

**HOPE VI Community & Supportive Services
Best Practices – Job Training/Readiness & Child Care
Birmingham Housing Authority**

Connecting Resources Increases Self-Sufficiency for Female Head-of-Households

Many single mothers with young children in Jefferson County, Alabama struggled with securing reliable childcare, which left them unable to work toward self-sufficiency through job training, work readiness and GED basic studies classes. To combat this problem, the Jefferson County Committee for Economic Opportunity and HOPE VI Community and Supportive Services (CSS) staff partnered with the local Head Start program, Transportation Facilities and the Birmingham Even Start program to provide transportation to and from job readiness trainings and GED classes at no cost to residents. The infant and pre-school children of these participants were enrolled in Head Start and early learning programs, which allowed them to be in a safe learning environment while their parents received services. GED classes were made available at a local Even Start program so that parents could receive their GED training in the same facility where their children received childcare.

Through these increased resources, the JCCEO and HOPE VI CSS staff created a holistic approach to addressing the needs of families and allowed residents who would otherwise be prevented from accessing resources to take an additional step toward self-sufficiency. Parents of children living in the HOPE VI development received additional points for Head Start admission, boosting them to a “most needed” designation and increasing likelihood of admission into the program. The collaboration also allowed the Birmingham Housing Authority to exceed its program goals in key service areas, including employment preparation/placement/retention, high school or equivalent education enrollments, childcare arrangements, transportation assistance enrollments, job skills training completions and high school or equivalent completions.

For more information on this Best Practice contact:

Yvonne Howze, yhowze@jcceo.org, 205.426.8636

Camille Johnson-Donnell, cjohnson-donnell@habd.net, 205.521.0694