On May 13, 2016, the Community Foundation of Greater Flint established the Foundation for Flint as a supporting organization to assist in Flint’s recovery from the water crisis. A 501(c)3 public charity, the Foundation for Flint raises and distributes resources to serve the long-term health and development needs of Flint children and their families through the Flint Child Health and Development Fund, also known as the Flint Kids Fund.

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**Flint Kids in focus**

We choose to FOCUS on the latter and to do everything we can to ensure that the kids at the center of the water crisis thrive today and every day in the future.

Yes, the effects of lead-poisoning can be disastrous—especially to children. But we believe that Flint kids are strong, Flint kids are smart, and Flint kids are resilient. With your help, we established the Flint Kids Fund, dedicated to serving our most vulnerable residents. In one year, we’ve distributed nearly $2 million to programs designed specifically to mitigate the effects of lead and give our children the resources, programs, education, medical care, nutrition, and enrichment they need to grow into healthy, well-educated, confident young men and women.

How we support our children now will have an impact on the future of our city, state, country, and world. With that in mind, we are putting Flint kids at the center of our efforts. They are our FOCUS.

So look closely.

What do you see?

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**Foundation for Flint Board of Directors**

- Bobby Mukkamala, Chair
- Tim Knecht, Vice Chair
- Manal Saab, Secretary
- Mark Piper
- George Wilkinson

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Hensley teaches toddlers at the new Cummings Great Expectations Early Childhood Center in Flint, a joint project of the University of Michigan-Flint, Flint Community Schools, and Genesee Intermediate School District. Funded in part by the C.S. Mott Foundation, the Pritzker Foundation, and the Flint Kids Fund, the center offers nearly 200 Flint children the opportunity to receive free-of-cost, highly specialized, research-based, early childhood care in a newly renovated, meticulously designed facility.

The school’s innovative curriculum follows the Reggio Emilia approach, which emphasizes exploration and discovery and respects the child’s innate ability to learn. Every detail of the space and teacher training embodies the ideals of inspiring growth and learning. Mary Lynn Gottler, Site Director, believes the school will have an immeasurable impact. “We have been given the ability to build this school from the ground up and bring to bear the very best of what we know about early childhood development to the people who need it most. This is an opportunity that does not happen every day. And we are committed to getting it right. This is now our legacy to the children of Flint.”

A two-year-old boy gently brushes blue paint on his cheeks, dabs it on his nose, and squeezes it through his hands. He smiles from ear to ear as he explores the smooth, wet goop, and feels it slide on his skin. It is the first time he’s ever painted, and his teachers are letting him fully engage in the experience. “Part of our philosophy is that children are strong and filled with wonder and knowledge. We want to help them understand their world and develop their curiosity,” said his teacher Diana Hensley.

Flint Kids learn
Cummings Great Expectations, An Early Childhood Center

Grant Strategy:
Access to high quality early education
Grantee:
University of Michigan-Flint
Grant Award:
$360,000
Market Manager Amber Hasan said the response by community members has been very positive. “Seniors are excited about being able to buy groceries at their senior centers. They can get the produce they need for a good price.” One woman Hasan met had a disability that required her to eat a vegan diet. She also used a wheelchair, which made transportation around town difficult for her. “She was so excited to see us; it was really wonderful,” said Hasan. “The Mobile Market makes it possible for her to get a variety of organic and non-GMO vegetables at reasonable prices without leaving home.”

In a town commonly known as a food desert due to the lack of quality locations for purchasing groceries, the Flint Fresh Mobile Market meets a need for residents looking to feed their families with healthy options. In addition to fruits and vegetables, the market has a selection of dry goods including pastas, rice, and beans, as well as ready-to-eat items such as sandwiches and yogurt. The program also offers cooking demonstrations, physical activities, and health information and events, all organized to promote healthy lifestyle changes among Flint residents.
Developmental Behavioral Health Specialist at Hurley Children’s Center, Dr. Lauren O’Connell, learned about the benefits of the VIP program (until recently only available in New York City), and wanted to bring it to Flint to help address the challenges facing children affected by the lead in water crisis. Through a grant from the Flint Kids Fund, program implementation is now underway. It will enroll 100-200 kids in 2017, with a plan to expand to 900 children in the first three years.

Enrollees in the free program attend half-hour VIP sessions on the same days as their regular well-visits at Hurley Children’s Center. Curriculum presented during the 13 sessions that occur from birth to age three centers on the importance of play, reading, and routines.

“All parents want the best for their children, and Flint parents are no different. Play is a wonderful way to engage both parents and children,” said Dr. O’Connell. “VIP gives parents an understanding of the types of behavior to anticipate with lead exposure and appropriate ways to engage children to promote healthy development. It increases parental confidence and enhances the relationship between parent and child, not to mention the host of other positive outcomes that VIP produces.”

A mom holding hand puppets shows them to her 6-month-old son, while sitting on the doctor’s office floor. Another woman videotapes them, taking notes on their interactions. After five minutes, they watch the video together and discuss it. The woman—a trained interventionist—gives feedback to the mother, pointing out positives as well as areas to improve. This is a Video Interaction Project (VIP) session designed to give parents tools to be more proactive in their child’s development. The research-based program will provide strategic interventions for the future development of Flint children affected by lead exposure.

Flint Kids play

Video Interaction Project at Hurley Children’s Clinic

Grant Strategy: Improve access to a medical home
Grantee: Hurley Foundation
Grant Award: $140,000
Thanks to a grant from the Flint Child Health and Development Fund and the Flint Kids Read Fund, a new program through the Flint Public Library enables children living in Flint to receive free books every month delivered to their home through regular mail. The Dolly Parton Imagination Library book-by-mail program selects age-appropriate books for children from birth to age five, and sends them out each month to children who enroll through the public library.

Mom of three, Tiffany Prewitt, was excited to sign her children up to receive the free books. Since she has three children (Anton, 6 months; Antionna, one; Desire, three) she will receive three different books suited to her children’s ages. “I think it’s important to read to my kids every day of the week. They take turns sitting on my lap and turning the pages. They don’t want to stop reading,” Prewitt said she is looking forward to reading her kids stories that she enjoyed as a child, as well as new ones that have been published more recently. Now, she’ll have access not only to books at the library, but to all the books her family receives through the mail each month. By the time her youngest child turns five, The Dolly Parton Imagination Library program will have helped the Prewitts (and hundreds of other Flint families) build a home library of more than 120 books.

Reading plays a tremendous role in child development, and when children are read to consistently in the early years it improves vocabulary, contributes to kindergarten readiness, and encourages reading skills. We are committed to giving Flint children the best early childhood experience possible to help mitigate the negative effects of lead exposure. Making reading a priority for children and providing them with easier access to books helps equip them to excel in school.

Flint Kids Read

Dolly Parton Imagination Library

Grant Strategy: Family literacy and parenting skills
Grantee: Flint Public Library
Grant Award: $516,700
The Flint Child Health and Development Fund Advisory Committee was eager to make grants in 2016. As of December 31, 2016, the Committee approved $1,992,200 in grants. Applications are now being accepted for the 2017 grant cycle. A complete list of grants, their purpose, and amount, is listed below.

**Grant Strategy**: Increase access to high-quality early education for children.

**Child Connect for Family Success**

- **Grants**: $26,000
- **Purpose**: Provide 26 early childhood professionals with the opportunity to complete an Early Childhood Development Associate credential.

**Flint Public Library**

- **Grants**: $516,700
- **Purpose**: Implement Flint Kids Read with the Daily Parton Imagination Library that will provide an age-appropriate book by mail each month to Flint children from birth to age five.

**University of Michigan-Flint**

- **Grants**: $360,000
- **Purpose**: Support a portion of the renovation costs of the Cummings Great Expectations Early Childhood Center, which will provide over 200 high-quality early childhood openings to Flint children.

**Grant Strategy**: Provide access to healthy food and nutrition education.

**Catholic Charities of Shiawassee and Genesee Counties**

- **Grants**: $20,000
- **Purpose**: Provide partial support for Mr. Gaines Gardening Program, a community garden program that provides summer jobs and mentoring to nearly 50 at-risk youth residing on the north end of Flint, while teaching agriculture and nutrition education regarding healthy foods.

**Edible Flint**

- **Grants**: $11,000
- **Purpose**: Support Edible Flint’s efforts to increase residents’ ability to connect, grow, and access healthy food through programs, including Garden Starters, Annual Food Garden Tour, soil testing, and outreach and information related to lead safety for gardeners.

**Genesee County Community Action Resource Department**

- **Grants**: $167,000
- **Purpose**: Expansion of the Meet Up, Eat Up summer meal program to more Flint sites and to establish year round sites for weekend meals.

**Hurley Foundation**

- **Grants**: $22,000
- **Purpose**: Support cooking demonstrations and nutrition education for Flint families to lessen the effects of lead exposure. Hurley staff, in collaboration with other partners, will provide 100 cooking demonstrations at the Flint Farmers’ Market, Flint schools, and community locations.

**Michigan Breastfeeding Network**

- **Grants**: $100,000
- **Purpose**: Support 310 Connect: A Flint Collective Impact Breastfeeding project which aims to improve health and neurodevelopment outcomes in the Flint area by addressing barriers to breastfeeding initiation and continuation.

**Michigan State University Extension Services**

- **Grants**: $180,000
- **Purpose**: Increase breastfeeding rates among low-income women by providing peer counselors who give one-on-one breastfeeding support to pregnant and new mothers throughout their infant’s first year of life.

**YMCA of Greater Flint**

- **Grants**: $62,000
- **Purpose**: Launch a mobile farmers’ market called Flint Fresh Mobile Market. The market will bring fresh, healthy foods to people throughout the community, in neighborhoods, places of worship, senior centers, and medical centers.

**Genesee County Community Action**

- **Grants**: $40,000
- **Purpose**: Support implementation of the Nurse Family Partnership program which provides early health and developmental interventions for mothers and children. Each mother is partnered with a registered nurse and receives ongoing nurse home visits that continue through the child’s second birthday.

**United Way of Genesee County**

- **Grants**: $40,000
- **Purpose**: Strengthen the capacity of an emerging organization, Latinos United for Flint, for engagement and coordination efforts that will help to ensure that Spanish-speaking residents of the city have equitable access to information and services related to the water crisis.

**Grant Strategy**: Increase family social and emotional support as well as family literacy and parenting skills.

**Crim Fitness Foundation**

- **Grants**: $200,000
- **Purpose**: Expansion of Mindfulness programs to reach all Flint Community School children as a tool to help address the impacts of lead poisoning and environmental stress. The Crim will also educate the public about Mindfulness and its benefits starting with a community-wide symposium featuring internationally known Mindfulness researchers and experts.

**Genesee Health System**

- **Grants**: $50,000
- **Purpose**: Implementation of an accessible, culturally-sensitive, community-wide approach to building resilience, coping, and socio-emotional skills, known as the Community Support and Resiliency Partnership (CSRP). CSRP will provide community-wide resiliency events and work-force training supports, in addition to individual, group, and family counseling which will be provided through a mobile clinic.

**Crim Fitness Foundation**

- **Grants**: $200,000
- **Purpose**: Support the Safe Places to Wild Places program which will provide access for 100 Flint youth ages 7-17 to experience a week long, overnight camp at YMCA Camp Copneconic.

**Michigan State University Extension Services**

- **Grants**: $25,000
- **Purpose**: Provide education and support to increase coping skills and resiliency strategies to help residents handle the negative psychological impact of the Flint Water Crisis.

**YMCA of Greater Flint**

- **Grants**: $10,000
- **Purpose**: Support the Safe Places to Wild Places camping experience program. The program will provide access for 100 Flint youth ages 7-17 to experience a week long, overnight camp at YMCA Camp Copneconic.

**Total Grantmaking**: $1,992,200
To achieve this, the Flint Child Health and Development Fund will advocate for the following:

- Long-term state and federal expansion of early education, literacy, and universal Pre-K programs.
- Long-term state and federal expansion of nurse home visits and school health programs.
- State and federal support and collaboration to develop, implement, and maintain a population-wide longitudinal health record and registry for Flint children.
- Community-wide initiatives to improve the social determinants of health, including education, employment, safety, and economic development.
- Elimination of child poverty.
- Programs that prevent child exposure to lead from all sources.
- The coordination of services and information technology to improve child health and development outcomes.

In addition, the Flint Child Health and Development Fund will publicize and help to share information with the Flint community and the nation, through the following activities:

- Publishing stories of Flint families that demonstrate their hope, resilience, and ability to thrive.
- Supporting the robust assessment/research of child and program outcomes.
- Developing best practices and community-based innovations to improve child health outcomes.
- Reporting on how to eliminate child exposure to all environmental sources of lead.

For more information, contact Sue Peters, Director of Special Projects, at speters@cfgf.org or 810.767.3519.

The Flint Child Health and Development Fund Advisory Committee is committed to advocating for policies and initiatives to create a supportive political environment to help meet the community’s needs after the water crisis. We will publicize to the Flint community and the nation the best practices that have emerged, outcomes that have been achieved, and the stories of hope and resiliency that have risen out of recovery efforts.

To its goal, the Flint Child Health and Development Fund will advocate for the following:

- Long-term state and federal expansion of early education, literacy, and universal Pre-K programs.
- Long-term state and federal expansion of nurse home visits and school health programs.
- State and federal support and collaboration to develop, implement, and maintain a population-wide longitudinal health record and registry for Flint children.
- Community-wide initiatives to improve the social determinants of health, including education, employment, safety, and economic development.

Beyond Grantmaking: Advocacy and Education

The Flint Child Health and Development Fund Advisory Committee distributes grants from the Fund to nonprofit organizations that provide interventions and support positive outcomes for Flint children.

- Elimination of child poverty.
- Programs that prevent child exposure to lead from all sources.
- The coordination of services and information technology to improve child health and development outcomes.

In addition, the Flint Child Health and Development Fund will publicize and help to share information with the Flint community and the nation, through the following activities:

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Campaign for Flint Kids

A Campaign for the Children of Flint, being conducted by the Foundation for Flint, a supporting organization of the Community Foundation of Greater Flint, continues. Funds raised will support the Flint Child Health and Development Fund. This comprehensive, forward-thinking effort seeks to meet the immediate and long-term health, development and education needs of Flint children and their families by supporting programs necessary to ensure the children of Flint thrive.

The campaign will raise resources for what is essential for children to thrive:

- Increase access to high quality early education
- Provide access to and education regarding healthy food and nutrition, including the importance of breastfeeding
- Improve access to a medical home and a child health team for all children and pregnant mothers, to ensure in part that all children are provided with robust developmental assessments and support
- Increase family, social and emotional support, as well as two generation family literacy and parenting skills

**Fund Goals**

FLINT KIDS is seeking $50 million in private support over the next 10 years. Through a successful regional and national campaign, these funds will provide the resources necessary to address challenges created by the Flint water crisis and 40 years of serious, community-wide economic decline.

While lead exposure is detrimental to anyone exposed, it is particularly harmful to children, especially those ages 0-6. Lead exposure can result in lifelong health, developmental and behavioral problems. Prior to the water crisis, Flint children already faced significant health and education barriers associated with extreme poverty and racial disparities resulting from decades of economic decline. In fact, over 62% of all Flint children live in poverty.

By investing in our children, the Flint Kids Fund will allow all Flint children to grow and develop into healthy young adults, supported by community-based systems that optimize learning and school achievement, health and development, and social skills and confidence.
Flint’s public health crisis became a national media headline on January 5, 2016 when the State of Michigan declared a state of emergency in response to the lead in water crisis. The following week on January 11, 2016, community leaders, under the guidance of Congressman Dan Kildee (D-Flint), established the Flint Child Health and Development Fund. Founding donor, Dr. Mona Hanna-Attisha, was instrumental in promoting the Fund through national media appearances.

Thank you for caring for Flint children! We are grateful to the following donors who have contributed $10,000 or more to the Flint Child Health and Development Fund.

A list of donors to the Flint Child Health and Development Fund is available online at flintkids.org.
So now, what do you see?

Although the past year has been one of confusion and crisis, we are hopeful for what the future holds. With your help, Flint kids are now the FOCUS of multiple programs designed to encourage their success. Thanks to you and to these incredible initiatives, we look forward to a future where all Flint children are strong, resilient, and healthy. With your help, we know this is possible.

We hope you see what we see: Flint kids, thriving.

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