

## Impacting Children in the Early Years: Providing a Continuum of Care

Having a child is a life-changing event that can bring many joys, but also many challenges. For families who are already struggling, having a child can add a financial burden that forces them below the poverty line. Recognizing that many of the individuals we serve are facing multiple barriers to raising their children, including poverty, OhioGuidestone has developed a continuum of care to help overwhelmed, impoverished families support their children. By providing assistance and interventions during the early years, we put children on a better trajectory towards a successful future.

OhioGuidestone's continuum assists families with a wide range of concerns. Our Early Childhood Mental Health services work with children who are struggling with their emotions and behaviors. By providing counseling and developmental assistance, we are able to help them improve their actions, understand their feelings and strengthen their relationships with others. During our last fiscal year, we helped more than 1,400 children learn coping mechanisms, develop social skills and adjust to changes and challenges in their lives.

OhioGuidestone also offers programs that provide

supportive services to help get children off to a healthy start. Our Help Me

In the last year, MomsFirst provided over 685 health screenings to families in our communities and helped 89 pregnant women successfully plan for and deliver healthy babies.

Grow and MomsFirst programs provide education on how parents can help their children learn and grow. By providing developmental screenings, positive parenting education, and connections to community resources, these programs allow parents to provide a healthy start for their children. In the last year alone, MomsFirst provided over 685 health screenings to families in our communities and helped 89 pregnant women successfully plan for and deliver healthy babies. Additionally, parents involved in our Help Me Grow program showed a statistically significant improvement on understanding parent-child family

roles, leading to a reduced risk for abusive and negligent behaviors in the home. By

helping parents understand their child's needs, we are helping them work towards stable, consistent, loving environments for their families.

As children grow, OhioGuidestone grows with them. Critical components of development, including family support and educational growth opportunities, provide the next steps on the path out of poverty. By providing this 360° continuum of support, OhioGuidestone continues to help individuals grow and thrive.

To learn more about our early childhood services, visit us at

[www.OhioGuidestone.org](http://www.OhioGuidestone.org) or call Holli Ritzenthaler, *Director of Community Counseling*, at 440.260.8543. To make a charitable gift, call Cindy Naegele, *Vice President of Advancement*, at 440.260.8341.

