



**Board of Directors**

Jim McGovern – Chair  
*Neil Jones Food Company*

Claudia Black – Vice Chair  
*Multnomah County*

Kevin Kerstiens --Treasurer  
*Schwabe, Williamson & Wyatt*

Victor Merced --Secretary  
*Hacienda Community Development Corp.*

Representative Brent Barton  
*Oregon House of Representatives*

Angie Blackwell  
*Blackwell Family Resources*

Jay Bloom  
*BloomAnew*

Kathryn Calcagno  
*First Republic Bank*

Brett Fisher  
*Merrill Lynch Wealth Management*

Rajan Mehndiratta  
*Intel*

Victor Merced  
*Hacienda Community Development Corp.*

Renee Moseley  
*Bridge Meadows*

Dani Ledezma  
*Governor's Office*

Commissioner Loretta Smith  
*Multnomah County*

Rita Sullivan, PhD  
*OnTrack, Inc.*

Sen. Chuck Thomsen  
*Oregon State Senate*

Peter Wells - Program/Eval. Chair  
*City of Pendleton*

Judge Youlee You  
*Multnomah County Circuit Court*

TO: Education Subcommittee, Joint Committee on Ways and Means

FROM: Susan Lindauer, Children's Trust Fund of Oregon

DATE: March 10, 2015

RE: Increased Investment in Health Families Oregon (as a part of HB 5016)

Co-Chairs Senator Monroe and Representative Komp, and members of the committee,

My name is Susan Lindauer and I am the Executive Director of the Children's Trust Fund of Oregon Foundation. For 30 years, we have been promoting healthy child development and the prevention of child abuse through our strategic community-based grants, as well as original research, and public awareness. On behalf of our Board, we urge your support for the increased \$10 million investment in the Healthy Families Oregon (HFO) program, as a part of House Bill 5016.

HFO has one of the highest levels of evidence among parenting education programs nationally, and gets real results for families. While most state programs focus on child outcomes only, we know that children are not successful without the support, stability and nurturing of their families during critical developmental years. Also, unlike statewide programs that are mandated, Healthy Families Oregon is voluntary, so parents do not feel the same stigma of participation. Parents report feeling more empowered as they are provided with support and skills to be the best parents for their children.

As a foundation with a statewide focus, we invest in 39 grantees across the state that provide parent education services that are proven to be effective in reducing the incidence of child maltreatment. One of the programs we invest in is home visiting. We know the difference that home visiting can make for parents, especially new parents who are at-risk and under significant stress because they have drug or alcohol dependency, limited networks of support, or who are isolated and unprepared for taking care of a new baby. The Trust Fund is thrilled to have the extensive Healthy Families Oregon network available and accessible for parents in each county, but our limited funding can only go so far and we know how critical it is for the state to invest in this important service. We are also supportive of building the network of the Early Learning Hubs so that families can access and be referred to a coordinated array of early learning and family services, to meet their child's needs.

A \$10 million increase would support an estimated additional 1000 children and their parents annually<sup>i</sup>. Parents involved in home visiting often experience high levels of poverty and family instability. Many parents have said that they did not have nurturing adults to care for them during their childhoods- 69 percent of parents receiving home visiting report that they grew up in homes with at least one parent who had problems with substance abuse, mental health, or criminal involvement.<sup>ii</sup> 32 percent also report

substance abuse in their own lives.<sup>iii</sup> **Unfortunately, this cycle of early trauma and abuse is often repeated if there are not specific interventions and supports provided.**

The latest evaluation of Healthy Families Oregon demonstrates:

**Increased Parental Resiliency<sup>iv</sup>:**

- After one year of home visiting, 96% of parents can consistently engage in positive, nurturing interactions with their children;
- After just 6 months, 75% of parents report improvement in their parenting skills; and
- Between birth and 6 months, 61% of parents report decreased parenting-related stress.

**Increased School Readiness<sup>v</sup>:**

- After one year of home visiting, 88% of parents were creating positive, developmentally supportive learning environments;
- After one year of home visiting, 92% of parents report reading to their children 3 times per week or more; and

**Increased Healthy Development<sup>vi</sup>:**

- 99% of children have a primary health care provider (compared to 80% of all children)
- 93% of children receive regular well-child check-ups (compared to 76% of all children)
- 90% of children are fully immunized (compared to 76% of all children 1-2)

These are just several of the compelling reasons why we support the expansion of Healthy Families Oregon and urge you to invest fully in the program so that Oregon's most vulnerable children and have the best opportunities for life-long success.

---

<sup>i</sup> Oregon Health Authority. (February, 2015). Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV). Retrieved from personal communication, February 6, 2015.

<sup>ii</sup> Green, B. L. et al. (February 2013). Statewide Evaluation Results 2011-2012: Healthy Start~ Healthy Families Oregon Executive Summary. [http://www.npcresearch.com/Files/Healthy\\_Start~Healthy\\_Families\\_Oregon\\_Evaluation\\_Report\\_2011-12.pdf](http://www.npcresearch.com/Files/Healthy_Start~Healthy_Families_Oregon_Evaluation_Report_2011-12.pdf)

<sup>iii</sup> Ibid.

<sup>iv</sup> Ibid.

<sup>v</sup> Ibid.

<sup>vi</sup> Ibid.