



## Announcement of \$25,000 Grant for Farmworker Children

- East Coast Migrant Head Start Project, (ECMHSP), is receiving an important grant from ABC Quality and SC Department of Social Services to increase young children’s access to quality, naturalized outdoor environments that support play and learning across all domains of development.

Charleston, SC. January 10, 2022.- **East Coast Migrant Head Start Project** (ECMHSP), a non-profit organization serving nearly 3,000 children of farmworkers across ten states, **received a 25K grant from ABC Quality and the SC Department of Social Services** to implement a new natural play environment. “We are grateful for this grant. These funds will provide to our Manning Educational Campus the opportunity to start a new and modern natural play space for our children”, said Maria Garza, CEO at East Coast Migrant Head Start Project. “While still facing the COVID-19 pandemic, it is more important than ever that our children have outdoor spaces where they can relax and continue learning” Maria added.

This grant follows a \$3,500 scholarship that ECMHSP's Manning South Carolina Educational Campus was awarded after being selected as a pilot for the Grow Outdoors SC (GO SC) project. Grow Outdoors SC (GO SC) is a joint effort of the Division of Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Obesity Prevention at the SC Department of Health and Environmental Control and ABC Quality at the SC Department of Social Services.

The goal of GO SC is to increase young children’s access to quality, naturalized outdoor environments that support play and learning across all domains of development. GO SC is designed as a six-step process to increase knowledge of outdoor learning environments, facilitate the creation of naturalized, outdoor environments in South Carolina childcare programs, and promote the intentional use of outdoor spaces for play and learning.

“After we received the \$3500 grant to cover the cost of a 12-week Early Childhood Outdoor Learning Environment course, and the cost of an interactive design session with a landscape architect to design our current playground as a natural play and learning environment, now we’re awarded an additional **\$25,000** grant from ABC Quality and SC Department of Social Services to implement what we learned, designed and planned. We are on our way to a new and modern natural play space for our children!”, said Dana Rogers, South Carolina Head Start Administrator at East Coast Migrant Head Start Project.

The staff, children, and parents at East Coast Migrant Head Start Project, are grateful for this opportunity to increase young children’s access to quality, naturalized outdoor environments that support play and learning across all domains of development.

**East Coast Migrant Head Start Project** was established in 1974 through a grant from the United States Department of Health and Human Services. Under the Leadership of Sister Geraldine O'Brien. The Head Start centers opened along the east coast of the United States to ensure continuity of services for families migrating to work in agriculture. Currently, ECMHSP operates in 48 Head Start Centers across ten states.

**ABC Quality** a voluntary rating and improvement program that helps South Carolina parents identify high **quality** childcare and daycare providers

**The Department of Social Services (DSS)** The Department’s mission is to serve South Carolina by promoting the safety, permanency, and well-being of children and vulnerable adults, helping individuals achieve stability and strengthening families.

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