

Community Action Head Start and Early Head Start



Washington County, Oregon



Annual Report 2012-13 Program Year

About Community Action

Since 1965 Community Action, located in Hillsboro, Oregon, has served Washington County families by continuously providing crucial services to help economically disadvantaged people achieve better lives, and increase opportunities for their children to thrive at home and in school. We assist families with housing and homelessness services, energy and emergency rent assistance, energy conservation services, prenatal care and early childhood education. Our Information and Referral program provides information to the 2-1-1 system serving Oregon and Southwest Washington. Our Child Care Resource and Referral network supports families with child care referrals and supports child care providers with technical assistance, onsite literacy training, and business development. Head Start is one of our oldest and largest programs, and Early Head Start supports the growth of our county's youngest citizens.

Today, the work we do is more necessary than ever. As the country continues to recover from the recession, many Washington County families are being left behind. We know that when the right services are available at the right time, people can find a path out of poverty. By supporting and empowering families, we help build a brighter future for children.

Message from the Director

Community Action Early Head Start and Head Start program has completed another year of providing high quality services to children and families in Washington County. Head Start is a comprehensive, two generation program that serves children and families with the greatest need. Children from low-income families often begin school with learning deficits that impede their success over time. This year through our collaboration with families and community partners, 550 children transitioned to kindergarten ready to learn and parents were ready to support their children's learning and advocate for their needs. Our dedicated staff continue to strive to be life-long learners and embrace challenges and setbacks as opportunities for collective problem-solving and innovation.



The community that we serve has diversified and over 50 percent

of children in our program speak a language other than English at home. Our participation in the Planned Language Approach project will support children's home languages while helping them build proficiency in English. Dual language learners build cognitive skills that give them an advantage in school, and we look forward to being part of their success. When families succeed, children succeed. This year we offered financial literacy education to enrolled families, and thirteen Head Start parents enrolled in the Individual Development Account (IDA) program to save money for a brighter future.

In our journey toward quality by becoming a Learning Organization, we have developed an understanding of applying child, family, and community data effectively to plan, implement, and evaluate the impact of our services and make corrections as we identify patterns and emerging trends. Using the data to make informed decisions supports our commitment to continuous program improvement. The support from our Board of Directors, Policy Council, and community partners provides a strong framework for our children, families, and staff to thrive and get closer to our mission. We look forward to another year of strong governance, leadership, and effective management systems to provide high-quality services.

Farzana Siddiqui, Psy.D. Director of Child Development

Program Options

Part-Day Pre-K Head Start

In this program option, children ages three to five attend class for three and a half hours per day, four days per week, in classrooms located in public schools in the Beaverton, Hillsboro, and Tigard-Tualatin school districts and in our Hillsboro and Beaverton Child Development Centers. Children receive one balanced lunch and one healthy breakfast or snack every day. Teachers conduct two home visits and two Parent-Teacher Conferences throughout the year. Bus transportation is provided for most classes.

Full-Day Full-Year Head Start

This program option provides full-day Head Start services to children ages three to five whose parents are working and are eligible for Employment Related Day Care (ERDC) funds from the State of Oregon. This program option operates from 7:30 am—5:30 pm, five days per week year-round. Children receive healthy breakfasts, lunches, and snacks. Teachers conduct two home visits and two Parent-Teacher Conferences per year.



Full-Day Full-Year Early Head Start

Like Full-Day Full-Year Head Start, this program option is for children of working parents who are eligible for ERDC child care subsidies. Infants and toddlers ages six weeks to three years receive full-day educational services and healthy balanced breakfasts, lunches, and snacks. Early Head Start teachers conduct two home visits and two Parent-Teacher Conferences per year.

Home Based Early Head Start

This program option serves children ages three and under in Beaverton and Hillsboro. Home Based Teachers make weekly visits to families and teach them to use their homes as learning environments for their children. Twice per month, families come together for Socialization experiences at our Beaverton Child Development Center. Parent training is provided through Socializations and parents' involvement in Parent Site Meetings and Policy Council.

Combination or Part-Day Full-Year Early Head Start

This program option serves parents and children up to age three. Parents and children attend class together in a nurturing play environment twice per week for three hours. Classes are led by qualified and trained teachers who encourage parents to strengthen their parenting skills through observation, play, practice, and fun. Teachers conduct two 90minute home visits per month with each family.

Early Head Start at Coffee Creek

This innovative Combination program option serves eight children up to age three, their incarcerated mothers, and the children's caregivers in a special Early Head Start classroom at Coffee Creek Correctional Facility. Through a special partnership with Oregon Department of Corrections, our qualified and trained teachers facilitate the interactions that help incarcerated mothers bond with their children, learn parenting skills, and prepare for parenting after they are released from prison.

2012-13 Program Highlights

Dual language learners were served more effectively

Head Start has a long history of serving linguistically and culturally diverse families. Over 50 percent of children in our program speak a language other than English at home. Research shows that dual language learners are more successful in school when their home languages are supported as they become proficient in English. Our assessment data shows that dual language learners often exceed the program average in cognitive skills.

This year our program was selected to participate in Planned Language Approach training along with staff from two public schools that house our Head Start classrooms and which serve a large number of dual language learners. Head Start and school district staff will work together to develop approaches to supporting children's home languages while building their English language skills. Our program's school readiness goals include proficiency in English.

Staff qualifications increased

The Head Start Act of 2007 increased the required qualifications for classroom staff. Our program now requires that all Head Start teachers must have baccalaureate or advanced degrees in education, early childhood education, or early childhood special education **or** a degree in a field related to early childhood education. Early Head Start teachers must have an associate, baccalaureate or advanced degree in education, early childhood education, or early childhood special education **or** a degree in a field related to early childhood education, or early childhood special education **or** a degree in a field related to early childhood education. Teachers with unrelated degrees must have 20 semester credits or 30 quarter credits in early childhood education college coursework.

As of this year, our Teacher Aides have either a Child Development Associate (CDA) credential or a college degree with an early childhood education or elementary education concentration, or are enrolled in a program to earn these credentials.



CLASS scores continued to improve

Our teaching staff continued to improve their scores on the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS), an instrument for measuring the quality of teacher-child interactions in the classroom. CLASS measures interactions in three domains: Emotional Support, Classroom Organization, and Instructional Support.

Positive interactions between children and adults are a primary method of supporting children's development and learning. In 2012-13 our program's CLASS scores consistently exceeded the national average.



Start Making a Reader Today

This year ten of our Part-Day Pre-K classrooms participated in the SMART program. SMART—Start Making A Reader Today— provides critical early literacy support through a Pre-K delivery model that serves the entire classroom. Students read one-on-one with volunteers in 15- or 20-minute sessions. Each volunteer reads with three or four students per hour. Students choose two books per month to take home. The Pre-K SMART program's oral reading focus aligns with the literacy development stage of preschool-age students.

Our program participated in a study of the SMART program's effect on literacy skills. Classrooms participating in SMART were compared to control classrooms in our program. By the end of the year children in SMART classrooms showed a statistically significant increase in reading interest and comprehension compared to the control classrooms.

Head Start is committed to closing literacy gaps and ensuring that all children are well-prepared for kindergarten, so we will participate in the SMART program again in 2013-14.

A Foundation for Success

When Chad Andersen was three years old, his mother enrolled him in a Head Start program . Today he is a graduate of Southern Oregon University who is continuing his education to earn his MBA.

Chad grew up in North Plains, Oregon, a small, semi-rural town of approximately 2000 residents. He had always been shy and credits Head Start with giving him the social skills to make friends when he entered elementary school. "The preschool gave me the opportunity to meet the kids I would go to school with and develop friendships prior to that scary first day of kindergarten." Head Start programs emphasize social-emotional development; without these skills, children often feel overwhelmed by the classroom experience and cannot learn other skills as easily.



Chad struggled in middle school and high school, but was inspired by the business program at his high school and decided to study business in college. "I was tired of being the typical low income child, set for failure and ready for a career at the local supermarket. This program would prove to be my passion."

As the first member of his family to attend college, Chad found the college application process daunting. "Nobody in my family had attended college; in fact, I was only one of two people in my family to graduate high school. The idea of college was foreign to my family and I had no footsteps to follow in. I was accepted to Southern Oregon University and, upon visiting, fell in love with Ashland. I attended SOU in the fall and began my college career."

In June 2013 Chad received his Bachelor of Science in Business Administration with an emphasis on public accounting. He is currently enrolled in Southern Oregon University's Masters in Business Administration program and plans to complete his MBA in spring 2014. When not in school, Chad works at the Ashland YMCA. He says, "I love being involved in the lives of children and I see certain kids who remind me of myself as a child. It reminds me that without the Head Start program, I would have had an even harder time as a child in elementary school. Without it, I would likely not be where I am today."

Read more of Chad's story at www.caowash.org.

Who We Served

Head Start and Early Head Start serve age and income-eligible children and families who live in our Washington County service area. When a family applies, we verify their eligibility and add them to a prioritized wait list, which we use to ensure that the children who most need our services are selected for enrollment. We make every effort to enroll the children with the highest needs as quickly as possible. Our program includes children who are experiencing homelessness, who are in foster care, who have special needs and/or disabilities, who do not yet speak English, and whose parents are incarcerated. Through a network of strong partnerships with local agencies, we often refer families to appropriate resources to address specific needs, such as mental health services, housing and food assistance, and health services.

Enrollment

In 2012-13 we were able to expand our program to 927 funded slots.

- 816 in Head Start
- 111 in Early Head Start

We served a cumulative total of 1040 children.

- 884 in Head Start
- 156 in Early Head Start
- In 2012-13 our average monthly enrollment was 100 percent.
- In 2012-13 we were able to enroll **68 percent** of children who applied.



Art by Head Start children



Children with special needs

At least ten percent of our enrollment opportunities are made available to children with special needs. These children participate fully in our program and receive individualized services to ensure that they receive a quality education.

Our program partners with the Northwest Regional Education Service District, our Local Education Agency, to operate three supported classrooms where children with and without special needs learn together. These classrooms are staffed by Head Start teachers and Educational Assistants from the NWRESD.

In 2012-13 we served **210** children with special needs. Speech and language impairments were most common, followed by developmental delays, autism, orthopedic delays, and other health impairments as defined by the IDEA act.

- 188 children in Head Start (21 percent)
- 22 children in Early Head Start (14 percent)

Our Diverse Community

As our Washington County service area has diversified, so has our program. The children who enroll speak a variety of languages at home. To serve our many Spanish-speaking families, we distribute program information in English and Spanish. We provide interpretation services at Policy Council and Parent Site Meetings to allow all families to participate. Children who are learning English area always welcome in Head Start and Early Head Start.

Race and Ethnicity

In 2012-13, the children we served were:

- 82 percent Caucasian (includes Hispanic/Latino origins)
- 7 percent Biracial/Multiracial
- 4 percent Black/African American
- 3 percent Asian
- 1 percent American Indian / Alaska Native
- >1 percent Native Hawaiian / Pacific Islander
- 2 percent Unspecified
- 68 percent were Hispanic/Latino
- 32 percent were not Hispanic/Latino

Family Structure

The children in our program came from **938** families, the majority of which were two-parent families.

- 582 two-parent families
- 356 single-parent families

Parental employment

In the majority of two-parent families, at least one parent or guardian was employed.

- **26 percent** had both parents working.
- 63 percent had one parent working.

The majority of single-parent families also had an employed parent or guardian.

- In **59 percent** of single-parent families, the parent or guardian was employed.
- In **41 percent** of single-parent families, the parent or guardian was unemployed, retired, or disabled.

Eleven families had at least one parent or guardian who was a member of the United States military on active duty.



Home Language

Over 50 percent of our students speak a language other than English at home.

- 50 percent spoke Spanish
- 42 percent spoke English
- 2 percent spoke an African language
- >1 percent spoke a Pacific Island language
- >1 percent spoke a European or Slavic language
- 5 percent did not specify a language



High Quality Early Childhood Education

The mission of every Head Start and Early Head Start program is to provide a high-quality early childhood education to low-income children and to support parents in their role as their children's first teachers. To accomplish this, we staff our classrooms with qualified teachers who develop classroom activities using the research-based Creative Curriculum[®].

Three times per year, teachers assess children's growth and learning in seven developmental domains using the Teaching Strategies[®] GOLD assessment tool, which is aligned to the objectives of the Common Core State Standards, State of Oregon early learning guidelines, the Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework, and the Oregon Kindergarten Readiness Assessment, and our program's School Readiness Goals.

Classroom practices are also assessed via the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) tool, which measures the quality of teacher-student interactions.

After each checkpoint period, our education staff reviews the data and uses the results to inform program improvements. We also review the results of specific groups of children, including dual language learners, children in foster care, and children with special needs, to determine how best to serve these groups. Teachers review their own class data to gain an understanding of their students' unique needs and develop lesson plans to address them.

2012-13 Head Start Child Outcomes

Social-Emotional Development

This is a primary focus of Head Start programs. When Head Start students transition to kindergarten, they are already familiar with classroom routines and can focus on learning.



Percentage of children ages 3-5 who were below, meeting, or exceeding widely held expectations at three checkpoint periods in 2012-13

Why is Social-Emotional Development so important?

Children's ability to form positive relationships with trusted adults is essential to their success in school. Nurturing, positive interactions promote social competence, enthusiasm for learning, and eventual academic success.

Research has established strong links between social-emotional development, behavior, and school success. Emotional understanding is critical to positive social relationships and peer acceptance. Children who can interpret emotional signals accurately are more likely to respond appropriately to others instead of becoming angry or aggressive.

Positive social skills also help children build the relationships that they will need to overcome the challenges that living in poverty often presents. Head Start and Early Head Start teachers recognize this and emphasize socialemotional development in their classrooms every day.



Percentage of children ages 3-5 who were below, meeting, or exceeding widely held expectations across three checkpoint periods in 2012-13



Physical Development—Fine Motor

Percentage of children ages 3-5 who were below, meeting, or exceeding widely held expectations across three checkpoint periods in 2012-13

Observing and responding

To better understand the needs of specific groups of children, we compare the average child outcomes across the program with the outcomes of several specific cohort groups, including:

- Dual language learners.
- Children with special needs.
- Children in foster care.
- Children who have experienced homelessness.
- Children who transitioned to Head Start from Early Head Start.

We use this cohort group data to make program-wide changes to better serve these children. In 2012-13 these changes included:

- Strengthening the professional development of staff who serve children with special needs.
- Aligning IFSP goals with our curriculum and lesson plans.
- Exploring strategies to promote children's home languages.
- Strengthening the transition process from Early Head Start to Head Start and individualizing earlier in the year.
- Continuing to promote a variety of indoor and outdoor physical activities for infants and toddlers.
- Strengthening the math curriculum and providing math and science instruction trainings for teachers.

Specific groups often have specific needs. The data we collect and analyze helps us better support the learning of every child in our program.



Percentage of children ages 3-5 who were below, meeting, or exceeding widely held expectations across three checkpoint periods in 2012-13

Our program serves many children who are learning English. We support children's continued learning in their home languages as they develop proficiency in English. This approach has been shown to improve children's learning of other topics while they develop proficiency in English.

We hire bilingual staff whenever possible and place them in classrooms where they can support dual language learners.

Our School Readiness Goals for Head Start and Early Head Start include proficiency in English.

Filling in the "Word Gap"

By the time they are four years old, children from low-income families have already heard approximately 30 million fewer words than children from wealthier families.

Research shows that a child's early academic success is directly related to the amount of talk he or she hears from adults during those first years of life. The more words a child hears, the greater his chance for academic success will be.

Children build vocabulary skills in conversation with adults, and those vocabulary skills are crucial to early literacy. The Word Gap is one reason why children from low-income families often enter kindergarten already behind their peers.

Every day in Head Start, teachers read to children, engage them in conversation, and encourage them to build their vocabularies through songs, games, and stories. A strong vocabulary opens the door to a love of reading, which provides a foundation for future learning.

Cognitive Development



Percentage of children ages 3-5 who were below, meeting, or exceeding widely held expectations across three checkpoint periods in 2012-13

Literacy 9 Spring 2013 15 21 Below Winter 2012 73 III Meet 6 E Exceed 60 Fall 2012 37 3 20 40 60 80 100

Percentage of children ages 3-5 who were below, meeting, or exceeding widely held expectations across three checkpoint periods in 2012-13



This year teachers attended a "Thinking like Scientists and Mathematicians" training to learn new strategies for math and science education.



Percentage of children ages 3-5 who were below, meeting, or exceeding widely held expectations across three checkpoint periods in 2012-13

Measuring Growth in Early Head Start

Our Early Head Start program uses the **Creative Curriculum for Infants**, **Toddlers and Twos** to develop classroom activities for children ages 0-3. In 2012-13 our Combination and Home Based program staff also used **Parents as** Teachers, a different research-based curriculum that is especially well suited to home-based programs.

This year our Early Head Start staff used Teaching Strategies GOLD to assess all children ages 0-3 in six domains.

- Social-Emotional
- Physical
- Language
- Cognitive
- Literacy
- Mathematics

We reviewed the Teaching Strategies GOLD[®] Growth Reports, which differ from the Widely Held Expectations reports, to evaluate how the children in our care were progressing. Our data showed that infants and toddlers were thriving in our program. Children made the greatest gains in language and cognitive development. Because children from Early Head Start often transition to Head Start, we have strengthened the transition process to enable these children to build on the gains they have made.



Health and Nutrition

A quality education begins with a healthy child. Children who are hungry or who have unaddressed health concerns cannot learn as easily as children who are fed nutritious meals and have their medical and dental needs met.

Since the beginning of the recession in 2008, the number of Oregonians who rely on emergency food pantries has increased by 41 percent. The Oregon Food Bank reports that approximately 270,000 people in Oregon each month eat meals from an emergency food box, including 92,000 children. At the end of the last program year, 65 percent of our Head Start graduates transitioned to kindergarten in schools where over half of enrolled children qualify for free or reduced price school lunch. Food insecurity is an increasing problem in our community.

In Head Start and Early Head Start classrooms, children are served nutritious meals and snacks every day. We often refer parents to resources for food assistance.

Each child receives vision, hearing, behavioral and developmental screenings to identify any possible impediments to learning. We work closely with the Northwest Regional Education Service District to identify children who may have special needs and who may be eligible for Early Intervention services. We work with parents to ensure that each child has a medical and dental exam during the year and establishes a **medical and dental home**—a continuous source of medical and dental care.

By the end of the 2012-13 program year:

- 97 percent of enrolled children had established medical homes by the end of the program year.
- 96 percent of children were up to date on a schedule of age-appropriate preventive and primary health care.
- 96 percent of children had established dental homes.
- 92 percent of children had received dental exams.

Engaging Parents

Parent engagement is a crucial element of Head Start. Parents are their children's first teachers, and Head Start recognizes this by inviting parents to become engaged in their children's education and in the governance of our program.

The Head Start Parent, Family and Community Engagement Framework provides a road map for engaging parents in the program, their children's education, and their community. Parents attend monthly Parent Site Meetings where topics of interest to them are presented. In 2012-13 these topics included parenting, financial literacy, health and nutrition, mental health, child development, leadership and advocacy skills, and opportunities for community engagement.

Parents who are elected to Policy Council build leadership and advocacy skills while participating in the governance of our program. A representative from the Head Start Policy Council serves as a liaison to the Community Action Board of Directors. Parents throughout the program are encouraged to contribute ideas and raise issues. Former Policy Council members often go on to serve in leadership positions in the community.

Two Policy Council members represent our program as State Delegates to the Oregon Head Start Association. OHSA representatives play a role in advocating for the program at state and national levels. This year our OHSA State Delegates met with 17 legislators to advocate for early childhood education.

Parents also volunteer in our program. In 2012-13 current and former Head Start and Early Head Start parents contributed a total of **13,765** hours of volunteer time.



Family Services

When families thrive, children thrive. Our Family Services staff works with families to help them set and achieve Family Goals each year.

After families set goals, or when a need is identified, Family Services staff works with families to address their needs and connect them to appropriate community resources.

In 2012-13 Family Services staff referred **575** families to a variety of resources.

- **204** families needed emergency assistance to meet immediate food, clothing, and shelter needs.
- 200 families were referred to education resources such as GED programs and college courses.
- **169** families were referred to parenting education resources.
- 169 families were referred to English as a Second Language classes.
- **109** families received health education referrals.
- **103** families were referred for mental health services.
- **62** families were referred to services for families of incarcerated individuals.
- **40** families were referred to job training.
- 36 families needed assistance with utility bills or home repairs.
- **18** families were referred to child abuse and neglect and/or domestic violence resources.
- 10 families received referrals for substance abuse prevention or treatment.



Building a strong financial future

This year we continued to offer financial literacy education at Parent Site Meetings. In addition, 13 current and former Head Start parents are participants in the Individual Development Account (IDA) program. This is an asset-building program that includes financial literacy and budgeting information as well as matching funds for participants saving for specific goals, such as returning to school, opening a small business, or purchasing a home.



Ready for Kindergarten

The Head Start mission has always been to ensure that children from low-income families enter kindergarten ready to learn. Everything we do serves the goals of kindergarten readiness and success in school.

While children attend Head Start, they benefit from our research-based curriculum and assessments, which are aligned to our program's school readiness goals, the Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework, the Common Core State Standards, and the statewide Kindergarten Readiness Assessment. Children enrolled in Early Head Start have an age-appropriate set of school readiness goals of their own. Classroom routines follow a structure that prepares children for the kindergarten classroom. Positive relationships with teachers and high quality teacher-student interactions give children the stability they need to focus on learning.

Most of our Head Start classrooms are located in public schools, and our teachers develop working relationships with the kindergarten teachers in those schools. This helps them prepare children and parents for the expectations of kindergarten. Before children transition, teachers keep parents informed of kindergarten orientation dates and encourage parents to visit the kindergarten classrooms their children will attend. Kindergarten transition information is also included in Parent Site Meetings.

When children transition from Head Start to kindergarten, teachers conduct a Transition Parent-Teacher Conference for each child, provide parents with copies of screenings and assessments, and provide a Transition to Kindergarten letter that the parent can bring to the child's elementary school. Every effort is made to smooth the transition for the child and the family.



Office of Head Start Triennial Review

Our program's last triennial review was held in December 2010. At that time, reviewers found no issues or deficiencies in our program. Our strong partnership with the Northwest Regional Education Service District and our Early Head Start program at Coffee Creek Correctional Facility were noted by reviewers as Areas of Strength.

Our next triennial review is scheduled for 2013



Fiscal Information

2012-13 REVENUE	
Administration for Children and Families Federal Head Start Grant	\$3,328,391.00
Administration for Children and Families Federal Early Head Start Grant	\$1,326,431.00
Federal Training and Technical Assistance	\$36,079.00
USDA* - CACFP Program	\$400,147.00
Oregon Dept of Education Head Start Grant	\$3,308,235.00
Oregon Dept of Education Expansion Funds	\$386,882.00
Oregon Dept of Education Early Head Start Grant	\$86,772.00
Oregon Training and Technical Assistance	\$100,848.00
CACFP Child Care Wellness Grant	\$6,248.00
Oregon Dept of Human Services - Employment Related Day Care	\$296,964.00
Private Contributions	\$251,953.63
Total	\$9,528,950.63

2012-13 EXPENSES	Actual	Budgeted
Employment Expenses	\$7,117,849.15	\$6,516,196.00
Supplies	\$63,558.84	\$62,350.00
Training and Travel	\$185,015.34	\$186,810.00
Occupancy	\$476,875.61	\$437,404.00
Client Expenses	\$730,314.97	\$726,043.50
Communications and Marketing	\$60,723.36	\$66,862.50
Telecommunications	\$54,521.15	\$58,000.00
Equipment Leasing	\$69,243.81	\$77,852.00
Insurance	\$43,174.44	\$42,239.00
Repairs and Maintenance	\$116,850.85	\$97,344.00
Miscellaneous	\$141,835.21	\$39,397.00
Depreciation	\$4,080.00	\$0.00
Administration	\$926,548.00	\$926,548.00
Total	\$9,990,590.7 3	\$9,237,046.00

Community Action Fiscal Audit Results

On October 10, 2013, Community Action received the report of the audit of our 2012-13 financial statements from the firm of McDonald Jacobs, PC. The auditors found that our financial statements presented fairly, in all material respects, our financial position and that we are in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

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Community Action leads the way to eliminate conditions of poverty and creates opportunities for people and communities to thrive.

Executive Director Jerralynn Ness

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