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For Immediate Release

Resilient Families and Surround-Care School Community Coalition has received a planning grant from Boston Children’s Collaboration for Community Health

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Boston, MA, September 6, 2019. Boston’s Higher Ground is excited to announce it has received \$150,000 for a Children’s Health Equity Initiative (CHEq) one-year planning grant as part of [Boston Children’s Collaboration for Community Health](#).

Nine non-profit organizations focused on children and families have joined with Boston Public Schools (BPS), the Higginson K-2 Full Inclusion, Higginson-Lewis K-8 and David Ellis K-5 Schools and Crispus Attucks Children’s Center (CACC) to form the Resilient Families and Surround-Care School Community Coalition to improve the health and well-being of 1,200 children and their families. While this collaborative can be described as emerging, each partner has worked with one or more partners, and Higher Ground has collaborated with most members for one to nine years.

Higher Ground and Teen Empowerment co-located responding to neighborhood residents concerned about disconnected youth, violence and lack of services in this community with more than 90% residents of color. Learning in 2011 that Higginson Lewis School was challenged by growing homelessness and insufficient access to early childhood development programs, Higher Ground explored solutions with BPS’ Homeless Education Resource Network, engaged Families First to sponsor Parenting Circles and worked with Crispus Attucks Children’s Center to improve operations, renovate its campus, increase enrollment and serve more children.

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When Higginson K-2 reopened six years ago, Higher Ground began supporting its development, added the Ellis School and convened parent leaders from three schools to develop a coalition. Collaboration with Union Capital followed as an excellent way of supporting parent engagement in their children’s education. Following completion of assessment of its operation, Higher Ground concluded in 2014 that it would focus on children, birth through middle school, and build a strong foundation for children and families to thrive.

Three years ago, The PEAR Institute: Partnerships in Education and Resilience (PEAR) began to work with Higginson Lewis to assess social emotional needs of the students and train teachers on ways to provide tailored supports. Room to Grow, KeySteps, Elizabeth Stone House, and Doc Wayne Youth Services are now part of our growing coalition and bring their expertise related to early childhood development, youth leadership and development, domestic violence, and social emotional development.

“Each one of the nonprofit organizations and schools in the Resilient Families and Surround-Care School Community Coalition are deeply committed to helping some of Boston’s most vulnerable children and families in high-risk neighborhoods. We are also committed to the principle that collective efforts have far-reaching results. We have banded together to bring about positive and lasting change in our community and we believe the best place to start is with improving the educational outcomes of our children,” said Mossik Hacobian, Executive Director of Boston’s Higher Ground.

The planning grant to Boston’s Higher Ground is part of Boston Children’s Hospital’s total commitment of \$53.4 million to support community organizations and agencies in their efforts to improve the health and well-being of children and families in Boston and across Massachusetts. Over the next 6 - 9 years, Boston Children’s will distribute these funds as part of an agreement with the Massachusetts Department of Public Health’s Determination of Need Program. This is in addition to the hospital’s ongoing support for programs and partnerships.



“A prescription to keep children healthy includes quality schools, safe places to exercise and play, stable housing, and good jobs with adequate pay for families,” says Shari Nethersole, MD, executive director for Community Health at Boston Children’s. “This initiative will help address disparities that we know children and their families in our city experience. By working together collaboratively to focus on equity in child health and supporting the needs of neighborhoods, we hope to remove barriers to make a difference in the health and well-being of children.”

Boston Children’s Hospital, the primary pediatric teaching affiliate of Harvard Medical School, is home to the world’s largest research enterprise based at a pediatric medical center. Its discoveries have benefited both children and adults since 1869. Today, more than 3,000 scientists, including nine members of the National Academy of Sciences, 17 members of the National Academy of Medicine and 11 Howard Hughes Medical Investigators comprise Boston Children’s research community. Founded as a 20-bed hospital for children, Boston Children’s is now a 415-bed comprehensive center for pediatric and adolescent health care. For more, visit our [Vector](#) and [Thriving](#) blogs and follow us on social media [@BostonChildrens](#), [@BCH_Innovation](#), [Facebook](#) and [YouTube](#).

