

EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAM EXPANDING TO SERVE MORE KIDS IN NYC

The program, which serves children with developmental delays and disabilities, will receive an additional \$2.46 million in funding

New York City Health Department, in partnership with the Fund for Public Health NYC, receives support from Robin Hood, Viking Global Foundation, and Tiger Foundation

November 28, 2023 — A successful Early Intervention (EI) initiative for New York City children is receiving additional support from three philanthropic foundations to expand electronic referral and retention efforts for underserved communities. The Fund for Public Health NYC – on behalf of the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene – was awarded a two-year renewal grant from Robin Hood, New York City's largest poverty-fighting philanthropy, to expand electronic referrals to Early Intervention. Additionally, Viking Global Foundation and Tiger Foundation have each chosen to support the expansion of electronic referral and retention efforts to help connect more families from underserved communities to NYC's Early Intervention program.

"Early Intervention is a life-changing resource for thousands of city families and sets our precious children out on a trajectory for healthy, happy, and long lives," **said Health Commissioner Dr. Ashwin Vasan**. "Our goal is not just to deliver extraordinary services but to help New Yorkers connect to them, and this additional philanthropic support will ensure that every family in underserved communities who needs it can access NYC's Early Intervention program."

"These grants to the Fund for Public Health NYC allow the Bureau of Early Intervention to continue expanding and refining its wonderful, important work," **said Leslie Hayes, M.D., Deputy Commissioner of Family and Child Health**. "The positive impact of EI has been documented many times over, and its services are especially valuable for families that are underserved. We want as many people as possible to know that EI is free, its providers are culturally sensitive, and that families are included in the work every step of the way."

The Electronic Health Records—Early Intervention initiative, initially funded by Robin Hood in 2021, is helping increase access to EI for families of color and low-income families and enhancing follow-up and retention.

Since its launch in 2022, the mechanism has enabled four partner healthcare institutions and 20 pediatric primary care sites across New York City to monitor a child's progress through the referral process and address any emerging barriers. This has helped facilitate 4,000 EI referrals, 86% of which were for Black and Latinx children and 54% for children living in neighborhoods with high and very high poverty rates.

Early Intervention is a free program that assists and empowers families whose children ages 0-3 have developmental delays or disabilities. The program connects families to services that can reduce the need for special education and significantly improve a child's developmental trajectory. The Bureau of Early Intervention in the Health Department's Division of Family and Child Health coordinates Early Intervention services for 30,000 children annually.

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Early Intervention Program Expands, cont.

The renewed funding from Robin Hood and the new grants from Viking Global Foundation and Tiger Foundation will allow the initiative to work with more clinical sites and an additional hospital system.

"It's exciting to see how, with funding from Robin Hood, Viking Global Foundation, and Tiger Foundation, NYC can make the referral process for early intervention more seamless," **said Sara Gardner, Chief Executive Officer at the Fund for Public Health NYC.** "The result is that more low-income families and families of color are receiving services to support their child's development."

"The federally funded and mandated EI program is a lifeline for infants and children with developmental delays. Yet far too many families with at-risk children, especially New Yorkers of color, and non-English speaking families, remain underserved or lack access to the services and benefits their children deserve and need to thrive. We are pleased to fund an expansion effort of the EI referral program so more New York families, regardless of their race, income, or zip code can seek the therapeutic services they need to give their children the best possible start in life," **said Robin Hood, Viking Global Foundation, and Tiger Foundation in a joint statement.**

For more information on the Health Department's Early Intervention Program, visit www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/health/health-topics/early-intervention.page or call 311.

The Fund for Public Health in New York City facilitates partnerships between the public and private sectors to develop, test, and launch new public health initiatives that advance the health of all New Yorkers. For more information, visit: fphnyc.org

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