



Early/Head Start Network

**FY24**

# ANNUAL REPORT



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# General Information

## Grantee: Start Early



**Program Number: 05CH012453**  
**Address: 33 W. Monroe, Suite 1200, Chicago, IL 60603**  
**Phone Number: 312-922-3563**  
**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](http://www.StartEarly.org)**  
**Agency Type: Recipient**

**Agency Description:**  
Start Early, is a Head Start/Early Head Start grantee that provides services through directly operated, partner, and delegate programs throughout the city of Chicago and the surrounding suburbs.

Educare Chicago & Healthy Parents & Babies – Directly-Operated programs

<b>Site Locations:</b> Educare Chicago 5044 S. Wabash Ave. Chicago, IL 60615	Healthy Parents & Babies 100 N. Western Ave. Chicago, IL 60612
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<b>Community Areas Served</b> • Grand Boulevard • Kenwood • Washington Park • Fuller Park • Oakland • New City	<b>Community Areas Served</b> • Grand Boulevard • Hyde Park • Kenwood • Washington Park • Brighton Park • Humboldt Park • McKinley Park
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**Child Outcomes:**  
Summary of 2023-2024 Child Outcomes Center-Based (Educare Chicago):  
At least 88% of all children met or exceeded expectations in all areas during the Spring checkpoint. The area of greatest strength is Physical where 93% of children met or exceeded expectations. For Cognitive, 92% of our children met or exceeded expectations. The highest rate of widely held expectations for African American males was also Physical with 94% and 91% in Cognitive, and all percentages were at 80% and above.

Home-Based (Healthy Parents & Babies) reports the following percentages for children's development:

- Approaches to Learning: 84% meets or exceeds expectations
- Social-Emotional Development: 82% meets or exceeds expectations
- Physical Development and Health: 79% meets or exceeds expectations
- Language, Literacy, and Communication: 79% meets or exceeds expectations

- Mathematics: 78% meets or exceeds expectations
- Creative Arts: 79% meets or exceeds expectations
- Science & Technology: 92% meets or exceeds expectations
- Social Studies: 98% meets or exceeds expectations

Services for Diverse Learners and Children with Disabilities:  
Center-based:

Last checkpoint the makeup was 53% male and 47% female, with 21% of children diagnosed with a disability, 12% of which were in our 0-3 age group and 9% in 3-5 age group. From the last checkpoint there was a 15% increase in children that began to receive specialized education services, based on evaluations. The increase from 9% in the winter to 18% in the spring can be attributed to some children in 0-3 who were aged out of an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) and approved for services by Chicago Public Schools (CPS) when they turned 3 years old. We still have two children in the referral process in Early Head Start. This season, during the spring, children with diagnosed disabilities were meeting and exceeding expectations with 64% in Social-Emotional, 83% in Physical, 60% in Language, 86% in Cognitive, 77% in Literacy and 72% in Math.

Home-based:

This spring, 15 children enrolled in the program had an IFSP. The home visitors, employing the Parents As Teachers Curriculum, have broadened their services to include support for families and children with disabilities, in collaboration with a disabilities coordinator. This expansion is part of a holistic approach aimed at providing comprehensive care and enhancing family wellbeing and fostering a collaborative environment for setting developmental goals for the children and overarching family objectives.



# Community Assessments

## Healthy Parents & Babies

- Demographically, the children assessed during this period included 8% under one year old, 39% one-year-olds, 32% two-year-olds, and 21% three-year-olds.
- Gender distribution was 34% male and 66% female.
- Healthy Parents & Babies' families primarily speak Spanish and English, with an even split of 50% for each language. This data reflects the program's commitment to serving a diverse community and addressing the unique needs of each family and child.

## Educare Chicago

**20%**

Of children ages 0-5 are considered to be in deep poverty.

**45%**

Of residents ages 5+ speak a language other than English.

**42%**

Of the residents in the service area identify as Hispanic.



# Community Partners

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## HEALTH SERVICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Access Community Health Center  
City of Chicago Department of Public Health WIC programs  
County Care  
Illinois Chapter - American Academy of Pediatrics  
Patrick M. Magoon Institute for Healthy Communities - Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago  
Plano Child Development Center  
Prevent Blindness  
University of Illinois Chicago

## BRIGHTPOINT OPEN HOUSE VOLUNTEERS

CARPLS Everyday Justice  
Kids First Chicago

## COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Apple Dental Care  
Center for Changing Lives  
Chicago Furniture Bank  
Chicago Lights  
Child and Family Connections #8, #9, #10, #11  
County Care  
Employment and Employer Services  
Erikson Institute Center for Children and Families  
Family Rescue  
Great Chicago Food Depository Workforce Development  
Heartland Alliance/ Englewood Health Center  
Hispanic American Community Education and Services

## COMMUNITY PARTNERS CONTINUED

Illinois Department of Children and Family Services  
Infant Welfare Society of Chicago, Family Health  
Jane Addams Resource Center  
Lake County Health Department WIC program  
Lift Chicago  
Mile Square Dental Clinic  
MOD Diaper Dollars  
National Alliance for the Mentally Ill  
Near North Health Centers  
Office of Diverse Learners and Specialized Services  
Refugee One  
The Encompassing Center  
Threshold's Mothers Project  
Tuesday's Child

# Our Programs



## ACADEMY OF GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP

**Program Number:**  
**Address:** 4942 W 44th Street, Chicago IL 60638  
**Phone Number:** 773-582-1100  
**Site Director:** Saskia Rombouts  
**Site Director Email:** [srombouts@agcchicago.org](mailto:srombouts@agcchicago.org)  
**Agency Web Site Address:** [www.agcchicago.org](http://www.agcchicago.org)  
**Agency Type:** Partner Organization with Start Early

**Site Location:**  
4942 W 44th Street, Chicago IL 60638

#### Community Areas Served

- Archer Heights
- LeClaire Park

#### Child Outcomes

##### Summary of 2023 - 2024 Child Outcomes

When it comes to Physical development, 94% of children are meeting expectations. We attribute this outcome to our scheduled outdoor play time, when weather permits, which we believe directly positively impacts our children's gross motor skills. When weather or other factors prohibit outdoor play, our children are able to play in our indoor gym. For Social-Emotional development, 90% of our children are meeting expectations. We believe this strong outcome is due to our Conscious Discipline approach. With our practice of Conscious Discipline, we provide our children a safe and welcoming environment and the developmental tools necessary for them to learn how to manage their emotions and put words and names to their feelings. Every classroom has a calm area that provides numerous emotional regulation resources for children to utilize. The objective that has the highest percentage of children meeting expectations is "Manage Emotions," where all of our three-year-old children are meeting expectations.

#### Services for Diverse Learners and Children with Disabilities:

This program year, we had eight children with diagnosed disabilities. Children who have an active Individualized Education Plan (IEP) are actively working towards the goals in their IEP and the teachers have been adapting their day-to-day activities to accommodate each child's needs. Compared to the beginning of the school year, we have seen these children make strides and progress in their developmental areas. 100% of our children with IEPs have achieved at least one goal stated in their plan. As we look forward to program year 2024-2025, we will continue working with these children and their assigned therapist so we can continue supporting their individual needs.



# BRIGHTPOINT



**Program Name: Brightpoint (formerly Children’s Home & Aid)**  
**Addresses: 1701 W. 63rd Street Chicago, IL 60636**  
**Phone Number: (773)476- 6998**  
**Head Start Director Name: Mendy Smith**  
**Head Start Director Email: Mmsmith@brightpoint.org**  
**Agency Web Site Address: brightpoint.org**  
**Agency Type: Nonprofit Social Service Agency**

Site Locations:  
 Mitzi Freidheim  
 1701 W. 63rd St.  
 Chicago, IL 60637

Community Areas Served:  
 • Englewood  
 • West Englewood

Child Outcomes  
 Summary of 2023 - 2024 Child Outcomes

Interactions between teachers and students consistently showed positive emotional connections, with no signs of a negative climate. Teachers were consistently aware of and responsive to students’ needs, effectively addressing any issues. Some support for student autonomy and leadership was evident, and teachers were proactive in monitoring the classroom to prevent problems and were well-prepared for activities and lessons.

Teachers sometimes facilitated activities to encourage interest and engagement, but at other times, they simply provided activities without additional involvement. A variety of modalities and materials were used to capture students’ interest and participation in some lessons. Learning objectives were clear at times, leading to periods of student engagement, though interest sometimes waned, and students were less involved in activities.

Discussions and activities promoting analysis and reasoning were rare, and opportunities for students to create or generate their own ideas were infrequent. Concepts and activities were often presented in isolation without requiring students to apply previous learning. While some attempts were made to relate concepts to students’ lives, opportunities to scaffold student learning were missed. Students were occasionally asked questions or prompted to explain their thinking, and additional information was sometimes provided to expand their understanding. Some encouragement of students’ efforts was noted, increasing their involvement and persistence. Conversations between teachers and

students occurred occasionally, but few open-ended questions were asked.

Presenting concepts and activities in a connected manner, linking new information to previous lessons, helps students see relevance and apply what they have learned. Scaffolding techniques, such as breaking tasks into smaller steps, providing hints, or modeling the thought process, can support individual student learning.

Feedback should go beyond brief comments by providing detailed responses that help students understand their progress and how they can improve. For instance, instead of saying “Good job,” teachers could say, “Good job on organizing your blocks by color. Can you also try sorting them by size?” Praising efforts and persistence, not just end results, encourages a growth mindset, and motivates students to keep trying.

Modeling advanced language and vocabulary, describing actions and concepts in detail, and introducing new words in context can expand students’ language skills. Engaging in interactive dialogues with students, encouraging back-and-forth exchanges that build on their responses, extends their thinking and understanding. Finally, providing more opportunities for student autonomy and leadership, such as letting students lead parts of activities, make choices about their learning, and take on classroom responsibilities, can enhance their engagement and development.

Services for Diverse Learners and Children with Disabilities:

During the 23 - 24 program year, 21 children were referred to the Local Education Agency (LEA) for evaluations. Of those 21 children, 14 were evaluated by 7/31/24 and 13 were found eligible for Individualized Education Plans (IEPs). One child was found ineligible. Of the seven remaining referrals, five parents refused to move forward once the referral was submitted, and two children are still waiting for evaluations to be completed by the LEA. 24.7% of children enrolled for the 24 - 25 program year are children identified with disabilities.

Individualized plans were/are also created for children with existing IEPs or 504s. These plans are used to detail strategies and modifications/adaptations being implemented in the classroom/home environments to support the child’s IEP or 504. These plans document that, although we are not the Special Education provider, we are working to address the child’s individual needs identified by the IEP. When appropriate, feedback from our mental health consultant is used when drafting plans for children with social emotional needs. The child’s individual lesson plan must align with this plan. In an effort to support further advocacy of the needs of our children and families, staff participate in LEA evaluations and annual reviews. We also partner with LEA providers to support further individualization of our diverse learners and to ensure we have the most up to date IEPs and reports

# CASA CENTRAL



**Program Number: 007**  
**Program Name: 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: Nilsa Ramirez**  
**Head Start Director Email: [nramirez@casacentral.org](mailto:nramirez@casacentral.org)**  
**Agency Web Site Address: [casacentral.org](http://casacentral.org)**  
**Agency Type: Social Service Agency / Non-Profit (Non-CAA)**

Site Locations:

Home Based	Center Based
1335 N. California Ave. Chicago, IL 60622	1343 N. California Ave. Chicago, IL 60622

Community Areas Served:

- Hermosa
- Humboldt Park
- Logan Square
- West Town

Child Outcomes

Summary of 2023-2024 Child Outcomes

Center-Base:

In general, data from this checkpoint period showed improvement in eight out of eight developmental domains. Compared to the previous two checkpoints, many more students are meeting or exceeding widely held expectations. The domain with the highest percentage of children meeting or exceeding expectations is Physical and Social-Emotional. There has been an emphasis on social and emotional education through the implementation of the Conscious Discipline curriculum. The teachers use the Creative Curriculum to plan, implement and assess children's learning and development in all developmental domains.

Home-Base:

62% of children met and exceeded expectations in Language development. Over 70% met or exceeded expectations in Math comprehension, Social-Emotional and Cognitive development. 78% also met or exceeded expectations in Physical development. Parent Educators continue to provide individual support and education to the children and families they serve.

Services for Diverse Learners and Children with Disabilities:

Casa Central served 52 children (20% cumulative enrollment) with disabilities and diverse learning needs. 28 children had Individualized Family Service Plans (IFSPs) and 11 children had Individualized Learning Plans (IEPs). Children with IFSPs and IEPs were identified via several methods including outcomes from their developmental screenings, parental concerns, or via referrals to Early Intervention or a Local Education Agency (LEA) prior to enrolling in our program. Our team worked closely to help children and families access the services needed and to respond to children's unique learning needs in our environment as successfully as possible.



# CHILDREN'S PLACE ASSOCIATION



**Program Number: 05CH8456/03**  
**Address: 11 E. Adams St. Suite 1550 Chicago, IL 60603**  
**Phone Number: 773-395-9193**  
**Fax Number: 773-395-4486**  
**Site Director: Porsche Snowden**  
**Site Director Email: [psnowden@childrens-place.org](mailto:psnowden@childrens-place.org)**  
**Agency Web Site Address: [www.childrens-place.org](http://www.childrens-place.org)**  
**Agency Type: Nonprofit. Center-based Head Start/Early Head Start, home-visiting Early Head Start**

**Site Locations:**

Early Learning Center 1800 N. Humboldt Blvd. Chicago, IL 60647	Home-Based Early Learning Program 3059 West Augusta Blvd. Chicago, IL 60622
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**Community Areas Served**

- Humboldt Park
- Logan Square
- West Town

**Child Outcomes**

**Summary of 2023-2024 Child Outcomes**

**Center-Base:**

Over 84% percent of the children are meeting or exceeding expectations in each developmental domain since the last check point. The spring percentages increased a significant amount from the fall data. Since the last check point, we have enacted additional coaching around routines and experiences. As a result, realizing more home-engagement activities were necessary, teachers began providing weekly at-home experiences for parents and children. All children who will be transitioning to kindergarten in the fall will be screened in the ESI.K to determine each child's readiness.

**Home-Base:**

Throughout the most recent quarter, children have shown growth in the different developmental areas. Over half our children were level with, or above, the national average of meeting or exceeding widely held expectations. Overall, we see development growth and more children are showing positive progress towards meeting milestones. Children with Individualized Family Service Plans (IFSPs) are also showing progress in their set goals.

**Services for Diverse Learners and Children with Disabilities:**

The disabilities and wellness coordinator met regularly with staff regarding the development or updating of our children's Positive Behavior Support Plans, implementation plans, and interim plans for children with IFSPs, Individualized

Education Plans (IEPs), or an identified disability. These meetings were held as means of guiding each child's individualization in the classroom setting. The disability and wellness coordinator also regularly collaborated with the teaching team, parents and specialists, the in creation of tailored Individualized Support Plans for each child. These plans outlined specific goals, interventions and accommodations, addressing each child's unique challenges and promoting their development across different domains. As a means of assessing the effectiveness of interventions and services, the coordinator diligently tracked and monitored each child's progress. Regular data analysis allowed for ongoing adjustments to the child's support plan as needed, ensuring continuous improvement and optimal outcomes. The disabilities and wellness coordinator also actively promoted inclusive practices within the classroom, working closely with teachers on adapting and modifying activities. This ensured that all children could participate and engage in activities together, fostering a sense of belonging and positive social interactions.

In terms of professional development and learning opportunities for staff and families, the disabilities and wellness coordinator organized workshops and training sessions regarding working with and supporting diverse learners and children with disabilities. We found that these efforts helped create a more inclusive and supportive learning environment for all children. Additionally, the program has developed a more strategic plan for the use of the sensory room which is used to provide these children with a safe and educational sensory break. Additionally, we plan on reinstating utilizing sensory boxes, which we believe will also help children better regulate when they need additional emotional support.



# EL HOGAR DEL NIÑO



**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: Not-for-profit Early childhood Education Services. Center Based & Home Based**

**Site Locations:**

Center-based	Home Based Services
1710 S. Loomis St.	1901 S Blue Island
Chicago, IL 60608	Chicago, IL 60608

**Community Areas Served:**

- South Lawndale
- Lower West Side
- Near West Side

**Child Outcomes**

**Summary of 2023-2024 Child Outcomes**

**Head Start and Early Head Start:**

Across all Early Head Start classrooms the current strengths that we see in the data are in Physical and Language. A trend based on the data for the Early Head Start classrooms is that children who are enrolled in the program for two years are meeting the domains in Physical, Cognitive and Literacy. Social-Emotional and Language are still areas of focus and continuous planning and individualizing. The reasons for these challenges are that teachers are individualizing and utilizing intentional teaching cards to support children’s social and language development but not consistently. Early Head Start teachers are part of the interim and implementation planning, and the activities are according to the individualized goals. Teachers are implementing these activities and through observations are tracking students’ progress.

Across our Head Start classrooms we see progress in all areas of child development. The reason these percentages are strong is due to intentional planning and instruction. One example of planning and instruction are the teaching team’s educational methods utilized during story time and large group activities. Teachers encourage critical thinking and language usage by asking open ended questions, which in turn allow children the space to think deeply and voice their own story predictions.

**Services for Diverse Learners and Children with Disabilities:**

Early Head Start enrollment met the outlined 10% enrollment goal for children with diverse learning needs, with a total of 24 Individualized Family Service Plans (IFSPs) present in center-base programming. Of these 24 center-based children, two children dropped, and four transitioned to an Individualized Education Plan (IEP). Early Head Start increased the enrollment percentage due to the 23 referrals made within the year, 14 of which resulted in IFSPs. Head Start also increased the percentage of diverse learners/students with disabilities with 13 referrals submitted and two resulting in IEPs. Head Start had 19 total IEPs throughout the school year with three children dropping out of the program. 36 referrals were made in total for center-based children. The diverse services coordinator worked with teachers to create interim plans to provide more individualized support for children while awaiting evaluations.

Accommodations consisted of creating attainable goals, assigning activities from the curriculum in support the set goals and providing any necessary materials that could help children progress (social stories, schedules, visuals). The diverse services coordinator also worked with families during the referral process on gaining consents, executing followups and keeping parents engaged and aware of the steps of the process. They also provided ongoing feedback and workshops for the teaching teams. Teachers also received additional support from a speech therapist who provided information, strategies and best practices of implementation to support children’s speech development.



# 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](mailto:claudia.rivera@family-focus.org)**  
**Agency Web Site Address: [www.family-focus.org](http://www.family-focus.org)**  
**Agency Type: Social Service Agency / Non-Profit (501(c)(3))**

Site Locations:

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

Community Areas Served:

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

Child Outcomes

Summary of 2023-2024 Child Outcomes

When reviewing the data there were gains and challenges in all areas. The areas we will focus our efforts in program year 2024-2025 are Language, Literacy, Cognitive and Math for center-based students. For our home-based programs, we will focus on Gross Motor Skills and Tools and Technology. As a means of improving Social-Emotional developmental outcomes, teachers incorporated additional resources into their lesson plans and classrooms including a “Scribble Your Emotions” activity, “Emotional Cards,” a calming area, and a poster-sized “Feelings Thermometer,” for classroom usage. In two of our preschool classrooms, the teachers used a 60-day plan, in collaboration with Start Early, to help improve challenging behaviors in the classrooms. This was done in the middle of the school year because the classrooms had new Lead Teachers. The outlined plan proved very effective. Classroom behavior improved. The teachers observed that the children were actively participating and exhibiting more positive behaviors. Overall, the teachers feel our children have made progress. Children who are departing the program are ready for kindergarten and those who will be leaving home-based and Early Head Start are ready for Head Start.

Services for Diverse Learners and Children with Disabilities:

Over 10% of our Head Start children are diagnosed as diverse learners or children with disabilities. Over 5% of Early Head Start children are diagnosed as diverse learners or children with disabilities. Of the 18 children who received Individualized Education Plans (IEPs), nine children received services. Four children received their IEP late and were not assigned to a specific school. The other five children did not receive services due to inability to obtain transportation. There were four Early Head Start children diagnosed as children with diverse learning needs or children with disabilities. Three children were from center-based and one from home-based programming. All four children received services. There were no dual language learners in home-based. The teachers used the children’s IEPs and/or Individualized Family Service Plans (IFSPs), implementation plans and interim plans to provide developmentally appropriate activities for them. From these supports, teachers saw positive changes in classroom participation. The dual language learners engaged more in the classroom and became more comfortable with the class routine. The children were showing signs of conversing more with the children and teachers in the classroom setting and their parents have also gotten more involved in attending parent meetings and parent activities.



# FIRST STEP



**Program Number: 200-3**  
**Program Name; 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**

Site Location:  
22025 Governors Hwy,  
Richton Park, IL 60471

- Community Areas Served:
- Richton Park (Head Start service area)
  - Park Forest (Head Start service area)
  - Chicago Heights (Head Start service area)
  - Crete
  - University Park
  - Matteson
  - Steger

Child Outcomes  
Summary of 2023-2024 Child Outcomes  
Our children continued growing and developing in all areas this year, with 99-100% of our children meeting expectations in Social-Emotional, Cognitive, and Literacy domains by the end of the school year. The Literacy and Cognitive domains also showed the greatest gains across the school year. The Language and Physical domains showed the least gains across the school year, although about 90% of our children were meeting expectations in both by the end of the school year. This outcome is not surprising to us, based on the high percentage of children with diagnosed disabilities that are included in our program, many of whom receive speech and occupational therapy services.

Services for Diverse Learners and Children with Disabilities:  
This year, 16% of our enrolled students had a diagnosed disability and were receiving services through our local school districts and Early Intervention (EI) facilities. We are also enrolling greater numbers of children with social-emotional delays and challenging behaviors than we have in the past. With this change, we have increased our consulting hours with our mental health team and partnered with our teachers and parents in implementing positive behavior support plans.



# MARILLAC ST. VINCENT FAMILY SERVICES



**Program Number:** 05CH011953-8  
**Program Name:** Marillac St. Vincent Family Services  
**Address:** 2145 N. Halsted, Chicago IL, 60614  
**Phone Number:** 312-943-6776  
**Fax Number:** 773-584-3312  
**Head Start Director Name:** Tracey Young  
**Head Start Director Email:** [tracey.young@marillacstvincent.org](mailto:tracey.young@marillacstvincent.org)  
**Agency Web Site Address:** [www.marillacstvincent.org](http://www.marillacstvincent.org)  
**Agency Type:** Nonprofit Agency

**Site Locations:**

Marillac Social Center	St. Vincent DePaul Center
212 S. Francisco Ave.	2145 N. Halsted St.
Chicago, IL 60612	Chicago, IL 60614

**Community Areas Served:**

- Austin
- East Garfield Park
- Humboldt Park
- Lincoln Park
- North Lawndale
- West Garfield Park

**Child Outcomes**

**Summary of 2023-2024 Child Outcomes**

**Early Head Start:**

Children saw the most growth in Mathematics (+12%), where a majority of them are now meeting or exceeding expectations. Literacy is now the weakest domain in which there has been minimal growth. Cognitive is now the strongest domain with 71% of birth to three students meeting or exceeding the widely held expectations.

**Head Start:**

Preschool students saw the most growth in Social-Emotional and Literacy domains, increasing the percentage of students meeting or exceeding expectations by 17%. Their strongest domains are Social-Emotional and Physical, where 91% of students are meeting or exceeding the widely held expectations.

**Services for Diverse Learners and Children with Disabilities:**

The diverse learners specialists submitted 11 Early Head Start external referrals to Early Intervention (EI), and three evaluations were completed. All evaluated children were deemed eligible for EI services. Diverse learners specialists also submitted two Early

Head Start external referrals to Chicago Public Schools (CPS) and one was evaluated and deemed ineligible. Nine Early Head Start children transitioned to CPS evaluations and eight were determined eligible for Individualized Education Plans (IEPs). There were 15 Head Start external referrals to CPS. Nine were evaluated, one parent canceled their child's evaluation, eight were determined eligible, and one determined ineligible. Overall, 34 children were eligible for Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) services through a certified IEP or Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) during the program year. Six children diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder were enrolled in the program. In terms of center-based support, our diverse learners specialists coordinated EI services for 16 Early Head Start children during the program year. They also supported the coordination of half-day programs for 17 children and speech services with the DePaul Speech and Language Pathology Services for eight children. Lastly, they completed quarterly lesson plans and child observations in the fall, winter, and spring for children with interim and implementation plans.



# ONE HOPE UNITED



**Program Number:** 05CH01243-OHU24-02  
**Program Name:** Waukegan Early Learning Center and Bridgeport Development Center  
**Address:** 2111 S. Ernie Krueger Circle, Waukegan, IL 60087; 3053 S Normal Ave, Chicago, IL 60616  
**Phone Number:** 847-245-6800; 312-842-5566  
**Fax Number:** 847-336-2671; 312-842-5030  
**Head Start Director Name:** Kenneth Shackelford (currently being filled)  
**Head Start Director Email:** kshackelford@onehopeunited.org  
**Agency Web Site Address:** [www.onehopeunited.org](http://www.onehopeunited.org)  
**Agency Type:** Private/Public non-profit

**Site Locations:**

2111 S. Ernie Krueger Circle Waukegan, IL 60087	3053 S. Normal Ave. Chicago, IL 60616
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**Community Areas Served:**

- Beach Park
- Bridgeport
- New City
- North Chicago
- Park City
- Waukegan

**Child Outcomes**

**Summary of 2023-2024 Child Outcomes**

**Head Start:**

Trends held steady amongst widely held expectations for Head Start children hovering between 88% to 90% in all areas as compared to Spring FY23 at 88%. There was a considerable jump from FY23 for our Head Start children in the areas of Math (83% for preschool in FY23 and 86% in FY24). This growth illustrates the positive impact of our implementation of our new math orientation lesson plans and providing individual training plans for the Head Start classrooms where math outcomes were consistently trending lower in prior years. Within Head Start Language domain, the school year started out with an average score of 78% but with the support of the bilingual staff we saw increases to 80-85% from winter to spring checkpoints.

**Early Head Start:**

For our Early Head Start children, we saw exponential growth in the Cognitive development domain (FY23 92% and FY24 96%). We attribute this increase to the fact that our Early Head Start program was nearly full staffed at the start of the year in FY24. Surprisingly, there was a high percentage increase in outcomes within the Physical

domain, particularly within demonstrating traveling skills, balancing skills and gross motor manipulative skills. This outcome speaks to the concerted effort Busy Bee staff has made in intentionally increasing Physical domain lessons and active play time.

**Services for Diverse Learners and Children with Disabilities:**

**Head Start:**

A trend we have seen in our programs is an increasing number of children with Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) or the need for referral within the preschool and the twos classrooms. Within the preschool rooms, we have found that comprehensive and intensive support is needed for our current children with IEPs. We have seen that our children with IEPs need this additional focus so that they can establish stronger connections with their peers and improve their conflict resolution and regulation of individual emotions and behaviors. With the partnership established with LEEP forward at BPI, the areas of Social-Emotional development held steady between 90-92% but this was a constant effort with additional staff and administrative support to make it happen.

In terms of referrals, we had 11 children referred for evaluation to determine their eligibility under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). These referrals came from developmental screening results or concerns raised by parents or staff. Of the 11 children referred, five were evaluated through the Local Education Agency (LEA) of Chicago Public Schools (CPS). Among these, three children were diagnosed with disabilities and received IEPs to support their needs. The remaining two children, although not diagnosed with a disability, were provided with individualized support and accommodations to help them succeed in the classroom. Additionally, 12 other children started the school year with existing IEPs, ensuring they received the necessary support to participate fully in classroom activities.

**Early Head Start:**

In the Early Head Start program, 23 children were referred for evaluation based on their developmental screening results or concerns from parents or staff. Four of these children were evaluated through Lake County Early Intervention, and two were found eligible for services. Alongside these new evaluations, 10 children began the school year with current Individualized Family Service Plans (IFSPs) from Early Intervention (EI) and were already receiving ongoing support from therapists. All children with IFSPs received tailored support to meet their individual needs. Overall, both programs implemented comprehensive strategies to support children with disabilities, ensuring they received appropriate evaluations, interventions, and individualized assistance.

# SGA YOUTH & FAMILY SERVICES



**Program Number:** 05CH011953-SGAYFS-02  
**Program Name:** SGA YOUTH & FAMILY SERVICES  
**Address:** 11 E. Adams, Suite 240, Chicago, IL 60604  
**Phone Number:** 773-321-9232  
**Fax Number:** 773-475-7454  
**Head Start Director Name:** Amanda McMillen  
**Head Start Director Email:** amcmillen@sga-youth.org  
**Agency Web Site Address:** www.sga-youth.org  
**Agency Type:** Social Service / Nonprofit

Site Locations:  
3501 W. 48th Place, Chicago, IL 60632

Community Areas Served:

- Brighton Park
- McKinley Park
- New City

#### Child Outcomes

##### Summary of 2023-2024 Child Outcomes

We saw growth in all areas of development from the fall to spring. The largest growth areas for Early Head Start included Language, Literacy and Communication. Parent educators continued working with parents on completing activities that promote growth in all areas of development during home visits and socialization groups. Referrals to Early Intervention (EI) continue to be completed as needed. Based on the review of all the monthly education reports, the patterns of growth and development reflected that the number of home visits completed throughout the year varied each month. The months with the most completed virtual visits this year were September, December, January and March. According to the Outcomes Report from fall to spring, most children were meeting the widely held expectations in all areas of development.

##### Services for Diverse Learners and Children with Disabilities:

During the program year, 25% of our children were referred for an evaluation to determine eligibility under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Of the number referred (38) 21 children received an evaluation and were diagnosed with a disability. This equates to 14% of the Early Head Start population served. Parent educators individualized lesson plans for all children with disabilities incorporating their Individualized Family Service Plans' (IFSPs') goals. SGA employs a disabilities specialist who works with Early Intervention (EI) to support families in the referral process and obtain virtual therapies. Parent educators and the disabilities specialist also work together on developing implementation and interim plans, providing children more individualized learning opportunities based on each child's needs.



# TRELLUS



**Program Number:** 005  
**Agency Name:** Asian Human Services DBA Trellus  
**Program Name:** Passages Charter School  
**Address:** 1643 West Bryn Mawr Chicago, IL 60660  
**Phone Number:** 773-433-3530  
**Fax Number:** 773-769-3229  
**Head Start Director Name:** Rebecca Creighton  
**Head Start Director Email:** rcreighton@mytrellus.org  
**Agency Web Site Address:** mytrellus.org  
**Agency Type:** Sub-recipient

Site Locations:  
 1643 West Bryn Mawr  
 Chicago, IL 60660

Community Areas Served:

- Andersonville
- Edgewater
- Rogers Park
- Uptown
- West Ride

Child Outcomes  
 Summary of 2023-2024 Child Outcomes:  
 Overall, we have significantly more children both meeting and exceeding expectations. Following the winter checkpoints, we noted that a sizable amount of our scholars were residing in temporary living situations. As they received permanent placements, we had a large amount of turnover. Although turnover continued impacting our program, we still celebrated major gains for many of our scholars who remained enrolled throughout the program year. In areas of development, the number of children below expectations decreased while we saw more children exceeding expectations. A noted area of strength is the advancement of language acquisition skills. As more children developed dual language skills, they were in turn able to build social skills. This trend is evident across all content areas. The number of children below expectations has decreased significantly while the number exceeded has stayed steady. Considering around 80% of our student population are English language learners, meeting expectations is deeply encouraging. Although Physical development has the highest percentage of meeting and exceeding expectations, Social-Emotional development is also very strong and has a percentage of 78% meeting and exceeding expectations.

Growth throughout the program year has been exponential. From fall to spring, we have

seen gains in the Social-Emotional domain from 57% meeting expectations to 79% either meeting or exceeding expectations. Physical went from 64% meeting expectations to 86% meeting or exceeding expectations. Language went from 43% meeting expectations to 72% meeting or exceeding expectations. Once again, these gains occurred in a student population of 80% English language learners. Cognitive development rose from 55% meeting expectations to 74% meeting or exceeding expectations. Literacy grew slightly from 56% meeting expectations to 60% meeting or exceeding expectations. While this domain features our smallest gain, we do not find this trend particularly disturbing as many objectives in this domain require more practice to master especially for our English Language Learners population. Lastly, we saw gains in Math from 45% meeting expectations to 74% meeting or exceeding.

Services for Diverse Learners and Children with Disabilities:

In FY24 we provided half-day services to children who had current Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) and half-day services with Chicago Public Schools (CPS). We also provided space for therapists to come and work with our Early Head Start child with an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP). We utilized internal staffing to determine best support needed for families and scholars with suspected disabilities.

Trellus will soon be interviewing candidates for the inclusion coordinator and mental health coordinator positions. This will have a tremendous impact on making needed improvements to the program. Not only will it provide staff with the additional supports they need, but it will also allow our program director to focus on education content specifically to strengthen our collective practice.



# YMCA



**Program Number: 05CH012453**  
**Name of Agency: YMCA of Metropolitan Chicago**  
**Program Name: Early Learning, Early Education and Care/Head Start**  
**Address: 1030 West Van Buren**  
**Phone Number: 312 932 1200**  
**Head Start Director Name: Dorothy Cole-Gary**  
**Head Start Director Email: dcolegary@ymcachicago.org**  
**Agency Web Site Address: YMCA of Metro Chicago | YMCA (ymcachicago.org)**  
**Agency Type: Non-Profit**

Site Locations:

Dr. Effie O. Ellis	Rauner
10 South Kedzie Ave.	2700 South Western Ave.
Chicago, IL 60624	Chicago, IL 60608

McCormick	South Side
1834 North Lawndale	6330 South Stony Island
Chicago, IL 60647	Chicago, IL 60637

Community Areas Served:

- East Garfield Park
- Logan Square
- Lower West Side
- Woodlawn

Child Outcomes

Summary of 2023-2024 Child Outcomes

The fall data showed new and returning students off to a good start in school readiness for kindergarten and beyond. Over 70% of children reflected meeting widely held expectations for their age in Social-Emotional development and Cognitive development. Social-Emotional was a bit higher than anticipated for the fall, showing 84% of children overall demonstrating skills and abilities at and above their age and 25% performing below.

In the winter period, students' attendance averages are at and above 85%. Students are familiar with routines and, according to winter data, show progression from fall to winter in each area of learning and development. The most significant percentage of children meeting widely held expectations, from fall to spring is seen in Literacy domain. Students show the most growth from fall to spring in Spanish Language, Spanish Literacy and Physical domains. The Cognitive domain remained the same. Math and Literacy domains are slightly below the 85% target goal.

Services for Diverse Learners and Children with Disabilities:

The Y strives to ensure 10% of the funded enrollment opportunities are available to children with disabilities. Over the past six years, the Y has continued to exceed the requirement. During Program Year 2023-2024, the Y provided services to 20% of children with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP). 10% of the children enrolled with an IEP were found eligible due to timely screenings, referrals and Chicago Public Schools' (CPS' )evaluation during this current program year. There are five children transitioning and enrolled at CPS Kindergarten. Our projected funded enrollment for children with an IEP is 11 (13%) returning for the new program year 2024-2025.



# FY24 Financials

**TOTAL FUNDS: \$ 44,764,209**

**SOURCE AMOUNT**

Federal: \$42,011,267

State: \$2,269,117

Local District: \$0

Private: \$478,825

In-Kind: \$5,000

FY24 Actualized Expenditures		
	Budget	Actual
Personnel	\$12,365,601	\$12,260,958
Contractual	\$2,373,874	\$2,373,053
Supplies	\$408,419	\$398,771
Travel	\$215,849	\$213,838
Fringe Benefits	\$3,462,368	\$3,433,068
Sub-Recipient	\$20,404,692	\$20,404,994
Other	\$5,533,406	\$5,676,730

# Our Children & Families

Number of Children Served in 2023 - 2024				
	Funded Enrollment HS	Number of Children Served in HS	Funded Enrollment EHS	Number of Children Served in EHS
Center-based	930	1178	456	447
Home-based	0	0	440	703
Family Childcare	0	0	0	0
Total:	930	1178	896	1150

Ages of Children & Percentage of Pregnant Women/People Served	
	Percentage
4 Years Old	19%
3 Years Old	28%
2 Years Old	18%
1 Year Old	16%
Less than 1 Year Old	15%
Pregnant Women	4%

## ENROLLMENT STATISTICS

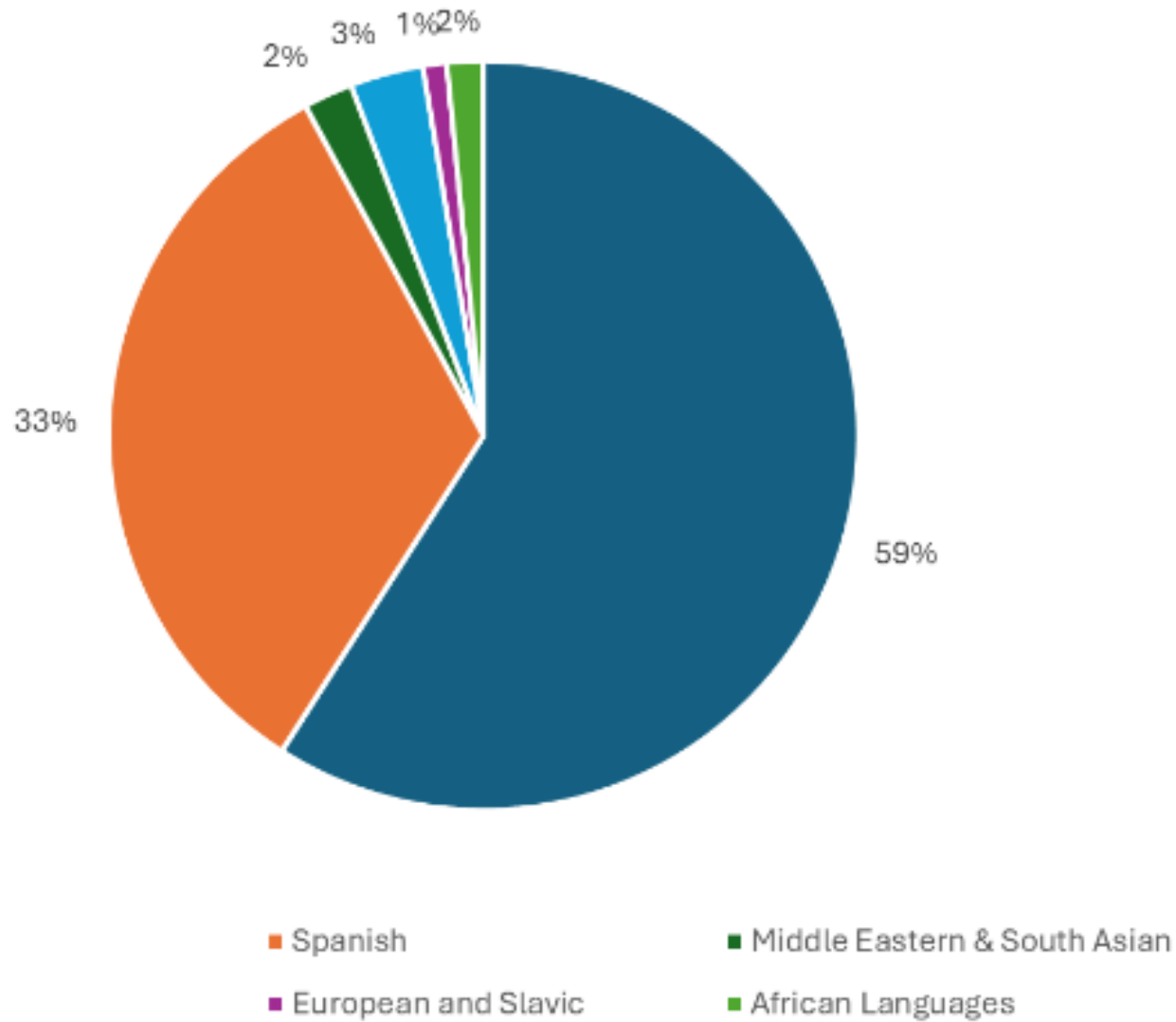
Education Levels Achieved by Families	
	Percentage
Advanced/Bachelors	14%
Associate/Vocational/ Some College	26%
High School Graduate/ GED	44%
Less than High School Graduate	16%

## TEACHER EDUCATION LEVELS

Education Levels Achieved by Teachers	
	Percentage
Master's Degree	11%
Bachelor's Degree	34%
Associate's Degree	29%
Child Development Associate	6%
Home Visitor Credential	4%
Not Qualified	16%

# DEMOGRAPHICS

Languages Spoken by Families



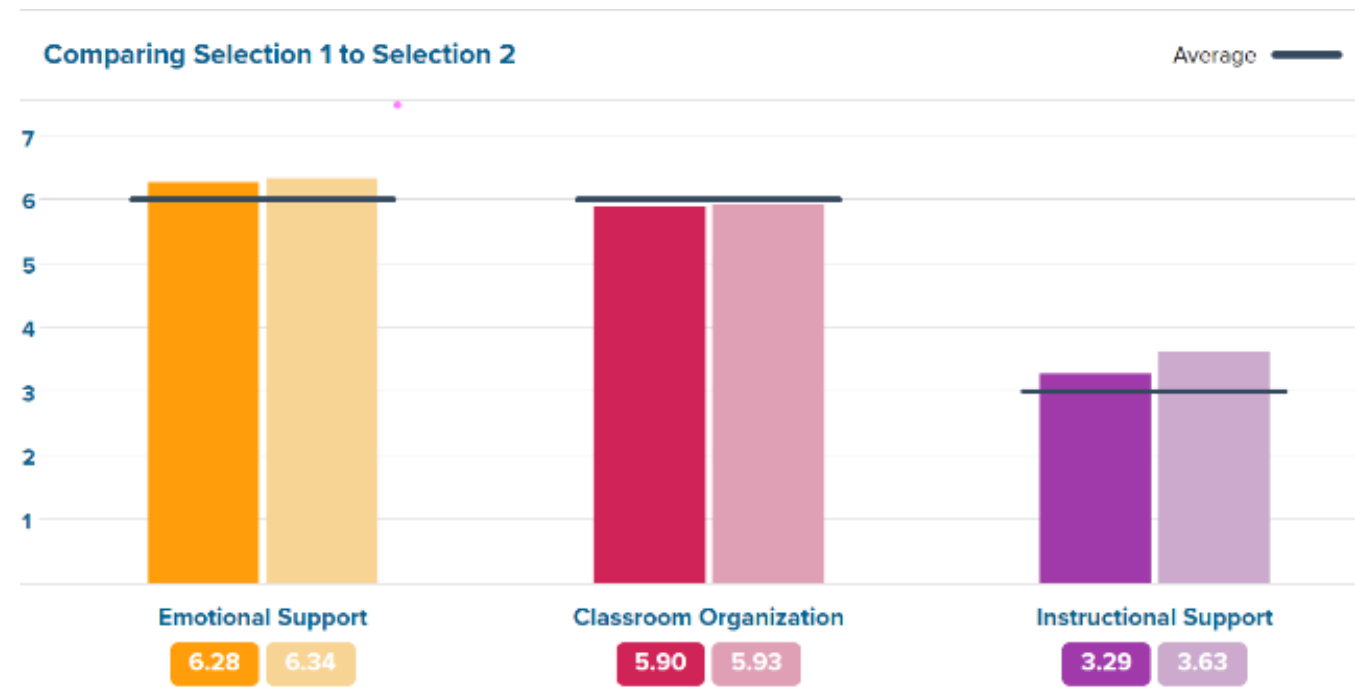
# RACE/ETHNICITY OF FAMILIES

Race / Ethnicity of Families	
	Percentage
American Indian or Alaska Native	<1%
Asian	5%
Black or African American	45%
Multiracial/Biracial	4%
White	31%
Native Hawaiian/other Pacific Islander	<1%
Other/Unspecified	15%

Breakout of Hispanic and Non-Hispanic Families	
	Percentage
Hispanic of Any Race	48%
Non-Hispanic	52%

# SUMMARY OF CLASS OBSERVATIONS

The Prek CLASS observations conducted throughout the program year have yielded positive results, indicating improvements across various domains and dimensions. Notably, Emotional Support saw an increase of 0.06 points, Classroom Organization by 0.03 points, and Instructional Support experienced the most significant growth with a 0.34-point rise. The only exception was the Instructional Learning Format dimension, which did not show improvement. To support these advancements, program staff have been leveraging the scores to recommend targeted video modules for teachers, aiming to enhance their understanding and application of CLASS domains within educational settings. This strategic approach has been instrumental in fostering the observed progress.



Spring Center-Based TSG 2024				
	All Students	African American Boys	Dual Language Learners	Diagnosed Disabilities
Social Emotional	87%	85%	85%	92%
Physical	89%	92%	84%	95%
Language	80%	82%	74%	92%
Spanish Language	79%	100%	79%	N/A
Cognitive	87%	87%	82%	93%
Literacy	83%	85%	74%	90%
Spanish Literacy	79%	100%	75%	N/A
Mathmatics	80%	85%	80%	77%

Spring Home-Based TSG 2024				
	All Students	African American Boys	Dual Language Learners	Diagnosed Disabilities
Approaches to Learning	58%	41%	62%	55%
Social Emotional Development	61%	50%	66%	48%
Physical Development and Health	67%	59%	70%	66%
Language, Lit, and Communication	57%	55%	58%	53%
Math	60%	50%	65%	60%
Creative Arts	61%	55%	66%	53%
Science and Technology	68%	55%	72%	55%
Social Studies	61%	64%	65%	47%

# FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

Every Start Early Early/Head Start Network program is required to provide trainings in the categories below. Some happen during monthly Parent Committee meetings. Some are stand-alone events. Program staff survey parents formally and informally to determine specific topics, times and dates. This table shows a sample of training topics from the 2023-24 program year.

Examples of Family Engagement Activities	
	Topic
Father Engagement	Male Involvement: Read for the Record, Fatherhood and Culture, Men's Health Workshop, Bring Dad to School Day, Monthly Father Figures group, Donuts with Dad
Mental Health	Positive Behavior Management, Stress Management, Daily Habits and Routines, Raising a Happy and Healthy Child, Depression and the Family
Disabilities	Early Detection, Screenings, & Kindergarten Readiness, Learning Disabilities, Typical/Atypical Development, Purpose of Developmental Screenings
Health	Health and Fitness Exercises and Activities, Dental Workshop, CPR and First Aid, Importance of Oral Health, Preventing Alcohol, Drug and Tobacco Use
Financial literacy	Budgeting, Credit, Savings, and Banking, Taxes Training: Referrals for Free Tax Filing and Obtaining IRS Updates
Nutrition	Promoting Health with a Healthy Diet, Nutrition for Children, Families, and Pregnant People, Food Selection and Preparation, Understanding Your Child's Nutritional Status, Resources (WIC, SNAP, food pantries), Helping Your Child Be Fit: Childhood Obesity Prevention and Information
Parents as Teachers parenting curriculum	Parents As Teachers Self Esteem, Park Scavenger Hunt, Cooking, Memory Skills: Cognitive Development, Motor Development with Household Objects, Importance of Routines, Music and Movement
Safety	Transportation Safety, Pedestrian Safety, Sleep: Safe Sleep Practices, Bedtime Routines, SIDS awareness, Child Proofing at Home, Violence Prevention, Car Seat Safety, Creating Your Home Safety Plan
Transitions	Chicago Public Schools Kindergarten Application Process, Transitions to Kindergarten, Transitions from Early Head to Head Start
Events	Fall Festival, Father's Day Breakfast, Mother's Day, Health Services Advisory Committee, Chinese New Year Activity, Winter Festival, Week of the Young Child Open House, Resource fair with community partners, Ask a Lawyer Day, Library parent meetings, Family Story Time, Parent volunteer orientation

Father Engagement: 324 Early Head Start and 325 Head Start fathers and father figures engaged in family assessments, goal setting, home visits, parent conferences, Head Start program governance, and/or parenting education workshops. Every program offers at least two events each year specifically for father figures.

There was a total of 1,589 families who received one or more resources in program year 2023-24. The most common resources include food and other donations (2,075), health/family health resources (1,384), parenting curriculum support (804), transitions support/resources(730), financial security resources (348), adult education opportunities (342), employment resources (322), housing support (263), safety support(262), mental health resources (244).

# SERVICES FOR DIVERSE LEARNERS & CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

Summary of services provided to children with special needs during the program year 2023-2024

Start Early Head Start programs provided services to a total of 371 children that qualified for Special Education which was 21% of its funded enrollment. This number does not include the suspected children that Head Start programs continued to provide individualized supports for that didn't qualify for services. The need for services for children with suspected and diagnosed disabilities continues to grow. This year, the Early/Head Start Network disabilities team focused on three key areas to improve outcomes: supporting individualized needs of diverse learners, coordinating service delivery, and enhancing data collection for ongoing service improvement.

The Initiatives undertaken this year have significantly impacted children with disabilities and their families. By improving inclusive classroom practices, providing targeted professional development, and enhancing home-based support, we have created more equitable learning environments. The SECI pilot, in particular, has demonstrated the importance of collaboration between school districts and community partners, ensuring that children with disabilities receive the support they need within their community-based programs. These efforts have not only improved educational outcomes but also strengthened the capacity of staff to support diverse learners, ultimately fostering a more inclusive and supportive environment for all children.

Key Initiatives and Successes:

### 1. INCLUSIVE CLASSROOM SUPPORT

**Objective:** Improve teaching practices to create inclusive classrooms.

**Actions:**

- Utilized the Inclusive Classroom Profile (ICP) Framework.
- Digitized ICP criteria for formal data collection.
- Conducted pre and post observations in all HS programs.
- Surveyed program coordinators and teaching staff to identify needs.

**Outcome:** Developed a baseline assessment and identified areas for improvement. Enhanced staff well being by ensuring they felt supported and capable.

# SERVICES FOR DIVERSE LEARNERS & CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES CONTINUED



## 2. PROFESSIONAL LEARNING SERIES

**Objective:** Support inclusive teaching practices, improve coaching to decrease staff burnout and improve child development and Start Early outcomes.

**Actions:**

- Developed a professional learning series using the ICP framework.
- Focused on aligning ICP, CLASS, and Conscious Discipline.
- Implemented individualized lesson planning and coaching.

**Outcome:** Improved individualized lesson planning and classroom support for diverse learners.

## 3. HOME-BASED (HB) PROGRAM SUCCESS:

**Objective:** Provide equitable support for diverse learners and their families.

**Actions:**

- Utilized the PAT IAA curriculum.
- Aligned PAT IAA with HB Personal Visit Planning Guides (PVG).
- Developed targeted strategies and activities.

**Outcome:** Enhanced knowledge and parenting practices, supported IFSP/IEP goals, and tracked outcomes for diverse learners.

## 4. STRENGTHENING EARLY CHILDHOOD INCLUSION (SECI) PILOT:

**Objective:** Expand special education services into community-based programs to support the least restrictive environment

**Actions:**

- Provided special education services to 20 children at Educare.
- Start Early Policy and EHSN divisions facilitated services for 40 children across six Head Start programs.
- Improved collaboration between school districts and community partners to support young children with disabilities.
- Focused on ensuring access to inclusive special education services for all children with disabilities enrolled in community-based early childhood programs.

**Outcome:** Successfully supported children with itinerant or speech-only services. The SECI pilot will continue into the 24-25 program year, with plans to enroll additional children and further advocate for improved service delivery in Community-Based Organizations (CBOs).

## 5. INCLUSIVE CLASSROOM PROFILE (ICP) PROFESSIONAL LEARNING NETWORK (PLN):

**Objective:** Enhance the quality of inclusive classroom practices.

**Actions:**

- Implemented the ICP framework to assess and improve classroom practices.
- Conducted observations and assessments to establish a baseline for inclusive practices.
- Provided targeted professional development based on ICP findings.

**Outcome:** The ICP PLN helped tailor professional development to program teachers' and Ed/Dis Coordinators specific needs, improving the quality of inclusive practices and supporting the developmental needs of children with disabilities.

**Conclusion:** The initiatives undertaken this year have significantly impacted children with disabilities and their families. By improving inclusive classroom practices, providing targeted professional development, and enhancing home-based support, we have created more equitable learning environments. The SECI pilot, in particular, has demonstrated the importance of collaboration between school districts and community partners, ensuring that children with disabilities receive the support they need within their community-based programs. These efforts have not only improved educational outcomes but also strengthened the capacity of staff to support diverse learners, ultimately fostering a more inclusive and supportive environment for all children.





The recipient has a fully staffed mental health team of one manager and two coordinators who 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 programs, their staff and families for mental health and social and emotional wellbeing. MHC supports children with challenging behaviors and diagnosed/suspected disabilities through observation, consultation with staff and collaborative development of individualized positive behavior support and interim plans. MHC also supports both staff and families through reflective groups, ongoing training opportunities, 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 provides a framework for developing interventions and adaptations for Positive Behavioral Support Plans and Interim Support Plans. Additionally, the curriculum supports positive and nurturing caregiver/child relationships and social-emotional-

skill development in children through the framework of the brain state model and the seven essential skills and powers. Conscious Discipline also provides teaching staff and parents with concrete resources and materials for bringing the seven skills and powers to life through repeated opportunities to practice. Lastly, Conscious Discipline also focuses on teaching adults the essential skills to control their own emotional triggers/responses, see children's challenging behavior as a call for help, and to put these skills into practice for supporting the social-emotional skill development of children within our programs.

This program year, the Recipient built on our strong Conscious Discipline Action Teams (CDAT) at each program, who are a core multi-disciplinary team of program staff that have been comprehensively trained on the curriculum and prepared to facilitate a holistic approach to implementation, by rolling out our E-course with all program staff. This E-course was the "Handling Upset: The Adult Mindset Shift" from Conscious Discipline, which aims to provide the necessary skills for adults to improve their own abilities with self-regulation, identifying personal triggers and understanding the sources of challenging behavior from children. By spending time intentionally working on our skills as adults, we aim to address the fundamental flaw of expecting that the staff can teach skills to children that they are struggling with themselves. By taking this step towards intentionally focusing on the skills of the adults in our programs, we have aimed to improve overall insight, self-regulation skills inside and outside of work, more cohesive teams at every level of our programs and overall improved staff-wellness.

By building on our sturdy foundations of a multidisciplinary CDAT at each program, the Recipient has positioned itself for success in meaningfully implementing the breadth of the Conscious Discipline curriculum across all agencies and program models as we continue onto our next curriculum training course for the coming program year.

## HEALTH SERVICES

Percent of Children Meeting Health Requirements 2023 -2024

	Health Insurance	Medical Home	Dental Home	Professional Dental Exam	Current EPSDT	Up-to-Date Immunizations
Center-based Program	97%	95%	90%	73%	47%	86%
Home-based Program	96%	94%	68%	28%	23%	84%
Family Childcare Home	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

## OUR COMMUNITY

In 2021, there were 28,773 births in Chicago, which is an estimated birth rate of 10.6 per 1,000 persons, also known as the crude birth rate. The West Town area has the highest number of births. For children 0-2, West Town, Austin, Lakeview and West Ridge have the highest numbers, with Austin and West Ridge having the highest numbers of children zero - to - five overall.

For children between ages zero - to - five in Chicago overall, race/ethnicity estimates for 2022 show 34.4% Hispanic, 29.0% Black, 23.8% White, 6.4% Asian, and 6.4% Other.

Looking at the number of births by community area where the mother was between the ages of 15 and 19, the areas of Austin (n=574), South Lawndale (n=377) and Chicago Lawn (n=327) are in the highest categories.

The community area of Burnside has the highest percentage of births that were low birth weight (22%), followed by West Garfield Park (17.2%) and Englewood (17.0%).

The city of Chicago's New Arrivals Situational Awareness Dashboard provides a daily snapshot of the number of new arrivals and their current locations. As of March 20, 2024, the total number of individuals seeking asylum arriving via Texas buses and airplanes is 37,388. Over 15,000 of those have been resettled; 5,439 reunited with sponsors, 10,845 in shelters, and 104 awaiting placements (click [HERE](#) to view today's snapshot).

In February 2024, Chicago Public Schools (CPS) identified 24,157 students experiencing homelessness. This represents a 57% one-year increase and is the highest number of students that CPS has ever identified. During the 2023-24 school year, students experiencing homelessness comprised 7.23% of the total CPS student population compared to the 2021-2022 school year where homeless students enrolled in CPS comprised 5.37% of total enrollment. (Chicago Coalition for the Homeless).



## PROGRAMMATIC CONSIDERATIONS

**CONTINUE TO INCREASE EFFORTS TO IDENTIFY, SUPPORT, AND SERVE FAMILIES EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS, AND ALSO EXPAND EFFORTS TO SUPPORT NEW ARRIVALS IN CHICAGO.** As seen in the community assessment highlights, over 37,000 individuals seeking asylum have arrived in Chicago since June 2023, and the number of homeless students has increased in this past year as well, per the Chicago Coalition for the Homeless. Providing support and services for newly arrived families and families experiencing homelessness impact all programs and service areas, but Englewood and Humboldt Park (served by Casa Central, Children's Place Association, Brightpoint, Marillac St. Vincent, Educare Chicago, and Healthy Parents & Babies) are two areas to examine closely, since they have high numbers of CPS students in temporary living situations.

**INCREASE REFERRALS AND RESOURCES FOR HEALTHY FOOD ACCESS FOR PROGRAM FAMILIES.** It is clear from community data that residents in Start Early's service areas are in need of concrete assistance such as food, employment as well as housing resources and information. East Garfield Park, South Shore, West Englewood, and Washington Park (Brightpoint, Family Focus, South Side YMCA, Dr. Effie O Ellis YMCA, Educare Chicago, Healthy Parents & Babies' service areas) are all categorized as having low food access, defined solely by distance (further than a half mile from the nearest supermarket in an urban area).

**CONTINUE TO EXPLORE THE IMPLICATIONS OF RECENT DATA ON THE NUMBER OF BIRTHS, CHILDREN ZERO - TO - FIVE, AND CHILDREN ZERO - TO - TWO.** West Town, Austin, West Ridge and Lakeview (served by Casa Central, Children's Place Association, Educare Chicago, Healthy Parents & Babies, and Trellus) are among the community areas with the highest numbers of expectant mothers, births and young children. The suburban areas of Waukegan and Zion in Lake County, as well as the southeast corner of Chicago Heights show scarcity of child care when child care centers, family child care providers, Head Start providers and public and private preschools are considered. Within the city of Chicago, some south side community areas (Grand Boulevard, Hyde Park), southwest side areas (South Lawndale, Brighton Park, Gage Park, New City) and northwest areas (Humboldt Park, Logan Square, Hermosa) show child care scarcity, per the Center for American Progress interactive map tool.

**CONTINUE TO IDENTIFY AND SUPPORT FAMILIES IN DEEP POVERTY.** While all programs and service areas are impacted, children in Englewood, West Englewood (Brightpoint), Kenwood, Washington Park, Woodlawn, Hyde Park, South Shore (Family Focus and South Side YMCA), and East Garfield Park (Dr. Effie O Ellis YMCA) have particularly high percentages of children ages zero - to - five who are living at less than 50% of the Federal Poverty Line.

**(CONTINUED FROM LAST YEAR): REVIEW 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.**

**(CONTINUED FROM LAST YEAR): CONTINUE IMPLEMENTING 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 continued 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.

# SHARED GOVERNANCE

**BOARD INVOLVEMENT:** Start Early has a formal structure of shared governance through which parents can participate in policy-making and other decisions about our programs. 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.

**HEAD START POLICY COUNCIL INVOLVEMENT:** The Policy Council (PC), consists of members that include Head Start parents and community representatives. The BOD, in partnership with the PC, is the governing body of agency. The BOD is legally and fiscally responsible for all activities of the agency, including decisions for the agencies’ policies, approving the annual budget, and determining the goals and the direction of the agency and its programs. The PC is responsible for the direction of the agency, including making decisions about policies, operating procedures, budgets, and proper adherence to programmatic guidelines. A special thank you to our BOD and PC members. Your continued support through FY24 is appreciated!

## 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

In the fall of 2023, Start Early received notification of non-compliance in the areas of Child Supervision, Human Resources and Monitoring Health Services. Start Early course corrected these non-compliances with the support of technical assistance from a Technical Assistant specialist that contracts with the Office of Head Start, and to date, these non-compliances have been closed due to all findings being addressed and completed.

## SCHEDULE OF FINDINGS AND QUESTIONED COSTS: YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2023

### Section II. FINANCIAL STATEMENT FINDINGS

Identifying Number: 2023-001: Accrued vacation balances

**CRITERIA OR SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS:** Accounting standards generally accepted in the United States of America require that organizations establish and maintain a system of internal controls to provide assurance that amounts are properly recorded and reported in the financial statements.

**CONDITION:** During reviews of the June 30, 2023 trial balance, management identified that the accrued vacation balance was significantly higher than expected and concluded that the accrued vacation balance was incorrect.

**CAUSE:** Upon investigation into the cause, management discovered that there was a setting in their payroll system that had been inadvertently turned on in fiscal year 2021, which caused a full pay period’s vacation hours for all employees to be accrued each time a payroll was run. Therefore, any time a correction had to be processed or a supplemental payroll had to be run for even one employee, a full pay period worth of vacation hours would be accrued for all employees.

**EFFECT:** This issue had impacted several pay periods in fiscal 2022, resulting in approximately \$376,000 of additional vacation hours to be accrued in that year. The magnitude of the error increased in fiscal 2023 and was approximately \$1,200,000 which management corrected prior to the audit. Management did not have effective controls in place to monitor the vacation balance for accuracy.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Management should improve the internal controls over employee vacation balances. Proper internal controls should include system controls such as exception reporting for balances outside of defined parameters as well as timely manual reviews of the balances for accuracy.

### SECTION III. FEDERAL AWARD FINDINGS AND QUESTIONED COSTS

None reported.

**VIEWS OF RESPONSIBLE OFFICIALS:** Management agrees with this finding and recommendation. See corrective action



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