

HOPE VI Community & Supportive Services Best Practices - Family Self-Sufficiency Housing Authority of the City of Ft. Myers

Partnership Connects Parents with Employment & Early Childhood Programs

Improving family self-sufficiency was a challenge for the Housing Authority of the City of Ft. Myers (HACFM). Many parents were unable to obtain employment because they did not have reliable childcare. The HACFM had limited funds but wanted to address this challenge to help improve employment. To accomplish this goal, HACFM partnered with the Southwest Florida Early Learning Coalition (SWFELC) to leverage a dollar-for-dollar match of HOPE VI CSS funds with State funds to subsidize daycare and early childhood education programs for children.

As a result of this partnership, the Community Coordinated Care for Children, Inc. (4C), a subsidiary of SWFLEC that administers the enrollments into pre-kindergarten and daycare, agreed to offer daycare subsidies for neighborhood children. To qualify for a daycare subsidy, the parent/guardian must be actively seeking employment or enroll in a job-training program. Case managers use the eligibility requirements for daycare assistance as a tool to encourage residents to sign up for job skills training or apply for jobs. Each household that participates is provided with CSS funds for four months. At the end of the four month period, households that remain eligible are connected with other funding sources from 4C, which opens up the opportunity for additional HOPE VI families to enroll into the CCEP program. The HACFM has exceeded its goals for enrollment.

This program has also increased the available CSS funds for vocational job skills training. HACFM has committed \$20,000 a year to the CCEP program to assist all eligible HOPE VI households. Currently there are 372 children age four to twelve that could potentially benefit from this program.

For more information on this Best Practice contact:

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