

General Information

Name of Agency: **Family Focus**

Program Number:

Program Name: Hyde Park

Address: 5467 S. University

Phone Number: 773-643-0452

Fax Number: 773-643-0620

Head Start Director Name: TeeNeka N. Jones

Head Start Director Email: teeneka.jones@family-focus.org

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

Agency Type: Non-Profit

Agency Description: Social Service

Site Locations

Hyde Park Preschool Center

5467 S. University Ave, Chicago IL 60615

Community Areas Served

Hyde Park

Kenwood

Washington Park

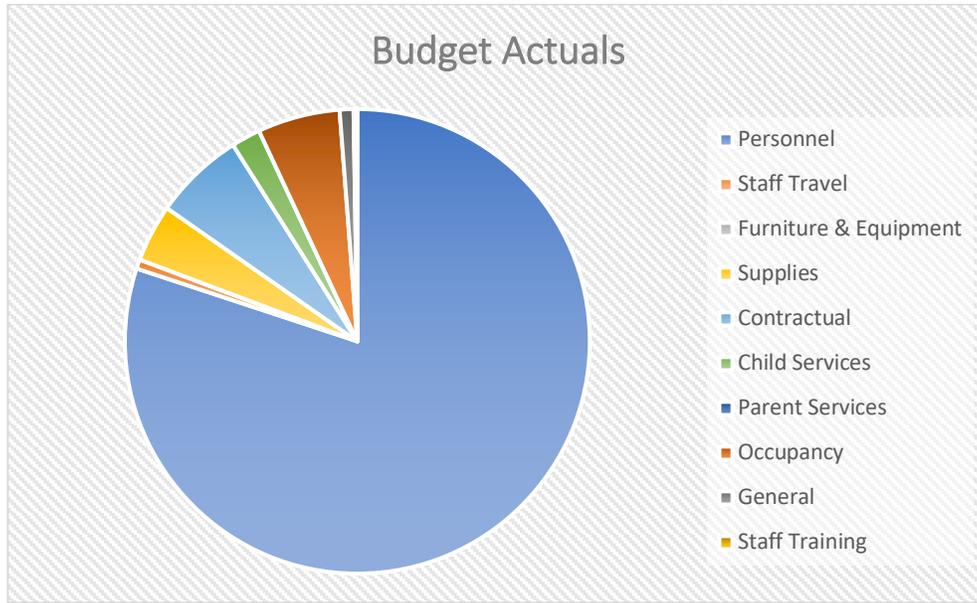
Woodlawn

Overall Grantee Budget 2020

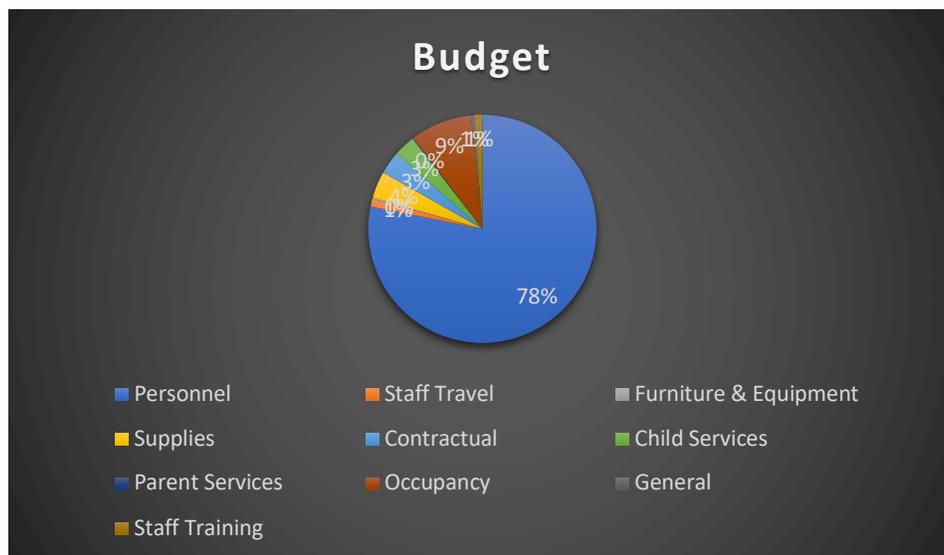
Total Public and Private Funds received: \$ 1,035,280

Public Funds		Private Funds	
Source	Amount	Source	Amount
Federal	22,578	Individuals, Corporations, Foundations, etc.	219,579
State	1,996,290	Private Grants	262,671
City of Chicago	2,892,358	Annual Dinner	12,430
		Special Event Fundraising	20,254
		Private Tuition	155,646
		Tuition Co-pay	364,700
Total	4,911,226	Total	1,035,280

Budget and Actual Expenditures 2020



2020 Expenses	Actuals	Budget
Personnel	80.08%	78.16%
Staff Travel	0.65%	1.09%
Furniture and Equipment	0.00%	0.21%
Supplies	4.00%	3.77%
Contractual	6.30%	3.26%
Child Services	2.03%	3.03%
Parent Services	0.00%	0.17%
Occupancy	5.73%	8.74%
General	0.96%	0.44%
Staff Training	0.26%	1.14%
	100%	100%



Summary of your most current Community Assessment

Children and Families Served in 2020

Grantee Funded Enrollment

	Head Start Enrollment	Early Head Start Enrollment
Center-based Program	37	24
a. 5 days per week	37	24
1. Full-day enrollment	37	24
2. Part-day enrollment	0	0
b. 4 days per week	0	0
1. Full-day enrollment	0	0
2. Part-day enrollment	0	0
Home-based Program	0	0
Unallocated Slots	0	0
Total:	57	24

Site:

Total Children Served: 67

Total Families Served: 64

Average monthly enrollment (as percentage of funded enrollment): 100%

Number of Eligible Children in Community, ages 0-5	2403
Percentage of children served in agency	6%

Health

Percentage of enrolled children who received medical and dental exams

	Received Medical Exams	Received Dental Exams
	Medical HS=61% EHS=38% Total =52% (numbers from August 2021 PIR)	Dental HS=66% EHS=62% Total 64% (numbers from August 2021 PIR)

Parental involvement in Directly Operated, Delegate and Partner Agencies

Community Assessment Summary:

Executive Summary

- The pandemic and subsequent economic recession permeates almost every section of this report
- Numbers and data, particularly from the Census Bureau, were not often current enough to reflect the effect of the pandemic on many sections of this report
- Reports from agencies chronicling the pandemic and news stories were used to provide as much up-to-date information as possible

Strengths in Communities Identified by Focus Groups

- The focus groups found that the COVID-19 pandemic dominated all the discussions – it was difficult to think about strengths before the pandemic hit and the conversations focused on the world “as we now know it.”
- From all the focus groups, “family, provider, and community resilience continue to shine through” with flexibility and creativity; families supported one another, families supported friends, co-workers supported one another and agency cooperation was manifest. Everyone “just kept pushing through.”
- The programs were a needed and welcome source of support to families for information, resources, continued child education and many other services helped with the family's stability and well-being
- In addition to the program services, parents and community partners saw the way service providers in communities adapted to be responsive to family needs – “there were new discoveries every day on how to effectively meet a family's need” and the availability of all these community resources “let the families know they were not alone during this hard time.”

Status of Illinois' Early Childhood Programs

- With the enforced closure of child care in 2020, participation in the CCAP subsidy program remained down from February through November of 2020, especially for infants and toddlers.
- Participation for pre-school children was better although centers bore the brunt of the decrease
- Preschool for All, MIECHV home visiting programs and referrals to the Early Intervention services had also declined.
- interviews with parents by Action for Children found that parents were hesitant to return their children to early childhood programs because of health and safety issues
- But lack of child care also caused stress and challenges for those parents who were essential workers and had to miss work because of no child care
- Every Child Ready Chicago (ECRC) is a public-private partnership with the aim to align the prenatal-to-five systems and supports serving Chicago children and families

Homelessness

- In 2019, a count of the homeless found 1,105 family households
- The U.S. Department of Education during the 2017-2018 school year showed that an estimated **52,978** public school students experienced homelessness over the course of the year, mainly in doubled up housing
- Studies by the Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia and the Census Bureau's Household Pulse Survey found the COVID pandemic has exacerbated the already existing housing burden on renters
- The American Rescue Plan recently passed by Congress includes rental assistance but may not keep families and children from shelters and doubling up with other families

Recruitment of Early Head Start and Head Start – Births and Birth Rates

- Birth rates can help predict changes in the population of children birth through age five in Illinois
- The birth rate has fallen from 56 births per 1,000 women in 2010 to 51 per 1,000 in 2016-2018
- Most counties in Illinois show declining birth rates; the only counties with increasing births are outside the Chicago area and surrounding counties
- Historically when the labor market is weak, aggregate birthrates decline; when the labor market improves, birthrates improve. The Covid-19 pandemic has propelled the country into an economic recession and may predict a further decline in births

Recruitment of Early Head Start and Head Start – Children Not Served, 0-2

- In many communities the supply of early childhood programs that serve infants and toddlers continues to be insufficient but does meet the needs in other communities
- Hyde Park, Kenwood and West Town have more programs for infants and toddlers than there are eligible children
- The other current recruitment areas continue to have eligible infants and toddlers that are not served by either Early Head Start or Prevention Initiative programs
- When center and family child care is subtracted from the pool of eligible children, six current recruitment community areas remain with unserved eligible children
- The *proposed* recruitment areas had more eligible children not served in Early Head Start, Prevention Initiative or in child care

Recruitment of Early Head Start and Head Start – Children Not Served, 3-5

- While efforts to expand preschool have stalled in the state and in the city due to the pandemic, economic recovery and President Biden's Build Back Better Recovery Plan, if passed and funded, will likely see these expansions continue
- Looking at just Chicago, the number of Preschool for All funded slots already exceeds the number of eligible preschoolers
- Four current recruitment community areas had eligible children that were not served in Head Start or in Preschool for All – Fuller Park, Hermosa, New City and Oakland; the number of children not served in Fuller Park and Oakland is largely the result of no programs operating in those two community areas.
- When center and family child care is subtracted from the pool of eligible children, only Oakland remained as a community area with eligible preschoolers that were not served by Head Start, Preschool for All and center and family child care
- Four proposed community areas had a substantial number of eligible preschoolers after subtracting the numbers served by Head Start and Preschool for All: Albany Park, Austin, West Lawn and West Ridge
- When center and family child care slots were subtracted from the pool of eligible preschoolers, more programs existed than there were eligible preschoolers
- The number of children eligible for Head Start may increase in the next year or two as a result of the unemployment and economic recession due to the pandemic

Recruitment of Early Head Start and Head Start – High Priority Children

Disabilities, Birth through Age Two

- Information from the Chicago Public Schools from September 20, 2020 indicated that 984 children aged birth through 3 had an Individual Education Plan (or more properly an Individual Family Service Plan), which accounted for 30.8% of all enrolled children in that age group
- All of the CFCs in Chicago exceeded the national percentage of Child Find for infants under one year and for infants and toddlers birth to age three, which means they are screening more infants and toddlers and ensuring more infants and toddlers are identified with disabilities with ensuing services that are provided as early as possible

Disabilities, Ages Three through Five

- According to the Chicago Public Schools, on the 20th day of school year 2020-2021, 1,541 students aged four had an Individual Education Plan (IEP) or 16.2% of 4-year-old students

Disabilities and COVID

- From February through September 2020, screenings for children birth through age two have dropped by 68% and referrals have dropped by 58% due to the pandemic
- Children with special needs likely found their provision of services greatly disrupted due to the pandemic; some services were likely ended during Shelter in Place while others changed the modality to virtual
- While all the requirements of an IEP or an IFSP still needed to be met, changes were made to a Remote Learning Plan (RLP) but such services can be very difficult to implement remotely
- CFCs, schools and parents have worked together to continue to provide services to special needs children but the challenges have been difficult to overcome

Child Abuse and Neglect

- Although not current data, the overall child abuse and neglect rate in Chicago between 2015 and 2019 rose by 31% from 10.8 per 1,000 children in 2015 to 14.1 per 1,000 children in 2019
- Some communities not only had high rates but saw large increases in the rates between 2015 and 2019
- Englewood, Washington Park, West Englewood and Grand Boulevard were among the top ten current recruitment community areas with the highest rates of child abuse and neglect
- South Shore, West Garfield Park and North Lawndale showed the highest rates among the *proposed* recruitment areas
- Generally, the *proposed* recruitment areas showed decreases in child abuse and neglect except for West Garfield Park, which showed an increase

Substitute Care

- Most community areas had small numbers of children in substitute care, not enough to reliably calculate a rate per 1,000 children
- Morgan Park, Englewood, West Englewood, Near West Side and Humboldt Park had the highest rates of substitute care
- Despite high rates, all the current recruitment areas showed large decreases in substitute care between 2015 and 2019

- The *proposed* Start Early recruitment areas also had small numbers of children in substitute care
- Austin, North Lawndale and South Shore had the highest rates of substitute care for the *proposed* recruitment areas
- South Shore showed a substantial decrease but Austin and North Lawndale showed increases

Child Abuse and Neglect/Substitute Care and COVID

- Children lost access to concerned adults outside the family during shelter in place as well as to mandated reporters
- Despite efforts by the Department of Children and Family Services in asking teachers and other mandated reporters to be extra vigilant, calls concerning child abuse and neglect dropped during the pandemic
- Anecdotal information from the Illinois Head Start Association, reports an increase in child abuse and neglect

Teen Birth Rate

- In 2019 the U.S. teen birth rate was 16.7 births per 1,000 teens, down 4% from 2018 when the rate was 17.4 births for every 1,000 adolescent females aged 15-19
- The birth rates for teens declined for nearly all groups in 2019: down 2% for non-Hispanic Black, 6% for non-Hispanic White, and 5% for Hispanic teens

Poverty and Extreme Poverty

- Most of the community areas in this report saw increases in child poverty
- The Chicago young child poverty rate in 2019 was 26% and in 2018, 23%, an increase of 11%
- Englewood, West Englewood, Washington Park, Woodlawn and New City had 40% or higher of children, birth through age five in poverty
- North Lawndale, Austin, East Garfield Park and West Garfield Park, *proposed* recruitment areas, had more than 40% of their children, birth through age five in poverty
- Many of the current recruitment community areas with high percentages of young child poverty also had high percentages of children in extreme poverty (below 50% of poverty): Englewood, West Englewood, Washington Park, Woodlawn
- The same was true of the *proposed* recruitment areas – North Lawndale, Austin, East and West Garfield Park, all with high poverty at 100% also had high levels of extreme poverty (50%)

Poverty and COVID

- The American Rescue Plan expands the child tax credit and could reduce child poverty by about 40%
- Currently the plan is only for one year but if renewed and made permanent could replicate a similar policy in Great Britain that reduced child poverty by half
- The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities estimated that in Illinois 2,543,000 (89%) children will benefit from the expansion of the child tax credit; of those, 153,000 children under 18 will be lifted above the 100% of poverty line and a further 338,000 will be lifted closer to the 100% poverty line and out of extreme poverty

Health

Uninsured

- An estimated 120,000 Illinois children were uninsured in 2019, a 46% increase since 2016; Latinx children had the highest rate of uninsured at 5.6% compared to all other children at 4.0%
- The increase in the uninsured came just before the COVID pandemic started, leaving more children without health care insurance
- The American Rescue Plan has a special enrollment period for the Affordable Care Act and has allowed 5,300 people to sign up since February, 2021 and an extension to August will allow thousands more Illinoisans to sign up

COVID and Communities at Risk

- The city of Chicago has created a Chicago COVID-19 Community Vulnerability Index that takes several factors into account in determining a Chicago community area's vulnerability to the pandemic
- The index and rankings of Chicago community areas ranged from 4 (the lowest) to 64 (the highest)
- A high score correlated with high rates of COVID hospitalizations and mortality, low socioeconomic status and high mobility during COVID (unable to shelter in place, likely due to occupation)
- Residents of high vulnerability community areas have been almost 3 times as likely to have died from COVID-19 as low vulnerability community areas and the top 10 community areas account for 25% of all COVID-19 deaths
- Of the top 15 high vulnerability community areas, 7 were majority Latinx and 8 were majority Black
- Of the current recruitment areas, West Englewood, New City, Englewood, Humboldt Park and Hermosa all had indexes of 50 or more and were considered high risk
- Of the *proposed* recruitment areas, North Lawndale, South Lawndale, Archer Heights and Austin all had indexes above 50 and were considered high risk

Child Health and COVID

- While inequities existed in health care for high-risk groups prior to COVID, the pandemic has exacerbated these differences and reflects the disparities prevalent in the adult population; nationally there has been a disproportionately higher infection rate occurring in Latinx children than in White or Black children
- Other child medical concerns related to COVID include curtailment of active or ongoing medical treatment, physical and other therapies and health monitoring such as for asthma; wellness checks were put on hold while the Shelter in Place order was in place and have been slow to resume
- Additionally, children were falling behind on vaccinations for chicken pox and measles among others, which could lead to future additional illnesses and medical problems

Lead in Illinois

- Illinois has more service lines made of lead than any other state and Chicago has more than any other city
- Mayor Lightfoot started a small pilot program to target low-income neighborhoods and replace just 650 of Chicago's 400,000 lead service lines this year
- President Biden's proposed Build Back Better Recovery Plan includes \$45 million in funds to replace lead pipes; even if the \$45 million for lead pipe replacement remains in the plan and is funded, Chicago remains behind most U.S. cities

Perinatal and Child Health Indicators

- The Illinois Maternal and Child Health (Title V) Program recently published a new infant mortality data report that outlines factors contributing to the inequities in infant mortality for Black and White infants

Social-Emotional Health

- Mothers, especially Black, Latinx and single mothers, have borne a great deal of stress during the pandemic; the stress and mental health crises that many mothers face is seen and felt by their children
- A positive consequence of the pandemic is resultant smaller class sizes that have contributed to a decrease in behavioral challenges of the children and made it easier for teachers to handle behavioral difficulties
- The Illinois Children's Mental Health Partnership devoted their annual report to the Governor on the effects of the COVID-19 virus on children's mental health and on the effect of structural and persistent racism, overtly recognized as never before this past year, to the mental health of children
- Both the Lake and Will County Health most current health reports noted mental health needs in their communities

Nutrition

Food Insecurity

- Food insecurity remains a major concern for families already experiencing poverty and is a growing concern for many families negatively impacted by the economic consequences of COVID-19
- The Census Bureau's Household Pulse Survey found that between 7 and 10 million children live in a household where children didn't get enough because the household could not afford it
- In Illinois, the percent of adults reporting that children in their household were not eating enough because the household could not afford food was 17%
- In Chicago, the Greater Chicago Food Depository, which also covers Cook County, reported that in their 41-year history, the Depository has never seen a hunger crisis greater than the one caused by the COVID virus
- Perhaps an additional consequence of the pandemic and school/early education closures is increased obesity of children because they have less time to exercise and may not be eating as healthily as they would have at school or early education centers

SNAP Benefits

- SNAP benefits in Illinois increased by 16% between February and May, 2020
- The American Rescue Plan passed by Congress and signed by President Biden in March, 2021 includes expansion of the SNAP program
- Although data updating Child SNAP receipt from 2015 to 2019 was obtained, the values were virtually the same as between 2014 and 2018 and do not reflect the increases seen with the COVID pandemic
- Nevertheless, from that data SNAP receipt decreased in almost all the current recruitment community areas, Washington Park and Morgan Park showing the only increases
- Fuller Park, West Englewood and Woodlawn, in the current recruitment areas, showed the highest receipt of SNAP, between 71% and 99%
- North Lawndale, West Garfield Park and South Shore showed the highest SNAP receipt for the *proposed* recruitment areas, also between 71% and 99%
- SNAP was one of the public assistance programs included on changes to public charge by the Trump administration; on March 9, 2021, the United States Department of Justice filed motions to dismiss the Trump public charge rule, which ended a two-year legal battle and invalidated the rule nationwide

Unemployment

- Unemployment rates have been higher for Black and Latinx workers, 9.9% and 8.5% respectively since February, 2020, compared to 5.6% for White workers
- Unemployment has also risen faster among workers born outside of the United States, including individuals who are now U.S. citizens
- Latina women fell into the deepest unemployment at the height of the job losses last spring
- The majority of jobs lost have been in industries that pay low average wages, with the lowest paying industries accounting for 30% of all jobs but 55% of the jobs lost from February, 2020 to February, 2021
- When family members are considered, as many as 38 million people in February, including nearly 10 million children, lived in a family where at least one adult did not have paid work in the last week because of unemployment or the pandemic
- While the economy has improved from last spring, the gains, like the losses, have not been spread evenly with significantly fewer Black and Latina women working, fewer than any other demographic; women are lagging behind men across race and ethnicity
- Workers in the lowest quarter of earners lost almost 8 million jobs from 2019 to 2020, while the highest wage earners actually gained jobs
- When jobs re-open, the groups hurt the most, single mothers of color especially those with a high school diploma or less education, have the hardest time getting back to work
- When the pandemic hit, the unemployment rate in the Chicago-Joliet-Naperville region rose to 10.4% in September, 2020 and has since fallen to 7.4% in February, 2021

Immigrant Families

- While threats to immigrants have eased recently, it may take time for immigrants to feel comfortable accessing needed health care and other services due to fear of deportation by the government
- Immigrants, particularly women, often work in low wage-earning jobs and industries which have been hardest hit with lay-offs and unemployment
- Immigrants, even those who are now U.S. citizens have seen job losses without the gains that U.S. born citizens might be experiencing

Chicago Unrest

- The death of George Floyd in late May in Minneapolis sparked several marches and demonstrations in cities across the county including the Chicago area
- By June 2, the National Guard had been activated in at least 28 states and dozens of cities, including Chicago, had imposed curfews to stop the looting, arson and violence
- Most of the protests have been peaceful, however. Between May 26 and August 22, 2020, 93% of protests were peaceful and nondestructive
- Nevertheless, police in many cities reacted with unnecessary violence
- Mr. Floyd's death came during the coronavirus pandemic that saw Americans ordered to stay in their homes and saw unemployment rise to levels not seen in years
- The pandemic clearly revealed many inequities in American systems from health care to employment

- The confluence of all these factors forced people to pay attention, less able to look away and be distracted by other things
- A poll for ABC suggested that 74% of Americans felt that the killing of Mr. Floyd was part of a broader problem in the treatment of Black Americans by police
- The protests and inequities the COVID pandemic laid bare, have generated a societal accounting for the racial injustice in the United States leading to numerous legislative proposals at all levels of government to combat police misconduct, systemic racism and police brutality

Crime

- The first quarter of 2021 has seen more gun violence than in the past 4 years – 131 killings so far in 2021, a 34% jump over the same period a year ago
- The last year also saw 760 people killed as neighborhoods struggled with school closures, unemployment and shortages of resources in poorer communities as well as the unrest following George Floyd's death
- Chicago has not been the only city experiencing a spike in gun violence and deaths; Detroit, New York, Philadelphia, as well as smaller cities such as Grand Rapids and Milwaukee, have also experienced an increase in gun violence
- In addition to the gun violence and homicides, Chicago has also experienced a large increase in carjackings this year, continuing from an increased trend in 2020

Property Crime

- Between 2015 and 2019, many Chicago community areas saw decreases in property crime
- Of the current recruitment areas, Fuller Park, again as in the last few years, had the highest property crime rate at 115.3 (115.3 offenses per 1,000 residents) followed by Englewood at 61.3
- The lowest property crime rate for the current recruitment areas was in Brighton Park at 12.8 (12.8 offenses per 1,000 residents)
- In the *proposed* recruitment areas, Near North Side had the highest property crime rate at 66.5 (66.5 offenses per 1,000 residents); the lowest was in West Elsdon at 15.1
- Most of the *proposed* recruitment areas saw increases in property crime but a few saw decreases

Violent Crime

- Between 2015 and 2019, most current Start Early recruitment communities saw a decrease in violent crime
- Fuller Park, like with property crime, had the highest violent crime rate of 57.9 (57.9 offenses per 1,000 residents) as they have for the last several years; Edgewater had the lowest crime rate at 3.0 (3 offenses per 1,000 residents)
- In the Start Early *proposed* recruitment areas, most saw increases in violent crime
- West Garfield Park had the highest violent crime rate at 46.4 (46.4 offenses per 1,000 residents) and Garfield Ridge the lowest at 2.3

Domestic Violence

- In 2019, there were 67,600 incidents of domestic violence or 60.4% of all offenses, the highest percentage of offenses out of all offences

- the Illinois Children's Mental Health Partnership found that calls to domestic violence hotlines had increased significantly during the COVID pandemic
- However domestic violence shelters had less capacity due to social distancing and used hotels as shelter places.
- Anecdotal information from Head Start and early care and education programs were also seeing increases in domestic violence

Challenges in Communities Identified by Focus Groups

- Families will need lots of support in the months and year ahead
- There is concern and stress around the city “returning to normal” when certain families and populations are still facing the same struggles with health concerns, unemployment, and adequate schooling and childcare
- There is a need for community partners to come together to share resources and partner together soon. Parents need to know what resources are available to them
- Among the needs and challenges families and communities face:
 - Support with issues related to grief and loss, violence and trauma, and continued support around emotional recovery (mentioned most frequently)
 - Affordable housing in neighborhoods that are safe for children and families (also mentioned frequently)
 - Health insurance and equitable health resources for Black and brown communities
 - Support in the hospital during labor for pregnant mothers
 - Computer and technology accessibility (tablets, iPads or laptops; high speed internet) and literacy
 - Economic development plan for helping organizations and families recover from pandemic and helping people back to full employment
 - Protection from the ending of COVID-19 related protections such as evictions, student loan payments, utilities being shut off
 - Information about vaccines for themselves and their children and about resources and remedies available
 - Funding for programs that provide resources and services to children and families

Proposed Recommendations

The following recommendations are offered as an initial point of departure for further questions, strategizing and planning. Many of the recommendations from last year would also be applicable.

- Program staff summarized their focus group discussions and formulated needed and highly relevant recommendations. The recommendations should all be implemented
- While the expansion of universal pre-K has been stalled by the pandemic, efforts will re-start sooner or later; Build Back Better has provisions for universal pre-K if passed and funded. These efforts have implications for Head Start programs (less so Early Head Start programs); keep abreast of efforts and of communication about these efforts by the Office of Head Start and strategize accordingly
- The table in Appendix B that lists the percentage of homeless students is a resource for locating homeless families
- Analysis of the current and proposed Chicago community areas on number of children in poverty and number of children served in other early childhood programs revealed eligible infants and toddlers that were not served in most communities
- The same analysis showed that competition for preschool children continues with few current and proposed community areas that have many unserved eligible children
- Programs are encouraged to keep close contacts with their local Child Family Connections office for referral of

infants and toddlers with disabilities and to help coordinate and provide any virtual services

- As soon as is safe, allow therapists from Early Intervention to provide their services at the program site
- The local Child and Family Connections could also provide referrals for children turning three and aging out of Early Intervention but still in need of services
- Program staff may need to be acutely vigilant and aware of any child abuse or neglect that might have occurred during the enforced Shelter in Place orders and isolation
- Head Start and Early Head Start programs can provide a valuable service by ensuring that any missed well-child visits, vaccinations and other needed health services that were delayed or did not occur during the Shelter in Place order and families not accessing services for health and safety reasons
- Start Early's Head Start and Early Head Start programs have always been diligent in ensuring children are tested for lead. Given the recent findings on the number of lead pipes in Illinois and the Chicago area, that persistent diligence needs to continue
- The pandemic, economic recession and job uncertainty has created tremendous stress for families, particularly mothers. Use existing relationships with mothers and parents to sensitively talk about what keeps them up at night; use the mental consultant to discuss concerns and make referrals if needed
- With increases in food insecurity due to the pandemic, referrals to food banks and any other food resources the program can provide may be needed now more than ever
- Program staff should also ensure that families are enrolled in SNAP if needed and know how to access their local WIC agencies
- Many of the parents that the Start Early Head Start and Early Head Start programs serve might be the parents who have been unemployed due to the pandemic and may be having difficulty finding employment again. Staff can assist with referrals
- Programs should reassure immigrant families as much as possible that they can safely access needed services such as Early Intervention and other disability services, health and mental health and nutrition services. Staff should continue to provide support and referrals, when necessary, to immigrant families. They continue to be under stress and may not be accessing needed services
- While the American Recovery Act has provisions to help families stay in their homes, programs may find more families needing housing after being unable to pay rent or mortgages. Access to affordable housing will still be difficult but offering any referrals and support will help
- Program staff should be vigilant for possible domestic violence that may have occurred during the forced isolation
- Staff should continue to provide the needed services parents appreciate and noted in their focus groups – mental health consultant, nutritionist, health referrals, disability referrals and any other social service needs

Parent Education Activities: 8 PAT Activities were conducted virtually via YouTube videos

- October – Fall Tree, Nature Walk & Fall Creations
- November – Thankful Turkey, Thankful Paper Chains and Shake/Rattle/Roll
- February – Bouquet of People You Love, Feeling and Sorting Hearts
- March – 3D Rainbow, Rainbow Activity
- April – Foam Rain Cloud, Musical Eggs
- May – Pizza Food Experience, Flowerpot Activity
- June – Summer Collage
- July – Summer Fireworks, Catch Butterfly Activity

Parent Committee Meetings:

Parent Meetings were organized and facilitated by the Site Director. The topics of the meetings have included:

- Parent Orientation/Pedestrian Safety/TSG-Creative Curriculum/ Referrals and Screenings (9/17 & 9/15, 2020)
- What is Mental Health? / Options for Knowledge (10/13 & 10/15, 2020)
- The benefits of good attendance & Preparing your child for success in school/Preparing your child for preschool/kindergarten Transitions (11/17 & 11/19, 2020)
- Safety Training/Health Insurance (12/15 & 12/17, 2020)
- Mental Health A Typical Behavior (1/19 & 1/21, 2021)
- Importance of Physical Activity/Importance of Medical and Dental (2/16 & 2/18, 2021)
- Nutrition/Parent Curriculum (3/16 & 3/18, 2021)
- Mental Health-Childhood Violence (4/20 & 4/22, 2021)
- Behavior Health (5/18 & 5/20, 2021)
- Kindergarten Readiness/Transitions (6/15 & 6/18, 2021)

Other special gatherings or activities: UIC Workshops were conducted virtually

- October – Who I Am With Money & Book Sharing
- November – Savings & Teaching the ABC's
- December – Choosing Credit & Creating Home Literacy Centers
- January – What Happens If I Don't Pay & Math at Home
- February – Money Services & Children's Writing
- March – Tracking Spending & Parents and Teachers Get Together
- April – Spending Plans & Parents and Homework
- May – Credit History and Score & Talking Leads to Learning

Other Special Activities:

- April - Universal Smiles Dental Van
- September – Back-to-School Jam

Male Involvement:

- Family Focus hosted a Fatherhood Conference on June 16th

Health

- Starting Program Year 20-21 during the pandemic, we wanted to make sure that all children's health requirements were current. We reached out to our healthcare facilities whom we have cooperative agreements, to see those who might be facing challenges with getting exams.
- Due to COVID-19, health services such as hearing/vision and dentals were not performed in the 1st 45 days. Children did not receive onsite dental exams until June 2021. Some children were screened for hearing/vision in May 2021. Children 12 months+, received vision screenings via Plus Optix.
- Ongoing monitoring was done by Health Coordinator of medications, action plans, and health requirements.
- Throughout the year, the Health Coordinator completed HGB screenings.
- The Nurse Consultant performed BP and lead assessments for missing or expired screenings. Nurse also conducted classroom observations.
- Health Coordinator conducted spring heights and weights.
- Nurse Consultant reviewed health histories and Nutrition Consultant reviewed nutrition histories. Individual health plans were completed for those that were overweight, underweight, chronic conditions, and anemia

Mental Health

- Mental health services were provided throughout the school year for staff and families.
- Mental Health Consultant did virtual classrooms observations and provided feedback to teachers.
- Mental Health Consultant had specific office hours on when staff members can reach out to for services.
- The Mental Health Consultant provided several trainings for parents/guardians during monthly parent meetings. Parents/Guardians are informed that individual consultations are available as well.

Community and Social Services Other Community-related Education:

- This year we had Universal Smiles mobile dental team provide professional quality preventive dental care to children one-year and older. The services provided were dental examinations, dental cleanings, fluoride treatments, dental sealants, and oral health education
- Friend Family Clinic allowed us to recruit by having a table for us at the clinic and speak to clients with children. We also have a referral process with them to refer families for physicals and lab work.
- UIC Fast Parent program provide free trainings for parent and fathers that was giving to parents and encouraged to participate.
- Cradles to Crayons provide clothing and other needed items to our families that were in need. They also donated 100 back packs for our children going to kindergarten and for our Back-to-School Jam events.
- Excel Academy has referred their students to Family Focus for childcare services and we have referred our young parents to their academy to finish high school.

Education and Literacy:

- Education services offered- Developmental screenings; quarterly assessment based on teacher/family observations of the child; group and individual planning based on the needs and interests of children; daily routines and transitions that support attachment and development; home/school connection activities to promote parent involvement in children's education. Families receive 2 formal visits per year (2 home visits; 2 family conferences) to discuss their child's development and planning.
- Literacy services offered Diverse, multicultural books in classrooms; daily reading for group and individuals; materials labeled with pictures and words; songs, nursery rhymes, and fingerplays used for routines and transitions; visual schedules posted in classrooms
- Conscious Discipline services offered Teachers incorporated "I Love You Rituals" and the "Safekeeper Ritual" during their group times and throughout the day. Teachers created family boards to help with

hellos/goodbyes and used visual schedules to support daily routines/transitions. Coordinators did monthly trainings and provided coaching/modeling on how to implement strategies in the classroom. Classroom materials such as CD books, I Love You Ritual cards/CDs, posters, etc were provided by the Grantee to support implementation. Coordinators reviewed with teachers how to use the materials in the classroom. Conscious Discipline overview given to parents during parent meeting, along with reviewing the Conscious Discipline website for resources during the parent session.

- EHS Transitions Transition forms begins to be filled out when the child turns 30 months of age. Transition form is reviewed and updated at least quarterly with activities that classroom teachers are doing and what families are doing at home to support transitions. Classroom books of the HS classrooms were made for EHS classrooms for children to see what their new environments would look like. HS teachers made welcome videos for EHS children to view before their transition. EHS children visited HS classrooms when the classrooms were empty.

Kindergarten Readiness

Special Efforts to Prepare Children for Kindergarten

Transition Activities to Promote Kindergarten Readiness

- Parents were given Family Portal and activity information, activities for Kindergarten were input for children transitioning, transition plans were created for each child.
- Home Activities: Practice kindergarten skills; Explore pencils, crayons, and child-size scissors.; Practice saying full name and how you get to and from school.; Hang up a coat, go to the toilet, and wash hands without help.; Follow simple rules and take turns.
- Children were given opportunities to recognize self as a unique individual having own abilities, characteristics, emotions, and interests. Children learned about belonging to family, community, and other groups.
- Children were given opportunities to demonstrate recognizing number of objects in a small set. The ability to understand the relationship between numbers and quantities. Children learned to compare numbers, associate a quantity with written numerals up to 20, and begin to write numbers.
- Child developed knowledge and skills that help promote nutritious food choices and eating habits. Children increased their knowledge of personal safety practices and routines.
- Daily activities were provided to encourage phonetic and phonological awareness, nursery rhymes, reading stories that incorporate rhymes, beginning sound activities and clapping, demonstrating knowledge of alphabet by naming letters out of sequence, writing letters, and identifying letters in their names.
- Comprehending read aloud, reading books 3 times a day so that children can properly understand and articulate information read, recall information, discuss information, and ask and answer open ended questions related to books read.
- Children are given learning experiences that enhances their problem-solving skills, i.e. “How do you think we can make this better” supporting their ability to make good choices and understanding the consequences when they do not.

Summary of Audit Findings

2020-006 Allowable Costs (Repeat Finding) Early Head Start and Head Start Program – 93.600
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Award Numbers – 33334, 33369, 25EHS, 22HS

Criteria or specific requirement – An entity may only charge to a federal award allowable costs. Adequate source documentation should be retained to support amounts and items reported in order to ensure compliance with allowable cost requirements.

Condition – Certain amounts selected for testing did not agree with supporting documentation. In all instances of amounts sampled, portions charged to the grant were less than the actual amount expended per the supporting documentation.

Questioned costs – None.

Context – 21 out of the 40 expenditures charged to the grant that were selected for testing within the months of November 2019 and May 2020 had amounts that were less than the actual amount expended per supporting documentation. For personnel-related expenditures, amounts charged to the grant had been computed without fully and properly reconciled substantiation behind such computation, resulting in certain allowable personnel-related deductions and benefits to be improperly excluded and inconsistent with source documentation.

Effect – Mismatch between expenditures charged to the grant and actual expended amounts has resulted in the Society being unable to fully and properly reconcile its grant vouchers to the general ledger and the Society's financial reporting system. As a result, the Society did not fully recoup eligible expenditures that were allowed to be charged to the grant.

Cause – The Society did not have any procedures in place to review the preparation of allowable costs charged to the grant.

Identification as a repeat finding – 2019-006

Recommendation – We recommend that the Society implement policies and procedures to ensure that expenditures charged to the grant are consistent with source documentation and that accurate and timely reconciliations be implemented and reviewed such that program-related expenditures align with the Society's financial information.

Views of responsible officials and planned corrective actions – Historically, the Society's accounting platform was not structured to capture the data necessary to perform specific allocations of certain benefit costs like medical insurance by participant. The vouchering process used an allocation of total costs to estimate reimbursable expenditures. The historical estimating process used to allocate costs to the Society's grants and contracts was reviewed and allowed by both government and independent auditors. The Society has implemented the necessary changes to its general ledger structure to produce a detailed allocation of expenditures agreeing directly to source documents to assure that maximum allowable contract reimbursement is accomplished.

Summary of Information Required by the Secretary

The Ounce Board of Directors and Policy Council were given brief summaries and links to all Program Instructions and Information Memorandums

