

EHCO

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For Immediate Release
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West Palm Beach – Extended Hands Community Outreach, a non-profit 501 (C) (3) organization that serves Riviera Beach and West Palm Beach’s inner-city neighborhoods such as Pleasant City, has been awarded a \$25,000 grant from the Quantum Foundation of Palm Beach County through its Neighborhood Initiative Fund.

ECHO executive director Shandra Stringer said the grant will be used to expand The Parenting Project, a preventative program for parents of out-of-control teenagers, many of whom are already in the criminal justice system. The Parenting Project is licensed by the state Department of Children and Families, and ECHO recently completed a pilot program with funding from the Children Services Council.

Quantum established the fund to support projects that work to improve the health and well-being of a neighborhood. The Quantum grant will allow ECHO to service twice as many families, Stringer said. “We are pleased that our grant has stimulated additional collaborative efforts to support this worthy program of Extended Hands. While young people at risk present many challenges, whenever families and communities work together, there is hope,” Gionfriddo commented.

“Juvenile crime impacts the entire community, the juveniles themselves and their families and friends,” Stringer said. The program’s mission is to reduce a child’s destructive and illegal behavior by improving parenting skills.

“Through this program, we have seen very tangible improvements, including decreased gang activity, reduced crime and drug use, and fewer teen pregnancies.”

The majority of people served by ECHO are African Americans who live at or below the federal poverty level. “If parents of juvenile offenders cannot regain control, their children probably will end up in prison, where the chances to develop a productive adult life is almost non-existent.”

ECHO works with several local community partners on The Parenting Project, including Pleasant City Beacon Center; Sheriff’s Department; Pentecostal Church of God in Christ; and the Juvenile Justice Faith & Community Partner Network.

“Empowering the Community With Our Hands”