

# Kind HEARTED

## YOUR GIFTS CHANGE LIVES

SUMMER 2025

Inside this issue: Strengthening Families | Helping Neighbors Experiencing Poverty

## Strong Foundations, Stronger Families

Please Help Us Expand Early Head Start to Serve More Children



Atelier 11 Architecture has created this rendering for the center's addition.

With your support, we will soon serve more families through HumanKind's Early Head Start (EHS) Center in Lynchburg!

HumanKind received approval from the Office of Head Start to move forward with plans to grow our center on Fenwick Drive in Lynchburg. Currently, 48 children and their families are served, and that number will almost double to 90 with the expansion. Having access to high quality child care without the barriers of cost will help more than 300 family members pursue their goals for work, education, and economic stability. Early Head Start serves children from 6 weeks up to age 3.

### The need

Access to licensed childcare is one of the most urgent needs facing families in Lynchburg today. Nearly 1,800 children under the age of 5 in Lynchburg don't have access to early education programs. More than 25% of area children live in poverty. At HumanKind, we see the impact of this every day. Our Early Head Start program is full, with a long waiting list of families hoping for a spot.

### Answering the need

EHS is so much more than childcare. It is a vital partnership with working families to improve health, welfare, and education. HumanKind's wrap-around services for families include access to medical, dental,

**48**  
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vision, hearing, mental health, disability, and nutrition services; parenting support; and connection to community resources for food, housing, employment, and financial stability.

### How you can make an impact

You can help make this expansion possible with your support. **Learn more at [Support.humankind.org/EHSstrongfoundation](https://support.humankind.org/EHSstrongfoundation) or snap the QR code with the camera on your phone.**



## Early Head Start Support Wraps Around Mom

When LaShaunta learned she was pregnant with her second child, uncertainty clouded what should have been a joyful moment. Facing a difficult pregnancy and overwhelming life circumstances, she knew something had to change. “It all just snapped,” she recalls. “I told myself, ‘We got to get this together.’”

On June 29, 2022, LaShaunta’s son Jokobi was born at just 27 weeks. What followed was a long and emotional stretch—LaShaunta remained hospitalized until mid-July due to pregnancy complications, and baby Jokobi spent 68 days in the NICU before coming home in September.



*HumanKind staff volunteer with LaShaunta to build her Habitat house.*

The timing of these health challenges temporarily derailed LaShaunta’s plans for the future, including a Habitat for Humanity house, as she focused on caring for her medically fragile newborn. But hope returned in February 2023 when Jokobi enrolled in HumanKind’s Early Head Start. Through the program, not only did LaShaunta find child care at no cost, but developmental, nutritional, and educational support for Jokobi.

Through HumanKind, LaShaunta found unwavering support. “She has a sort of optimism about her that encourages those around her to want to be part of her world,” Family Engagement Specialist Ashley Nowell shares.

Now, with Jokobi preparing to enter

Pre-K, LaShaunta is contributing “sweat equity” toward her Habitat home—200 hours of hands-on work required of future homeowners. We are especially proud that more than 20 HumanKind staff volunteered to help build her home.

LaShaunta knows the value of what lies ahead: a stable, safe space for her sons to grow. Reflecting on her journey, LaShaunta’s voice is filled with gratitude. Early Head Start “has been a blessing on top of a blessing,” she says.

With your support of HumanKind’s Early Head Start program, the power of community, and her perseverance, LaShaunta’s dreams are becoming a reality.



*Jokobi*

## Your investment in HumanKind’s Early Head Start is life changing.

### Families who participate in Early Head Start and Head Start:

- Offer more stimulating home environments, read with children, and use less physical punishment.
- Are more likely to increase their educational levels and become more self-sufficient.
- Fathers not living with their children spend more days per month with their children.

# +13%

“The economic return on investment [for Head Start and Early Head Start]: **More than 13 percent annually** ... outpacing the stock market.”

*The Hill, 4/26/25*



# YOUR GIFT EMPOWERS CHILDREN & FAMILIES TO THRIVE

## Finding a Place to Thrive: Sarah's Story

Sarah entered foster care in January 2024 as a teenager, after it was discovered that she was neglected and living in deplorable conditions. When Sarah entered HumanKind's Foster Care, she had significant medical needs: untreated diabetes, sleep apnea, and high blood pressure. In an attempt to improve her situation, Sarah was attending high school and working full time. Despite her hard work, she could not make any headway in her family's situation because relatives stole her debit card.

Although Sarah entered our program with multiple needs, it was evident that she was a bright, motivated young lady who would go far in life. Over the course of the last year she has improved her health, continued to work part time, took advanced high school classes, and became active in her church. She has flourished! This spring she received five early admission offers for college for the fall of 2025! Her entire team is proud of her hard work and dedication.

Thank you for supporting HumanKind's foster care and young people like Sarah!



**Did you know?** HumanKind Foster Care has **16 case workers serving around 130 kids** across the state of Virginia.

### A Foster Care Volunteer Opportunity

Be part of our **Trunk or Treat event on Oct. 25** at HumanKind's Lynchburg Campus. We need 20 cars to decorate and welcome families to this free event. For more information, email [krogers@humankind.org](mailto:krogers@humankind.org).



## Your Support Changes Lives

Healthy Families Strengthens Homes, Empowers Parents

Healthy Families is a home visiting program that guides and strengthens families by providing one-on-one education and support. Hear from our Lead Family and Community Engagement Specialist, Katie, about the difference your support makes.



Meet Katie!



Healthy Families celebrated summer's start on June 18th by welcoming families to HumanKind. With wonderful community support, including the Lynchburg Fire Department, the Freedom First Credit Union ice cream truck, Lynchburg Public Library and so much more, the families enjoyed all of the stations, which included a giant slip-and-slide!



1903 HumanKind Way  
Lynchburg, VA 24503

**Your generosity changes lives. Thank you!**

## HK in Brief

HumanKind



LYNCHBURG  
**TURKEY  
TROT 5K**

PRESENTED BY SCOTT INSURANCE



### Registration Opens Aug. 4

The 2025 Lynchburg Turkey Trot will be held Thanksgiving Day, Nov. 27. In the meantime, plan to be part of the fun — as a participant or sponsor.

Register at [humankind.org/turkeytrot](https://humankind.org/turkeytrot).

Last call for sponsors! For more information contact Keeley Tuggle, [ktuggle@humankind.org](mailto:ktuggle@humankind.org).

## Fore Our Community!

### Golf Challenge Returns Sept. 4

Support our Economic Resource Center by being part of our 2025 Golf Challenge.



**Where:** Magnolia Green Golf Club, 7001 Awesome Drive Moseley, VA 23120

**When:** Thursday, September 4, 2025

11:30 am – Check-In and Registration

1 pm – Shotgun start

Golfer Reception and Award Presentation, following golf



Sign up as a sponsor or participant



**Did you know?** In 2024, our **Economic Resource Center served 6,538 people across Virginia** with fair-interest auto loans, financial coaching, financial workshops, and workforce development! We have ERC staff in Richmond, Lynchburg, Roanoke, and Warrenton.