



68% of the families participating in Sixpence-funded programs face three or more major risk factors associated with reduced parent efficacy as educators and caregivers and poor developmental outcomes for infants and toddlers.

Sixpence prioritizes the role of parents as the key element in the healthy development and early education of their youngest children.

Supportive Parenting

Confident, responsive parents are the heart of Sixpence

A child's best chances to thrive in school, adopt positive social behaviors and eventually mature as a productive, contributing citizen are directly related to the presence of nurturing adults from the first days of life. Stable, supportive and engaging relationships are crucial to early neural and physiological development of infants and toddlers, with effects that persist across a child's lifespan. No other relationship children experience in their first three years has as profound, positive and enduring effect than the one they share with capable, responsive parents.

Aspects of supportive parenting

- **Serve-and-Return Interactions:** Parents who regularly engage young children—even newborns—in progressive, back-and-forth exchanges using words and vocal sounds, physical gestures and visual cues actively cultivate healthy neural pathways for emerging language and social skills
- **Nurturing attachment:** Very young children who are consistently held and touched in a comforting, affectionate manner are more likely to develop essential self-regulation and stress management skills, grow in self-confidence and security, and even benefit from stronger autoimmune function into adulthood.
- **Child development knowledge:** The more a parent knows about the unique stages of their infant or toddler's growth, the better equipped they will be to respond to those needs, recognize potential problems in their development, and seek out the necessary help to address those issues before they become more severe challenges to ongoing learning and health.

Sixpence helps parents grow as educators and caregivers

The Sixpence Early Learning Fund provides financial resources, specialized professional guidance and rigorous evaluation for community-built partnerships serving infants and toddlers at risk and their parents statewide. Each Sixpence-funded partnership prioritizes the role of parents as the key element in a child's lifelong success. Whether the services offered focus on center-based child care, or family engagement and parent coaching, these programs employ highly-skilled, experienced early childhood professionals with a solid grounding in the unique developmental needs of infants and toddlers.

- **Modeling positive interactions:** Sixpence works directly with families to demonstrate, observe and encourage parents in techniques for developing stronger emotional attachments with their young children, enhancing language and communication skills and strengthening overall neural development.
- **Encouraging social connectedness and resilience:** Early childhood professionals in Sixpence-funded programs advise parents about, and

connecting them to the public services, health care resources and community supports already available to them in their communities. Many programs also host events where parents and families connect with, learn from and support one another.

- **Better parent-child interactions:** Child care is a necessity for many parents who must participate in the workforce in order to meet their family's basic needs. Center-based services funded by Sixpence focus on involving parents closely in their child's progress so they can help them reach their developmental milestones.

How do we know Sixpence is working

- **94%** of all center-based Sixpence locations met high-quality goals in social-emotional support
- **86%** of all center-based Sixpence locations met high-quality goals in language and activities
- **94%** of Sixpence families met high-quality standards in parent and child interactions
- **76%** of all children in Sixpence programs met the program goal for social-emotional competencies (up to 9 points above the national average)

