



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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EPISCOPAL CHILDREN'S SERVICES AWARDED \$23K TO EXPAND SERVICES IN BEACHES COMMUNITY

The Beaches Community Fund investment allows more at-risk children to be served.



JACKSONVILLE, Fla., May 22, 2023 - Episcopal Children's Services (ECS) has been awarded a \$23,000 grant from the Beaches Community Fund, giving the ECS Rhoda Martin Early Head Start Center the ability to now serve children up to the age of five.

The Rhoda Martin Center has served Early Head Start children (ages six weeks until the child turns three) for many years, however when children were ready to transition to the Head Start program, which assists children ages three to five, they must go to another location for services. To better serve the Beaches community, Episcopal Children's Services is creating a Head Start classroom so children can be served at the same location from birth until beginning kindergarten.

The Beaches Community Fund investment will purchase furniture and classroom materials for the Head Start classroom to cover any one-time costs. "Our classrooms are designed to provide a variety of experiences and play-based activities for children to develop across learning domains," said ECS Chief Executive Officer Connie Stophel. "The classroom will incorporate multiple learning areas, including Reading, Block Play, Dramatic Play, Art, Music, Science, and Manipulatives, for fine motor skills. This is a great win for our beaches' communities."

Episcopal Children's Services creates long-lasting academic and social impacts preparing children to enter school ready to learn. The Head Start and Early Head Start programming is a two-generational approach that concurrently supports both parents and their children to break the cycle of poverty. The best outcomes for parents and children result from the critical combination of high-quality early education, care for children, economic support, and opportunities for skill-building for parents. The approach is necessarily comprehensive as we focus on the most vulnerable parents and children in the communities served.

About Episcopal Children's Services

Episcopal Children's Services serves more than 27,000 children and their families in 14 counties in Florida. ECS offers School Readiness, Head Start and Early Head Start programs in Baker, Bradford, Clay, Duval, Nassau, Putnam, St. Johns, Marion, Dixie, Gilchrist, Lake, Levy, Citrus and Alachua counties.

ECS uses research and best practices to help families ensure their children enter school ready to learn. Talented, dedicated teachers and staff work proactively with children from birth to age five and their families to build a strong educational foundation.

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