

PRESS RELEASE

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**The Children's Home Society of New Jersey Welcomes 372 Children
to Their Head Start/Early Head Start Program's Opening Day**



A CHSofNJ Head Start/Early Head Start student excitedly chooses his new book bag to start the school year.

Trenton, NJ (September 8, 2014) – The Children's Home Society of New Jersey (CHSofNJ) is proud to welcome 372 children and their families to the agency's Head Start/Early Head Start program's opening day on Monday, September 08, 2014! As sole provider of these important Head Start services in Trenton, CHSofNJ is excited for the start of the new school year and eager to help Trenton's children become the best learners they can be.

On September 4th, CHSofNJ hosted a parent orientation at Lighthouse Outreach Ministry, where CHSofNJ's Head Start/Early Head Start Executive Director Wendy Garrett welcomed parents and introduced them to the program's management staff and teachers. CHSofNJ President and CEO Donna C. Pressma addressed the crowd to convey her confidence in the effectiveness of the program. "We believe that your children are capable of greatness, and we are proud to play a role in helping them reach their full potential," she said. Pressma continued, "Your son or daughter may very well be a future Mayor of Trenton, and we are honored to partner with you, our Trenton parents, to provide the education and support to help him or her succeed."

CHSofNJ Trustee Cordelia Staton, a well recognized community leader who also serves as the Board's Vice President of Community Relations, spoke briefly of her own successful experience as a Head Start mother years ago; "I could immediately see the benefits this program had on my own child when I was a Head Start mother myself. And I am proud to now share The Children's Home Society of New Jersey's Head Start/Early Head Start program with you and your children. For over 120 years, The Children's Home Society of New Jersey's mission has been to save children's lives and build healthy families, and the Head Start program is a wonderful addition to this agency's extensive array of helpful programs and services available to your family."

Both CHSofNJ and Head Start believe that parents are their child's first and best teacher. Reverend Julio Guzman of CHSofNJ's Board of Trustees spoke to parents and expressed the importance of parent participation at Thursday's parent orientation when he said, "To be successful, children need their parents to be actively engaged in their education throughout all of their school years." CHSofNJ's Education Early Childhood Manager Candis Wade echoed Reverend Guzman's sentiment when she said, "Our teachers will not finalize a lesson plan until you, the parents, have reviewed and signed-off on it. We encourage you to be actively involved in your child's education so that we can work together to build the educational foundation he or she will need to succeed." Rena Funderburg, a CHSofNJ Head Start/Early Head Start parent and Policy Council Chairperson agreed, stating, "The program encourages parents to be involved to help guide the program and to work with staff to ensure that your child's individual needs are met."

CHSofNJ's Head Start/Early Head Start program collaborates with the Trenton Board of Education and is further enriched through Abbot funding. Classes will be offered in four locations throughout Trenton; the Bellevue Center at 715 Bellevue Avenue (609-498-0731), the CYO Center at 794 E. State Street (609-989-8143), Smith Santiago Center at 1198 Southard Street (609-393-7400), and St. Bartholomew Center at 1746 S. Clinton Avenue (609-393-3800). The program's wonderful staff has prepared their classrooms beautifully, taking into consideration the needs of the diverse population they will serve. Caring and experienced teachers have reviewed the Head Start curriculum to ensure that the children of Trenton receive the quality education and experience they deserve. CHSofNJ looks forward to the start of a successful year for the children enrolled in its Head Start/Early Head Start program!

About The Children's Home Society of New Jersey

The Children's Home Society of New Jersey is a nonprofit child and family serving agency whose mission is to save children's lives and build healthy families. Founded in 1894, the agency protects abused or neglected infants and at-risk children by insuring stable, permanent, and loving homes for each and every child it serves. All services are confidential and most are free. For more information, visit our website at www.chsofnj.org.

About The Children's Home Society of New Jersey's Head Start/Early Head Start Program

The Children's Home Society of New Jersey's Head Start Program promotes school readiness for children by providing comprehensive educational, health, nutritional, and social services. Parents play a large role in the program, both as primary educators and as participants in administering the program locally. CHSofNJ's Early Head Start Program is offered in both Center-Based and Home-Based environments, and is designed to enhance children's social, emotional, cognitive, and physical development, assist pregnant women with prenatal and post-natal care, support parents efforts to fulfill their parental roles, and assist parents in moving toward self-sufficiency. Pregnant women and families with children (birth to age 5) that meet Federal Income Eligibility Guidelines, reside within the city of Trenton, or have children with disabilities and/or special needs may enroll in CHSofNJ's Head Start/Early Head Start Program. For more information, visit our website at www.chsofnj.org.

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