



York County
Head Start
A Program of York County Community Action Corporation

ANNUAL REPORT

2022

2023



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PERSEVERANCE TO RE-BUILD

Dear Head Start & Early Head Start Friends,

Thank you for taking the time to review the YCCAC Head Start and Early Head Start Annual Report for Program Year 2022-2023. This report is not just a collection of data, but a testament to the impactful work we do together for the children and families of York County. Despite the hurdles, our program has demonstrated remarkable resilience and adaptability over the past year.

A few of the successes that you will see in our report are:

- Children showed growth in all developmental areas.
- Children had continuous, accessible health care.
- CLASS Scores continued to meet and exceed the national average.

Despite our successes, our challenges continue to be:

- Recruiting qualified Early Childhood Education staff. This has been a national issue that has had a direct impact on our program. We have not had adequate staffing to be fully operational. Five Head Start classrooms were closed all year, and two to four Early Head Start classrooms were closed throughout the year. This resulted in being placed on an under-enrollment plan through the Office of Head Start. It is a requirement that we maintain 97% enrollment.
- The high needs in our classrooms: 33% of Head Start children had an Individual Education Plan, and 32% of Early Head Start had an Individual Family Service Plan. These numbers do not account for the number of children who may have challenging behaviors or mental health concerns but may not be eligible for services through Child Development Services.

We recognized that we needed to persevere and rise above our challenges. This required to reimagine and rebuild our program to ensure we were equipped to provide high-quality services to children and families of York County. After a long, thoughtful process of looking at our program and community needs, we decided to submit a Change in Scope application to ensure that:

- We are in the best position to meet the children's and our communities' needs.
- We are able to provide classroom staff with the support they need to be successful in meeting the high demands in our classrooms.
- We are adequately compensating our staff for their essential work with the children and families.

We are eagerly anticipating the possibilities and opportunities that a Change in Scope would open up for us.

I am deeply appreciative of our Policy Council and Board Members for their unwavering support during this challenging year. I also want to express my profound gratitude to our exceptional staff for their dedication and commitment to providing high-quality services to the children and families. Lastly, I want to thank our families for choosing our program and partnering with us to ensure their children's needs are met.



Sincerely,
Cecily Silva
Director of Head Start & Early Head Start
York County Community Action Corporation

ABOUT YCCAC

York County Community Action Corporation (YCCAC) is a private nonprofit organization governed by a Board of Directors composed of business owners, public officials, and private citizens.

York County Community Action Corporation was incorporated in 1965 in response to the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964. Since then, York County communities have counted on YCCAC to provide opportunity and hope to people from all circumstances, particularly in times of transition or adversity.

Over time, YCCAC has added to our services to meet the changing demands in our communities, but our approach remains the same: we are driven by the belief that when our communities are strong, all of its members have opportunities to thrive— and, in turn, that when an individual achieves personal success and independence, our communities grow healthier, stronger, and more vibrant.

2022-2023 Board of Directors:

Claudette Dupee, President
Betsy Kelly, Vice President
Jean Walsh, Treasurer
David Wright, Secretary

Don Burns
Lisa Carter
Grady Collins
Donna Finneran
Ayn Hanselmann
Will Hygh
Jane McCabe
Bill Mondor
Isabelle Palin
Megan Rochelo

YCCAC Services:

- **Home Ownership & Repair program** offers Home Buyer Education classes, Pre and post-purchase counseling, foreclosure prevention counseling, home repair grants, and “Thriving in Place” grants
- **Heat, Energy, & Fuel:** LiHeap Heating assistance, Weatherization & Home Energy audits, Electricity Lifeline program, and Energy Crisis Intervention program;
- **Economic Opportunity:** Free Tax Preparations, Matched Savings Accounts, York County CA\$H, Legal Advocacy – Guardianship
- **Children’s Services:** WIC (Women, Infants, and Children), Early Head Start and Head Start, Whole Family
- Transportation
- Nasson Health Care – Community Health Center, Health Insurance Application Navigator

ABOUT YORK COUNTY HEAD START

York County Community Action Corporation through its Early Head Start and Head Start programs has been providing high-quality early childhood care and education to children 6 weeks to 5 years across York County for more than 57 years.

The Head Start program is built upon a holistic family approach. We believe that families are the child's first and most important teacher and we encourage each family to participate in all aspects of the program.

Our Mission

“

We partner with families of young children, helping them achieve their self-identified family goals with a focus on their child's health, education and well-being.



Our Strategic Goals:

- YCCAC Head Start's systems and practices support a fully-staffed operation, with qualified and highly-engaged personnel in all positions to deliver high-quality services to children and families of York County.
- YCCAC Head Start provides intentional opportunities for children to grow and learn so that Head Start children are ready for school.
- YCCAC Head Start adapts its program structure and provision of services to meet the needs of families, employees and the community at-large, while ensuring the quality of educational and supportive family services is sustained at the highest level.
- YCCAC Head Start is prudent yet forward-thinking in its approach, and makes sustainable modifications to the program to ensure its long-term financial viability in the midst of growing needs and market fluctuations.

2022-2023 Policy Council Members

Community Members:

Jane McCabe (Board Liaison)
Shannon Briggs
Kelly Weber

Parents:

Lynne Greenwood (Chair)
Kelly Collins
Heather Drake
Brittaney Gallipeau

Daisy Helstein
Ami Karantza
Tayla Mulldune
Christina Wilson

Learn more about Policy Council and its impact in the growth of the program on page [16](#).

COMMUNITY NEEDS

In the 2021 Community Needs Assessment, YCCAC has identified the following needs/areas of greatest concern with the regard to the continued health and safety, financial stability and overall well-being of low-income and at-risk individuals and families throughout York County:

- **A lack of affordable housing:** There is an insufficient supply of affordable housing. The impact is particularly felt by older adults, the unhoused/at-risk of being unhoused, increasing numbers of “cost burdened” renters paying almost 50% of income on housing, and low-to-moderate income earners who are unable to afford a home in York County.
- **A crisis in childcare:** The crisis is two-fold: a lack of affordable, quality childcare for working families, coupled with a shortage of childcare and early education workers.
- **Access to healthcare:** As patients seek to return to medical providers - often after gaps in regular care during the pandemic - they encounter waitlists or long delays in obtaining appointments for essential care.
- **Transportation barriers:** Existing challenges, including limited public transport and long commutes between home and work (> 30 min), exacerbated by surging fuel and vehicle costs.
- **Living wage earners:** Employment markets were disrupted by the pandemic, particularly for those at the lower end of the income scale. However, even as employers entice workers back with higher wages, workers face rising costs in every aspect of living, including shelter, food, fuel and transportation.

Meeting the Families’ Needs:

Head Start Family Liaisons worked with families to identify their needs, extending beyond school readiness. As a result, in PY 2022-2023:

- **100%** of families whose children were in Early Head Start accessed at least one available resource.
- **75%** of Early Head Start families and almost 50% of Head Start families were connected with Emergency/Crisis Intervention Services.
- **25%** of parents in the Early Head Start program received housing assistance.
- **60%** of Head Start families and over **80%** of Early Head Start families received services under the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC).



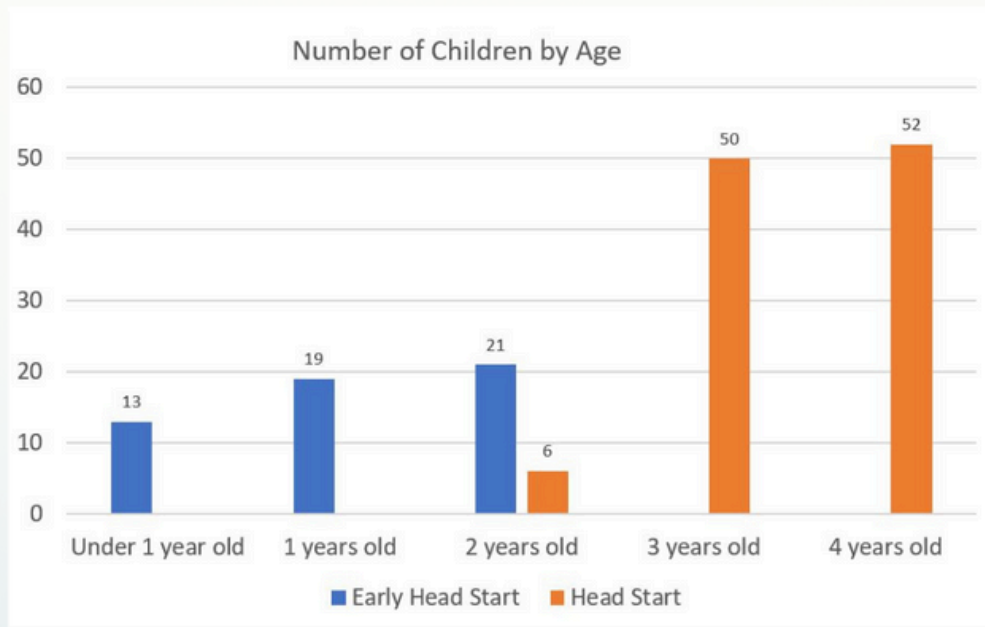
Our Family Liaisons adeptly support families' transitions from Early Head Start to Head Start, providing referrals to mental health services and aiding enrollment in job training, all while remaining attuned to community and socioeconomic needs.

DEMOGRAPHICS

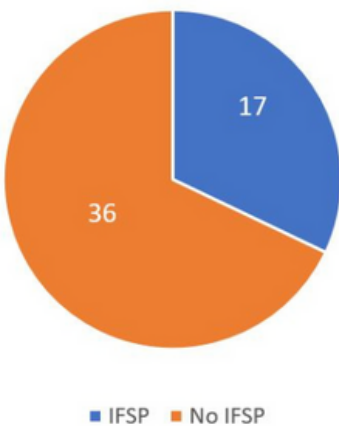
Cumulative Enrollment in 2022-2023

Early Head Start 53

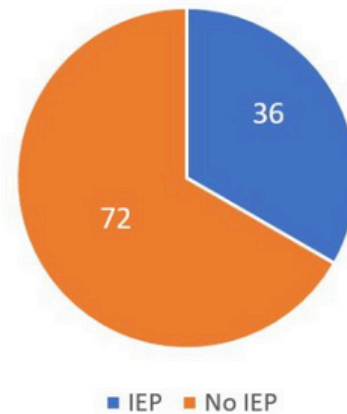
Head Start 108



Number of Early Head Start Children with Diagnosed Disability



Number of Head Start Children with Diagnosed Disability



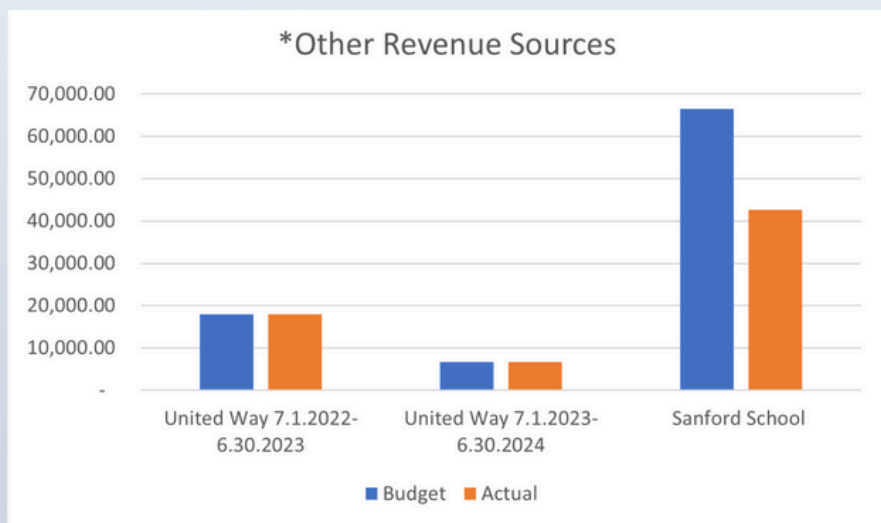
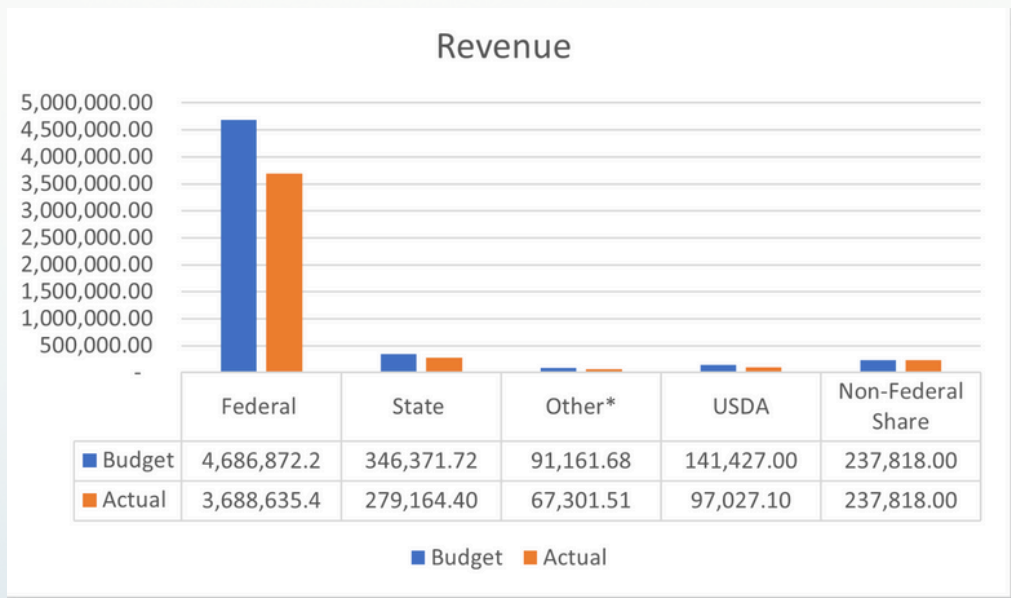
FINANCIAL PERSEVERANCE

In PY 2022-2023 the expected revenue was \$5,503,651. However, due to a number of factors total revenue was \$4,369,946.

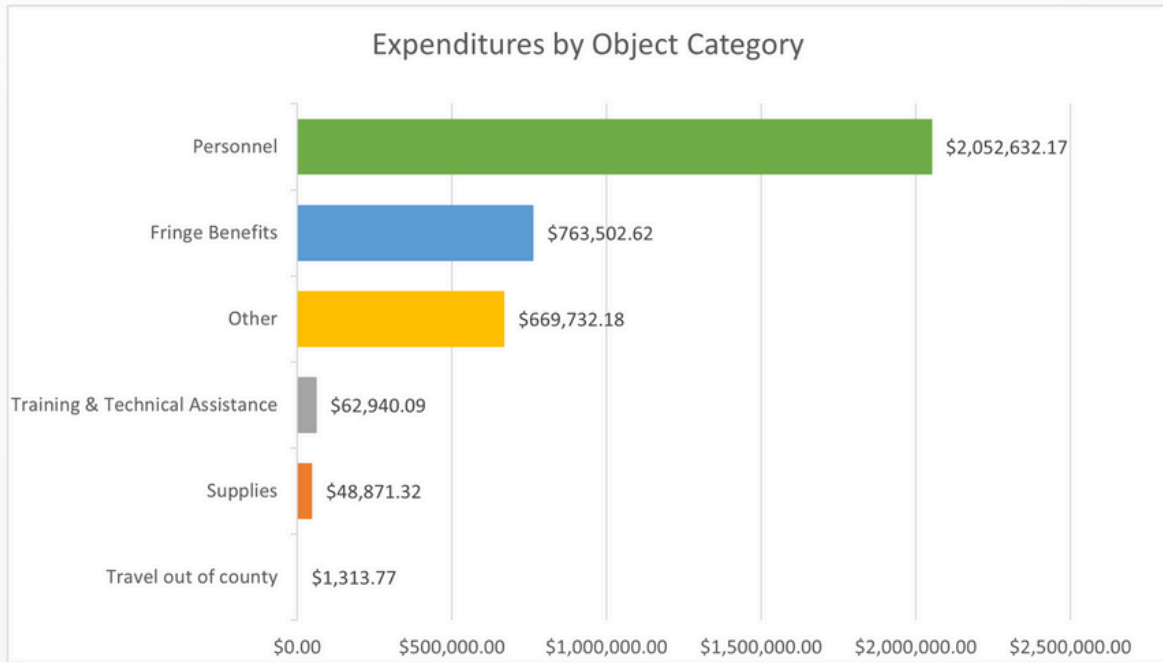
Factors that impacted total revenue include:

- Change in our partnership with the Sanford Schools Department.
- Carryover of \$470,998 of funds from PY 2021-2022 that was not spent in 2022-2023.
- Having 7 to 9 classrooms closed throughout the year due to staffing.
- Having an In-Kind wavier in place.
- Closed classrooms impacted the USDA revenue collected.

Overall, we underspent due to closed classroom and staff vacancies.



FINANCIAL PERSEVERANCE



During PY 2022-23, we had no expenses related to equipment purchases, contractual agreements, or construction activities.

The subtotal direct cost is \$3,598,992.15, supplemented by \$436,109.21 in indirect costs. With a non-federal share of \$237,818.00 and a contribution of \$97,027.10 from the USDA, the total expenditures amount to \$4,369,946.46.

The most recent independent auditor's report conducted by One River CPAs from Bath, ME in 2022 for fiscal years ending October 31, 2021 and October 31, 2022 did not show any noticeable difference in our expenditures.

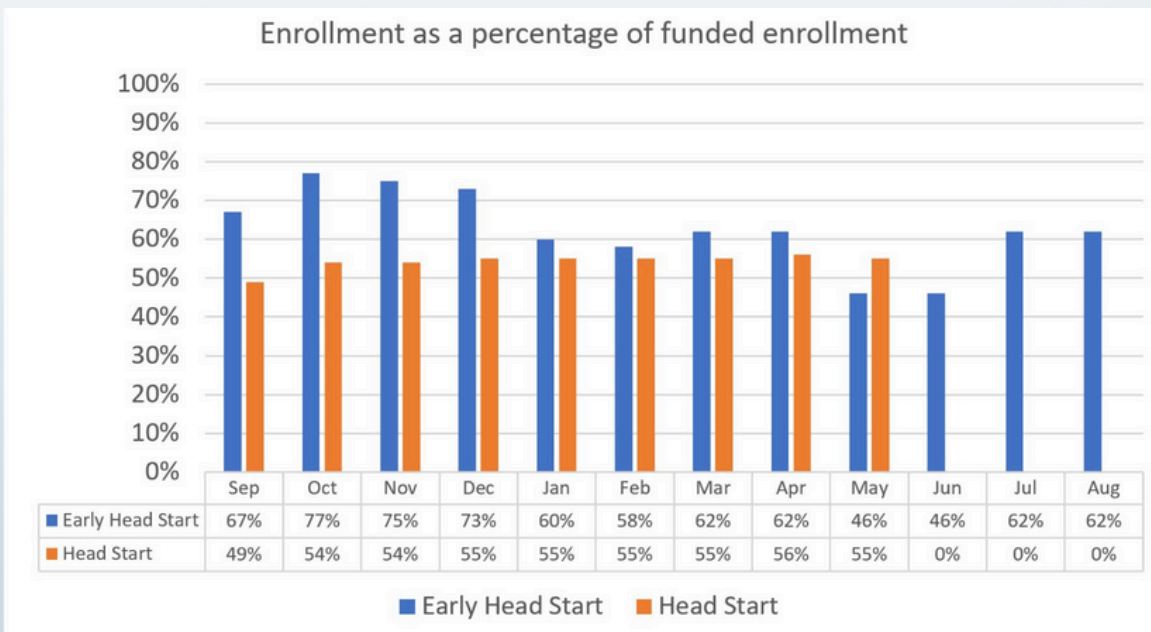
PERSEVERANCE IN ENROLLMENT

Enrollment

The Office of Head Start allows families to be categorically accepted into the program by showing they are receiving public assistance, are unhoused, or foster. Public assistance includes SSI (Supplemental Security Income), TANF (Temporary Assistance to Needy Families) and SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program).



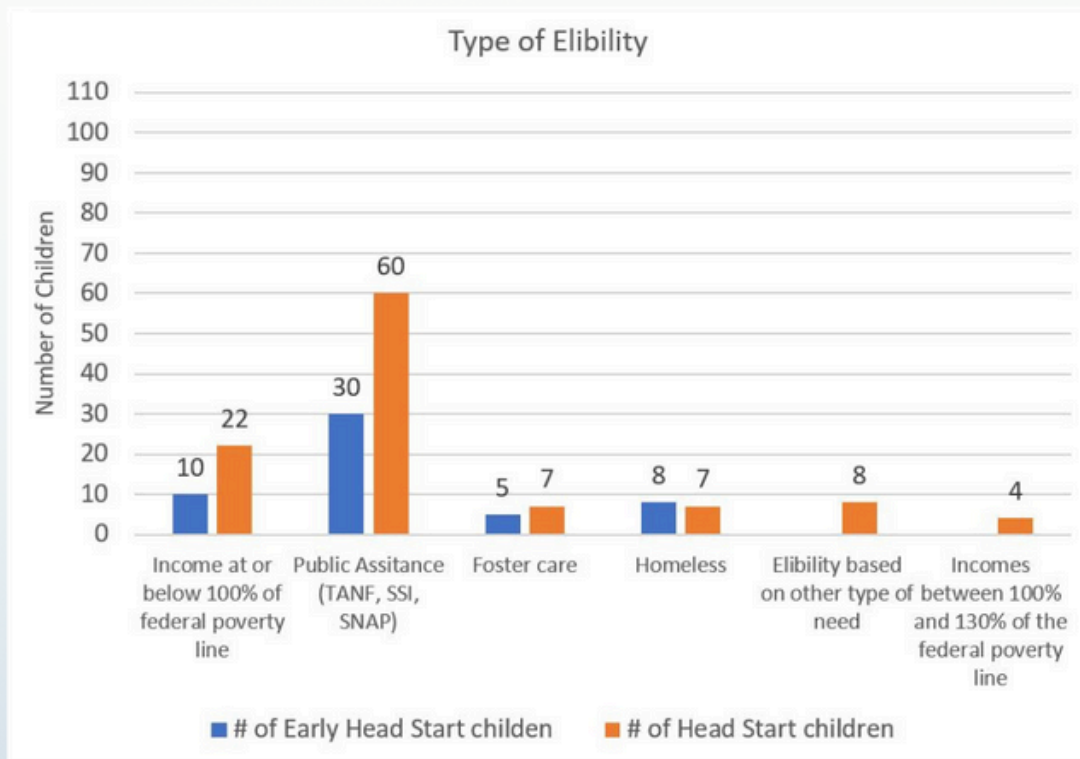
- **Early Head Start** funded enrollment for PY 2022-23 was **52**. This school year we had several of our Early Head Start classrooms closed. Out of the 6 Early Head Start classrooms, 2 did not open, 1 closed in April 2023 and 1 was closed in December 2022 due to a lack of teaching staff.
- **Head Start** funded enrollment for PY 2022-23 was **170**. This school year we had several of our Head Start classroom closed. Out of the 10 Head Start classrooms, we had 4 closed. There is no enrollment data for June-August because our Head Start classrooms are aligned with the local school departments and the school year for public schools' Pre-K ends in May.



PERSEVERANCE IN ENROLLMENT

Eligibility

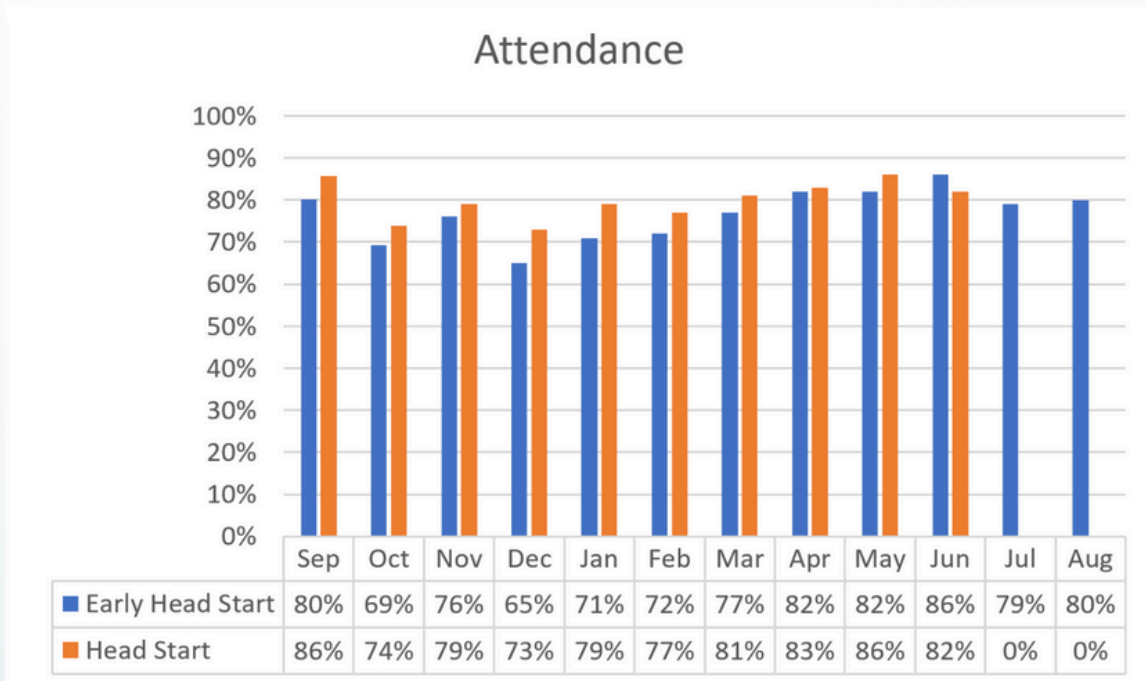
- All of Early Head Start children were either categorical or income eligible. The largest portion is that of public assistance. The majority of the Early Head Start children have been found eligible by having SNAP benefits.
- Similarly to Early Head Start, most of the Head Start children have been found eligible by having SNAP benefits. Four children were in the 101-130% of the federal poverty guideline. Eight children were over the 130% federal poverty guideline.



PERSEVERANCE IN ATTENDANCE

Attendance

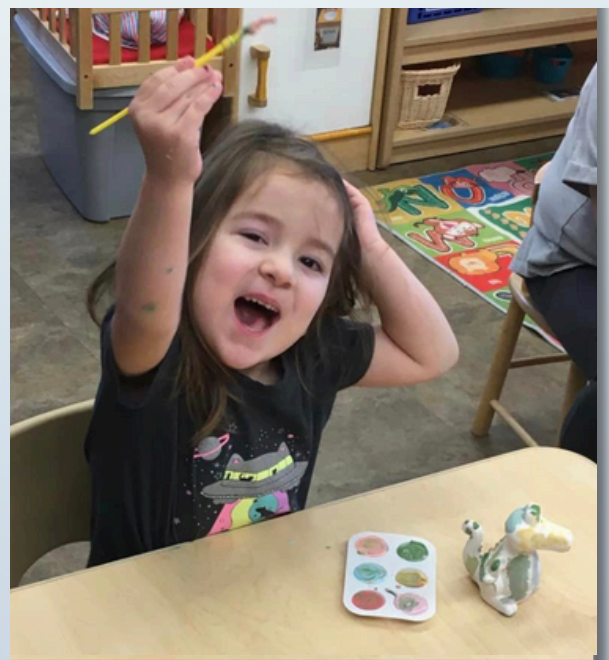
Office of Head Start’s Performance Standards states a program must maintain an 85% attendance rate per month. In PY 2022-23, the average monthly attendance was affected by classroom closures and inconsistent operation days for all sites. May was the only month we reached the standard of 85%.



Attendance Plans

We placed 19 families (27 children) on attendance plans in the 2022-2023 school season. The program’s Family Engagement Coordinator identified children/families who have unexplained absences and family service staff worked with the families to identify what was keeping the child from attending. We then worked with the family by setting up attendance plans and monitoring closely.

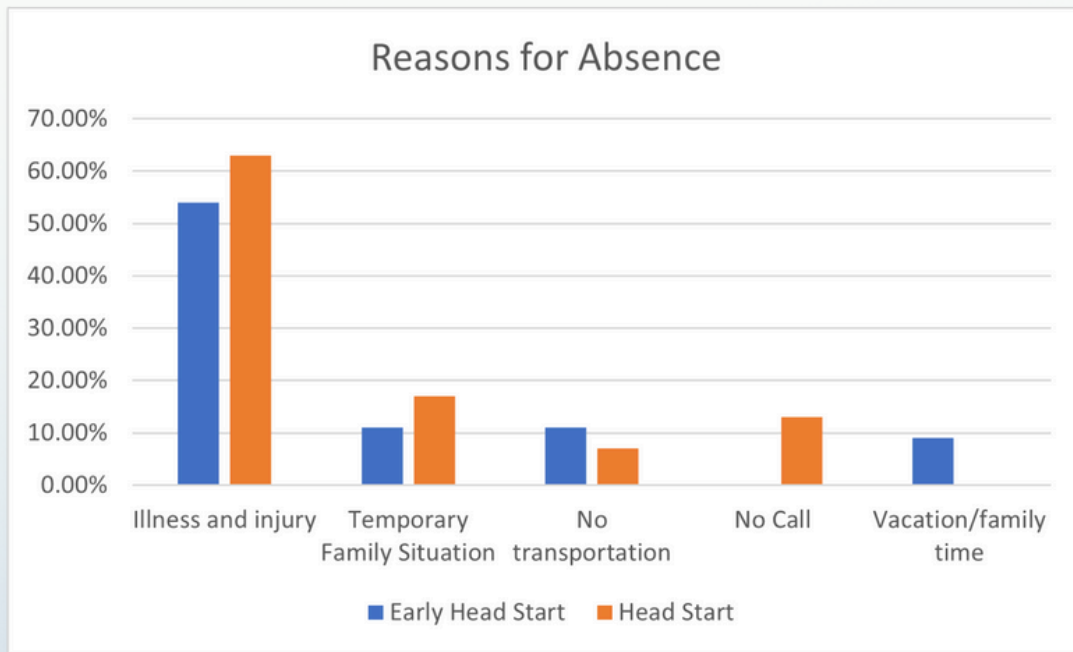
We did notice an increase in attendance plans over the winter months (with cold weather starting in November and continuing through April).



PERSEVERANCE IN ATTENDANCE

Major reasons for absences included:

- **Temporary family situation:** Parent/sibling sick and did not bring child, sibling’s classroom closed, kept child home due to COVID exposure, kept child home due to classroom half day schedule, home emergencies.
- **Vacation/family time:** Family taking vacation, family wants to keep child home, half day, family relatives in town, parent decides to keep child home with no extenuating circumstances.
- **Illness and injury:** Although we did see an increase in illnesses as the winter months approached we did find instances in which staff could have encouraged families to attend.
- **No transportation:** broken vehicle.
- **No call:** Parent or a guardian did not call in the first hour of the program opening with a reason for the child’s absence.



*Missing columns mean no child from either Early Head Start or Head Start was absent for a particular reason.

PERSEVERANCE TO IMPROVE HEALTH OUTCOMES

In PY 2022-2033, we continued partnering with Nasson Health Care, a division of York County Community Action Corporation and Federally Qualified Health Center, to provide dental checkups and give access to ongoing dental care for more families.

Early Head Start:

Out of an enrollment of 53 children, 77% (31 children) had a dental home. Only 31 children were up-to-date on their periodical dental schedule.

32 Number of children who were up to date on a schedule of age-appropriate preventive and primary health care, according to the relevant state's EPSDT schedule for well childcare.

53 Number of children with an ongoing source of continuous, accessible health care provided by a health care professional that maintains the child's ongoing health record and is not primarily a source of emergency or urgent care.

51 Number of children who have been determined by a health care professional to be up to date on all immunizations appropriate for their age.



PERSEVERANCE TO IMPROVE HEALTH OUTCOMES

Head Start

In a cohort of 108 enrolled children, an impressive 85% (91) have secured a dental home, indicating a strong commitment to ensuring consistent access to dental care. Among the 91 children with a dental home, 73 dental visits have been completed, suggesting active engagement with dental services. However, despite the completion of these visits, 8 children still required dental treatment, highlighting ongoing dental health needs. Out of the 8 children in need for treatment, only 6 have done so, indicating potential barriers to accessing care. This data underscores both the program's success in connecting children with dental homes and the challenges in ensuring all children receive needed treatments. It highlights the importance of continued efforts to improve access to dental care and address barriers to treatment for children in the program.



98 Number of children who were up to date on a schedule of age-appropriate preventative and primary health care, according to the relevant state's EPSDT schedule for well childcare.

108 Number of children with an ongoing source of continuous, accessible health care provided by a health care professional that maintains the child's ongoing health record and was not primarily a source of emergency or urgent care.

106 Number of children who have been determined by a health care professional to be up to date on all immunizations appropriate for their age.

PERSEVERANCE TO IMPROVE HEALTH OUTCOMES

Building Healthy Eating Habits

For PY 2022-2023, the BMI index in the children ages 3-5 showed improvement from the previous program year:

- 8.5% decrease in obesity: from 21.5% to 13%.
- 64% of Head Start children had a healthy weight, an improvement by 14% from the previous year.

However, there was an increase in underweight children: from 4.3% to 6.5%.

We utilize a diverse range of strategies to ensure that the children in our program grow healthy and build healthy eating habits. Some of those approaches include:

- Access to WIC and SNAP funds: 80% of Early Head Start children and 60% of Head Start children received WIC Services in 2022-2023.
- Family Style meals: teachers and students eat together and have age-appropriate conversations with the goal to highlight the importance of mealtimes as a social experience and family bonding.
- Compliance with the CACFP program requirements: age-appropriate portion sizes and increased dietary-quality of the served meals.
- Utilization of “I am moving/I am learning” (IMIL) program designed to increase daily moderate-to-vigorous physical activity, improve the quality of movement activities, and promote healthy food choices among preschool children.

Total Meals Served:

34,637*

*This number does not include the number of meals served in the Head Start classroom set in our local Pre-K/Kindergarten school.



PERSEVERANCE TO INCREASE FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

Family engagement is the backbone to our program. The success of our program comes from our commitment to building partnerships with families, and families committing to actively supporting their child(ren)'s learning.

Learning Genie mobile app has been our primary channel to connect with parents – from daily classroom updates to announcements about family events and school closures due to weather. The app allows classrooms and families to connect and engage in the child(ren)'s learning experience throughout their time here at Early Head Start and Head Start. Learning Genie's In-Kind Activity Tracking Tool enables families to access at-home learning activities assigned by teachers and log In-Kind time instantly with a few taps.

Policy Council

Policy Council is our governing body. It is parent-led and is responsible for the direction of the program. This includes approving grants, budgets, and policies as well as supporting recruitment and informing program goals and activities.

9 Parents 2 Community Members 1 Past Parent

From December 2022 to May 2023, we had at least five (5) or more voting Policy Council Members in attendance and a quorum was met.



PERSEVERANCE TO INCREASE FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

Family Linkz (Monthly Parent Meeting)

Parent-focused survey results made the case that parents were aware of the different ways they can engage with the program and be a part of its continuous improvement processes. Yet, attendance was overall low, with variations throughout the year. Often the same families attended the meetings, especially the Policy Council members. Discussions about ways to generate increased participation led to change in the meeting time to coordinate better with drop off, as well as added coffee hour and playground meetings. Parents' low attendance at Family Linkz continues to be an issue.

Center-Based Family Engagement Events

Family engagement events are a great opportunity for staff, family and their children to come together and work on some of the child's educational goals. In PY 2022-23 we started holding in-person events more regularly, which have shown to have a higher turnout. We did not reach our goal to have sixty percent (60%) of enrolled families participate in a minimum of three (3) Family Engagement opportunities and this continues to be an upward battle for us.



In-Kind

In PY 2022-23, fifty percent (50%) of enrolled families completed In-Kind related activities through options provided by teachers and utilized Learning Genie for a minimum of five (5) months.

PERSEVERANCE IN EDUCATION AND SCHOOL READINESS GOALS

Our School Readiness approach ensures children, families, and schools are prepared for kindergarten. We value diversity and support each child's unique development. Our curriculum, guided by Teaching Strategies: The Creative Curriculum, aligns with Maine's Early Learning Development Standards and Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework. The education staff partner met with each individual family to identify and establish their child's school readiness goals during the first home visit for the program year.

Behavioral and Developmental Screenings

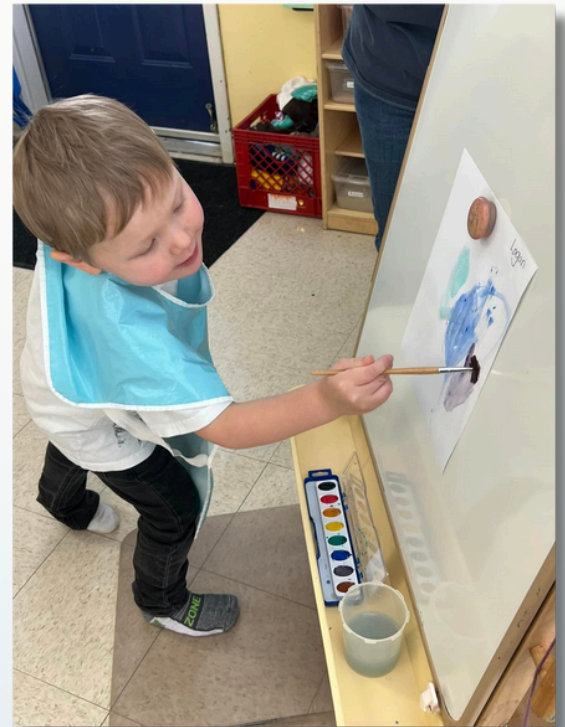
- 67 out of 77 newly enrolled children (87%) in the Head Start program completed required screenings within 45 days for developmental, sensory, and behavioral concerns.
- 26 out of 31 newly enrolled children (84%) in the Early Head Start program completed required screenings within 45 days for developmental, sensory, and behavioral concerns.

Educational Outcomes

We continue to see growth in all areas of development. Our Head Start children made significant gains in the areas of Literacy and Mathematics: 47% growth in Math and 44% in Literacy.

In Early Head Start, we saw growth in Language, Literacy and Mathematics from their first to second assessment within the same age group, and slight decreases in Social Emotional, Physical and Cognitive.

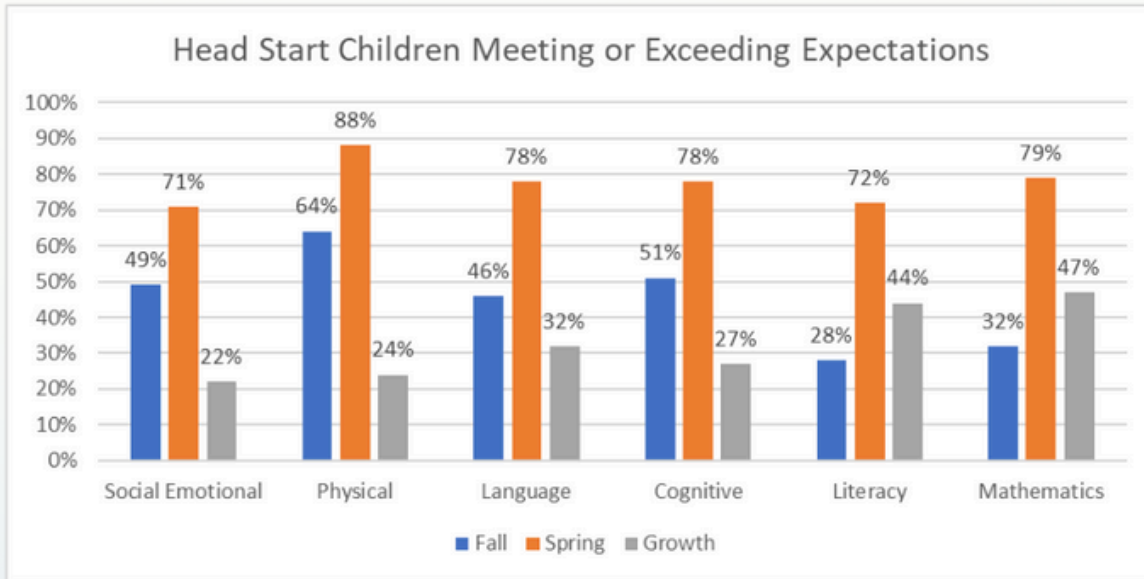
- Early Head Start classrooms were monitored using a new tool, The Quality of Care for Infants and Toddlers (QCIT), used to measure the quality of interactions between infants and toddlers (from birth to 36 months) and their caregivers in early childhood settings.
- The Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS®) Scores continued to meet and exceed the national average measured along 3 categories of teacher-parent interaction that support children's learning and development: Classroom Organization (CO): Head Start 5.83 vs national average 5.78; Instructional Support (IS): Head Start 3.88 vs national average 2.94; Emotional support (ES): Head Start 6.41 vs. national average: 6.03.
- Classroom staff has embraced "Conscious Discipline" - a framework that teaches adults and children how to manage emotions and understand feelings. Classroom observations using the Fidelity tool showed moderate to strong implementation in 5 out of the 7 skills (Composure, Assertiveness, Encouragement, Choice, and Positive Intent).
- We reached 93.4% Overall Creative Curriculum Fidelity Score for Head Start and 92% for Early Head Start.



PERSEVERANCE IN EDUCATION AND SCHOOL READINESS GOALS

Head Start School Readiness Goals

We met and exceeded the School Readiness goal of demonstrating 15% growth in the areas shows below, as well as the benchmark of 65% of children meeting or exceeding them by June 2023.



Early Head Start School Readiness Goals

We met the goal of demonstrating 15% growth in Mathematics, and the benchmark of 65% of children meeting or exceeding expectations in Social Emotional, Physical and Mathematics.

