



Early/Head Start Network

FY22 ANNUAL REPORT



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GENERAL INFORMATION

GRANTEE: START EARLY

Program Number: 000
Address: 33 W. Monroe, Suite 1520, Chicago, IL 60603
Phone Number: 312-922-3863
Fax Number: 312-346-2981
Head Start Director Name: Diana McClarien
Head Start Director Email: dMcClarien@startearly.org
Agency Web Site Address: www.startearly.org
Agency Type: Recipient

Agency Description:

Start Early, is a Head Start/Early Head Start grantee which provides services through directly operated, partner, and delegate programs throughout the city of Chicago and the south suburbs.

Educare Chicago– Directly-Operated Program

Educare Chicago is a state-of-the-art school on Chicago's South Side, that serves low-income infants, toddlers, preschoolers and their families. The program offers specialized supports for children and their families, including arts, intensive math and language, and many parent education opportunities. By providing research-based, high-quality services to young children and their families, Educare helps break the cycle of unequal access to resources and historic under-investment. It also serves as a model for learning and innovation in the field nationwide. The center is the original site of a national network of Educare schools developed through a partnership between Start Early and the Buffett Early Childhood Fund.

Healthy Parents and Babies – Directly-Operated Program

Start Early's Healthy Parents & Babies Program provides services to pregnant people, young parents, and children birth – age 3. The services also include specific assistance for families with children with special needs. The model involves home visits from doulas starting as early in a pregnancy as possible, then

transitions to home visitors conducting home visits once the child is born. The home visits continue through age three.

Seventy-eight slots are allocated to the program with flexible enrollment between services to pregnant people and EHS's home-based program. The maximum number of parents and children being visited (enrolled) at any point in time is 48 while the maximum number of pregnant people receiving services at any one time is 30.

The program is staffed with a program manager, a home-base coordinator, a doula coordinator, a lead family support specialist, two doulas, a family support specialist, and four home visitors. Five of our team members are bilingual. Support, training, and technical assistance are provided by the Grantee Support Services partner team. Each home visitor has a caseload of no more than 12 children to whom they are providing Early Head Start Home-Base educational services. The doula coordinator has a caseload of 8 families and the doula has a caseload of fifteen birthing parents, where they are providing supportive prenatal education services to pregnant people.

Site Location

Educare Chicago
 5044 S. Wabash Ave.
 Chicago, IL 60615

Site Location

Healthy Parents & Babies
 33 W. Monroe st.
 Chicago, IL 60603

Community Areas Served

- Grand Boulevard
- Kenwood
- Washington Park
- Fuller Park
- Oakland
- New City

Community Areas Served

- Grand Boulevard
- Hyde Park
- Kenwood
- Washington Park
- Brighton Park
- Humboldt Park
- McKinley Park



COMMUNITY ASSESSMENTS

Healthy Parents & Babies

The supply of early childhood programs that serve infants and toddlers continues to be quite short of the number of eligible infants and toddlers who could benefit from such programs.

Unfortunately, the number of uninsured children and individuals continued to rise, as the COVID-19 pandemic continued, despite low unemployment and a strong economy.

SNAP recipients continued to decrease for most community areas.

A few Chicago communities saw small increases in unemployment; most saw decreases. Despite the decreases, several communities still had unemployment rates of 20% or higher.

Poverty rates for infants and toddlers also decreased, but they still remain the group with the highest poverty rates.

17.8%

Of families with infants and toddlers were living below the poverty line.

16.9%

Of families with for preschoolers were living below the poverty line.

15.6%

Of families with older children (6 – 17) were living below the poverty line.

Educare Chicago

In the past year, the needs of children and families have changed dramatically because of the continued national health pandemic, general social unrest, and the level of crime in Chicago.

48%

Of the families served by Educare are essential workers. Many of them struggled to maintain employment with grave concerns about infecting their children and other loved ones due to working in a pandemic.

67.42%

Of our families recently reported being employed.

28%

Of these families were only working part time.

33%

Of families reported being unemployed.

ASIAN HUMAN SERVICES

Program Number: 005

Program Name: Passages Early Learning Center

Address: 1643 W. Bryn Mawr Ave., Chicago, IL 60660

Phone Number: 773-433-3530

Head Start Director Name: Cindy La, Executive Director of Education

Head Start Director Email: cla@ahschicago.org

Agency Web Site Address: www.ahschicago.org

Agency Type: Social Service Agency / Non-Profit

Agency Description:

Since its beginnings in 1978, Asian Human Services (AHS) has delivered on a singular purpose: to ensure that every immigrant and refugee across Chicagoland has access to personalized support and services necessary to become prosperous members of society.

Our goal is to build and deliver an integrated network of services that makes a real difference in the lives of our clients. We rely on grants and other donations to fund this critical work. Thanks to these funders and other supporters, AHS's impact continues to grow, improving lives and strengthening communities, one person at a time.

Site Locations:

AHS Headquarters

2838 W. Peterson Ave.

Chicago, IL 60659

Community Areas Served:

- Edgewater
- West Edgewater
- West Ridge
- Uptown
- Rodgers Park
- Albany Park



Community Assessments

The data highlights the special significance of English as a Second Language (ESL) classes, literacy programs, and other services designed specifically for refugees and immigrants in the Chicagoland area.

While a diverse minority population does not conclusively indicate a community in need, data from Chicago Public Schools supports the claim that neighborhoods whose residents AHS serves have a high incidence of low-income immigrants. This data indicates that 84.4% of children are from low-income families, with 42.8% students identified as English Language Learners.

The West Ridge area had 1,647 children between the ages of 0 to 5 years old living under the 100% Federal Poverty Level (FPL) in 2017. It is estimated that 31 – 44% of families in West Ridge are living below the poverty line with three or more of their own children within the household.



CASA CENTRAL

Program Number: 003

Casa Central – Early Learning Academy

Address: 1343 N. California Ave., Chicago, IL 60622

Phone Number: 773-645-2300

Fax Number: 773-645-1432

Head Start Director Name: Mary Reynolds, LCSW, I/ECMH-C

Head Start Director Email: mreynolds@casacentral.org

Agency Web Site Address: <http://www.casacentral.org>

Agency Type: Social Service Agency / Non-Profit (Non-CAA)

Agency Description:

Since 1954, Casa Central, a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization, has been transforming lives and strengthening communities with a special focus on serving Chicago's Hispanic population. The agency's Early Learning Academy provides Head Start and Early Head Start services to children, ages birth – 5, and their families. The program serves 84 Head Start and 120 Early Head Start children and their families in both home and center-based settings. Casa Central specializes in preparing children for entry into kindergarten or Head Start with an emphasis on social-emotional development, literacy enhancement, and math comprehension.

Center-Based Early Head Start & Head Start

The center-based Early Head Start and Head Start program option, which includes childcare collaboration, provides full-day early learning services in six classroom settings (two Early Head Start and four Head Start) for children ages 2 – 5. All classrooms are also part of our partnership with the Chicago Department of Family and Support Services, Preschool for All, and Prevention Initiative programs, which support increased staff credentialing and licensing and the maintenance of smaller teacher to child ratios to ensure high-quality, individualized services for all children.

Site Locations:

Casa Central

Home-Based

Center-Based

1335 N. California Ave.

1343 N. California Ave.

Chicago, IL 60622

Chicago, IL 60622

Community Areas Served:

- Hermosa
- Humboldt Park
- Logan Square
- West Town



Community Assessments

There is a sizeable percentage of the population served with limited English proficiency, indicating continued need for Casa Central's bilingual (English/Spanish) approach.

Pre-K expansion grants continue to ensure that more children ages 3 – 4 are being served by Preschool for All and Chicago Public Schools-based free preschool; this means there are fewer and fewer Head Start-eligible children in our community who are not already connected with other programming.

Although the population of children in the Early Head Start age range decreased in Casa Central's primary community areas, there still remains very limited access to both center- and home-based Early Head start programming for income-eligible children ages birth – 3.

Screenings to identify disabilities in infants and toddlers decreased by 68% in February through September of 2020, meaning that children in need of services were not identified and connected with appropriate therapies as early as possible. In general, children with disabilities and diverse learning needs found their provision of services greatly disrupted due to the pandemic. We anticipate this will mean children enter our program with more significant developmental delays than ever before.

CHILDREN'S PLACE ASSOCIATION

Program Number: 200-2

Children's Place Association: Arthur E. Jones Early Childhood Care and Learning Center and Home-Based Early Learning Program

Address: 700 N. Sacramento, Suite 300, Chicago, IL 60612-1046

Phone Number: 773-395-9193

Fax Number: 773-395-4486

Head Start Director Name: Porsche Snowden

Head Start Director Email: psnowden@childrens-place.org

Agency Web Site Address: www.childrens-place.org

Agency Type: Social Service Agency / Non-Profit

Agency Description:

Children's Place Association has 133 Head Start/Early Head Start-eligible slots. Children's Place provides comprehensive support services to children and families affected by illness and poverty. Programs include nursing for medically complex children, mental health counseling, case management, summer camp, foster care and adoption, emergency assistance, supportive family housing and early education services that include a home-based program and the Arthur E. Jones Early Childhood Care and Learning Center.

The Early Learning Center serves children birth – 5 years of age, with age-specific classrooms, degreed teachers and specially trained aides, an onsite nurse, nutritious meals, transportation, and a secure, private playground. The home-based program serves children ages birth – 3 years, providing developmental and emotional screenings, nutrition education and assessments, monthly infant health checks by a registered nurse, advocacy, referrals and group socialization. The center-based program includes Head Start and Early Head Start programming, and the home-based program provides Early Head Start programming.

Site Locations:

Children's Place Association

Home-Based Early Learning Center

3059 W. Augusta Blvd. 1800 N. Humboldt Blvd.

Chicago, IL 60622 Chicago, IL 60647

Community Areas Served:

Both programs supported by Start Early operating out of Humboldt Park on Chicago's West Side. While Children's Place Association's catchment area is the entire city, the annual Community Assessment conducted by Start Early and Children's Place evaluates the areas surrounding/adjacent to the Early Learning Center since a large percentage of children served come from these areas. Some, such as Logan Square and West Town, are undergoing gentrification, but pockets of poverty remain; others face ongoing issues of high poverty rates and racial disparities.



Community Assessments

The majority of children served by Children's Place early education programs are African American and Hispanic. Approximately 32% of children served by the Early Learning Center are Black, 51% Hispanic, 14% multiracial, 1% Arabic, and 1% White. In the Home-Based program 92% of families are Hispanic and 7% African American.

Per US Census data, the poverty level begins at annual incomes of \$12 – \$44,000 depending on family size. In our last fiscal year, FY 2020, 80% of Early Learning Center and Home-Based client families made annual incomes below the federal poverty level of \$5,000 or less.

Children's Place specializes in serving families and children with special needs. More than half of the children served in the Early Learning Center, 45%, in FY 2020 had an illness or disability, furthermore, 14% had a parent living with a disability or medical condition.

EL HOGAR DEL NINO

Program Number: 006

EL Hogar Del Nino- Loomis Site

Address: 11710 S. Loomis, Chicago IL, 60608

Phone Number: 312-733-5584

Fax Number: 312-733-6108

Head Start Director Name: Maria Heidkamp

Head Start Director Email: maria.heidkamp@elhogardelnino.org

Agency Web Site Address: www.elhogardelnino.org

Agency Type: Social Service Agency / Non-Profit

Agency Description:

El Hogar serves children from birth – 12 years of age in its different programs. Our programs are Early/Head Start center-based, and home-based.

Center-Based Early Head Start & Head Start

The center-based Early Head Start and Head Start program option, which includes childcare collaboration, provides full-day early learning services in six classroom settings (two Early Head Start and four Head Start) for children ages 2 – 5. All classrooms are also part of our partnership with the Chicago Department of Family and Support Services, Preschool for All, and Prevention Initiative programs, which support increased staff credentialing and licensing and the maintenance of smaller teacher to child ratios to ensure high-quality, individualized services for all children.

Site Locations:

El Hogar Del Nino

1710 S. Loomis St.

Chicago, IL 60608

Community Areas Served:

- Pilsen
- South Lawndale
- Lower West Side
- Near West Side

Community Assessments

Due to our large Hispanic/Latino representation, bilingual education remains a need in our service area.

Many of the children in our service areas grow up speaking more than one language (i.e., English and Spanish, English and Arabic). This is a strength for the children growing up in bilingual homes.

Our service area has numerous social service organizations that provide these services at a free or sliding scale rate.

51.6% of children ages 0 – 5 are enrolled in the SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) in our service area of the Near West Side. 3.6% of children in our service area are enrolled in TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families).

The demographic of make-up of children served at EL Hogar by community areas are as follow:

• Lower West Side: White 10.6%, African American N/A, Hispanic 37.8%, Asian N/A, Other N/A.

• South Lawndale: White 31.9%, African American 34.1%, Hispanic 34.8%, Asian N/A, Other N/A.

• Near West Side: White 2.6%, African American 28% Hispanic %12.4, Asian %4.6, Other N/A.



FAMILY FOCUS

Program Number: 007

Family Focus

Address: 5467 S. University Ave. Chicago, IL 60615

Phone Number: 773-643-0452

Fax Number: 773-643-0620

Head Start Director Name: Claudia Rivera

Head Start Director Email: claudia.rivera@family-focus.org

Agency Web Site Address: www.family-focus.org

Agency Type: Social Service Agency / Non-Profit

Agency Description:

Family Focus has a rich history serving children and families throughout the Chicagoland and suburban areas. The recent merger between Family Focus and Chicago Child Care Society, has allowed the two organizations to expand its footprint with providing social services within its service areas. Among its services, Family Focus offers Head Start and Early Head Start center-based and home-based program options located in the Hyde Park and South Shore communities. Currently, Family Focus serves 145 Head Start center-based children across both sites and 64 Early Head Start center and home-based children at the Hyde Park location.

Site Locations:

Hyde Park Center	South Shore Center
5467 S. University Ave.	7037 S. Stony Island Ave.
Chicago, IL 60615	Chicago, IL 60649

Community Areas Served:

- Hyde Park
- Kenwood
- Woodlawn
- Washington Park
- South Shore



Community Assessments

Our community areas had very a low percentage of adults with an education level less than a high school diploma. Hyde Park, at 4%, was the community with the lowest percentage of adults with less than a high school education of all the Chicago recruitment areas. Woodlawn and Washington Park's highest percentages fell in the some college/AA education level. For Kenwood and Hyde Park, their highest percentages fell in the category of BA or higher degree.

Percentages of families that received prenatal care in first trimester by neighborhood: Kenwood (76.2%), Hyde Park (82.4%), Woodlawn (71.6%), Washington Park (66%), South Shore (67.1%)

Percentages of Children with low birth weight by neighborhood: Kenwood (10.3%), Hyde Park (7.8%), Woodlawn (14.4%), Washington Park (15.1%), South Shore (13.1%)

30% of children aged 5 or younger are living below 100% of the poverty line.

13.5% of children aged 5 or younger are living below 50% of the poverty line.

56% of children aged 5 or younger are living below 185% of poverty line.

14% of children aged 5 or younger are eligible for Head Start and Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP)

FIRST STEP CHILD CARE CENTER

Program Number: 200-3

First Step Child Care Center

Address: 22025 Governors Hwy, Richton Park, IL 60471

Phone Number: 708-747-3000

Fax Number: 708-747-5000

Head Start Director Name: Ellie Giberson

Head Start Director Email: egiberson@fs3c.com

Agency Web Site Address: www.firststepofrichtonpark.com

Agency Type: For-Profit, Center-Based

Agency Description:

First Step Child Care Center is a for-profit childcare and early learning center which facilitates the development of the whole child through carefully designed experiences that tap into the child's natural curiosity and developmental readiness. We know that every child's emotional well-being is vitally important to their development, and our warm and loving staff provide a stable, nurturing environment where children can thrive. All our learning experiences are individualized to meet each child where they are in their development. Our teaching and administrative staff are dedicated to continual research and professional learning in child development and the best practices in early childhood education.

First Step child Care Center has been providing a safe and nurturing environment in Richton Park, IL since 1999. This family-owned business cares for children from 6 weeks to 5 years of age. We are accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and are a Gold Circle Center with the Illinois ExceleRate System for childcare centers.

Site Locations:

First Step Child Care Center

22025 Governors Hwy.

Richton Park, IL 60471

Community Areas Served:

- Richton Park
- Park Forest
- Crete
- University Park
- Matteson
- Steger
- Chicago Heights



Community Assessments

This year's assessment highlighted the effects of COVID on our community, showing higher rates of unemployment, more children in family care, and higher numbers of children qualifying for Early Intervention services than before.

Families identified needs for better medical facilities, more pediatric dentists, and more options for affordable foods.

We also saw a larger number of children in foster or relative care than ever before.

MARILLAC ST. VINCENT FAMILY SERVICES

Program Number: 008

Marillac St. Vincent Family Services

Address: 2145 N. Halsted, Chicago IL, 60614

Phone Number: 312-584-3240/312-943-6776

Fax Number: 773-584-3312

Head Start Director Name: Tracey Young

Head Start Director Email: tracey.young@marillacstvincent.org

Agency Web Site Address: www.marillacstvincent.org

Agency Type: Social Service Agency

Agency Description:

Marillac St. Vincent Family Services has been providing services to families in Chicago for over 105 years. Our programs serve people prenatally through senior citizens. Our mission is: Marillac St. Vincent Family Services, strengthens, empowers, and gives voice to those in need – in the Vincentian spirit of service – through education and comprehensive programs to build vibrant communities in Chicago. Each site has one infant and three toddler rooms designated as Early Head Start classrooms. There are two Head Start classrooms at each center. In total we have 64 Early Head Start slots and 68 Head Start slots.

Site Locations:

Marillac St. Vincent	Marillac Social Center
2859 W. Jackson Blvd.	212 S. Francisco Ave.
Chicago, IL 60614	Chicago, IL 60612

Community Areas Served:

- East and West Garfield Park
- Austin
- North Lawndale
- Humboldt Park
- Near West Side



Community Assessments

There was a closure of an Aldi store on the West Side that has increased the community's lack of choices in grocery stores. Many neighborhoods continue to be food deserts.

The use of our food pantries, at both sites, increased during the year due to high inflation rates that also affected an increase in the cost of gas, food, and rent.

The pandemic continued in 2022 – Rush Medical Center provided the community and Marillac St. Vincent COVID-19 Boosters and vaccines weekly on-site at Marillac.

Mental health and anxiety issues have increased across our served areas. We have been focusing on wellness and dealing with burnout and compassion fatigue amongst our staff and our families.

ONE HOPE UNITED

Program Number: 001 and 201

One Hope United – Bridgeport Child Development Center

Address: 514 W. 31st St., Chicago, IL 60616

Phone Number: 312-949-4045

Fax Number: 312-949-1168

Head Start Director Name: Marquita Cox

Head Start Director Email: mcox@onehopeunited.org

Agency Web Site Address: www.onehopeunited.org

Agency Type: Private/Public Non-Profit

Agency Description:

Founded in 1895, One Hope United is a multistate nonprofit that helps children and families build the skills to live life without limits. We serve over 10,000 children and families each year through education centers, child and family services, counseling, and residential programs. With our evidence-based and trauma-informed practices, we empower children and families to see and create a future where, regardless of their past, they can reach their full potential.

One Hope United Child Development Centers cater to the individual needs of each community, child and family in our care. We nurture children's growth and partner with parents to help children become independent, self-confident, inquisitive learners. Our curriculum-based programs focus on preparing students to succeed when they enter kindergarten.

Site Locations:

Bridgeport 1 & 2

514 W. 31st St.

Chicago, IL 60616

Community Areas Served:

- Bridgeport
- New City Chicago
- Pilsen
- Mckliney Park
- Armour Square



Community Assessments

Enrollment in early childhood programs was down across all program modes and age groups, with the largest drop in center-based care.

We also saw less programs available to families in our service areas, but Chicago Public Schools' Preschool For All expansion halted programs closing.

Many children who would have been identified for evaluation have been missed due to low preschool enrollment and lower numbers visiting the doctor.

Less children with development concerns were being identified.

SGA YOUTH & FAMILY SERVICES

Program Number: 05CH011953-SGAYFS-01

SGA Youth & Family Services

Address: 11 E. Adams St., Suite 240, Chicago, IL 60603

Phone Number: 773-321-9232

Fax Number: 773-475-7454

Head Start Director Name: Ann Grecek

Head Start Director Email: agrecek@sga-youth.org

Agency Web Site Address: www.sga-youth.org

Agency Type: Social Service Agency/Non-Profit Organization

Agency Description:

SGA Youth & Family Services mission is to help children, families, and the communities facing great challenges to reach their potential. SGA creates and implements innovative, tailored solutions based on best practices to continuously improve outcomes for individuals and communities. SGA is committed to fulfilling its mission with respect, integrity, and accountability. SGA Youth & Family Services partners with Start Early to provide comprehensive Early Head Start and Head Start home-based services to families. The agency services 120 Early Head Start and Head Start eligible children.

Site Locations:

SGA Youth & Family Services

3501 W. 48th Pl.

Chicago, IL 60632

Community Areas Served:

- Brighton Park
- McKinley Park
- New City



Community Assessments

Most of our communities have a greater than average concentration of linguistically isolated households. Children with disabilities, or at risk of developing disabilities, across our service areas are at risk of not receiving services to address those needs. Nearly one in five children enrolled in SGA Early Head Start program has an IFSP or IEP.

A greater percentage of SGA Head Start clients are overweight or obese compared to national, state, and program-level Head Start averages.

The rate of teen births is higher than average in the majority of our service areas. Most of our served neighborhoods have a higher percentage of young children utilizing SNAP benefits when compared with the average for the city of Chicago.

HEAD START PROGRAM OVERVIEW

FINANCIALS FUNDING YEAR 2021

Total Funds: \$20,463,562

SOURCE AMOUNT

Federal: \$17,910,949

State: \$1,046,820

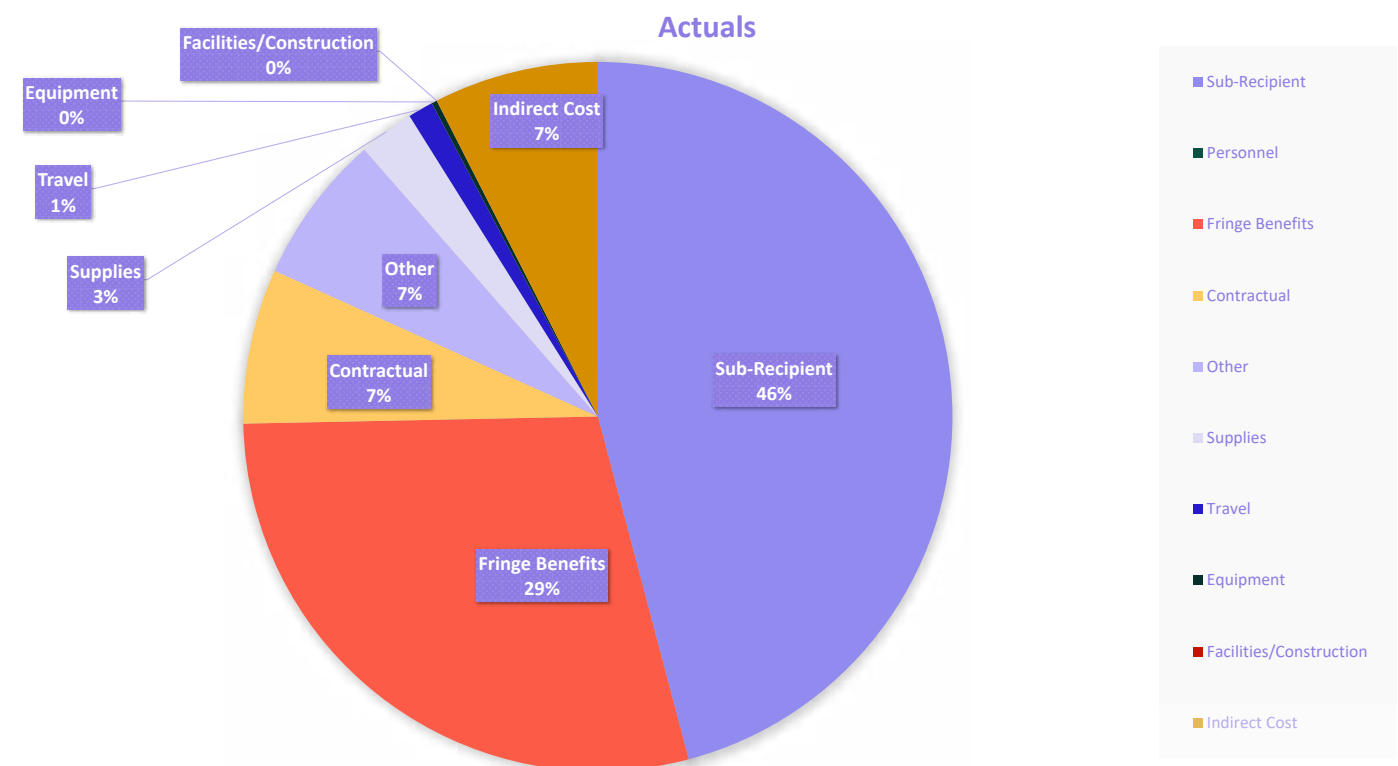
Local District: \$1,221,994

Private: \$261,799

In-Kind: \$0

Other: \$22,000

FY 2020 and Actual Expenditures		
	Budget	Actual
Sub-Recipient	\$9,175,880	\$9,175,879
Personnel	\$6,604,901	\$5,761,331
Fringe benefits	\$1,481,352	\$1,413,030
Contractual	\$1,241,916	\$1,363,605
Other	\$688,445	\$505,772
Supplies	\$423,746	\$230,628
Travel	\$67,197	\$49,704
Equipment	\$0	\$0
Facilities/ Construction	\$561,866	\$1,501,654
Indirect Cost	\$1,822,877	\$1,501,654





OUR CHILDREN & FAMILIES



Number of Children Served in 2020-2021				
	Funded Enrollment HS	Number of Children Served in HS	Funded Enrollment EHS	Number of Children Served in EHS
Center-based	1,020	799	386	402
Home-based	87	19	662	615
Family Childcare	4	4	4	3
Total:	1,111	822	1,052	1,020

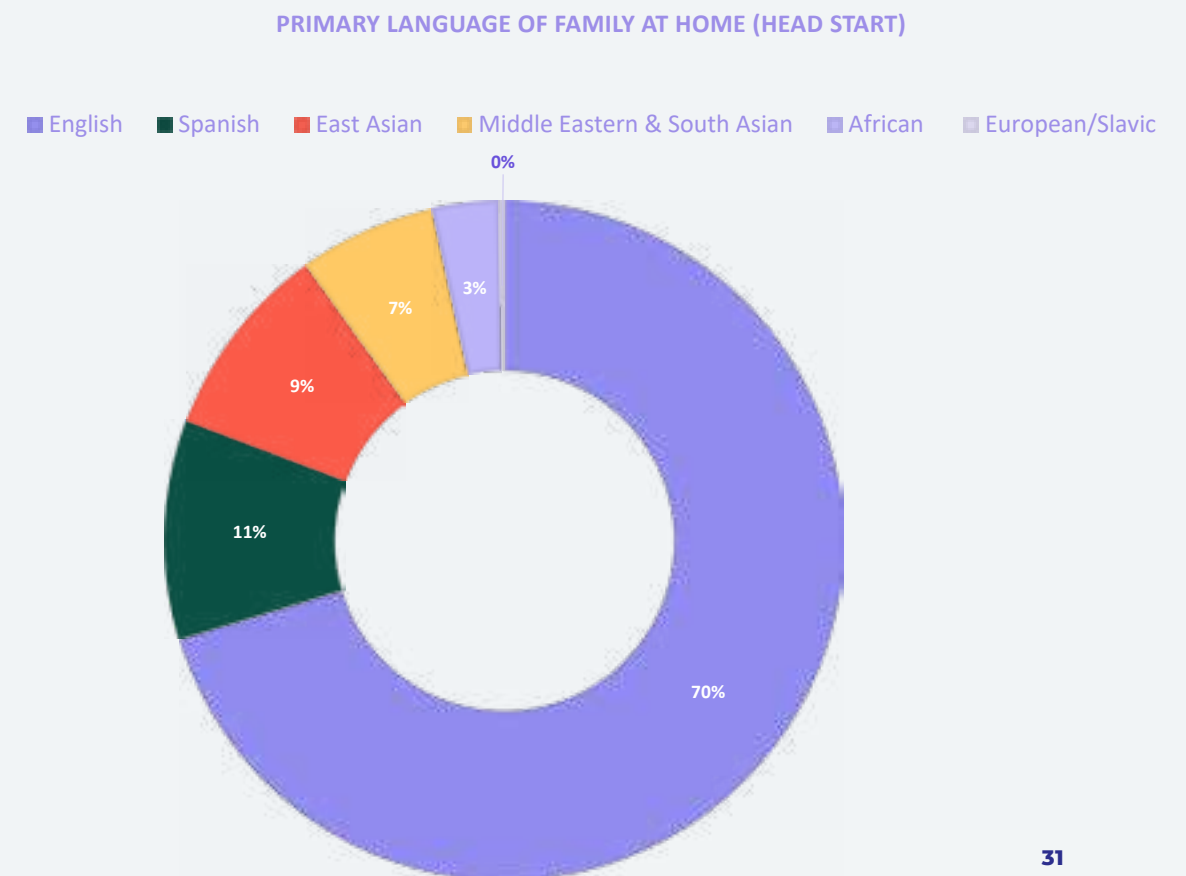
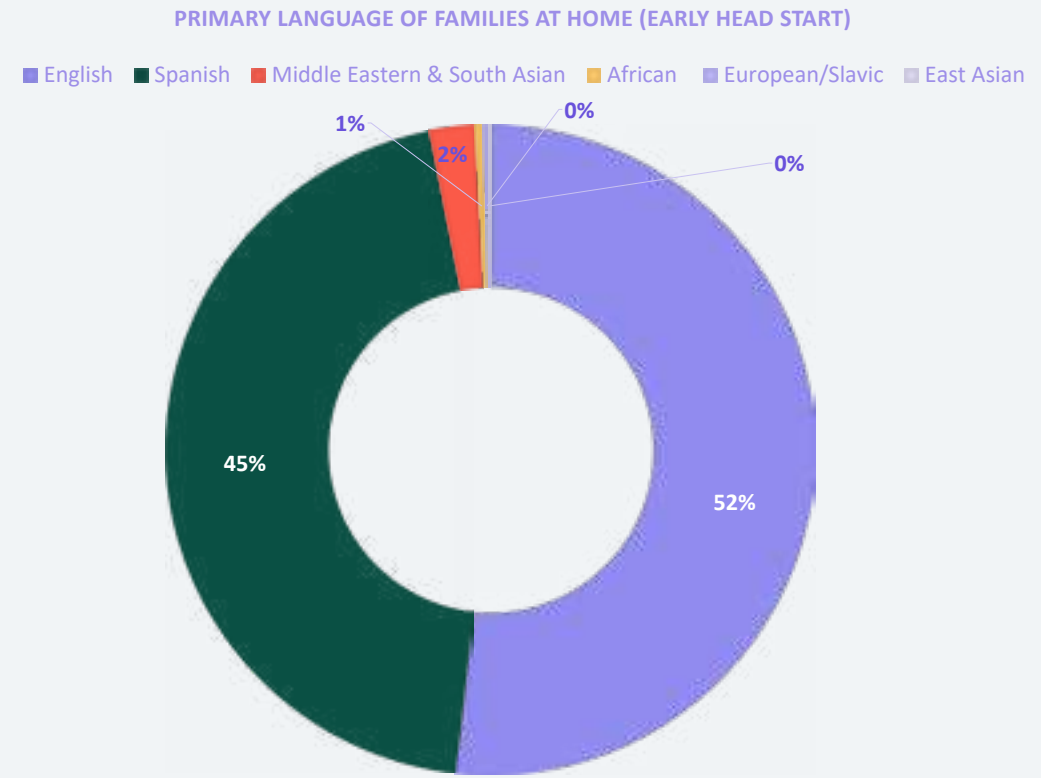
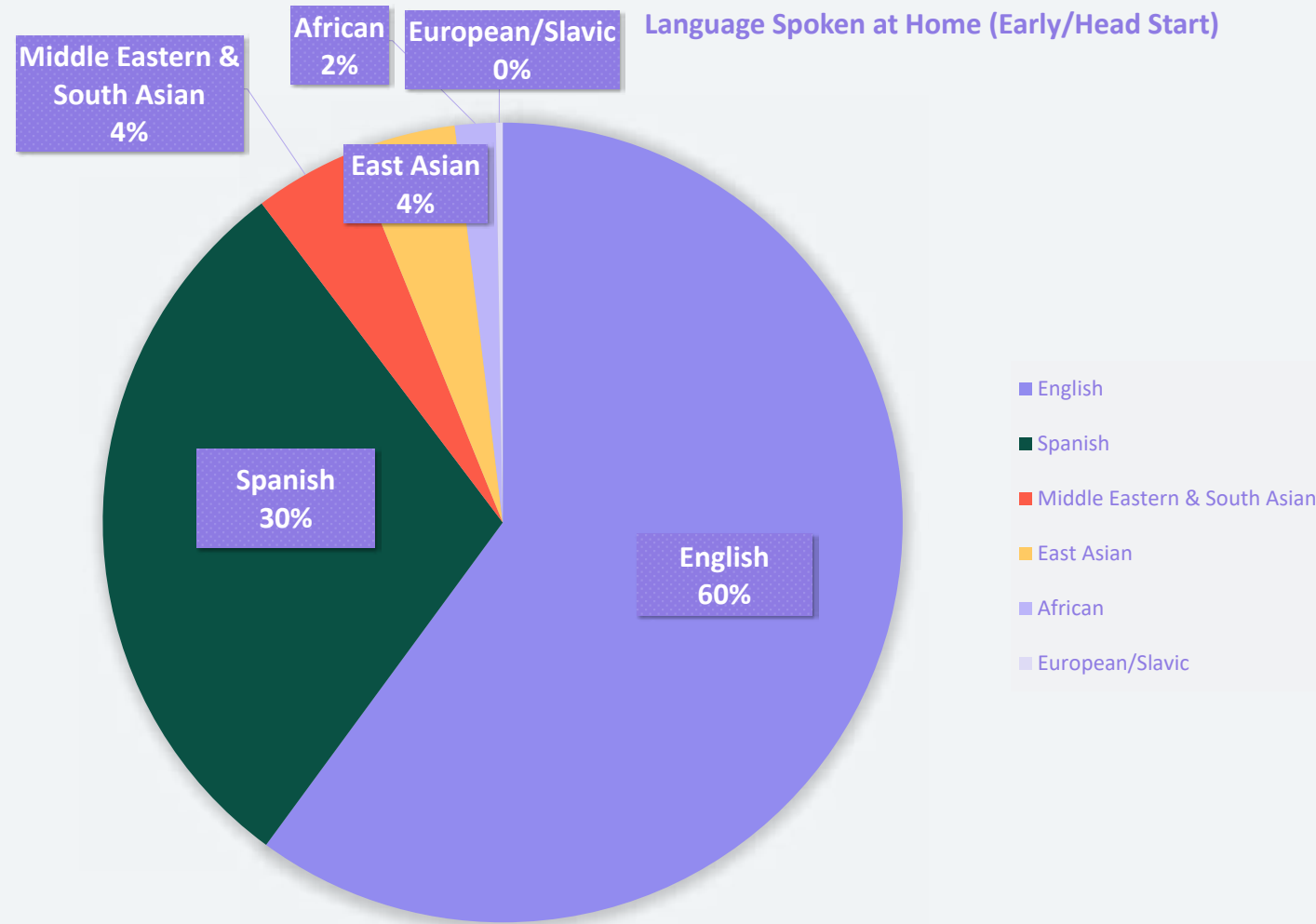
Ages of Children & Pregnant Women Served in Head Start / Early Head Start	
	Percentage
4 Years Old	18%
3 Years Old	24%
2 Years Old	23%
1 Year Old	15%
Less than 1 Year Old	16%
Pregnant Women	4%

Enrollment Statistics

Highest Level of Education by Family	
	Percentage
Advanced/Bachelors	12%
Associate/Vocational/ Some College	29%
High School Graduate/ GED	42%
Less than High School Graduate	17%
Did not answer	3%

Race / Ethnicity of Participants	
	Percentage
Asian	6%
Black or African American	48%
Multiracial/Biracial	4%
White	40%
Did not answer	2%

LANGUAGES OF OUR FAMILIES



Preparing Children for Kindergarten

Teacher Level of Education	
	Percentage
Master's Degree	27%
Bachelor's Degree	34%
Associate's Degree	25%
Child Development Associate	10%
Home Visitor Credential	0%



SUMMARY OF CLASS OBSERVATIONS

Observations were conducted in 34 Head Start and 45 Early Head Start classrooms. The recipient average for the 3 domains was Emotional Support 6.26; Classroom Organization 5.92; and Instructional Support 3.0. None of the domains are below the national average. We have shown growth in the Instructional Support domain, specifically Language Modeling.

Pandemic Response

As the country continues recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic, we continue providing support as programs pivot to full in-person services. We are collaborating with our health team on creating and sharing resources and information as they conduct in-person learning in both center-based and home based programs.

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

Summary of Parent Education Activities/ Parent Committee Meetings/Other special gatherings or activities

Male Involvement/ resources provided to families

Each program ensures that every family has an opportunity to participate in a research-based parenting curriculum. The curriculum we use is Parents As Teachers, and every family support team member is fully trained in this curriculum. Home based programs use this curriculum in all their home visits, as well as in their socializations. Every center-based program offers at least eight parent/child activity groups, and all families are invited. Individual Parents as Teachers sessions are offered to families who are interested but cannot attend the group sessions. Programs also offer information and activities from the curriculum through family engagement technology such as Class Dojo and Learning Genie.

Each program also offers parent training either during Parent Committee meetings, which occur once a month, or at different times convenient to the families. These trainings are either mandated by Head Start or are provided at parents request. Often, community partners are brought in to provide these trainings. Our community partners include Lift, Ladder Up, Center for Changing Lives, Family Rescue, and Chicago Public Libraries. Topics include but are not limited to financial literacy, home safety, the GoCPS application process, nutrition and healthy lifestyles, and transportation and pedestrian safety. All these trainings may be offered virtually or in person, or a combination of both.

Additionally, programs offer other activities for parents depending on the needs of the program. Some offer parent support groups led by a mental health professional, math or literacy events, and cooking classes.

Every program has a father engagement plan that specifies how they work to make their environment welcoming to fathers and engage them in activities such as home visits and parent conferences. It also includes at least two events each year that are specifically designed for fathers. This year one of our events included a day where fathers could see and explore a fire engine with their children and also do activities from the “Strong Fathers, Strong Families” curriculum. Some programs have partnered with other agencies to provide father empowerment and mentoring programs.



CHILD OUTCOMES

Summary of 2020-2021 Child Outcomes

During the pandemic we did not collect assessments for children due to our programs being 100% virtual during the mandatory shut down in Illinois.

In 2021-2022 We completed our 3 checkpoints. At the end of the year over 50% of all home based children were meeting expectations, 80% of all center based children were meeting expectations. The areas of strength were physical, social-emotional and cognitive development. Areas of needed improvement are language, literacy and math. In reflection, all of are children are progressing towards our school readiness goals.

SERVICES FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Summary of services provided to children with special needs during the program year 2020-2021

Start Early ensures the full participation in

program services and activities for enrolled children with disabilities, including children eligible for services under Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and those with Individualized Family Service Plans (IFSPs) and Individualized Education Plans (IEPs), by creating inclusion aide positions that support a more individualized approach for children with suspected and diagnosed disabilities. Inclusion aides assist teaching staff in instructional and behavioral support for children with diagnosed and suspected disabilities. They also support access to the classroom environment by assisting children with suspected and diagnosed disabilities with independent living skills. In addition, they support full inclusion through reinforcing strategies and support developed by the disability coordinator and mental health consultant. Inclusion aides also observe and provide feedback for modifications to support and gather documentation to support the referral process. The modified recipient, ERSEA, and internal staffing procedures allow for programs to intentionally plan for children with suspected and diagnosed disabilities prior to enrollment and at the point of identification.

These procedures aid in programs implementation of strategies, allowing for modifications to the environment and providing training opportunities for staff. The protocols also foster collaboration between content areas, allowing both parents and teachers to be heavily involved in the process, as well as providing the proper access to specialized services

delivery providers to ensure that children with suspected and diagnosed disabilities are experiencing the most conducive environment for accessing each programs' activities.

Start Early also ensures the individualized needs of children with disabilities are met by utilizing the interim/implementation planning procedures to individualize for the needs of children with diagnosed disabilities and collaborate with parents and local agencies responsible for implementing IDEA. The interim and implementation process ensures that individual activities, modifications, and accommodations are developed from children's IFSP/IEP goals embedded into weekly lesson plans. These individualized plans are monitored quarterly for progress and adjustment to meet the ongoing need of the child. Individualized interim and implementation plans are reviewed with parents at initial development of the plans and quarterly for parent input onwards. subrecipients collaborate with Early Intervention (EI)/ Lead Education Agency (LEA) to develop cross instructional goals and strategies that support both learning environments.





HEALTH SERVICES

Percent of Children Meeting Health Requirements 2020 -2021						
	Health Insurance	Medical Home	Dental Home	Professional Dental Exam	Current EPSDT	Up-to-Date Immunizations
Center-based Program	95%	94%	83%	63%	61%	94%
Home-based Program	96%	95%	76%	49%	47%	97%
Family Childcare Home	100%	100%	63%	88%	13%	100%

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Summary of mental health services provided during the program year 2020-2021

The recipient has hired and retained a mental health manager and coordinator to assist program staff in implementation and monitoring of mental health best practices, according to Head Start Performance Standards. Program staff utilize mental health consultants (MHC) to partner with staff and families for mental health and social and emotional well-being. MHC supports children with challenging behaviors and diagnosed/suspected disabilities through observation, feedback and collaborative development of individual behavior -

support and interim/implementation plans. MHC also supports both staff and families through reflective groups, training, staff/parent consultations, individual/classroom observations, and facilitation of referrals for external mental health related services for staff and parents.

Conscious Discipline is the trauma informed social emotional curriculum utilized by the recipient, which models interventions and adaptations for Behavioral Support Plans and interim/implementation plans. Conscious Discipline also provides teaching staff and parents with resources and materials on the importance of caregiver connections with their children and supports positive and nurturing caregivers and child relationships. It also focuses on teaching adults to control their own

emotional responses to behavior to co-regulate with children.

OUR COMMUNITY

Community Assessment Highlights

The summary is indicated in bullets below

Start Early service areas have increasingly becoming more diverse over the past 10 years, especially in Waukegan. The African American population grew 14.6% in IL overall, 29.2% in Chicago, and 20% in Waukegan. The Hispanic/Latine population grew 17.5% in IL overall, 28.6% in Chicago, and 51.9% in Waukegan. The Asian American population grew 6% in IL overall, 6.8% in Chicago, and 6.2% in Waukegan.

Infants and toddlers make up the greatest population of children under the age 5 in Chicago and Waukegan. Chicago's under five population makes up over 6% of the total population, with greater percentages of children under 2. Over 101,000 children under the age of 3 and nearly 65,000 children between 3-4 years of age reside in Chicago: indicating greater numbers of infants and toddlers in the city.

The median income for Start Early's service area is 2% lower (\$15,000 lower) than the national average.

More than 216,000 residents in Chicago and Waukegan are living in extreme poverty.

While the US, state of Illinois, and Chicago have experienced an economic recovery since the pandemic, Waukegan's unemployment rate continues to be higher than both the country's at large as well as Illinois' overall.

A single parent with two children must earn over \$93,000 annually to pay for all daily expenses. Living in the Chicago metropolitan area is 23% more expensive than the nationwide average.

African American women-identifying people and women-identifying birthing people living in areas with higher economic hardship bear the highest rates of maternal morbidity and mortality.

PROGRAMMATIC CONSIDERATIONS FOR START EARLY

Expand services to infants and toddlers throughout the service area through Head Start conversion, expanded Early Head Start services, and/or through increased services through Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) funding. (CCAP) funding.

Review its selection criteria to provide priority enrollment to teen parents,

pregnant people at-risk for delivering babies at low-birth weights, immigrant families, and families residing in geographic areas that are food insecure.

Continue to implement enhanced mental health services that focus on a family and child's protective factors.

Research indicates that families with young children, as well as children themselves, are facing increased mental health needs due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Families are suffering from high inflation costs; loss of income; food insecurity; higher crime rates; housing insecurity, and racial/ethnic systemic inequities, thus impacting their overall mental health.

Actively participate in the significant changes to the early childhood education and care field by having members from the management team of the Start Early/Head Start Network participate in community planning meetings.



SHARED GOVERNANCE

Start Early has a formal structure of shared governance through which parents can participate in policy-making and other decisions about the program. Start Early implements the Parent, Family and Community Engagement Framework to promote parent and family engagement and children’s learning and development. Participation in policy groups, parent committees, and governing bodies empowers parents and community members to share in the decision-making process.

The Board of Directors (BOD) is comprised of dedicated volunteers that represent various sectors of the community. The BOD is legally and fiscally responsible for all activities of the agency, including decisions for the agency policies, approving the annual budget, and determining the goals and the direction of the agency and its programs.

The Policy Council (PC), consists of members that include Head Start parents and community representatives.

The PC, in partnership with the BOD, is the governing body of the Head Start Program. The PC is responsible for the direction of the program, including making decisions about policies, operating procedures, budgets, and proper adherence to program guidelines.

Special Thank you to our BOD and PC members that have worked tirelessly throughout the program year 2021-2022. Your support is appreciated!

SUMMARY OF AUDIT FINDINGS

FY2021 Single Audit had one finding related to the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA). This requires that first-tier subawards over \$30,000 are subject to reporting in the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act Subaward Reporting System (FSRS). This had not previously been completed for the applicable subawards. Immediately, following this finding this was resolved for previous subawards and is now monitored for compliance by the director of grants and financial compliance.

SUMMARY OF INFORMATION REQUIRED BY THE SECRETARY

Start Early Board of Directors and Policy Council received brief summaries and links to all program instructions and informational memorandums.

SUMMARY OF ANNUAL REVIEW FINDINGS

Focus Area 1: There was an area of concern during our Focus Area 1 review for Head Start and Early Head Start grant under Designing Quality Education and Child Development Program Services. 1302.91(e)(1)

- 16 of 64 Early Head Start teachers did not have a minimum of a CDA or comparable credentials. However, all 16 had professional development plans with CDA completion dates of one year from hire. The program required the completion of the CDA within the required timeframe for teachers to continue their employment.

Focus Area 2: There was no finding during our Focus Area 2 Federal Review for the Early Head Start program in 2022.

SUMMARY OF PERFORMANCE

In PY22, Start Early had a Focus Area Two (FA2) monitoring review of the Early Head Start Program for its Waukegan grant, that included funds to enroll 70 children and families in center and home-based services. Start Early collected and analyzed data to monitor service delivery and guide improvement efforts. This is a method Start Early practices and implements across both of its Head Start grants. For instance, Start Early hired a new data continuous quality improvement manager and contracted with the creator of its data management system to provide onsite training to all staff. Start Early also completed evaluations of its data capacity and usage over the last 3 years to identify ways to make the collection and analysis processes more efficient and impactful. Start Early is pleased to report there were no findings as a result of its FA2 monitoring review.



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