provided by Ohio State.

For example, for those who are interested in beginning an in-person program, Ohio State leverages its partnership with the city of Columbus, which offers a no-cost CDA to early educators. For staff interested in moving past a CDA, Ohio State will enroll them at the university for a no-cost bachelor’s degree.

Mixed-Income Delivery System: Ohio State is strategic in their placement of slots across their partner sites to ensure that, wherever possible, children are in mixed-income settings. This is especially successful in FCC homes, where in many cases, half of the enrolled children are funded by the EHS-CCP and half are tuition-based.



Selecting Partners with a Commitment to Improvement: At the beginning of the grant, Ohio State only selected partners who were rated a three or higher in their state's quality rating and improvement system. Over time, they shifted their strategy, selecting partner sites based on their commitment to a shared vision and a willingness to increase capacity. In the end, Ohio State found that the commitment to improve is more important to success and retention than a high starting

rating on a quality scale. This approach ensures that resources are going to the programs that really want and need quality improvements.

Family Supports: Ohio State collaborates with Directions for Youth and Families, an organization that connects families with social workers and community resources. They also partner with the Franklin County Department of Jobs and Family, which allocates a caseworker to each enrolled family to facilitate the child care subsidy process.



“Family child care providers are saying to us, ‘I have never felt that I have ever been a part of something, and I finally do.’ They’re not in isolation anymore, they are part of something bigger; they’re a community and feel like they’re finally being recognized as part of the early childhood community.”

—Partner Provider

THE RESULTS

- **160 additional infants and toddlers now have access to high-quality early care and learning** as well as services like health, mental health, nutrition, early intervention, speech and hearing support, family counseling, and workforce development services.
- **67 children who were not enrolled in the EHS-CCP still benefited** from improved classroom instruction, new curricula, new outdoor play spaces, new learning materials, and comprehensive services.
- **More than 100 families benefited from a Franklin County caseworker who assisted them with the subsidy process.**
- **Seven additional teachers earned a CDA credential, and three more are in the process of completing a CDA.**
- **Providers completed more than 80 hours of professional development on a variety of topics.**
- **All 19 providers upgraded their outdoor play spaces.**

Ohio State conducted an evaluation to assess the implementation of the partnership itself. Evidence gathered from online surveys reveals that child care providers have positive attitudes about the way the partnership is organized and managed as well as how they are treated as partners. Child care providers note the positive impact the partnership has on their professional lives, including an increase in their knowledge and expertise, an increase in the respect shown to their profession, a decrease in isolation, and an increase in collaborations with other child care providers in the community. In addition, more than 75 percent of parents express high levels of satisfaction with the services the Ohio State-EHS partnership provides.

THE TAKEAWAYS

The EHS-CCP is giving Columbus's youngest children and their families an integrated set of comprehensive services that they otherwise would not have access to—high-quality early education; health, mental, and dental care; family specialists; family counseling; housing supports; and employment supports.

Early Head Start is an exceptional program for low-income children and their families. The EHS-CCP program enables communities to distribute Early Head Start resources to prop up more early care and learning providers and serve more children. This strategy to build capacity across the child care system means that more children in Columbus, whether



EHS-eligible or not, will receive higher-quality services. As the grantee points out, this program is not about simply funding slots. It is about building community-wide capacity for all children.

Like most grantees, Ohio State originally underestimated the cost of providing high-quality infant/toddler care and education. After examining the numbers, Ohio State determined that the true cost for providing high-quality infant/toddler care and education annually is \$21,007 per child, including the EHS-CCP funds, the required match, and in-kind donations.

Child care providers do valuable and challenging work. Despite this, they are underpaid, under-resourced, and overworked. Their stress levels are high, and they rarely have access to employment benefits.

Investing in the workforce is not only good for the children they serve; it also helps teachers provide for their own families and achieve higher levels of education. Building networks across providers, particularly FCC providers, is a unique benefit of the EHS-CCP. It eases feelings of isolation and stress among providers, and it may help reduce turnover, which positively impacts their work with children and families.

This funding is a stable source of income for partner providers, which is not easy to come by in the early childhood system. Other than this funding and the child care subsidy, there are no other dollars dedicated to infants and toddlers in the state, despite the community's high needs. Ohio State says it is critical for the EHS-CCP program to continue and to expand.

