



Family Services, Inc.

An affiliate of Sheppard & Enoch Pratt Foundation

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For Immediate Release

Family Services Assists *Centro Familia* to Continue Providing Early Childcare Services to Latino Community

GAITHERSBURG, MD (April 12, 2010) – Family Services, Inc. (FSI) and *Centro Familia* have entered into an agreement that will permit Family Services to assist the smaller organization with an infusion of administrative expertise and support. Family Services is a large non-profit organization with over 100 years of service to the Montgomery County community and extensive programs that provide early childhood services, including nationally recognized programs such as Early Head Start and Healthy Families Montgomery. Both organizations are committed to working with children and their families to ensure that all children are safe, healthy, and ready to learn when they move to the next level of their education.

“Centro Familia will benefit from this partnership in many important ways, namely the ability to focus on its areas of strength,” stated Pilar Torres, Executive Director of *Centro Familia*. “The provision of high quality early childhood services, birth to age five, for our County’s growing Hispanic population is essential.”

Centro Familia provides important early childhood education programs in the Wheaton area that benefit many children, and was co-founded by Ms. Torres in response to the need for quality early childhood services for the Latino community.

“It’s important for Family Services to help build the broader health and human services system in any way possible,” said Thom Harr, Executive Director of Family Services. “That might include the direct provision of services, collaborations and partnerships with other providers or local government, or, as in this case, helping out smaller and newer non-profits in a way that supports their services to children.”

The focus of *Centro Familia*’s work is on their home based childcare services. These micro-enterprises not only provide sustainable income for the providers, but allow parents to access affordable, quality childcare so they can work knowing their children are safe.

“That is exactly the kind of service that is extremely important during a recession,” said Harr. “Anything that supports work in this way is very positive.”

Family Services and *Centro Familia* see the current agreement as short-term in nature, but both organizations have committed to discussing a partnership for the future that would develop more services to meet the needs of Montgomery County residents.

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