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CONTACT:

Angie Doss

Chief External Relations Officer

adoss@sunbeamfamilyservices.org

405.609.2311 (o) | 619.347.4057 (c)



[Download photos of Sunbeam's Early Childhood Services.](#)

[Watch a video about joining the Sunbeam family.](#)

Sunbeam Celebrates Early Head Start Month in October
Continues to Expand Services, Remains
Central Oklahoma's Only Early Head Start Provider

(OKLAHOMA CITY) – Sunbeam Family Services, Central Oklahoma's Only Early Head Start provider, continues to help children from birth to three learn, grow, heal and thrive. During October, Sunbeam celebrates the impact Early Head Start has in making the future brighter for infants, young children and their families.

"Sunbeam is a leader in early care and education," said Paula Gates, director of Early Childhood Services at Sunbeam. "Children who are not prepared to start school at age five are at risk of never catching up, leaving an achievement gap that can persist throughout their entire lives."

Sunbeam is committed to helping children develop strong social skills, including self-confidence, and emerge better prepared for kindergarten. By nurturing early learning, Sunbeam, and its community partners and their families, work together to close the achievement gap for central Oklahoma children.

Adding Early Head Start services and resources into traditional child care and settings creates new opportunities to improve outcomes for infants, toddlers and their families. Child care centers offer flexible and convenient full-day and full-year services. In addition, child care providers have experience providing care that is rooted in the cultural, linguistic and social needs of the families and their local communities.

"The impact goes beyond the classroom," said Gates. "We are raising the bar on how we provide supportive and engaging services for school and life success for children, their families and our communities."

Families are essential to the success of the child. Through Sunbeam's Early Childhood Services, each family has a dedicated family advocate who actively helps problem solve, locate resources within the community and achieve goals. Young children and their families are also supported through mental health and wellness initiatives. Families are invited to volunteer in classrooms and are encouraged to apply for employment opportunities within the program. This holistic approach addresses the needs of the entire family, including the personal and professional goals of the parent.

Sunbeam has been an Early Head Start provider since 2004. Over the last four years alone, Sunbeam has helped more than 2,600 children and their families achieve school readiness. In the next year, that number will continue to grow.

In March, Sunbeam announced it was awarded an \$18,624,629 grant by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership and Early Head Start Expansion (CCP 3). Sunbeam is the only nonprofit in Oklahoma to receive all three Child Care Partnership grants, totaling an anticipated \$53,261,686 from 2019 through 2024. With the addition of CCP 3, Sunbeam will help 680 children each year from birth to three prepare for school – and life – at over 20 partner sites across the Oklahoma City metro area. Thanks to this new grant, Sunbeam will expand partnerships to include ReMerge, Positive Tomorrows and Woven Life.

In order to expand its services to help even more children and families thrive, Sunbeam needs 50 more early childhood professionals to join the Sunbeam Family. This year, Sunbeam was voted one of Oklahoma's "Best Places to Work" for the fifth year in a row. Sunbeam is proud to be recognized as a 2019 Family Positive Workplace by the Potts Family Foundation and the OK25by25 Coalition. This award recognizes businesses throughout the state who intentionally help their employees balance work and family responsibilities.

For more information on Early Head Start, or joining the Sunbeam Family, visit SunbeamFamilyServices.org or call 405-528-7721.

Established in 1907, Sunbeam is Oklahoma's longest-serving social service agency. Each year, Sunbeam helps nearly 15,000 Central Oklahomans with life-changing services through our robust Early Childhood Education program, long-standing Foster Care program, compassionate Counseling program, and multifaceted Senior Services program.

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About Sunbeam Family Services

Founded in 1907, Sunbeam Family Services is one of Oklahoma's longest serving nonprofits and is one of the original United Way of Central Oklahoma Community partners. Sunbeam's mission is to provide help, hope and the opportunity to succeed to people of all ages of life in central Oklahoma through Early Childhood, Counseling, Foster Care and Senior Services. To learn more, call 405-528-7721, visit sunbeamfamilyservices.org, or join the conversation on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.