

## **Supporting Family Engagement in the Early Head Start Child Care Partnership**

### **Overview**

Understanding the importance of collaboration, reflective dialogue, and authentic engagement in aligning services to effectively address the needs of Early Care Head Start programs, the United Way has initiated a two-year process designed to better understand, engage, and empower, parents and community stakeholders to work in partnership to measurably improve outcomes for infants and toddlers. Conversations between the United Way and the University of Florida Lastinger Center for Learning have resulted in an effort focused on research-based strategies designed to support Technical Assistance Providers deepen their work as a community of practice in three ways: (1) Ongoing assessment of practices and implementation strategies, (2) Supporting and learning from one another, and (3) Authentically working with practitioners, parents, and community stakeholders to significantly improve and sustain family engagement and child outcomes for infants and toddlers.

### **Outcome**

Technical Assistance Providers working together to understand, engage, and empower parents and community stakeholders served by participating Early Head Start Programs to measurably improve program quality and outcomes for infants and toddlers.

### **Goals**

Participants will

- Employ collaborative methods and tools to engage in regular, reflective dialogue and ongoing professional learning and development.
- Explore how cultural, ethnic, racial, and other forms of identity shape our personal and professional views of people, communities, and early care and education.
- Assess the value of personal reflection, reflective dialogue, and intentional listening in professional learning and in growing relationships with peers and building effective partnerships and community stakeholders.
- Apply appreciative leadership strategies.
- Integrate collaborative methods and tools to improve job performance, family engagement, and program outcomes.

### **Program Framework**

The UF Lastinger Center, in collaboration with the United Way, will initiate a process of discovery to allow UF Specialists to customize the design of the program to the work of the Technical Assistance Providers. An iterative design process will be used to develop and deliver a series of incremental and interconnected training/work sessions delivered over a two-year period to ensure the alignment of the program's goals and activities with the desired outcome.