


A photograph of a group of children in a classroom. In the foreground, a young girl with curly hair is smiling and looking down at a book or paper. Behind her, other children are visible, some looking at their work. The image has a soft, slightly blurred background.

HOBBS FOUNDATION

ANNUAL REPORT 2018




This year the Hobbs Foundation made significant strides in its core program focus areas with investments in 30 strategic partners serving specified at-risk populations of children and families. The Foundation deployed additional capital in targeted programs that demonstrate effective solutions in addressing the greatest barriers to long-term stability and well-being. Advancement in program services that create positive outcomes in family security work to actively prevent risks of homelessness, child abuse and psychological distress for children. Partnerships with organizations providing individualized case management interventions and home visitation resources connect at-risk families and children with community support mechanisms. Privately funded Housing First services facilitate immediate permanent housing to alleviate developmental disruption and emotional strain on children.

Program expansions at Alpha House of Tampa are intended to address the increased need for early childhood development and family stabilization. Alpha House has shifted from a transitional housing facility to greater community outreach with in-home visitation, working with mothers in monitoring for healthy growth and development of infants and toddlers. In 2019, a partnership with the Tampa Hillsborough Homeless Initiative, they will act as lead agency in Rapid Re-Housing, or Housing First, moving at-risk families to privately held housing. After-care services will assist with employment, parent education and family-centered trauma-informed counseling that increases the likelihood of healthy coping strategies.

A partnership with Nurse-Family Partnership allows the Foundation to contribute to a state-wide effort in increasing home visitation services to at-risk pregnant mothers and their children that mitigate poor health, multi-generational poverty and low educational opportunity. Their evidence-based programming offers early development assessments and mentorship from registered nurses that has shown to have the greatest impact in the prevention of family insecurity. With nearly half of homeless Floridians families with children, a partnership with Family Promise engages local communities to host families experiencing homelessness and build lasting relationships that change life trajectories for families disconnected from family support.

Developments in federal legislation on child welfare reform bring sweeping changes for Florida's foster care system. The Family First Prevention Services Act minimizes placement in group homes and diverts the increased number of children entering foster care to foster parent or adoptive placement and requires service delivery compliance in medical needs and mental health treatment for residential group homes.



Complicated in part by the opioid crisis, more children entering care will place an even greater demand for the recruitment of foster parents and adoption. PSA recruitment campaigns in partnership with the Heart Gallery and Voices for Children bring a community-wide call-to-action in Hillsborough County. The Foundation has developed a strategic relationship with the Selfless Love Foundation and Children's Harbor with the opportunity to fund continued operations of the innovative Family Match matching platform across Florida. After its initial implementation in early 2018, Family Match has shown promising results in identifying adoptive parents and reducing lag time in the adoption process.

The opportunity to make greater investments in at-risk children and families in Florida in 2019 marks a meaningful development in the life cycle of the Foundation. With demand for increased services to foster care, parental security, healthy development and social relationships for vulnerable children, more attention to these issues has led to community responsiveness, policy change and advancement in service delivery. Key stakeholders have identified innovative pathways to create positive outcomes around issues of child welfare. With a greater commitment from the Hobbs Foundation, our partners carry out next stages of operational development to create lasting impact to improve the lives of children.

AMANDA LONG
SENIOR PROGRAM OFFICER
DECEMBER 2018

GRANTEES AT-A-GLANCE

Alpha House of Tampa, Tampa | Secure housing assistance, parenting and child development education, ongoing case management services to homeless, pregnant women and mothers with young children | **Housing First (Rapid Re-Housing)**, individualized housing support and case management services

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Tampa Bay, Tampa | Match recruitment activities that facilitate positive role modeling and mentoring relationships to at-risk students

Boys and Girls Clubs of Central Florida, Orlando | The Friday Night LIVE program provides creative, hands-on educational and social activities expanding to the new Hughes Club and Walt Disney World clubs for at-risk middle school and teen students

Boys and Girls Clubs of Miami-Dade, Miami | Continues after-school activities program with dance and performing arts; musical instrument instruction to promote intellectual and creative aptitudes for low-income students

Boys and Girls Clubs of Palm Beach County, West Palm Beach | After-school STEM education and activities program is expanding to the Delray Beach and Naomi Donnelley Haggin Club that builds academic competencies and cognitive development.

Boys and Girls Clubs of Tampa Bay, Tampa | After-school academic enrichment projects to the 21st Century Learning STEM education program for middle school students

Brookwood Florida, St. Petersburg | After-school educational, interest-based recreational, cultural enrichment activities for at-risk girls in the foster care system that promote healthy socialization and character development.

Chapman Partnership, Miami | My Family and Me Program with after-school educational, social and holiday activities for children of homeless families

Charity Navigator, National | Self-assessment financial and social impact platform for nonprofit organizations in line with the Hobbs Foundation's mission that supports good governance practices, accountability and programmatic effectiveness to overall children's services sector.

Children In Crisis, Fort Walton Beach | Support for the Summer Enrichment Activities Program with educational, recreational and social activities and field trips that inspire healthy socialization and active learning for foster children

Children's Harbor, Pembroke Pines | The Academic and Life Skills program provides academic tutoring, financial literacy, career counseling, mentoring on independent living and funds for extracurricular school activities for children in foster care.

Children's Home Network, Tampa | Explore After 4 Program providing after-school therapeutic learning and recreational activities for utilizing the Positive Behavior Supports model designed to address the social and emotional needs of children in foster care.

Family Promise, Florida | Advancing the development of Florida-based affiliates to implement permanent housing and landlord engagement services for children and families experiencing homelessness. On-going case management support assists families with independent living skills, financial literacy and therapeutic counseling to promote self-sufficiency.

The Florida Baptist Children's Homes, Lakeland | Youth on a Mission Program allowing foster children to participate in rescue mission and community service projects that build positive character development and civic leadership

Florida United Methodist Children's Home, Enterprise | The after-school STEM education program exposing children in foster care to self-discovery and critical thinking skills expanding with a Digital Arts and Computer Technology course that allows children to credits for post-secondary study.

Friends of Joshua House (Joshua House), Tampa | After-school academic enrichment and recreational activities for foster children encourage participation in constructive social and educational experiences including sports, art, vocational training and summer camp.

Grace Place for Children and Families, Naples | Support for the Academy of Leaders Program focusing on college and career preparation, college visits, academic tutoring, financial literacy, leadership, task management and effective communication skills for students of low-income families

Heart Gallery of Pinellas & Pasco County, St. Petersburg | Video Recruitment Program producing featured videos of foster children that promotes adoption in Pinellas and Pasco.

Heart Gallery of Tampa Bay, Tampa | Video Recruitment Program producing featured videos of foster children that promotes adoption in Hillsborough County; a county-wide PSA in partnership with Voices for Children of Tampa Bay is intended to meet the increased need for adoptive and foster parents

Heartland for Children, Bartow | Support for the Foster Family Appreciation Program holding educational, recreational activities with foster children and their parents that promotes healthy bonding experiences and positive learning.

HANDY (Helping Abused Neglected Disadvantaged Youth), Fort Lauderdale | Stars for Life Program offers academic tutoring, mentoring and educational activities for foster youth to prepare for secondary education and improve outcomes for graduation. The new Career Pathways program provides individualized case management designed for career development exposure, industry-recognized academic credentials and match with workforce internships with local business.

Jack & Jill Children's Center, Fort Lauderdale | Scholarships for early childhood education program encouraging healthy social, physical and cognitive development. Family support services increase financial stability, employment opportunity and successful coping and parenting strategies.

Metropolitan Ministries, Tampa | The PromiseLand therapeutic program evaluates the executive function needs and develops curriculum to improve cognitive deficiencies in children of homeless families experiencing instability in line with the principles of trauma-informed care.

Nurse-Family Partnership, Florida | Critical expansion activities to Florida affiliates in high-need areas to increase outreach to at-risk mothers and babies in support of home visitation early health and development consulting from registered nurses.

Place of Hope, West Palm Beach | Clothing for children entering foster care through the Place of Hope family cottages, emergency shelter and those children housed in their maternity group home

The Salvation Army, St. Petersburg, St. Petersburg | The Enrichment Experiences program provides foster children with educational field trips and after-school recreational activities that promotes social and emotional learning

Voices for Children Foundation, Miami | Children's Needs Fund that provides financial assistance for education and extracurricular activities for children entering the foster care system that encourages academic achievement and positive social relationships

Voices for Children of Tampa Bay, Tampa | Children's Needs

Fund that provides financial assistance for basic needs and personal items, education and extracurricular activities for children entering the foster care system in Hillsborough County; a county-wide PSA in partnership with the Heart Gallery of Tampa Bay is intended to meet the increased need for adoptive and foster parents

Youth Haven, Naples | Providing cognitive, social enrichment, educational and recreational activities, off-campus field trips and positive interest-based learning for children in foster and emergency shelter care; individualized academic tutoring works to bring children along with comprehensive therapeutic care improves resiliency and academic performance

GRANTMAKING STRATEGY HIGHLIGHTS 2018-2019

In 2018, the national Moving to Opportunity study concluded that being raised in a high crime neighborhood was the most determinant factor of economic success. Growing up in a low-income family and those with inattentive parenting has even more barriers to social and economic mobility when combined with living in a predominantly disadvantaged neighborhood. Without exposure to diverse social connections, instability and lack of opportunity become a reality for at-risk youth. HUD has shifted policy focus from Section 8 public housing and funding for transitional housing to a Housing First approach that is a critical part of the response to homelessness, more significantly in Florida, to children and families. Rapid re-housing rapidly connects families and individuals experiencing homelessness to permanent housing through a tailored package of assistance that may include the use of time-limited financial assistance and targeted supportive services. Rapid re-housing programs help families and individuals living on the streets or in emergency shelters solve the practical and immediate challenges to obtaining permanent housing while reducing the amount of time they experience homelessness, avoiding a near-term return to homelessness, and linking to community resources that enable them to achieve housing stability in the long-term.

Although access to affordable housing is an effective way to ensure long-term housing stability among households experiencing homelessness, affordable housing resources currently fall far short of the need. Short-term assistance - including financial assistance, housing search assistance, and targeted services - has shown tremendous promise in resolving the immediate crisis of homelessness for many families and preventing their future returns to homelessness. The primary focus of services in rapid re-housing is to provide help with finding private housing and to troubleshoot barriers that prevent access to housing. Housing identification services encompass helping households find appropriate rental housing in the community, contacting and recruiting landlords to provide housing opportunities for families experiencing homelessness, addressing potential barriers to landlord participation such as concern about tenant qualifications or short term rental assistance, assisting households complete applications and prepare for interviews with landlords and finding living conditions that best meet the needs of the family. After-care case management will also appropriately provide households with connecting to resources that help them improve their safety and well-being and achieve their long-term goals, including access to trauma-informed counseling, employment and healthcare services.

The body of evidence for the efficacy of the rapid re-housing program suggests that interventions have low barriers to entry, high placement rates, and low rates of return to emergency shelter when compared to transitional housing solutions and provides better living conditions than that of public housing projects. However, in the long-term, in private housing placements it cannot ultimately solve for affordability, requiring organizations to provide more meaningful approaches to the challenges families face that created insecurity in the first place. Issues such as lack of employment or employable skills, community supports, unstable partner

relationships, emotional instability and depression require on-going case management services with social workers who can form trusted relationships with families.

Most of Florida's students who were identified as homeless, 74 percent were doubled up with family and friends. 11 percent of homeless students were staying in hotels and motel rooms. A similar share, 10 percent, were living in shelters and transitional housing, although these resources were very scarce in rural areas. Nearly 2,000 students were living in places not designed for human accommodation, including cars, parks, and campgrounds. These children are particularly at risk of physical and mental health delays, psychological distress that interrupts the healthy brain development needed for emotional regulation and cognitive functioning. Children living with families in unstable housing situations have compounded challenges in academic performance resulting from frequent absenteeism and a lack of attention paid to schooling. Homeless students were much less likely to demonstrate proficiency in academic subjects. Passing rates for Florida's English Language Arts, math and science tests were much lower for students identified as homeless than housed students with proper parental motivation toward educational goals.

While families who rely on housing vouchers may have a chance at moving to areas with higher performing schools and improved conditions over Section 8 housing, it still leaves challenges for local agencies in identifying private housing options that are affordable for low-income families with children. The Tampa Housing Authority after moving out of the business of managing public housing in favor of private placement leaves local nonprofits with the task of re-housing, in many instances at higher rental rates, and preparing families for self-sufficiency. Ultimately, if achieved, would yield a greater likelihood of improved health and well-being outcomes for children.

Alpha House of Tampa has become a lead continuum of care agency in serving pregnant women and mothers with children experiencing homelessness, conducting specialized care in assessing and providing tools for the healthy growth and development of young children. Children of homeless families can identify immediate housing placement in a safe neighborhood with a diverse community of peers. This initiative is a pilot program that will focus on increasing housing stability through a strong emphasis on a continuum of care that provides a support system to defer to resources for employment, education, early child development, therapeutic counseling, and healthy parenting strategies. All Alpha House case managers are trained in trauma-informed care practices and administering early child development screenings to ensure that children are meeting their development milestones. Mothers receive hands-on education that facilitates healthy bonding and parenting skills for assisting children in progressing in their communication, motor skills, problem-solving and social-emotional development.

Research demonstrates a strong link between what parents know about parenting and child development and how they behave with their children. Parents with more knowledge are more likely to engage in positive parenting practices, whereas those with limited knowledge are at greater risk of negative parenting behaviors. Consequently, many parenting programs and services for families with infants and toddlers aim to improve parents' knowledge of child development and healthy caregiving practices. Studies of effective home visitation programs reflect the importance of at-risk, or low-income, parents expressing a strong desire to learn about their child's development, how to parent effectively, and reduce feelings of isolation by forming supportive relationships in times of stress and hardship. A strong, consistent parent relationship is essential to long-term outcomes of social-emotional stability and economic mobility outcomes for at-risk youth. Growing awareness of the lifelong affects of early childhood experiences on growth and development, social and economic gaps has called for robust interventions.

The challenges of growing up in a single-parent household or in families that are stressed by financial or relationship insecurities, poor health, or exposure to substance abuse or violence coincide with lower levels of academic achievement and economic opportunity. This year, the Hobbs Foundation made investments not only in early childhood development and parent stability in children of homeless families, but those in low-income, single-parent households at-risk of poor health and social conditions, more importantly, in those with children 18 months and younger. Parental substance use and addiction adds another dimension to the risks facing many young children today, both because of the developmental consequences of prenatal exposure and because of the impact on the caregiving capacities of parents. While recent policy and media attention has raised awareness of the devastating consequences of the current opioid epidemic, many parents of young children also struggle with alcohol addiction and other illicit drugs. Positive influences and supports for mothers early on has the best chance of preventing neglect, abuse, and family insecurity. Funding allocation for early childhood home visitation programs has a significant advantage of preventing further increases in the number of children entering foster care.

There is a clear need for more effective, integrated system of support to address the challenges of insecure mothers and young children with privately funded community-based care. With parents and families the most important influence on early life and child development, parents and caregivers must have the adequate knowledge, commitment and resiliency to promote their child's social-emotional well-being. Nurse-Family Partnership is an evidence-based, community health program that helps transform the lives of vulnerable pregnant mothers and their infants. Mothers are partnered with a registered nurse early in pregnancy and receive ongoing home visitation services through the child's second birthday. Children in the NFP home visitation program showed remarkable outcomes in cognitive and language development, reading and math achievement scores and a reduction in behavior problems compared to non-participant children. Nurse-Family Partnership nurses advocate for mothers, promote health, wellness and economic self-sufficiency through individualized case management.

With 13 Florida affiliates operating within their community, Nurse-Family Partnership is engaging in a 6-year strategic plan to expand their reach and the potential of the program, doubling the number of participating families by 2023 across the state. The organization aims to grow the program in targeted high-needs areas where they can have the greatest impact on the health and well-being of children. With additional oversight and programmatic support tailored to each community, NFP's agency partners will achieve higher quality service delivery, program model fidelity, and efficient case load management.

Awarded with incentive funding by the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation's Blue Meridian Partners, the organization has successfully raised over \$16M so far to invest in Florida's families. The Incentive Fund enables new or existing partners of Nurse-Family Partnership to improve access to and the quality of care for the most vulnerable families in local communities. Through a competitive application process, the Incentive Fund awards start-up dollars for three years to high-performing partners seeking to grow and sustain Nurse-Family Partnership. By seeding private dollars in the short-term to leverage sustainable public dollars and alleviate initial barriers to program implementation, the Incentive Fund is catalyzing growth in program enrollment – all while ensuring program integrity that drives beneficial outcomes for individual families and society as a whole. We are also exploring a Pay for Success funding model to support program expansions. Performance-based contracting allows private funders to be reimbursed by state payouts for operations expenses if key metrics are achieved. Private capital can bring NFP to the highest risk communities, including rural and other underserved areas lacking critical services with targeted expansion. Investors have the benefit of generating positive social impact in early childhood development and health, and gain a potential return from public contracts.

The Hobbs Foundation contributes equally to a state-wide program expansion with Family Promise. Family Promise extends the work we have accomplished with organizations like Alpha House of Tampa and Metropolitan Ministries with specialized family stabilization services for children experiencing homelessness in Hillsborough County. With national outreach capacities, Family Promise has identified the need in Florida in 9 affiliate communities across the state to dramatically decrease overhead costs in serving children and families and identifying housing. Like Alpha House, Family Promise has adopted a Housing First program model in addition to providing emergency housing to meet the immediate needs of families without shelter. The organization matches families with host families in their community and acts as a bridge, reconnecting homeless families to friends and neighbors that offer their support in rebuilding the lives of families in their community. Family Promise leadership, in a parallel approach, facilitates housing placement once the family has been stabilized and intensive case management has been completed. Families are linked to social services, employment training, and educational opportunities in line with the needs of the family and their children.

Family Promise's strategic plan for Florida expansion will serve to strengthen operations development and sustainability with greater oversight of leadership in each affiliate. Funding for post-shelter support provides life skills training, financial literacy and personalized mentoring for families. Expansion of their rapid re-housing program provides additional home visitation support services to families for 1 year with the goal of 100% of families maintaining permanent housing independence.

In addition to our work in support of family insecurity and early childhood development, the Hobbs Foundation's strategic grantmaking efforts focused on issues surrounding child welfare and foster care. This year reforms in child welfare policy were at the forefront for lead agencies and other nonprofit organizations serving children in foster care. The Family First Prevention Services Act outlines a reallocation of federal funding toward child welfare services. Family First dictates that federal child welfare financing will provide services to families at risk of entering the child welfare system. This approach is aimed at preventative strategies that reduce the number of children entering care. Prevention services receive public reimbursement for mental health services, substance abuse treatment and home visitation parent training before children are removed from their homes. This is an additional amendment to policies that discourage children from entering group homes rather than being diverted to more permanent home-like setting such as relative care or with foster parents.

The Family First Prevention Services Act seeks to curtail the use of congregate or group care for children and instead places a new emphasis on family foster homes. With limited exceptions, the federal government will not reimburse states for children placed in group care settings for more than two weeks. Approved settings, known as qualified residential treatment programs, must use a trauma-informed treatment model and employ registered or licensed nursing staff and other licensed clinical staff. The child must be formally assessed within 30 days of placement to determine if his or her needs can be met by family members, in a family foster home or another approved setting. These changes affect our group children's homes in that they may only care for up to 6 children and only receive funding for up to 14 days before a child must be placed with a foster family. They must also comply with placement recommendations; to be designated as a family-based residential treatment facility, requiring licensed mental health and behavioral disorders counseling, substance abuse treatment and related trauma-specific interventions. Licensing and staffing requirements to meet these standards will present significant cost-burden that private funding must supplement.

For foster care providers the focus has now shifted from child care to swifter, and more effective foster parent recruitment and adoption. With greater numbers of children coming into care, most notably, in Hillsborough County and South Florida, Broward and Miami-Dade, funding for foster parent facilitation is essential. If Florida can no longer place children in residential group homes without federal funding, recruitment for foster home placement will need to rise significantly and be streamlined for increased efficiencies. In 2018, Florida saw 6,700 more children enter care with a spike linked to higher rates of substance abuse, namely opioids.

Caregivers and advocates say there is a lack of available foster homes as well as funding and support for preventative services to help struggling parents keep their children. Resources for friends and relatives who often take in children removed from their parents are until now, lagging. The lack of services hurts kids in the state's care by failing to provide them with the crucial stability and attention they need to flourish.

In a response to the current climate in Florida's foster care system, the Foundation targeted focus, first, in Hillsborough County, providing additional funding for foster care recruitment efforts with organizations like the Heart Gallery, a community-based adoption recruitment partner, and Voices for Children, a coordinating agency for the Guardian ad Litem program. The organizations are now teaming up to create a county-wide awareness campaign to identify more foster families for children awaiting placement. Plans for future grant funding for Joshua House, a Tampa-based residential group home, will work to implement a training program for prospective foster parents that provides guidance on navigating the process of becoming a foster parent and matching children to a family that is the most appropriate fit. Consideration for additional funds needed to assist in the transition to foster home placement will be assessed in 2019 when new regulations take effect. In South Florida, lead residential group home, Children's Harbor is in the initial planning phases of adapting to these changes and has been an integral part of program strategy for the Hobbs Foundation's investment in foster care. A new CEO hire has extensive experience in foster family placement with the county's lead community-based care agencies and is developing planning efforts as well as raising private funding to continue residential care.

In partnership with Children's Harbor, the Foundation has developed relationships with the board of directors at Selfless Love Foundation. Selfless Love Foundation, led by former Children's Harbor CEO, Elizabeth Wynter, has provided seed funding to implement Adoption-Share's Family Match platform across foster care agencies in Florida. Family Match is an online database network and proprietary adoption matching technology that can be accessed by case workers to pair foster children and qualified prospective parents across the state. Using compatibility algorithms, Family Match can account for alignments in personality, expectation, parenting experience, attachment and behaviors. The platform was first introduced in Florida in January 2018, and under Elizabeth's leadership, is now in operation in foster care placement agencies across South Florida. To date, 500 families and 600 children are registered and can now be matched in a few months time over the typical 18-month process. In 2019, the project has plans to provide ongoing support to foster care agencies to best utilize the Family Match tool and dramatically increase the number of successful adoptions. The Foundation can then have the opportunity to assist in support of a coordinated program expansion across the state and create widespread impact in finding permanent, loving families for children awaiting adoption.

