

REAL STORIES REAL IMPACT

Support for New Parents



“Until I connected with ECSOC, I felt very isolated and didn’t know where to turn.”

– Susan Ho

Being a new parent is tough enough. Doing so in isolation, without a network of support to turn to when you feel overwhelmed or have questions, can be daunting.

“When my daughter came along, I was confident I would have no problem finding my way around,” says Susan Ho. “Was I wrong! Like every exhausted new parent, my world was consumed with meeting my child’s never-ending needs. Being relatively new to Boston, I felt isolated and alone. Not knowing what community resources were available or where to turn for help compounded my isolation.”

Isolation transformed into a strong sense of community when Susan connected with the Allston-Brighton Early Childhood System of Care (ECSOC), a United Way-funded program. The ECSOC approach, championed by United Way, creates a coordinated network of community-based services and supports that are organized to meet the unique needs of very young children and their families. ECSOC works to better support the social-emotional needs of young children and their families by improving and enhancing the capacity of organizations that already exist in the community. This includes partnerships with pediatric practices, newborn and infant home visits, training those who work with children and helping parents support their baby’s social, emotional and cognitive development.

“The day I discovered a flyer in the library about Allston-Brighton Family Network’s (ABFN) playgroups, a whole new world opened up for me and my child: new friendships, new ideas to exchange, and more importantly – access to local programs and information I knew nothing about!” Susan says with gratitude.

Today, Susan is using her ECSOC experience to help other families. “As I gained more confidence as a parent, I discovered in myself a strong desire to get involved in activities that benefit families of young children and to advocate for their needs,” she says. Since joining the Board of the Allston-Brighton ECSOC, Susan brings the cultural perspective of her Asian upbringing to breaking down service barriers that affect the diverse ethnic groups in her community.

“It’s exciting to be part of an effort that will positively impact all families in Allston-Brighton,” she says.

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