

Message from the Head Start Director

Dear Colleagues and Friends of CLC,

It is my pleasure to present you with the Children's Learning Centers of Fairfield County Head Start/Early Head Start 2020-2021 Annual Report. Children's Learning Centers of Fairfield County (CLC) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to providing high-quality early education and care to all families in our community. CLC Head Start/Early Head Start (HS/EHS) prepares children for kindergarten and a lifetime of learning by offering comprehensive health, nutrition, and family support services along with our infant/toddler and pre-k educational programs. CLC enriches Fairfield County as the leader in early childhood development. We continue to make progress; ensuring that our children have solid educational experiences that secures each child' school readiness. In addition, high-impact meaningful parent engagement opportunities are offered to parents to promote positive child and family outcomes.

This year, we continue to be vigilant in our practices to prevent the spread of Covid-19. To ensure the optimal safety of our children and staff, all staff and children 2 years of age and older are required to wear masks. A daily health screening form is also required; as well as daily temperature checks.

We have also continued our partnership with Columbia University Medical School's Family Nurturing Intervention Program to help families use the healing power of nurture through mother-child emotional connectedness to address and prevent emotional, behavioral, and developmental difficulties. Through a unique collaboration with the Yale University Center for Emotional Intelligence, CLC utilizes the preschool RULER approach for building social emotional skills in young children to aid in their development.

CLC's Head Start/Early Head Start program is funded to serve 168 children in Federal Head Start (34 of which are served through our delegate HS program at Family Centers in Greenwich), 20 children in State Head Start, and 48 children in Early Head Start in the designated service areas of Stamford, Darien, and Greenwich. Through a combination of state and private funding, the Head Start and Early Head Start program provides extended day, full-year center-based services.

We would like to give our sincerest thanks and appreciation to our staff, parents and community partners for helping us achieve successful outcomes for HS/EHS children and families.

Sincerely,

Marsha Guthrie

Head Start Director

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Our Mission:

Together, We'll Shape a Generation Through Early Childhood Education

Our Vision:

Building a Just Future Where Every Child Thrives Because of Early Childhood Education

Children's Learning Centers of Fairfield County (CLC) is committed to providing early childhood education for all families, with direct services and programs focused on health, nutrition & family support for children 6 weeks – 5 years of age.

As the second largest early childhood education provider in Connecticut, CLC has been a leader in developing and implementing high-quality and affordable early childhood education and care programs since 1902. The nonprofit agency is accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and has eight locations in Stamford.

CLC is a Fairfield County innovator in early childhood education outcomes, empowering families to be their own advocates in any circumstance, including when faced with early education obstacles. CLC also identifies and develops strategic community relationships to strengthen families and just educational outcomes.

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EDUCATION/SCHOOL READINESS

CLC continues to strengthen our model to prepare young children entering Kindergarten to succeed in elementary school, which is the primary outcome that CLC's Head Start/Early Head Start programs strive to accomplish.

The Education Manager, coordinators, and teachers utilize and implement a set of rigorous educational tools to create and consistently assess our children's growth and progression. This starts with a research-based curriculum called the Creative Curriculum, and includes its accompanying ongoing online assessment instrument Teaching Strategies Gold (TSG) for both Head Start and Early Head Start. Each child is screened within their first 45 days of entry using the Early Screening Inventory 3rd Edition (ESI-3) and the Ages and Stages 3 (ASQ-3) and Social Emotional (ASQ-SE) questionnaires as our developmental and behavioral screening tools for Head Start and Early Head Start.

For assessment of child and teacher interactions, we utilize the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS). Teachers also participated in coaching that focused on each teaching team's skills as a collective unit, while still supporting their individual needs. The results of each classroom's CLASS scores and coaching goals inform our practice and help guide our professional development training on an annual basis. During the 2020-2021 school year, we focused on providing high quality educational services to promote school readiness and positive program outcomes in the following ways:

- We conducted virtual CLASS observations in Fall 2020. Initial CLASS observations were conducted during the months of November & December 2020. We were able to establish a baseline for our CLASS scores during the Fall 2020 observations of all Head Start classrooms. We also conducted virtual observations in Spring 2021 and we were able to average both Fall and Spring CLASS domain averages to establish our overall average for the 2020-2021 school year. Additionally the Office of Head Start revised the guidance on how they will utilize grantee CLASS scores. The new system has 2 areas: Competitive threshold and Quality threshold, our focus and goal is to have our CLASS scores average in the quality threshold for all 3 learning domains.
- 2. We analyzed the child outcomes data after each checkpoint assessment. This past year we were able to conduct and assess children's outcomes for all 3 checkpoint assessments (Fall, Winter & Spring).

Data from our TSG assessments shows that children in both Head Start and Early Head Start made progress towards meeting school readiness goals during the 2020-2021 program year, across all domains of measurement. Below is a breakdown of all children who met and exceeded the widely held expectations as assessed from the Spring 2021 checkpoint assessment. For the purposes of this analysis, "widely held expectations" is defined as knowledge, skills and behaviors of a child measured against widely held developmental expectations for children of the same age or same class/grade as determined by TSG.

Aggregated data from TSG: Children Meeting and Exceeding Age Appropriate Expectations

CLC Child Outcomes Data Summary SY 2020-2021

All children are assessed using Teaching Strategies Gold assessment 3 times a year (Fall, Winter & Spring). However, due to COVID-19 only 2 assessments were conducted (Fall & Winter) This report will summarize the Winter assessment data and will focus on the following demographic groups:

- Overall Agency
- Children by age

- 1st year & 2nd year students
- Dual Language Learners
- Children with Disabilities

As an agency 82% of all Head Start Children met or exceeded expectations for the Spring checkpoint period. An increase of 30% from the initial Fall checkpoint in which only 52% of children met or exceeded expectations. This indicates that the children made gains across all learning domains over the course of the school year. A few areas did stand out that will need some additional support, Language, Literacy & Math all averaged 77% or 75% of children meeting/exceeding expectations. Meaning children plateaued within those learning domains. A further analysis showed that only 65% of all 4 year olds either met or exceeded expectations in the domain of Math. Whereas 84% of 3 year olds met or exceeded expectations. This trend also stayed consistent when comparing data of 1st year students & 2nd year students.

When children are compared by age (3's & 4's), the data indicates similar gains across Social Emotional, Physical and Cognitive domains. Meaning they were within 3% points of each other. This same trend was noticed in children returning for their 2nd year of service. When the data of 1st year 4 year olds was pulled, there was a considerable lower percentage of children meeting/exceeding expectations. Meaning that children who've had 1 or more years of service had better outcomes than a 4 year old in their 1st year of service.

When reviewing the outcome data for children identified as Dual Language Learners (children whose home language is other than English) reported 80% of children meeting or exceeding expectations. Compared to 84% of children meeting or exceeding expectations whose home language is English. The data within these 2 demographics indicates that although children whose home language is English performed better than the DLL's, the difference between each domain and overall is no greater than 5%. Meaning that our DLL students are learning and acquiring the necessary skills for their age and what is necessary for kindergarten. We are also working with our families to encourage using their home language when speaking to their child, and the benefits of bilingualism.

Children with disabilities (classified with an IEP), demonstrated 60% of meeting expectations. One obstacle that the providers faced was having to transition from in-person to virtual services for each child's related services. We were able to capture and report on the gains made with our children with disabilities. However, we also understand that there are smaller nonmeasurable gains made with our children that may not be captured in their outcomes report.

Impact of COVID-19 & Head Start

Providing early childhood services during the COVID-19 pandemic provided CLC with new obstacles during the 2020-2021 school year. We were fortunate to not have to close many classrooms. But one major impact COVID had on the school year was students' attendance. Our agency's sick child protocols became more stringent in response to COVID-19, and in most instances required children to be tested for COVID, in order to receive a doctor's note clearing them to return to school. That additional layer provided some of our families with an obstacle/hardship in returning to school, thus impacting their attendance for in-person learning. CLC developed an agency wide approach to remote learning. A distance learning grid was developed and implemented for children in quarantine or during

school/classroom closures which provided interim support to children and families. After the introduction of the vaccine, and people within the community becoming fully vaccinated, we noticed a decline in the number of children being exposed as a direct contact to COVID or testing positive, as well as a quicker turnaround on test results.



As an agency 82% of all children met or exceeded expectations across all learning domains.



The data here indicates that 84% of all 3-year-olds met or exceeded expectations this year in our Head Start program.



The data for all 4 year olds averaged 80% meeting or exceeding expectations. This means 47 out of 59 four year olds were assessed at having the necessary skills for kindergarten.



Children returning for their 2nd year of service in Head Start averaged 77% meeting or exceeding expectations.



When 1st year 4 year olds are added to create the 1st year student demographic, 72% of students met and or exceeded expectations.



When reviewing the outcome data for children identified as Dual Language Learners (children whose home language is other than English) revealed 80% of children meeting or exceeding expectations. Meaning that our DLL students are learning and acquiring the necessary skills for kindergarten.



Children with disabilities (classified with an IEP), demonstrated 60% of meeting expectations. One obstacle that the providers faced was having to transition from in-person to virtual services for each child's related services. We were able to capture and report on the gains made with our children with disabilities. However, we also understand that there were smaller gains made with our children that may not be captured in their outcomes report, but those gains were shared and discussed with parents during their child's Spring parent teacher conference.

SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

For the 2020-2021 school year HS and EHS exceeded the 10% enrollment requirement for children with special needs. To ensure our children with disabilities we're able to receive their required services we partnered with Stamford Public Schools Pre-K Team and scheduled virtual sessions with the service providers on a weekly basis, throughout the school year.

In addition, we continued to collaborate with our community partners to offer high quality special education services, and professional development training for staff on topics such as; developmental milestones, challenging behaviors, and working effectively with families of children with special needs. We have formal partnerships with early intervention agencies, and provider agencies such as; Abilis Birth to 3, Theracare Birth to 3, and Stamford Public School Pre-K Team (Apples program).

HEALTH & MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Nutrition services are monitored by the CLC nutrition team. The nutrition staff monitor and follow up on all children's nutrition and dietary needs, and maintain a food restrictions list for each classroom. The nutritionist provides nutrition case management services which will include medical and nutrition assessments, anthropometric measurements and training, CACFP meal observations, nutritional counseling for families, monitoring food allergies, and nutrition education and support.

The school nurse reviews all children's medicals and follow-up on their health care needs; including children with a chronic condition that requires an Individual Health Care Plan. In addition, the nurse will monitor Asthma Action Plans, and Medication Administration Plans for all children requiring special care. All services provided through these special plans are closely monitored by the school nurse. Health screenings are provided either by the school nurse or community partners; including follow up care.

Children are also educated on proper tooth brushing, and good oral health practices are also supported in the classrooms.

The HS/EHS Mental Health and Disabilities Coordinator is responsible for coordinating mental health consultation services for CLC HS/EHS with the Child Guidance Center of Southern Connecticut (CGC). Consultation is provided in the form of classroom observations and feedback to the teaching staff on strategies to develop and implement in-classroom interventions to manage challenging behaviors; supporting nurturing classroom environments and offering a guided approach to promoting positive teacher-child interactions. Mental health consultation also includes individual counseling for children and referrals for mental health support and treatment for parents/guardians.

This past school year we transitioned to all virtual observations with our mental health consultants, as well as virtual meetings on a monthly basis to ensure compliance with the Head Start Program Performance Standards.

PARENT/FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

CLC Head Start and Early Head Start Programs follow a two generational approach with children and parents to support healthy child development, school readiness and long term family wellbeing. This year, CLC HS/EHS continued to offer a wide variety of parent engagement activities; including the Shine on, Families research- based parenting curriculum, monthly workshops and Family Engagement Networking Meetings.

CLC HS/EHS uses Shine on, Families as our research -based parenting curriculum that builds on parents' knowledge and offers them the opportunity to practice parenting skills to promote children's learning and development. Shine on, Families builds upon and enhances home learning and parent meeting structures-extending the classroom curriculum into the home while engaging families with multiple opportunities for modeling, practice and reflection. Shine on, Families is designed to engage and reach every family so they have roles as equal partners to assure their children's healthy development and school readiness.

ERSEA Committee: Collaborative Recruitment Efforts, Partnerships & Highlights;

The Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment, and Attendance (ERSEA) Committee guides the assessment of a program's practices for verifying the eligibility status of children and families who are receiving the program's services and for ensuring appropriate enrollment of children. Each year, the Committee meets to review and update the Head Start and Early Head Start selection criteria to ensure it is in alignment with the Head Start Performance standards and that it reflects the composition of the neighborhoods our program serves.

CLC strives to ensure that our practice to assess communities, and recruit and enroll children and families most in need, includes the following activities:

- Training of all new staff who determine eligibility within 90 days of hire.
- Ongoing training of staff, Policy Council and Governing Board on Head Start and Early Head Start Eligibility Guidelines.

- CLC HS/EHS meets with community partners regarding eligibility and referral process.
- Community outreach to secure partnership agreements that enhance recruitment opportunities.
- Ongoing monitoring to ensure recruitment efforts are ongoing.

Opportunities for Parents in Shared Partnership Building/Goal Setting /Volunteering

Building trusting and sustainable relationships with families is integral to our family engagement work. We engage our families by offering individual case management services as well as supportive group workshops to support them in achieving their goals.

We encourage and provide ample opportunities for parents to volunteer at CLC. This includes; Policy Council, Family Engagement Network meetings/Class Committee meetings, Health Advisory Committee meetings, and various classroom activities, events, and workshops. Due to Covid-19, all parent engagement opportunities were offered to families virtually in 2020-2021.

CLC has established ongoing relationships with many community partners, organizations, and donors that support the children and families served in HS/EHS; including Stamford Public Schools (SPS), the Ferguson Library, Filling in the Blanks, Mother's for Others, United Way, Lions Club of Stamford, Hello Dental, Pitney Bowes, the Grossman Family Foundation, and the Viking Global Foundation to name a few.

GOVERNANCE

Participation in Decision Making/Governance/Policy Council

The CLC Parent Policy Council (PC) prepares parents/guardians to be advocates and leaders on behalf of their children, and cultivates them as community leaders. Parents on the Policy Council are provided with the opportunity to be fully engaged with program planning and decision-making, and work closely with the Head Start Director and Governing Board. CLC's Governing Body and Policy Council utilizes key program information established at the center-level parent committees which are discussed during monthly Policy Council (PC) and Board meetings to conduct their governance responsibilities. The Policy Council and Governing Board receive monthly financial statements; monthly HS/EHS program reports; all documents requiring HS Policy Council and Board approval; as well as communication and guidance from the Office of Head Start.

The CLC delegate agency at Family Centers Head Start in Greenwich conducts monthly Policy Committee Meetings, and business conducted at those meetings is shared with the grantee and PC.

The CLC Board provides oversight of all CLC program operations, and maintains responsibility for safeguarding the assets of the agency in tandem with the CEO. Through its regular meetings and the exercise of its fiduciary duties, CLC Board members receive training in the Head Start regulations, and their roles and responsibilities; including their legal and fiscal responsibilities to HS.

Parents on the CLC Parent Policy Council receive annual training on the Head Start regulations, a review of their roles and responsibilities, and eligibility training on federal regulations.

NUMBER OF CHILDREN & FAMILIES SERVED (Head Start; including Greenwich HS)

Head Start Enrollment as of June 30, 2021

Funded Enrollment: **188** Actual Enrollment: **151 Cumulative Enrollment: 175**

Number of Children served Year-To-Date in 2020-2021

Participants Age at time of Enrollment:

- 52% of the children enrolled were 3 Years Old: (91)
- 48% of the children enrolled were 4 Years Old: (84)
- Families served: 162
- 97% Percentage of eligible children served: (169)



• Figure 1- Participants by Age & Percentage



Figure 2- Participants by Income Eligibility Percentage

Participants by Income Eligibility Percentage

- 25 (14%) Homeless Children
- 3 (1%) Foster Care Children
- 12 (7%) Public Assistance such as TANF, SSI
- 129 (74%) Income Eligible Children
- 6 (3%) Over Income Children (101-130%)
- 0 (0%) Over income (above 130%)

Volunteers

- Total number of volunteers: 22
- Total number of these volunteers who are current or former Head Start Parents: 19

Head Start Staff

- Number of Head Start Staff: 58
- Number of Head Start Head Teachers: 11
- Number of Assistant Teachers/Aides: 25

Families

- There were more single-parent families served during this program year than two-parent families. We served 103 single families and 59 two- parent families.
- Father Engagement: 90 fathers
- 106 families received WIC Nutritional Services
- **162** Families that received program services to promote family outcomes

Health/Dental

- Children with completed medical exam: 98%
- Children with up-to-date immunizations: 78%
- Children with a completed dental exam: **95%**
- Children with health insurance: 94%
- Children with no health insurance: 6% (undocumented)
- Children with Special Needs/ IEPs: 11=%

Race/Ethnicity	Federal #	Federal %
American Indian or Alaska Native	1	.005%
Asian	1	.005%
Black or African American	49	28%
Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander	0	0%
White and Hispanic	106	60%
White non-hispanic	11	.06%
Biracial / Multi-Racial	7	.04%
Other Race	0	0%
Unspecified Race	0	0%

Race and Ethnicity as of June 30, 2021 (Cumulative Enrollment)

Primary Language of Family at Home as of June 30, 2021 (Cumulative Enrollment)

Languages	# of Participants	% of participants
English	73	42%
Spanish	94	54%
Central American, South American, or Mexican	0	0
Caribbean	2	.01%
Middle Eastern or South Asian	1	.005%
East Asian	0	0%
Native North American or Alaska Native	0	0%
Pacific Island	0	0%
European or Slavic	5	2.8%
African	0	0%
Other	0	0%
Unspecified	1	0%

NUMBER OF CHILDREN & FAMILIES SERVED (Early Head Start)

Early Head Start Enrollment as of June 30, 2021

Funded Enrollment: **48** Actual Enrollment: **45 Cumulative Enrollment: 62**

Number of Children Served Year-To-Date in 2020-2021

Participants age at time of enrollment

- 21% of the children enrolled were under 1 Years Old: (13)
- 40% of the children enrolled were 1 Years Old: (25)
- 39% of the children enrolled YTD were 2 Years Old: (24)
- Families served: **43**
- Percentage of eligible children served: 94% (58)



• Figure 1- Participants by Age & Percentage



Figure 2- Participants by Income Eligibility Percentage

Participants by Income Eligibility Percentage by Cumulative Enrollment

- 12 Homeless Children (19%)
- 1 Foster Care Children (1.6%)
- 3 Public Assistance such as TANF, SSI (4.8%)
- 42 Income Eligible Children (68%)
- 4 Over Income Children (6.4%)

Volunteers

- Total number of volunteers: 6
- Total number of these volunteers who are current or former Head Start Parents: 6

Early Head Start Staff

- Number of EHS Inf/Todd Staff: 32
- Number of EHS Teachers: 15

Families

- There were more single-parent families served during this program year than two-parent families. We served 34 single families and 9 two parent families.
- Father Engagement: 34 fathers
- 28 families received WIC Nutritional Services

Health/Dental

- Children with completed medical exam: 100%
- Children with up-to-date immunizations: 100%
- Children with a completed dental exam: **90%**
- Children with health insurance: 98%
- Children with no health insurance: 2%
- Children with Special Needs/ IFSPs: 8%

Race and Ethnicity as of June 30, 2021 (Cumulative Enrollment)

Race/Ethnicity	Federal #	Federal %
American Indian or Alaska Native	0	0%
Asian	0	0%
Black or African American	13	21%
Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander	0	0%
White and Hispanic	44	71%
White and non-Hispanic	1	1.6%
Biracial / Multi-Racial	4	6.4%
Other Race	0	0%
Unspecified Race	0	0%

Primary Language of Family at Home as of June 30, 2021 (Cumulative Enrollment)

Languages	# of Participants	% of participants
English	28	45%
Spanish	32	52%
Central American, South	0	0%
American, or Mexican		
Caribbean	1	1.6%
Middle Eastern or South Asian	0	0%
East Asian	0	0%
Native North American or Alaska	0	0%
Native		
Pacific Island	0	0%
European or Slavic	1	1.6%
African	0	0%
Other	0	0%
Unspecified	0	0%

2020-2021 HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START GRANT SUMMARY

Federal & CIK Actual Funded Revenue

 Federal Head Start
 \$1,638,972

 Early Head Start
 \$1,040,719

 Total
 \$2,679,691

Head Start Actual Expenditures

Salaries \$940,011 Fringe Benefits \$310,203 Training \$26,691 Equipment \$0 Supplies \$94,675 Contractual \$16,929 Other \$104,277 Allocated Indirect Cost \$146,186 Total Expenses \$1,638,972

Early HS Actual Expenditures

Salaries \$623,766 Fringe Benefits \$205,843 Training \$7,058 Equipment \$0 Supplies \$53,699 Contractual \$8,487 Other \$59,637 Allocated Indirect Cost \$82,230 Total Expenses \$1,040,719

FINANCIAL AUDITS AND FEDERAL REVIEWS

Blum Shapiro's audit opinion from CLC's last completed audit: "In our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of Children's Learning Centers of Fairfield County, Inc., as of June 30, 2020, and the changes in its net assets and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America."

CLC Head Start/Early Head Start is in the second year of its grant award. CLC received an Focus Area One (FA1) monitoring review in April 2021. CLC met full compliance with the requirements of the Head Start Program Performance Standards, Head Start Act, and other applicable regulations.

Children's Learning Centers of Fairfield County Executive Leadership

Marc Jaffe, CEO Darrell Ingram, CFO

HS/EHS Leadership Team

Marsha Guthrie, Head Start Director Enrique Pabon, Education Manager

Board of Directors

Robert J. Mattis, Jr., Chairman of the Board

Ellen Mellis, Second Vice Chair

Susan Cutler

Pam Kaprowski, Secretary

Bruce Blasnik, Treasurer

Yuliya Dorokhova, Head Start Parent Representative

Thomas Dickson

Thasunda Duckett

Dr. Janmeet Grover

Chuck Mosher

John Roberts

Andres Soto

Bonnie Kintzer

J. David Nelson

Sanjay Sidwani

Ernest Fleishman

Antonio Mazzara

Corey Kenyon

Karen Gianuzzi

Whitney Sachs

Noah Lapine

Elizabeth Sosnow

Policy Council

Yuliya Dorokhova, Chairperson Maria Tellez, Vice Chairperson Leidy Diaz, Treasurer Maria Rivas, Secretary

CLC Head Start/Early Head Start Sites

CLC Head Start 90 Maple Avenue Stamford, CT 06902

CLC Early Head Start 72 Franklin Street Stamford, CT 06902

