

The Burke Foundation Awards \$2 Million to Help Young Children and Families Thrive

PRINCETON, N.J., USA, January 21, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The [Burke Foundation](#) awarded \$2 million in the fourth quarter of 2020 to non-profit organizations in New Jersey working to improve prenatal and child health.

New Jersey has one of the country's worst records for child health and wellbeing, especially among under-resourced communities, despite being one of the wealthiest states in terms of per capita income.

The Burke Foundation seeks to improve this situation by funding the most promising and transformative programs and policies that foster the health, well-being and resilience of children and families in the state.

New Jersey ranks [47th among the 50 U.S. states](#) for maternal mortality, and its rate of more than 46 deaths per every 100,000 live births is nearly 50 percent greater than the national average. The situation is even more dire for Black women and babies: A Black mother in New Jersey is seven times more likely to die from pregnancy complications than a white mother, and the preterm birth rate for Black infants in New Jersey is 13.3%, which is [51% higher](#) than the rate for white infants in the state. New Jersey also ranks in the bottom third of states for children being up to date on immunizations at age two (35th out of 50), with stark disparities across socio-economic and racial lines.

The Burke Foundation believes that addressing these disparities requires investment in high-quality, scalable programming that prioritizes young children and families. Investments in the earliest years promote better health outcomes in the short term and provide significant social and economic returns in the long term. These new grants reflect the Foundation's deep commitment to supporting nurturing, responsive relationships between caregivers and young children to foster health, well-being, and resilience for a lifetime.

"We are very proud to help fund new initiatives that will give parents, caregivers and health care providers the resources they need to safeguard the healthy development and bright futures of New Jersey's children," said James Burke, President of the Burke Foundation. "And we are especially pleased that all of these programs are evidence-based and community-centered."

David Willis, M.D., Senior Fellow at the Center for the Study of Social Policy, applauded these new

investments. "As a pediatrician and policymaker, I am pleased to see the Burke Foundation's emphasis on early relational health," he said. "Having supportive, nurturing relationships early in life has been shown to bolster a child's resilience and lead to better social, emotional and physical health outcomes."

The strategic grants awarded by the Burke Foundation since September 2020 support solutions across the maternal and child health and early childhood development ecosystems, including:

- In collaboration with the New Jersey Department of Children and Families, the Burke Foundation is launching Family Connects in Mercer County, the first postnatal universal home-visiting pilot in the state. Burke awarded \$500,000 to Trenton Health Team to launch this evidence-based model for all parents who deliver at Capital Health.
- The Burke Foundation is supporting Centering Healthcare Institute with an initial \$300,000 grant as part of a multi-year initiative to scale and sustain the evidence-based Centering model.
- Reach Out and Read New Jersey (RORNJ) will partner with experts to develop and evaluate a new pediatric training program that will incorporate a focus on early relational health into well-child visits. The Burke Foundation provided a grant of \$91,722 to this initiative.
- The Burke Foundation has awarded \$200,500 to the Reinvestment Fund and Child Care Connection to conduct a mapping analysis of supply and demand for child care in Mercer County.
- The Burke Foundation has provided a \$300,000 grant to Mount Sinai Parenting Center to create a Parent Video Series that will be paired with the 14 standard pediatric well-child visits from birth to age five.
- The Foundation for Educational Administration (FEA) was awarded a \$180,000 grant to develop and advance a new model for a healing-centered education in New Jersey.
- The Burke Foundation is supporting Montclair State University's Center for Autism & Early Childhood with a \$200,000 grant to expand an evidence-based model to coach, support and train early childhood educators in northern New Jersey.

Learn more at www.burkefoundation.org.

Jennifer Baskerville

Qorvis

jennifer.baskerville@qorvis.com

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