

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**
July 8, 2020

**Contact**
Angie Doss
Chief External Relations Officer
adoss@sunbeamfamilyservices.org
Office: (405) 5098-2311 Mobile: (619) 347- 4057

[**Download a photo of the Educare OKC Groundbreaking.**](https://www.flickr.com/photos/sunbeamfamilyservices/49998114351/in/album-72157714674962152/)[**Download photos of Educare OKC.**](https://www.flickr.com/photos/sunbeamfamilyservices/albums/72157714674962152/with/49998114351/)[**Download a video about Early Education Centers.**](https://youtu.be/vfy5lU_63bQ)

**Happy 10th Birthday, Educare Oklahoma City!**

***Sunbeam Celebrates 10 Years of Preparing OKC***
***Infants and Toddlers for School Success***

(OKLAHOMA CITY) – This month, Sunbeam Family Services is celebrating Educare Oklahoma City's 10th birthday. Thanks to support from the community, Educare OKC, a program of Sunbeam, empowers families and prepares infants and toddlers for kindergarten.

It all started with a dream and a belief that children deserve the best early childhood education possible. Driven by a desire to prepare infants and toddlers for school success, 10 years ago Sunbeam joined together with many community partners, including Inasmuch Foundation, to open the doors of Oklahoma’s first Educare.

“For me, it has been tremendous to look back and think what one school could do,” said Robert J. Ross, chairman and CEO of Inasmuch Foundation. “I see a very long-term future here for something that is so critically important for our city and our state. In just the first decade of Educare OKC being available to families, Sunbeam has exported the best practice of early head start to more than 20 early childhood schools around OKC. Instead of only 120 students and their families benefiting from high-quality early care and education, now 680 students have access. Imagine what Educare OKC will accomplish in the next decade...the future is bright.”

Learning begins long before a child starts kindergarten. Sunbeam’s early education centers, including Educare OKC, build a foundation for achievement and school readiness for young children and their families. 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’s flagship early education center, Educare OKC is part of the Educare Learning Newtork. This network of schools is widely respected as one of the nation’s most effective early childhood models and uses an approach that extends beyond the classroom to help children, families, and neighborhoods thrive. As its incubator of best practices from around the country, Sunbeam leverages the expertise at Educare OKC by sharing it with all of its early education centers across Oklahoma City.

“Sunbeam is committed to helping children develop strong social skills, including self-confidence, and emerge better prepared for kindergarten,” said Sarah Rahhal, LCSW, chief executive officer of Sunbeam. “By nurturing early learning, Sunbeam, our community partners, and families work together to close the achievement gap for infants and toddlers living in Oklahoma City’s most at-risk zip codes. With help from the community, we’re investing in the minds of tomorrow’s innovators and looking to the future.”

To join Sunbeam in celebrating Educare OKC’s 10th birthday, or to learn how to help future generations visit SunbeamFamilyServices.org/educareOKC10 or call (405) 528-7721.

###

About Sunbeam Family Services

Founded in 1907, Sunbeam Family Services is one of Oklahoma’s longest serving nonprofits, providing help, hope and the opportunity to succeed to people of all ages 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.