

Kind HEARTED

your gift changed lives

Human Kind

June/July 2023

BRIDGING THE GAP for a *Healthy Smile*

BECAUSE OF YOU, ARIA HAD ACCESS TO HELP
WHEN SHE NEEDED IT MOST.

SOMETIMES YOU CAN
DO EVERYTHING
RIGHT, AND STILL FACE
OBSTACLES THAT YOU
DON'T KNOW HOW TO
NAVIGATE ALONE.

Even with both parents working full time, Cherish and Jordan still fell below the poverty line and struggled to make a better life for their family. Finding Early Head Start (EHS) as a daycare option for their daughter Aria was more than a gift, it was a blessing to all of them. Because of you, support was ready and waiting to care for this family. Here Cherish and Jordan found a support system of advocates who wrapped around their daughter and help chart a path to make sure she

YOUR GIFT EMPOWERS FAMILIES TO THRIVE.

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Thanks to your gifts and this collaboration with Johnson Health Center, all EHS students and their families will have the oral health screenings they need to ensure overall better health and wellness.

had access to the resources she needed.

Cherish and Jordan knew getting their daughter Aria a healthy start in life was important. They faithfully took Aria to all medical well check visits and got her immunizations as well as focused on nutrition. Cherish insisted on breastfeeding until she could eat solid foods and avoided bottles of juice, striving to give her the healthiest start in life in every way they could. Both parents knew they needed to work full time to care for Aria

and her siblings. And the pandemic added another level of stress to keep working and have reliable child care. But with combined income Cherish and Jordan were still falling below the federal poverty level and could not afford child care for Aria. That's when they found Early Head Start that provided free, full-time childcare and so much more. Your gift made this possible and eased a burden of stress for this family.

A few months into care, Cherish expressed concerns to the EHS teachers and staff that something was happening with Aria's teeth. She had tried to find a dentist to take her to – but could not find someone willing to conduct a full exam on a toddler and take Medicaid.

This was not a new struggle EHS staff were hearing – it was a definite gap in the community to reach children ages 0-3 with regular oral health screenings. This preventative care would help low-income families have a proactive approach to dental health

and reduce the risk of abscess, infection, and hospitalization. EHS Health & Disabilities Manager Kristen Williams, MPH, and Dr. Janna Laverdiere with Johnson Health Center got to work on a collaboration to prevent more young children falling through the cracks. By fall of 2022, pediatric dentists from Johnson Health Center brought a Mobile Dental Unit directly to EHS centers in Lynchburg and Bedford. Because of your support, every child's cost was covered so they could receive dental care no matter what the family's coverage allowed.

Aria was able to see a dentist for a full exam during her day at EHS – and her teacher walked with her through the visit every step of the way. Through this examination, the dentist confirmed Cherish's concerns. She was shocked to find significant, severe decay in nearly every tooth. With no apparent cause, the dentist gave an immediate referral to UVA Pediatric Dentistry. The dentist shared her own gratitude that this child had access to care at the right time. Without intervention, the risks for Aria's health would have only grown exponentially.

Because of your support, EHS staff can find gaps like this in our community and work to create solutions. Your gift ensures that our staff can meet the needs of families, help overcome barriers to better health, give better access to resources, and ultimately find a better path for life.



Aria is on the road to better health and receiving the care she needs. Oral surgery is scheduled for next month; Cherish and Jordan (above with Aria and her siblings) are at ease knowing that her care team has a plan to improve her oral health.



Beyond Expectations

YOU'RE THE REASON NATASHA AND EMMA ARE THRIVING.

In November of 2020 – during the midst of the covid pandemic – Natasha gave birth to her third child, Emma. Already challenging enough to have a baby during a time of isolation, baby Emma was diagnosed with Down Syndrome. Natasha knew she would need more support than ever as a mother. As she navigated finding community resources, she was referred to Early Head Start (EHS). Here she found an incredible support system, fierce advocates for her family, and access to vital resources that would help Emma overcome the challenges ahead.

Although at the time of her enrollment in-person care was restricted, Natasha and Emma were able to start with virtual services. EHS's Health & Disabilities staff supported her with Emma's critical healthcare and therapeutic needs. Parent training provided ways to support Emma's delayed development during the isolation of the pandemic. The teaching staff made monthly home visits and provided diaper deliveries. Natasha's Family Engagement Specialist opened up a community of support by connecting her to other parents through virtual parent meetings, and shared

Because of you, Natasha and Emma had the support they needed to overcome obstacles.

"Having this level of stability to support my daughter and my family is what makes life possible right now," Natasha shared. Because of your generous support, EHS was available to wrap around Natasha and Emma. What an amazing gift of community you have made possible.

community resources specific to the needs of her family. Through these connections, Natasha was empowered to take on a leadership role and was elected by her peers to become co-chairperson of the EHS Parent Policy Council.

When Emma started in-person at the EHS center full time in June 2022, her teachers built off the relationships already started and were able to take on the next big obstacles in her development. She was struggling to eat on her own with delayed hand-mouth coordination. In a matter of weeks, Emma made dramatic improvements and could enjoy new, nutritious foods all by herself! Doctors had told Natasha that Emma may never walk before age three – but after just two months at EHS she beat that obstacle too. With supportive daily care from her EHS teachers, Emma began taking steps at home and in the classroom.

Emma's dental health was a growing concern, and Natasha was struggling to find a dentist to meet her unique needs. EHS met that need by bringing dental services to the center for every child through a partnership with Johnson Health Center's Dental Unit. This service resulted in an immediate dental referral to UVA's Pediatric Dentistry where she could have access to the special care she needed.

Emma's achievements have not ceased to amaze everyone she encounters – she is learning new physical, social, and emotional skills every day. Her therapists come to the EHS center during daycare hours, which also helped Natasha return to work full-time.





Thank you for showing those in need that hope can change their lives! Hope begins with you.

Stan Southworth
President and CEO

You do so much to serve those that are hurting, overwhelmed, and don't know where to turn for help. So many of our neighbors who come to HumanKind are weary from the struggles and barriers in their life. They live in isolation, feeling like there is no way out and no way up. Having someone to walk with them through crisis seems like a dream to them.

That's why your support means so much. Thanks to you, those in need can find the programs, counseling, and support services they need to succeed. And often times it's not only help for one person, but the help ripples through to touch the whole family.

As more struggling neighbors reach out to us--you are there for them. You are among the heroes who put others' needs above your own. You join us on the front lines of compassion and kindness, caring for your neighbors when they need it most.

Your generosity means so much. Thank you for helping us show that opportunities for change do exist.

HELP A CHILD IN EARLY HEAD START: CLASSROOM SUPPLIES NEEDED!

This is the time of year our classroom shelves are starting to look empty. Please help keep the learning going in our Early Head Start centers. You can help by donating items from the most needed list below.

ITEMS MOST NEEDED RIGHT NOW

- Bubbles
 - Cardstock (white and colors)
 - Colorations Washable Tempera Paint (Gallons)
 - Construction Paper
 - Easel Paper
 - Favorite Children's Board Books
 - Gallon Ziploc Bags
 - Glue Sticks
 - Jumbo/Large Crayons
- Large Toddler Paint Brushes
 - Masking Tape Refills
 - Printer Paper
 - Refillable Containers with Brush on Lid for Washable School Glue
 - Sandwich Bags
 - Scotch Tape Refills
 - Tissue Paper
 - Washable Markers (triangular/jumbo)



All donations must be new.

HumanKind Main Campus | 1903 HumanKind Way, Lynchburg VA 24503

Open Monday – Friday | 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM

To coordinate a group drive, contact info@humankind.org.

DONATION DROP-OFFS

THANK YOU FOR CHANGING LIVES.



Walking the Journey

WITH YOUR SUPPORT, JENNIFER NEVER GAVE UP.

Jennifer was referred to Healthy Families after becoming pregnant at age 16. She was struggling to stay in school, living with her grandparents, and unsure of how she would build a life to support her baby. How would she overcome the challenges of becoming a parent at such a young age? But you were there; your generosity made the difference. Jennifer found the support she needed from a Family Support Specialist (FSS) through HumanKind's Healthy Families program.

When Jennifer first met with her FSS, she was overwhelmed and didn't know what to do next. She shared that attending high school as a pregnant teenager brought on a lot of judgement and she was being bullied. Immediately, the FSS was able to help enroll her in school online.

Because of you, the Family Support Specialist was able to come alongside her and help ease some of her greatest worries. Together they identified her

When asked what was stopping her, Jennifer replied that "Things like that don't happen to people like me." Because of you, she had someone to walk with her to overcome her obstacles and push forward to make things better for her family.

biggest challenges, set goals, and used the SMART Goals (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound) framework to create a plan. The first goal was to save enough money to prepare for her baby. Staying in school online allowed her to get a part-time job, and with that plan she met her goal.

After giving birth, Jennifer worked with her FSS on smaller goals around caring for her baby. She committed to breastfeeding, bonding with her baby, focused on development milestones, and even introduced potty-training at 15 months! Her FSS shared, "Mom paid attention to the cues baby would give, and their communication would always flow back and forth." During this time, Jennifer stuck to some other goals too. She graduated from high school and saved enough money to buy her first car.

With every goal met, Jennifer's confidence in herself grew and she continued to build a healthy and stable life for her and her baby. Along the way she moved out on her own, sought help and began to co-parent with the father, landed a better job, and even began to let herself dream. Jennifer smiled at her FSS and shared that she wanted to own a hair salon. Referring back to all that she had already accomplished, the FSS encouraged her to make it a new goal.

And now Jennifer is just weeks away from graduating from cosmetology school. Isn't it amazing what we can accomplish when someone walks the journey at our side? Feeling overwhelmed, discouraged, and a bit lost are realities of life, but learning to overcome these challenges -- that is empowering and life-changing.

Because of you, Jennifer had someone to walk with her every step of the way.

Help for a Struggling Mom

THIS MOM CAN'T MAKE IT ALONE,
BUT YOU CAN HELP.

Hannah knows things have to change, and that this is her chance to start over. But she can't do it alone.

After leaving incarceration, she found herself trying to overcome addiction and care for her new baby with no support system. She was faced with the decision to either become homeless or swallow her pride and enter a shelter. For the sake of her baby, she chose the shelter. Here she is working with the staff to stay in recovery, find a job, and desperately needs help to care for her baby.

She's made a lot of progress to bridge her gaps and is able to rely on community resources for food and shelter – but she needs a support system to help navigate motherhood. Hannah wants to stop this cycle and give her daughter a better start in life. She wants to build a better life, but she is stuck in the cycle of trying to find work without reliable childcare.



But the good news is that you can help! For just \$22 you can give her daughter Julia a full day of child care plus lunch and a snack through Early Head Start. And it's

more than the child care for Julia – your generous gift will also provide additional help for Hannah like supplies, diapers, and wrap around parent support she so desperately needs.

When you help a mom like Hannah have childcare for her daughter -- you help her find steady work, have access to resources and ultimately equip her to build a better life for both of them.

And it's not just Hannah who is struggling right now. More parents are at risk as they are trying to overcome economic challenges. Your support is critical in supporting these children and their families. Parents like Hannah cannot overcome these challenges without you.

Please send in a gift today to help parents like Hannah connect with resources to navigate these challenging times.

Your gift of \$22 will equip her with reliable childcare and parent support.

Yes, I'll help equip a parent struggling to overcome barriers and find stability.

Here's my special gift to provide childcare, food, diapers, parent resources and support the good work of HumanKind.

- ☐ \$22, to provide parent support and a full day of child care for 1 child
- ☐ \$44, to provide parent support and a full day of child care for 2 children
- ☐ \$66, to provide parent support and a full day of child care for 3 children
- ☐ \$ _____, to provide help to as many parents and children as possible.

To give faster, please give online today: humankind.org/ehshelp

*Help a
parent in
need today!*