



Investment Opportunity: Boyer CONNECT

“Children who are homeless, as compared to other children, have three times the rate of emotional and behavioral problems, are four times more likely to show delayed development, and have twice the rate of learning disabilities.” (National Center on Family Homelessness, 2008)

The earliest years of a child’s life, from birth to five, are the most influential time in their development, when 90% of all neurological pathways in their brain are created. Children facing homelessness are often under chronic stress, an adverse effect on brain development, which puts children at risk for developmental delays. In addition, children in transition are typically not receiving consistent pediatric care and developmental screenings, creating unintentional access barriers and gaps in systems coordination.

In response to this critical disconnect, the innovative Boyer CONNECT program was created in partnership with Mary’s Place, a local nonprofit that provides shelter for women, children and families facing homelessness. This unique program – central to Boyer’s mission of inclusion and providing care to all families who need support – will help build the capacity of Mary’s Place staff to support young children with special needs who enter their services, and establish a streamlined process of referral to early intervention providers.

Thoughtfully developed by Boyer’s leadership team and key members of its therapy, medical and family resources departments, this unique interagency partnership will work to eliminate barriers to accessing early intervention services for children who are homeless, directly engage those families in early intervention services, and reduce health outcome disparities for children with special health care needs. Once this pilot program has been established, Boyer will replicate the model with other homeless shelters around King County.

Boyer CONNECT is a unique early intervention referral model that will reach families who are facing homelessness in Seattle/King County. In partnership with homeless shelters like Mary’s Place, Boyer will work to provide coordinated collaborative and high-quality services for children age birth to three with developmental delays and their families, bridging the gap in access to services during a time that is most critical in brain development.

Anticipated Program Impact

- Assist families at Boyer Children’s Clinic who are facing homelessness
- Provide a seamless transition from early intervention services to preschool services at age three;
- Assist homeless shelters in designing environmental supports for children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and other developmental delays;
- Support shelter staff with strategies for managing behaviors common to children with ASD and other developmental delays; and
- Connect newly identified children over age three to their public school district’s Child Find to provide specialized support for children facing homelessness.

Would you like to learn more or make an investment in this critical program? Please contact Ellen Kuo, chief development officer, at (206) 325-8477 or email ellen.kuo@boyercc.org