

## ACTIVITY REPORT: June – August, 2016

### **Better-qualified teachers can improve the quality of early care and education**

An early care and education workforce that is appropriately skilled and trained is a major contributor to achieving the best possible child and family outcomes. 80 early care and education teachers are now better qualified having successfully completed a 10-month, 120-hour program to earn the Child Development Associate (CDA) national credential. The educators who are working hard to build their skills in early care and education are part of United Way's 16 Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership program.



### **Center hosts its first infant and toddler conference**

On July 29 and 30, more than 150 early care and education practitioners were inspired at the first United Way and Early Head-Start Child Care Partnership Infant and Toddler Conference. Themed *Embrace Early Care and Education*, the Center partnered with Mary Jane Maguire-Fong, author of the 2015 Teachers College Press book, *Teaching and Learning with Infants and Toddlers: Where Meaning-Making Begins*.



### **United Way's Early Childhood Program Administrator's Institute (ECPAI) celebrates its ninth year**

Early Childhood Program Administrator's Institute (ECPAI) is a series of courses specifically geared towards directors, owners and administrators of early education programs. In its ninth year, the program gives participants the opportunity to expand their knowledge of early education philosophies, build leadership skills, and improve the quality of their early childhood programs. In June, 97 administrators completed the program. ECPAI is funded by The Children's Trust and offered at the Center.



### **ReadingPals continues helping children get ready for kindergarten**

During its fourth year, ReadingPals volunteers clocked 2,507 hours of reading to 156 children in 41 classrooms across Miami-Dade County in a weekly basis. The participating programs were targeted for ReadingPals based on their low Kindergarten Readiness scores using results from the Florida Kindergarten Readiness Screener and geographical location. Children participating in the ReadingPals program increased their Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) assessment scores by more than 45%. All children participating in the program met or exceeded expectations, making them ready to learn in kindergarten. ReadingPals is funded through a private grant from Carol and Barney Barnett of Publix Super Markets. A fifth year of ReadingPals began on the week of September 12, 2016.



## **When a scoop of ice cream is not enough, you have a whole bag.**

Making learning fun and engaging is at the heart of our Demonstration School, Educare Miami-Dade, even when it comes to science. Nothing screams summer more than ice cream, and ice cream also makes for a great (and delicious) science experiment. On June 22, Cherry Beakert employees toured the Center and spent time with our preschool children making ice cream with no fancy tools, just a bag.



**If you want to know the science behind it:** Just like we use salt on icy roads in the winter, salt mixed with ice causes the ice to melt. When salt comes into contact with ice, the freezing point of the ice is lowered. By lowering the temperature at which ice is frozen, we are able to create an environment in which the milk mixture can freeze. The fat particles in the milk smash into each other and make big molecules of ice cream, yum! (Science Made Fun)

## **The Center launches online learning portal**

Through a contribution from Betsy and George Sherman, the Center launched [learning.unitedwaymiami.org](http://learning.unitedwaymiami.org) where early care and education professionals can sign-up for face-to-face and online learning opportunities. In its first month, more than 300 educators used the portal to sign up for trainings. Since opening its door, the Center has trained more than 24,900 early care and education practitioners locally and internationally.

## **The Demonstration School celebrates International Mud Day**

On June 29, the Demonstration School, Educare Miami-Dade, celebrated International Mud Day, an initiative from the World Forum Foundation where children and early care and education professional can celebrate nature, outdoors, and play. International Mud Day started with 58 orphaned children in the small village of Panchkhal, Nepal, with the idea of bringing children and to learn about and love their environment and nature. Every summer, children at the Demonstration School participate in their own discovery.

