



## **Mid Florida Community Services Sites EVEC I and II**

"Mid Florida Community Services received HSBS grants for two sites, EVEC I and II, both located in beautiful Daytona Beach, Florida.

Before receiving grant funds from HSBS, the outdoor areas at both of these centers were bleak and uninviting. Sand was the main ground cover, and the spaces were surrounded by asphalt and chain link fence. Children spent time outdoors daily, but outdoor time lacked meaning and purpose beyond teacher respite and a chance for the children to briefly enjoy the Florida sun. In truth, outdoor play time at these centers was never truly considered an equally productive part of a balanced day by the children or the staff.

With HSBS grant funds, we were able to install a large climbing wall at both centers that gives the children the opportunity to develop gross motor skills while having fun. This unique structure provides both color and interest to the spaces. In addition, we purchased and installed two natural play elements at each site: a balance beam made of cedar wood and real wood tree stumps of varying heights for climbing, jumping and creating opportunities for imaginative play.

The balance beam, made of specially treated cedar, is shaped like a crooked tree that has fallen in the forest. The children enjoy balancing on the beam as they walk, and use it as a special seat for those involved in pretend play. The staff is especially pleased with the birch-tree stumps of varying heights, as the children like to climb up and down, and jump from one stump to the next. These two pieces of equipment add interest and function to our outdoor space. Since the children have more fun outdoors while they learn and grow, the teachers are planning more activities for them to participate. It seems the natural elements we have added to these urban settings help the children relax and feel free.

Thank you HSBS for our grant funding, and for helping us create our newly enhanced outdoor spaces. We believe the time spent outdoors will now give the children a better chance to experience success in school and lead a healthier and more active life in the future."

Karen Bourbonnais, MFCS  
HSBS Grantee

