

# TO KEEP FRIENDS OF CHILDREN OF MISSISSIPPI, INC.

## MOVING FORWARD.

### 51 YEARS OF PARTNERSHIPS WITH FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

FCM, Inc. has an unparalleled history of striving to obliterate generational poverty through education and compassionate partnerships with families and communities.

In 1966, the Child Development Group of Mississippi (CDGM) was in jeopardy of losing its funding through the Head Start early-childhood education initiative—established and launched by President Lyndon B. Johnson in 1965. Grants were never guaranteed. Still, the CDGM continued to serve families located primarily in the most disempowered and impoverished areas of the Mississippi Delta. As an immediate call-to-action, families concerned for the welfare of their children planned and coordinated support for over 60 CDGM volunteer-based centers. This was in an effort to convince the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) to reverse its decision to not continue funding for the CDGM.

When the 1966 CDGM grant was terminated on October 15, a few former CDGM staff members established a new office to aid the now defunded volunteer centers. From this office, the CDGM staffers, hand-in-hand with motivated communities across the state, staged a vigorous and constructive movement. October 15, 1966 is significant because it marks the beginning of a grassroots organization of empowerment. Its model not only focused on the positive impacts of early childhood education, but also recognized parental and community involvement as foundationally essential for success. All of the hard work appeared to have paid off, when on December 16, 1966 officials of the OEO and CDGM reached an “Agreement in Principle,” which provided funds for another full year’s operation in 19 counties.

When finalized, six (6) of the 19 counties were excluded from funding. The community residents within those excluded counties still desired to be an integral part of the CDGM. On January 18, 1967, approximately 80 representatives from the affected counties mobilized and met in Jackson, MS to discuss their response to being excluded from the CDGM program. They wanted to develop a constructive and positive program that could best serve them—working from within their own communities and on their own behalves. Despite the absence of resources, the representatives from the six (6) counties elected to organize an independent volunteer community-based, preschool program. And, since they were all friends and their purpose was to serve children, they posed the question, “Why not call ourselves Friends of Children of Mississippi?”

In 1967, after years of providing much needed services to the children and families they served, Friends of Children of Mississippi (FCM) became a delegate agency with Tougaloo College serving as its grantee. In 1968, FCM petitioned for and was granted an incorporation charter through the state of Mississippi, thus becoming Friends of Children of Mississippi, (FCM) Inc. During 1979–1980, FCM, Inc. propositioned the Region IV Department of Health and Human Services in Atlanta, GA to become its own grantee. In 1980, FCM, Inc. declared its independence from Tougaloo College and became its own grantee.

### 51 YEARS OF POSITIVE IMPACTS FOR FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

Over the past 51 years, Friends of Children of Mississippi, Inc. Head Start (HS)/Early Head Start (EHS) has served over 148,000 children and their families. Significant FCM, Inc. grants, awards, partnerships, and/or accomplishments with positive impacts for families and the communities served are as listed:

- **Parent-Child Center (Laurel, MS):** Focusing on parental interactions with their infants and toddlers
- **EHS Program Grant:** Awarded the first EHS program grant in Mississippi; since 1995, FCM, Inc. has received five (5) expansion grants, expanding our EHS program to serve 335 pregnant women, infants, toddlers, and their families
- **TANF to Work and Ownership (T.W.O.) Project:** Providing services to dislocated workers and/or HS parents to empower them with skills to make sound decisions about their careers/jobs and day-to-day life situations
- **Quality Enhancement Project (Hazlehurst, MS):** A partnership with the Hazlehurst School District, Mississippi Department of Education, and Mississippi Department of Human Services—designed to bridge the educational gaps for preschool children
- **Region IV EHS Model Classroom:** Serving as the lead agent in Mississippi with a model designed to provide training and technical assistance to EHS programs, ensuring quality services for infants, toddlers, and their families
- **Customized Early Childhood Development Center (Canton, MS):** The first center of its kind in Mississippi through a partnership with the Madison County WIN Job Center, Mississippi Central Planning and Development District, and Mississippi Department of Human Services—designed to provide quality childcare services to assist families when utilizing the WIN Job Center for job searches and training
- **Legacy for Children Parenting Program:** A partnership with the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Administration for Children and Families’ Head Start—designed to support mothers’ abilities to engage in positive parenting behaviors and mother-child interactions, by improving parenting self-efficacy and mothers’ sense of supportive communities
- **Rural Integration Models for Parents and Children to Thrive (IMPACT):** Named one (1) of only 10 Rural IMPACT Demonstration Site communities across the country in an effort to combat poverty through a two-generational approach and is funded by US Department of Health and Human Services
- **Mississippi Early Learning Collaborative Partnerships:** Partnerships with Quitman (Clarke County) Lower Elementary School and Agape Educational Child Care Center (Canton, MS)—designed to ensure seamless transitions for enrollees in Head Start/Child Care/Preschool programs into the public school Kindergarten program, by focusing on their school readiness goals/skills
- **EHS Child Care Partnership and EHS Expansion Grants:** Providing full-day, full-year comprehensive services in child care centers to enhance and support learning skills; EHS center-based programs are expanded to a full year
- **Duration Grant:** Providing before and after school care for working families and a summer enrichment program for 4-year-olds transitioning to kindergarten



Friends of Children  
of Mississippi, Inc.  
Head Start/Early Head Start

### MISSION STATEMENT

Friends of Children of Mississippi, Inc. is a highly efficient, team based, non-profit human service organization. Our mission is to strengthen children and families through community partnerships by:

- Providing a comprehensive child development program which enhances social competence,
- Assisting families to become self-sufficient, and
- Serving as advocates for children and families.

We increase the families’ capacity to support and nurture their children by developing a compassionate partnership between staff and families which recognizes parents as primary educators of their children.

In support of that partnership, Friends of Children of Mississippi, Inc. provides opportunities for continuous staff growth and development and creates an environment which promotes job satisfaction and community service.

*Dr. Marvin Hogan, Executive Director*  
*Dr. Cathy Gaston, Deputy/Early Head Start Director*  
*Ms. Sharon Barnes, M.S. Ed.; Early Childhood Development and Health Services Director*  
*Mr. Charles Bell, Jr., Board of Directors Chairperson*  
*Mr. Cecil Ashford, Policy Council Chairperson*



**2016-2017 SCHOOL READINESS**

- **Computer labs** were added to all Head Start Centers, ensuring children are exposed to learning lab environments.
- **Literacy boards** were created by parents and children to better engage parents to work with their children to meet school readiness goals. The boards were incorporated into the classrooms as visual aids and learning tools.
- **Playgrounds** were renovated at FCM, Inc. Head Start and Early Head Start centers.

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 Head Start/Early Head Start  
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**MANY PARTS WORK TOGETHER...**