

# Cummings Great Expectation's 2020 Fall Parent Interview



## Voices Of Our Families!

**Thank you for participating in the Cummings Family Interview.**

The information provided in this interview helps inform what **resources** and **events** Cummings Great Expectations should provide, as well as **professional development training** for staff, so we can best support our children and families.

### What's Included:

Who We Are at Cummings Great Expectations .....	2
Supporting Children at Home .....	3
Impact of COVID-19 .....	5
Family Relationships .....	7
Family Social Supports & Challenges .....	9

Please contact Lisa White (Project Director, American Institutes for Research at [lwhite@air.org](mailto:lwhite@air.org)) if you have any questions or want learn more about the interview findings.

# Who We Are at Cummings Great Expectations!

Every year, families who attend Cummings get a chance to share how they are doing by reporting about their family life. During the Fall of the 2020-2021 school year, Cummings served a total of **62 children**. 34 families at Cummings, **reporting on a total of 40 children**, took the survey administered in Fall 2020. This means we reached a **response rate of 65% this year**.

## Families come in all shapes and sizes:



**97%**

of Cummings parents reported they completed their High School Degree or GED.



**88%**

of Cummings caregivers were employed at the time of the interview.



**82%**

of our children are taken care of primarily by their mother.



**18%**

of families have more than one child who attends Cummings Great Expectations.



**15%**

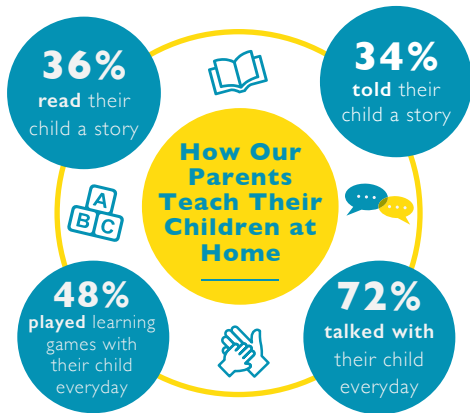
of Cummings Great Expectations caregivers are currently attending a training program or school.





## Learning at Home

Parents are children's first and most important teachers. When you talk, read, write, play and sing with your child, you're building their brain and helping to prepare them for success in school and life! Teaching children words, letters, and numbers at home and while out in the community boosts their development.





# TIPS FOR LEARNING AT HOME

Try these activities to keep your child learning at home:



**Make-up Stories** - Create your own stories using characters from other stories or from your own lives to create new tales. Be creative by using your personality to bring your stories to life. Using different voices for each character or acting out parts of the story can make story time even more enjoyable for you and your child.

**Give everything a name** - Build your child's vocabulary by talking about interesting words and objects. For example, "Look at that airplane! Those are the wings of the plane. Why do you think they are called wings?"

**Give your child (and yourself) and break!** - You don't always have to read the entire book. Reading even a few pages at a time will keep your child engaged and excited for the next story time with you.





## Impact of COVID-19

COVID-19 has had a huge impact on our families' work, health, and daily lives. Despite the challenges, many families reported improved parenting during the pandemic.



**44%** of caregivers reported that their parenting improved during the pandemic.



**39%** of caregivers said that the pandemic actually made their family relationship a little or a lot better.



## Challenges of the COVID-19 Pandemic

**1 in 6 caregivers** reported losing jobs permanently during the pandemic.

**Some of our caregivers** said their emotional well-being suffered since the beginning of the pandemic (30%).

**More than half of caregivers** at Cummings Great Expectations cut back hours at work or had family who were essential workers (56%).



## TIPS FOR COPING WITH STRESS DURING THE PANDEMIC

To help cope with stress from COVID-19, try these practices or get mindfulness resources by calling 810-600-5461:



**Take breaks from consuming news about the pandemic** - It's good to be informed, but hearing about the pandemic constantly can be upsetting. Consider limiting news to just a couple times per day and disconnecting from phone, T.V., and computer screens for a while.

**Connect with Others and Take Time to Unwind** - Talk with people you trust about your concerns about how you are feeling and try to do some activities you enjoy.

**Connect with Community Organizations and Mental Health Professionals.** During times of extreme stress, there are many ways to get help. If stress gets in the way of your daily activities for several days in a row, consider calling the GHS Free Crisis Hotline and Virtual Behavioral Health Urgent Care at 810-257-3740 or text FLINT to 741741. Services are available 24 hours per day, 7 days per week, 365 days per year. Learn more at [www.genhs.org/](http://www.genhs.org/).





## Family Relationships

Through positive family relationships, children discover who they are and learn to understand others. When children experience people helping, understanding, and enjoying them, they approach the world with openness and enthusiasm, and they grow to be responsive and caring people.

**100%** of caregivers shared warm relationships with their children.



**100%** of caregivers valued their relationship with their child.



**100%** of caregivers said who their children were comfortable with their physical affection.



**88%** of caregivers said their children would seek comfort when feeling upset.



# TIPS FOR SUPPORTING POSITIVE FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS

Use these tips to build positive relationships with children and find family engagement activities at [CummingsSchool.org](http://CummingsSchool.org)



**Allow for Unstructured, Uninterrupted Time with Your Child Each Day.** Let your child be the leader in deciding what to play. Don't multi-task during this special playtime - just be there with your child. You can also stay connected with your child while doing daily activities by talking with them or having them assist in an activity by giving them "jobs" they can handle.

**Let Your Child Know You're Interested In Their Activities.** Show a sincere interest in your child - whatever they are doing. You can show your interest by commenting on or describing what they are doing or getting involved by following their lead.

**Play Games that Explore Feelings.** Use puppets to act out a young child's typical frustrations or fears, like having to share toys with a classmate or separating from loved ones. Make drawings or hats for different emotions and talk about pictures in books that communicate feelings. You can help your child think through feelings by helping your child think through how others feel.





## Family Social Supports

Cummings Great Expectations families have access to many community resources and family support services to address challenges with food and housing insecurity.

**Parents ranked the most effective support as:**

**#1** Cummings Great Expectations! *Thank You Parents!*

**#2** Family (Spouses, children, parents)



**#3** My Own Children

## Family Challenges

**15%** of families at Cummings Great Expectations had some worries about food running out.



**9%** of our families reported sometimes feeling worried during the past year that they and their children might become homeless.





# TIPS FOR MANAGING FAMILY CHALLENGES

You're not alone with food/housing insecurity and we're here to help with these resources



**Visit the Great Expectations Market.** The Great Expectations Market is a free resource to families enrolled at Cummings School. The market provides many things that you would find at the grocery store, including boxed meals, fresh produce, meat, household cleaning supplies, personal hygiene products, and much more. To learn more, contact your Family Engagement Advocate, Home-Based Teacher, or SKIP Home Visitor to complete a brief survey, place your order, and arrange a time for curbside pickup.

**Ask a Family Engagement Advocate about Community Resources.** Cummings Great Expectations partners with various community organizations to assist in managing family challenges. Contact your Family Engagement Advocate to learn more about housing and food access services available through out community partners.

**Get Involved in a Parent Network.** Families can engage in a variety of classroom and program activities, including Parent Café, Parent Ambassadors, Fathers and Men Engaged (FAME), Women of Worth (W.O.W), Parent Mentors, and Never Stop Learning (NSL).





**Thank You Families!**