



**Imprints
cares**

*Nurturing Children. Supporting Parents.
Changing Communities.*

Shifting The Odds For Children In Forsyth

Jun 20, 2017 Child Care Facilities & Programs, Education, Local Resources, Non Profits 0

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By Guest Blogger Melissa Payton, Chief Fund Development Officer with Imprints Cares

Imprints Cares, an early childhood education nonprofit, seeking to break the cycle of poverty by providing children the early start they need in life, has received a Half-Million dollar (\$550K) grant for The Pediatric Holistic Health Initiative (The Initiative) from the Kate B. Reynolds Charitable Trust in Winston-Salem, NC (the

Trust).

The Initiative is a collaborative with Imprints Cares, Wake Forest Baptist Health, and Family Services to provide families access to a tiered-level of education and health services such as one-on-one consultations and child assessments, intensive and non-intensive home visits, and mental health support so that children are healthy, safe, and ready to learn. The American Academy of Pediatrics deems the medical home as a critical site to promote education, healthy development, and wellness across the family's life. Therefore, The Initiative expands our partnership on-site at Wake Forest Baptist Health-Downtown Health Plaza, Westgate Pediatrics, and Winston East Pediatrics, to address concerns such as pre- and post-natal care, behavior and mental health problems, child developmental delays, and/or parenting stress. We level the playing field so that at risk children and their families are prepared for success in school and in life.

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“Children living in poverty are at greater risk for developing physical and mental health issues that can negatively impact their ability to succeed in school,” said the Trust’s Joe Crocker. That’s why we funded Imprints Cares—in support of their collaboration with Family Services and Wake Forest Baptist—to connect families to health services that will help their children get set for school success.”

Berta Andrade, Imprints Cares Ready for School Director leading The Initiative said, “An example of how important these services are to at risk children and families in Forsyth County, is shared through Evelyn’s story.” When she first met Imprints Cares—thanks to a referral from Wake Forest Baptist’s Winston East Pediatrics—she was a high school senior who just found out she was pregnant. We knew the social and economic costs for a pregnant teen living in poverty as she—

- Has a higher risk for a baby with a low birth weight and infant mortality
- Has few skills to prepare her baby for kindergarten
- Has a baby with behavioral problems and chronic medical conditions
- Has a likelihood to more heavily use publicly funded health care
- Has low prospects for finishing high school
- Has no skills so she is more likely to be unemployed or underemployed as a young adult

The generational cycle could continue for Evelyn without Imprints Cares intervention—the stakes were high. Thankfully, Evelyn enrolled in our Ready for School, Pediatrics Partnership Program, and soon she realized how important her education and health was to her new baby. And, Evelyn now had a built-in family advocacy network with her Imprints Cares family educator and Wake Forest Baptist Health pediatrician. Her Imprints Cares family educator, Maria Stockton, ensured she had connections to other services that provided her prenatal nutrition and fresh produce as well as baby items (i.e., books, diapers, pack and play, bassinet, & car seat).





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Through visits at Imprints Cares site at Winston East, home visits at Evelyn's, group family meetings, and wellness checks with her pediatrician—Evelyn's life has changed. Today, her little boy, Adrian, is healthy and thriving. They read, sing, talk, and play

together daily. She finished high school and is almost done with her program at Forsyth Tech. And, she became closer to her own mom, sister, and family.

Imprints Cares also connected her mom and family to Habitat. They were approved for a Habitat Home, and she and her family have completed their volunteer hours and other requirements. Her dream is coming true soon—her family will move in this fall. Evelyn says, "To me, Maria and Imprints Cares are like another family, as they helped navigate me on this journey. I never feel alone anymore."



This is just one story of the many lives Imprints Cares changes in our community. And, we can now do more through The Initiative as we shift the odds together. We can do more with your help too by...

- Making a financial donation [HERE](#)
- Volunteering with us [HERE](#)
- Liking our Facebook page [HERE](#) to spread the word about our Ready for School Programs and Expanding Learning Services. Especially now as our summer camp is underway!