

5 & Under Initiative

Access to Opportunity
for Children in Poverty



Paul Schmattacher

5 & Under Grant Recipients:

Carson Center for Human Services, Inc.

Community Action of the Franklin, Hampshire
and North Quabbin Regions

Community Adolescent Resource and
Education Center (The Care Center)

Center for New Americans

Holyoke Chicopee Springfield Head Start, Inc.

The Salvation Army—Holyoke Corps

Springfield College*

Springfield Day Nursery Corporation
(Square One)

Springfield School Volunteers, Inc.

United ARC of Franklin and
Hampshire Counties, Inc.

YMCA of Greater Springfield

* Grant awarded to Springfield College School of Social Work to identify and promote best practices among the grantees.

United ARC of Franklin and Hampshire Counties started *Parenting University* to help parents with disabilities and learning challenges gain essential skills in financial and family literacy, and health and wellness. One *Parenting University* student, Linda (pictured here) learns budgeting skills, how to play with and read to her child, and health tips on proper nutrition, immunizations and childproofing. Sue Jones, program director, explains how the program is tailored for parents who learn in non-traditional ways, “We provide a safe and welcoming place to get support and learn with visual, hands-on activities and home visits.”

The Community Foundation launched its *5 & Under Initiative: Access to Opportunity for Children in Poverty* in 2006 following extensive research and consultation with its volunteers and community leaders. The initiative is designed to enable impoverished families with children five years of age and younger to improve their lives by addressing the root causes of poverty through targeted educational programs that include:

- Enhancing the education and skills of parents and teachers
- Creating supports for effective parenting
- Improving the educational attainment of the children by enhancing their cognitive, social, and emotional skills

In 2008, the Community Foundation awarded \$557,700 to eleven organizations for a combined total of \$1,660,400 over three years and decided to continue the initiative for two additional years.