



CELEBRATING EXXONMOBIL AND UNITED WAY BRIGHT BEGINNINGS September 2008

“Yes, I like to be here, working with the kids because they are angels of the next generation and I would like to make the difference.” -UWBB Teacher

Vision:

Founded by ExxonMobil and United Way in 2002, the United Way Bright Beginnings initiative is a model early education program designed so that children achieve developmental milestones (social, emotional, physical and cognitive) through better quality childcare. The program aims to improve childcare quality through intensive staff training and development, comprehensive curriculum, appropriate indoor and outdoor equipment, leadership development and parental involvement.

Importance of Quality:

Numerous studies find an extraordinary rate of return on investment in quality early childhood education. Two of those studies are quoted below:

16% Rate of Return on Investment (4% to participants; 12% to public)

(Source: 2003 Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis, “Early Childhood Development: Economic Development with a High Public Return.”)

Every \$1 invested in high-quality Pre-K in Texas returns \$3.50 per participant to the community

(Source: 2006 The Bush School of Government & Public Service “A Cost-Benefit Analysis of Universally Accessible Pre-K Education in Texas”)

A child with a quality early care experience can expect:

Greater Success in School

- Higher math and reading achievement scores
- Greater language abilities
- More likely to pursue secondary education

Greater Success in Life

- Less grade retention; lower dropout rates, less special education.
- Higher employment rates; higher earning rates
- Lower welfare dependency
- Fewer interactions with criminal justice system

United Way Bright Beginnings Model:

Eighteen childcare centers (six Tier I, admitted in 2002, eight Tier II, admitted in 2005 and four Tier III, admitted in 2007) serving children 0 to 5, located mainly in low-income geographic areas are receiving:

- Teacher training in innovative, developmentally appropriate curriculum and teaching methods
- One on one consultation between teachers and child care consultants at least twice a month
- Leadership training, professional development conferences, mentoring and networking for center directors
- Wage supplementation for directors and teachers meeting experience and education requirements
- Appropriate classroom supplies
- Developmentally appropriate outdoor playgrounds

University of Houston Institute for Urban Education has evaluated the results of the program for six years, documenting change in classroom quality, teacher retention and teacher and director view of the centers.

Bottom Line for the Community:

Quality Improvement: Increase in classroom quality improvement as measured by the Infant/Toddler Environmental Rating Scale and Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale and certified by University of Houston:

- 110% (Tier I centers)
- 108% (Tier II centers)
- 93% (Tier III centers)

Nationally accepted research shows that higher quality childcare classrooms lead to better outcomes for children, including more readiness for school

Staff Retention: 43% increase in staff retention in Tier I; 7% in Tier II

Kindergarten performance: UWBB kindergarten students outperformed Control Group students at HISD on the Stanford Reading and Stanford Complete Battery of Tests by a statistically significant margin (differences that were statistically significant at $p > .05$).

Six Year Program Production:

UWBB has touched approximately:

- 28 Child Care Centers
- 59 Child Care Center Directors
- 417 Child Care Teachers
- 3,076 Children

UWBB has helped center teachers receive the following degrees:

- 217 Child Development Associate certificate
- 14 Associates Degrees in Early Childhood
- 4 Bachelors Degrees in Early Childhood
- 3 Masters Degrees in Early Childhood (2 in progress)

Playgrounds: The UWBB program has installed child-friendly colorful playgrounds for 19 centers.

NAEYC: Three UWBB Tier I centers achieved accreditation from the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). One Tier II center will be visited by NAEYC in November 2008 and will receive final notice shortly thereafter. There is one other Tier II center on self-study (the initial step for accreditation) and several others are reviewing accreditation requirements.

Stats on Teachers, Directors and Children:

Teachers: (134 teachers in current UWBB centers)

- 63 current UWBB teachers have CDAs. Of those, 34 were obtained through UWBB
- 43 teachers are working on CDAs or diplomas/certificates in early childhood
- 87% of staff in the centers had participated in UWBB trainings
- Average of 9 years in the childcare industry

Directors: (18 directors in current UWBB centers)

- Eight of the directors earned CDAs through UWBB; one is in process
- Seven directors had earned an AA, BA or MA in Early Childhood
- Average of 17 years in the childcare industry

Children:

In 2007, the program served 761 children. Children in the program are 46% Hispanic, 25% African American, 15% Caucasian and 9% Asian. UW Bright Beginnings has targeted centers that serve low-income families. Two centers work with children whose parents are homeless; one center works with children that come from situations of domestic violence; one center provides services to children of community college students and one center works with children of teenage parents.

The Future with ExxonMobil and United Way Bright Beginnings:

The future for children, parents, teachers and the entire community in United Way Bright Beginnings center areas is indeed bright as young children are more likely to grow into successful adults that give back to the community. Because of the scope of ExxonMobil's gift to United Way Bright Beginnings, the program is able to offer:

- Wage supplementation for teachers and directors – very rare in early childhood initiatives, but one of the most important components
- Top flight training from nationally recognized trainers from around the country
- High level experts that are 100% dedicated to the program, allowing for expert management of content and course corrections
- Professional, academic, objective evaluation services enabling us to change the program over time for the better

Thanks to ExxonMobil for its vision in supporting United Way Bright Beginnings since 2002 with \$1 million per year.