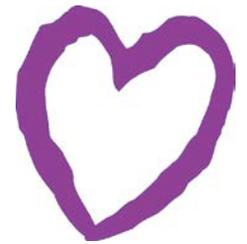




Children's Board
HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY

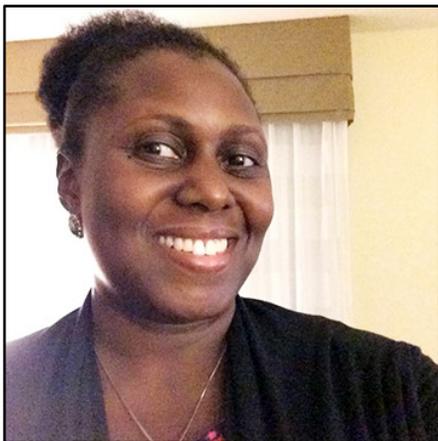
www.ChildrensBoard.org

FAMILY
RESOURCE CENTERS



Brandon Success Story

Coming Full Circle



Five Protective Factors: Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development

Children's Board Family Resource Centers are funded by the Children's Board of Hillsborough County and administered by the Healthy Start Coalition of Hillsborough County. Managing partners include: Champions for Children, Children's Home Network, Family Community Advisory Councils, REACHUP, Inc. and St. Joseph's Children's Wellness and Safety Center.

All programs and services are at no charge to families and individuals.



Children's Board
HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY

www.ChildrensBoard.org

In 2015, Erica Knight Merritt visited Baby Café with her newborn daughter, Madison, at the Children's Board Family Resource Centers in Brandon. Once here, she and Madison attended the child development playgroups provided by Baby Bungalow, Baby & Me, Growing Together, Wonder Years, Music & More, and Little Amigos. The Center invited her to become a Family Community Advisory Council member. Enjoying the experience, she ran for an officer position. In October of 2016, she became the treasurer! As their family grew, she enjoyed the classes with her youngest daughter, Morgan, as well. Both of the girls and Erica's mother, Veronica, all participate in the various playgroups and Center activities.

Erica shares her experiences, "With the Ages and Stages Questionnaires (ASQs), I'm able to ensure my children are reaching their developmental milestones. The classes offer opportunities for socialization and a variety of experiences. We have met staff and other families who have impacted us positively. We are better for being a part of the Resource Center!"

Erica's mother shares, "I am very thankful for the program. There are so many advancements now through research...children are at a different place. At the Center, instructors focus on getting every kid ready for school through reading, singing, and playing. They explain to the families why they are doing what they do!"

She also emphasizes how the child development specialists approach families to discuss the ASQs in a positive way. "There is no fault finding if your child is not where they should be! The teachers and staff understood no matter the emotional behavior that it was a child that needed to come. They never suggested to not come back. Everybody had the patience that I needed. They understood and never looked negatively."

She adds, "I have never been to a public agency in my life where I have been treated with genuine assistance! You, the staff, don't respect the person coming in the Center for who you think they are, but for who they are. Attention that you all show - just liking us - always impressed me. You are really there to really help! It has blessed my family immensely to be able to come! I can't imagine anything better!"

Recently, Erica became a child development class facilitator with Baby Bungalow. She is now teaching the same classes in which she participated! Excited, Veronica told us, "You were able to see leadership skills in my daughter! Everyone has something to contribute. Everyone has an asset in them!"