

# Family Involvement Funds



Eddie participating in a therapeutic horseback riding program

*Interested in attending a conference, workshop, or playgroup?*

*Early Steps has a unique scholarship program for families to participate in activities that enhance family involvement and education.*

*Empower yourself!*

USF Bay Area Early Steps Program

Division of General Pediatrics

Family Resource Specialist

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For more information contact:

[www.cms-kids.com](http://www.cms-kids.com)

[www.centraldirectory.org](http://www.centraldirectory.org)

## Bay Area Early Steps



### Family Resource Specialist



Evelyn Figueroa with her son, Eddie (12 years old)



State of Florida  
Department of Health

# What is a Family Resource Specialist?

- A parent of a child with varying abilities
- A resource for families served through Bay Area Early Steps
  - An advocate for families by expressing their views, perspectives, and needs
- A creator for a local system of support for families to network with each other, receive information, and participate in training opportunities
- An organizer and facilitator for the Bay Area Early Steps Family Advisory Council in which the parent's voices can be heard



Eddie, 11 years old,  
receiving his black belt in  
Tai Kwon Do

Dear Bay Area Early Steps Families:

I am honored and excited to be your Family Resource Specialist (FRS). I have been through and still experience the highs and lows of having a child with special needs.

I am a single mother of a 12 year old boy, Eddie, with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and Language Impairment. When Eddie was born he was a typical healthy baby boy. He was achieving all his normal milestones as he grew and when he was around a year and a half he began to regress with his development. Eddie was beginning to not make eye contact, he was declining with his motor skills, became sensitive to certain textures, vocabulary decreased, not focusing on tasks, and became a picky eater. I became very concerned and began looking for answers to all my questions.



Mommy and Eddie,  
3years old

At that time, I was working with the Early Head Start Program in Puerto Rico and discussed my concerns about Eddie with my co-worker and she referred me to the Early Steps Program in Puerto Rico.

It was the best thing I did. Eddie was evaluated and was able to receive services through the Early Steps Program. After a few months of services in my home I started to see improvements in Eddie. Eddie began to use more words and was able to focus more on tasks. Due to the fact of him being involved in Early Steps and being put on the right path he is now able to be in regular classroom settings. Eddie is an ESE student with an ESE teacher that comes to the classroom a few times a week. He has also obtained his black belt in Tae Kwon Do.

I would like to encourage you to participate in this wonderful program because the first years of your child's life are very crucial for the development. As parents, have me assist you and guide you thru the Early Steps process. I know is not an easy step to take at times but we can take it together. Please feel free to contact me at any time.

Sincerely,  
*Evelyn Figueroa*