



**For Immediate Release  
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**THE PARENT-CHILD HOME PROGRAM  
RECEIVES \$25,000 GRANT FROM UNITED WAY OF LONG ISLAND**

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**PROGRAM RECOGNIZED AS NATIONAL MODEL FOR FAMILY SUPPORT**

**Port Washington, NY** -- The United Way of Long Island Success By 6 initiative today awarded the Mobile Outreach Parent-Child Home Program a \$25,000 grant. The Program, which focuses on increasing the parent-child verbal interaction vital to developing children's language skills and preparing them for school, was recognized as a national model for family support. The Mobile Outreach Parent-Child Home Program is administrated through Equity Support Services of Eastern Suffolk BOCES and serves 100 homeless families throughout Suffolk County.

The United Way's Family Support report, released today, selected The Parent-Child Home Program as one of only three chosen from over 3,000 programs. The study also found that the most successful programs follow the framework of "family support," which sees needy households as partners, not problems. Instead of simply providing services for families and concentrating on correcting what is supposedly wrong with them, this new approach works with families and seeks to reinforce their strengths.

"We are delighted to make grants to these stellar Long Island-based family support agencies, which embrace the principles described in the Family Support report," said Patrick Foye, president & CEO, United Way of Long Island. "The grant to the Parent-Child Home Program will support its pioneering work with children of homeless families."

The Parent-Child Home Program is a national school readiness and family support program providing thousands of families of 2- and 3-year-olds with intensive home visiting focused on developing the language and early literacy skills needed to enter school ready to learn. It provides training and technical assistance to more than 140 sites throughout the country, including 19 sites on Long Island.

"Low-income children who complete The Parent-Child Home Program enter school ready to learn," said Sarah Walzer, executive director, The Parent-Child Home Program. "They perform better on school readiness measures than their peers, score at or above national averages on standardized tests, and graduate from high school at the rates of middle class students."

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Kesia's story may best tell the story of United Way's Success by 6 Mobile Outreach Parent-Child Home Program. Kesia is a young homeless mother who enrolled in The Parent-Child Home Program with her daughter Krasell, whose language warranted extra support and stimulation. Kesia participated wholly in every session, taking the lead, playing and reading to her daughter. Dad was there as well as he loved to watch and listen and to take part in the reading and playing during the week.

The family moved from homeless shelter to homeless shelter and, because of the Mobile Outreach Parent-Child Home Program plan, the same Parent-Child Home visitor was able to keep seeing them and bringing more books and more toys, week by week. The relationship was strengthened through its simple familiarity, and that familiarity grew in importance with each change. As future moves were added, again and again, the meaning of their relationship unfolded. Stories, creative art, toys and puzzles paved the way. Encouragement, interest, someone who listens, tries to understand, and just keeps coming back, brought a familiarity and regularity that was therapeutic.

Krasell had no preschool opportunities in most of the towns they lived in due to lack of money and transportation, so weekly sessions were all the pre-school experience she had. (The Parent-Child Home program typically offers two half-hour sessions per week to its families. The one visit per week variation is special for the Mobile Outreach Program.) Krasell continued to show deep interest in books, encouraged by mom and dad. She was not only musical, but also artistic like her mom. Many hours were enjoyed drawing together; each new paper and art supply brought was treasured. Mom offered so much to her child; Dad read stories again and again and then again. Krasell's conversation and vocabulary had improved immensely and her small motor, thinking and pre-reading skills had developed.

Keisa wrote the home visitor this note in a special card:

*The toys and books weren't just toys and books, they were outlets for us, to believe that for that one hour of the day we could escape our sadness and focus on learning how to believe in ourselves just the same as you believe in our children, to believe in a whole new world of reading and exploring. Your program shows us how to show the children something we forgot we had ourselves- believing in the joy of hope.*

Today, Krasell is now in first grade and her teacher continues to comment on her love of books and interest in learning. Kesia and her husband are continuing their educations. Dad works two jobs to support the family. Kesia is getting the medical help she has lived without for over six years. She enjoys reading to her baby, Yvette, each day and also enjoys that reading time with Krasell each evening before bed.

**(Note: Kesia and her family are available for interviews.)**