

## EARLY HEAD START

Early Head Start at Parsons Early Learning Center is a federally funded program for families who are pregnant or have children from birth to age 3. The center is accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), and offers both a home visiting component and a center base (day care) component. Program staff help parents with the changes and needs of their family that come with having a small child, and parents learn ways to help their children meet all milestones, including helping the family ensure the child is healthy, developmentally on target, and ready for the world. School readiness, including literacy, is a major component of the Early Head Start program.

**Help give your child the most valuable gift of all – a loving, nurturing and happy family.**

The Early Head Start program is located at the Parsons Early Learning Center at 125 Bigelow Avenue in Schenectady. There are eight classrooms for the 62 infants and toddlers in the center-based program. Each classroom is staffed with two highly trained and skilled teachers. In addition, 58 children are served with weekly visits by highly trained and skilled staff in the home visiting model. Staff follow a developmentally appropriate curriculum both in the home and in the center to ensure quality care and learning is achieved.

### AVAILABLE SERVICES

Families benefit through direct services provided by staff, as well as through partnerships with other area service providers. Parsons Early Head Start provides the following services:

- Mentoring and education around maternal and child health care including prenatal, breast-feeding, immunizations, and lead screening
- Screenings and educational activities to evaluate children's developmental needs with referrals when necessary for professional evaluation and, if deemed appropriate, intervention
- Families are aided in acquiring adequate health services for the family including physical, mental, dental, nutritional, visual, and auditory health services as needed
- Mentoring for parents regarding vocational direction
- Home-based families are encouraged to attend socializations each month so that their children can interact with other children and parents can meet other parents with children of similar age
- Free center-based care Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

### BENEFITS

- Increase school readiness and early literacy skills
- Increase positive interaction between parents and children
- Improve parent and child wellness and social connectedness
- Increase families' economic self-sufficiency
- Prevent child abuse and neglect

**Who can access services?** Any Schenectady County pregnant women and families with children from birth to age 3 who are living at or below poverty level resident children who are referred through the Schenectady County Department of Social Services.

**How are services accessed?** Call or visit the Early Learning Center: by calling or by visiting the Early Learning Center at 125 Bigelow Avenue, Schenectady, 518.292.5515.

**When are services available?** Home-base appointments are available Monday through Friday with flexible hours available depending on the families' needs. The Early Learning Center is open from 7:00 a.m. – 5:15 p.m. Early Head Start paid hours are from 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.