

## Annual Program Report

### Programa Esperanza Para Los Ninos / Hope For The Children Program April, 2004 - April, 2005

High Profile Program Name: Esperanza Para Los Ninos/Hope For The Children Program

Program Description: The “Esperanza Para Los Niños” program is funded by a \$400,000 annual grant award from the US Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). The proposal was one of two selected for funding in a national competition of 70 applicants. The program received funding for three years and an additional extension funding period. The grant will come to an end as of July 31<sup>st</sup>, 2007. The program will continue to serve the Latino community and has been expanded to serve the African-American community. This expansion has been made possible by the allocation of City funds.

The “Esperanza Para Los Niños” program is a partnership of award grantee, the City of Kansas City Missouri, Health Department, the Family Conservancy/Family Focus Center and the University of Missouri Kansas City/Institute for Human Development.

The goal of the overall program is to encourage optimal bonding between first-time mothers and their newborn infants for a period up to eighteen months, in order to prevent the development of emotional and cognitive disorders in these infants. Another goal is to inform and mobilize the community regarding the issue of positive mental health and the importance of infant brain development.

The Esperanza program is implementing an evidence-based model which was developed by Dr. Christoph Heinicke of the Family Development Center at the UCLA Neuropsychiatry Institute and Hospital. Bilingual program staff (English/Spanish) are available. Expectant mothers receive weekly home visits from a parent coach who has received training to enhance the expectant mother’s communication and personal adaptation. The parent coaches provide alternative approaches, direct affirmations and support. The intervention is designed to meet the developmental needs of women with limited financial resources and limited partner and family support. Expectant mothers also participate in a support group and attend classes provide the latest research findings on nutrition, child development and infant brain development.

The program includes a social marketing component which promotes mentally healthy communities, and encourages the recruitment of program participants. This component of the program was developed from best practices models originating from marketing, advertising and the social sciences.

The following section of the report will itemize Esperanza Para Los Niños's primary objectives and accomplishments and align each with one of the Ten Essential Services of Public Health.

Priority Projects:

- 1) To implement a social marketing campaign which promotes positive mental health in the community and encourages the recruitment of program participants? This campaign will include radio, billboards and internal/external transit vehicle posters. (Essential Service #4 – To mobilize community partnerships to identify and solve health problems and #3 – To inform, educate and empower people about health issues.)

During this reporting period the Esperanza Program has developed/planned a social marketing campaign which will include radio announcements, outdoor billboard displays and king-size posters on municipal transit buses. The graphics, conceptual message and photos have all been coordinated, so that the campaign will elicit recognition across media outlets. The campaign tagline will be “Regálale el futuro, hoy” or “Give the gift of their future, today”. The campaign will begin July 14<sup>th</sup>, 2007. ( Attachment A)

- 2) To deliver a home-visiting program which will encourage strong bonding between first-time mothers and their newborn infants. (Essential Service #3 – To inform, educate and empower people about health issues. Essential Service #7 – Link people to needed personal health services and assure the provision of healthcare when otherwise unavailable.)

As the federal grant comes to an end we have developed transition plans to identify which participants would best be served by continuing with the contractor, the Family Conservancy and which ones would be working with City staff. All of the necessary case assignments have been completed. The Family Conservancy is in the application process for a local foundation to provide continuation funding for their program.

The City funded “Hope For The Children” staffing includes 9 positions. We have filled 6 positions to date. We are aggressively recruiting for two bilingual parent coaches. We will complete those hires during the first quarter of FY2007.

We will be convening a graduation celebration and Open House on Saturday, July 14<sup>th</sup> from 11:30 am to 4:30 pm. Twenty-five of the original “Esperanza” participants who completed the required service participation will receive a certificate of completion. The festivities will include music, catered snacks and family photos for program participants. We have invited the Mayor, City Manager and members of the City Council. We are expecting 125 attendees.

Accomplishments (Undertakings):

The Project Director presented the findings of the Esperanza program to the “Cambio de Colores” (Changing of the Colors) Regional Conference in Kansas City, Missouri on April 2, 2007.