



NORWESCAP

Head Start and Early Head Start 2017-2018 Annual Report

MISSION

To enhance the development of low-income pregnant mothers and children 0-5 in supportive partnership with their families and in collaboration with the community through the delivery of education, health, nutrition, mental health and social services.



NORWESCAP

Head Start and Early Head Start Leadership

NORWESCAP Chief Executive Officer

Mark Valli

NORWESCAP Chief Program Officer

Chris Kirk

Head Start/Early Head Start Director

June Zungolo

Head Start/Early Head Start Assistant Director

Becky Brooking

Head Start/Early Head Start Child Development Specialist, EHS

Roxanne Doran

Head Start/Early Head Start Child and Family Wellness Manager

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Head Start/Early Head Start ERSEA/Home Visitor Manager

Annissa Worobec

Head Start/Early Head Start Family and Community Partnership Manager

Joan Quirk

Head Start/Early Head Start Health and Nutrition Manager

Susan Longcor

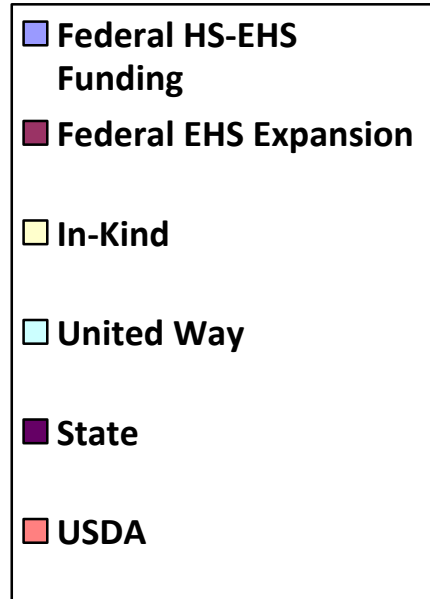
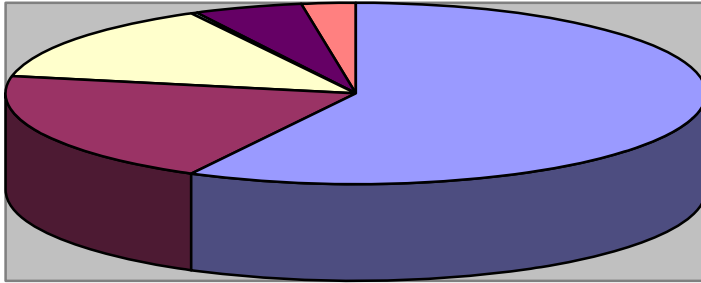
Head Start/Early Head Start Professional Development Coordinator

Patty Nardoza

Head Start/Early Head Start Transportation Manager

Paula Hammond

Funding and Budgets
Program Year September 1, 2017-August 31, 2018



2017-2018 Revenue

Head Start and Early Head Start Federal Funding:	\$ 6,050,578.00
Early Head Start Expansion Federal Funding:	\$ 2,106,383.00
In-Kind:	\$ 1,463,578.00
United Way:	\$ 36,200.00
State:	\$ 539,463.00
USDA:	\$ 248,470.00

2017-2018 Head Start and Early Head Start Budget and Expenditures
September 1, 2017-August 31, 2018

<u>Head Start and Early Head Start Budget</u>		<u>Head Start and Early Head Start Expenditures</u>	
Personnel/Salaries	\$ 3,508,218.00	Personnel/Salaries	\$ 3,615,211.00
Fringe	\$ 1,407,044.00	Fringe	\$ 1,255,377.00
Travel	\$ 13,548.00	Travel	\$ 3,367.00
Equipment	\$ -	Equipment	-
Supplies	\$ 65,251.00	Supplies	\$ 72,841.00
Contractual	\$ 326,099.00	Contractual	\$ 349,375.00
Facility/Constructions	\$ -	Facility/Constructions	\$ -
Other	\$ 730,418.00	Other	\$ 745,408.00

Early Head Start Expansion Budget and Expenditures
March 1, 2017- August 31, 2018

<u>Head Start and Early Head Start Budget</u>		<u>Head Start and Early Head Start Expenditures</u>	
Personnel/Salaries	\$ 1,249,318.00	Personnel/Salaries	\$ 548,042.00
Fringe	\$ 333,642.00	Fringe	\$ 140,120.00
Travel	\$ 15,590.00	Travel	\$ 16,329.00
Equipment	\$ -	Equipment	\$ -
Supplies	\$ 228,538.00	Supplies	\$ 119,634.00
Contractual	\$ 326,099.00	Contractual	\$ 349,375.00
Facility/Constructions	\$ -	Facility/Constructions	\$ -
Other	\$ 245,045.00	Other	\$ 175,165.00

2018-2019 Budgets
(September 1, 2018-June 30, 2019)

<u>Head Start and Early Head Start</u> (Sept. 1, 2018- June 30, 2019)		<u>Early Head Start Expansion</u> (Sept. 1, 2018- Aug. 30, 2019)	
Personnel/Salaries	\$ 3,073,320.00	Personnel/Salaries	\$ 753,855.00
Fringe	\$ 1,138,447.00	Fringe	\$ 231,947.00
Travel	\$ 84,666.00	Travel	\$ 4,484.00
Equipment	\$ -	Equipment	-
Supplies	\$ 57,257.00	Supplies	\$ 4,920.00
Contractual	\$ 305,294.00	Contractual	\$ 46,759.00
Facility/Constructions	\$ -	Facility/Constructions	\$ -
Other	<u>\$ 582,889.00</u>	Other	<u>\$ 186,638.00</u>
	\$ 5,165,673.00		\$ 1,228,603.00

The results of the most recent audit may be found at
http://norwescap.org/resources_annualreport.php

Program Enrollment

Program	Head Start	Early Head Start	Early Head Start Expansion
Funded Enrollment	305	193	64
Cumulative Enrollment	328	232	79
Categorically Eligible	91%	98%	93%
Families Served	309	199	78

Estimated percentage of eligible children in catchment areas served: 33% Head Start, 12% of Early Head Start

Monthly Enrollment

Month	Head Start		Early Head Start		Early Head Start Expansion	
	Enrolled	% of Funded Enrollment	Enrolled	% of Funded Enrollment	Enrolled	% of Funded Enrollment
September 2017	290	95%	193	100%	64	100%
October 2017	285	93%	193	100%	64	100%
November 2017	290	95%	193	100%	64	100%
December 2017	290	95%	193	100%	64	100%
January 2018	290	95%	193	100%	64	100%
February 2018	290	95%	193	100%	64	100%
March 2018	289	94.8%	193	100%	64	100%
April 2018	295	96.7%	193	100%	64	100%
May 2018	297	97.3%	193	100%	64	100%
June 2018	26*	8%	193	100%	64	100%
July 2018	26*	8%	193	100%	64	100%
August 2018	26*	8%	193	100%	64	100%

**Head Start center-based ended in June 2018*

Program Monitoring

NORWESCAP Head Start and Early Head Start monitor and manage multiple sites encompassing a combined total of 1,764 miles within Hunterdon, Morris, Sussex and Warren Counties. Systems have been designed to consistently reach Head Start goals, milestones, and deadlines. Continuous, ongoing monitoring and quality program improvement is embedded through the delivery of services. NORWESCAP Head Start and Early Head Start have the organizational capacity and ability to successfully oversee program operations that comply with applicable federal, state and local regulations. During the 2017-2018 program year, the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) did not conduct a review. On June 6, 2016 - June 7, 2016 (2015-2016 program year), the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) conducted the Leadership/Governance/Management Systems review event for the NORWESCAP Head Start and Early Head Start programs.

Based on the information gathered during this review event, the Head Start and Early Head Start program were found to be out of compliance with 4.1 of the Head Start Act.

4.1 Head Start Act

Sec. 641A. Standards; Monitoring of Head Start Agencies and Programs

(g) Self Assessments-

(3) ONGOING MONITORING- Each Head Start agency (including each Early Head Start agency) and each delegate agency shall establish and implement procedures for the ongoing monitoring of their respective programs, to ensure that the operations of the programs work toward meeting program goals and objectives and standards described in subsection (a) (1).

Noncompliance: Breakdown in the ongoing monitoring

Corrective Action: All ongoing monitoring tools were updated to reflect changes in procedures. Manager site visits include ongoing monitoring of the service area, bus observation checklists and classroom observation checklists to ensure continuity of supervision. The Ongoing Monitoring Plan includes the list of ongoing monitoring tools, responsible party and the frequency in which the events occur. In addition, all credit card statements are available for review at Policy Council meetings.

Child Health Services

Program Information Report Indicators	Head Start		Early Head Start		EHS Expansion	
	HS %		EHS %		EHS Exp.%	
Children up to date on schedule of EPSDT at end of year	328	100%	213	92%	79	100%
Of the above, children with chronic health condition needing treatment	17	5%	9	4%	1	1%
Of the above children, number who received treatment	17	100%	9	100%	1	100%
Preschool children who completed a professional dental exam	299	91%				
Of the above children, number who needed treatment	117	39%				
Of the children needing treatment, number who received it	83	71%				
Children with health insurance (end of program year)	318	97%	218	94%	76	96%
Children with a medical home (end of program year)	328	100%	219	94%	79	100%
Children up to date on immunizations (end of program year)	325	99%	219	93%	79	100%
Children with a dental home (end of year)	327	99.6%	182	100%	79	100%

Child Disability Services

Performance Indicator	Head Start	Early Head Start	EHS Expansion
Cumulative Child Enrollment	328	232	79
Number of Children with IEP/IFSP	37	41	14
Of these, the number who were determined to receive early intervention services:			
Prior to enrollment	20	27	7
During this program year	17	14	7
Percentage of Enrollment	11%	18%	18%

Parent, Family Community Engagement



Families play a critical role in Head Start and Early Head Start. NORWESCAP Head Start and Early Head Start have an established Policy Council through which parents participate in making decisions about their Head Start program. The Policy Council assists in developing program policies, making decisions with regard to the hiring and terminating of staff, developing the budget and determining program priorities. A Parent Association Committee (PAC) is established at each center and is comprised of the parents of currently enrolled children. Parents are surveyed for the types of activities or workshops in which they would like to be involved as PAC. Parents develop leadership skills and experiences as they take on the planning and development of these activities and services. Special events, such as those listed below, were planned by parents and staff:

Book Fairs	Dental Hygiene Presentations	Educational Workshops	
Rummage Sales	Arts & Crafts	Family Picnics	Ice Cream Socials
Father Engagement	Music for Learning	Parent Recognition Events	
Emergency Preparedness			

Parents had the opportunity to participate in special presentations addressing parent-selected topics such as Child Abuse Prevention, Domestic Violence, and Lead Awareness.

Father Engagement and Volunteerism



Father Engagement Performance Indicator	Head Start	Early Head Start	EHS Expansion
Number of fathers/father figures who were engaged in the following activities this program year:			
Family assessment	4	12	6
Family goal setting	39	12	6
Involvement in child's developmental experiences	107	75	19
Program governance - Policy Council, PAC	2	0	1
Parenting education workshops	9	1	1
Volunteerism Performance Indicator	Head Start	Early Head Start	EHS Expansion
Number of persons providing any volunteer services to the program since last year	420	207	59
Of these, the number who are current or former Head Start or Early Head Start parents	278	175	53

NORWESCAP Head Start and Early Head Start is a community-based, parent program, which requires parent participation.

Donations of goods or services reflect 20% of the Head Start and Early Head Start budget. Family workers and education staff encourage and invite parents to volunteer in the classroom, kitchen, and office. Parents were encouraged to work on special activities engaging parents with the program and each other.

- Families volunteered 46,299 hours during the 2017-2018 school year.
- NORWESCAP Head Start and Early Head Start reported \$1,656,206.00 in non-federal/in-kind match.

Education and School Readiness

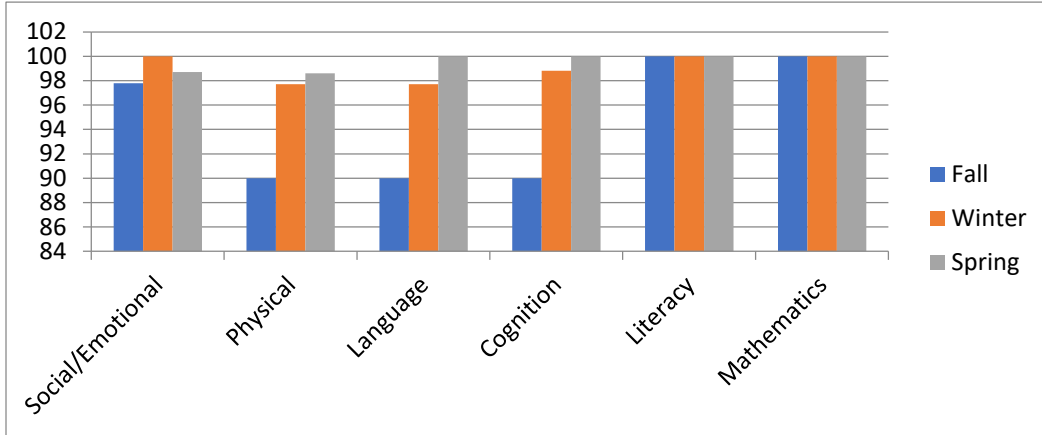
The education curriculum is reviewed with families on a regular basis to ensure that parents are involved in assessing the curriculum's effectiveness in meeting the needs and development of each child enrolled in the program. It is the philosophy of NORWESCAP Head Start and Early Head Start that parents are the primary educators of their children. Administrative and center staff recruit parents to become active members of the program and the community.

The curriculum process prepares children for kindergarten. After an initial screening using the Early Screening Inventory, preschool teachers and home visitors individualize their lesson plans by setting goals to meet the needs of each child. For children transitioning to kindergarten this includes skills in the areas of physical health and development, social and emotional development, approaches to learning, logic and reasoning, language development, literacy mathematics, science, creative arts expression, social studies and English language development for dual language learners.

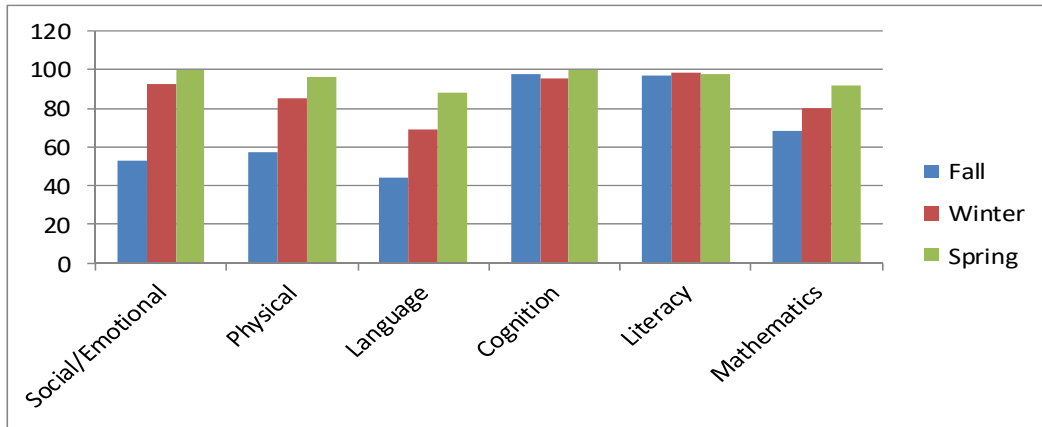
Throughout the year, the goals and accomplishments are updated and reviewed with each child's parents. Additional assessments through the year, using Teaching Strategies GOLD, provide the necessary data to determine outcomes and to develop continuous improvement plans. Infants and toddlers individualized development plans are based on the results of Ages and Stages Questionnaire screening and the Teaching Strategies GOLD assessment. Infants and toddlers are being prepared for success in school by thoughtfully planned activities that develop social-emotional, physical, cognitive and language skills while promoting confidence, curiosity, intentionality, self-control, relatedness, capacity to communicate and cooperativeness.

NORWESCAP Early Head Start 2017-2018 School Readiness Data

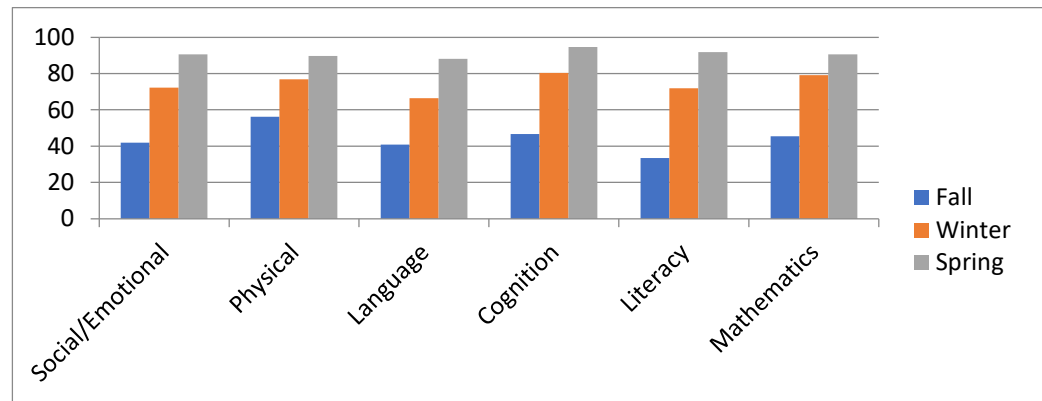
Birth to one year olds meeting/exceeding expectations



One to two year olds meeting/exceeding expectations

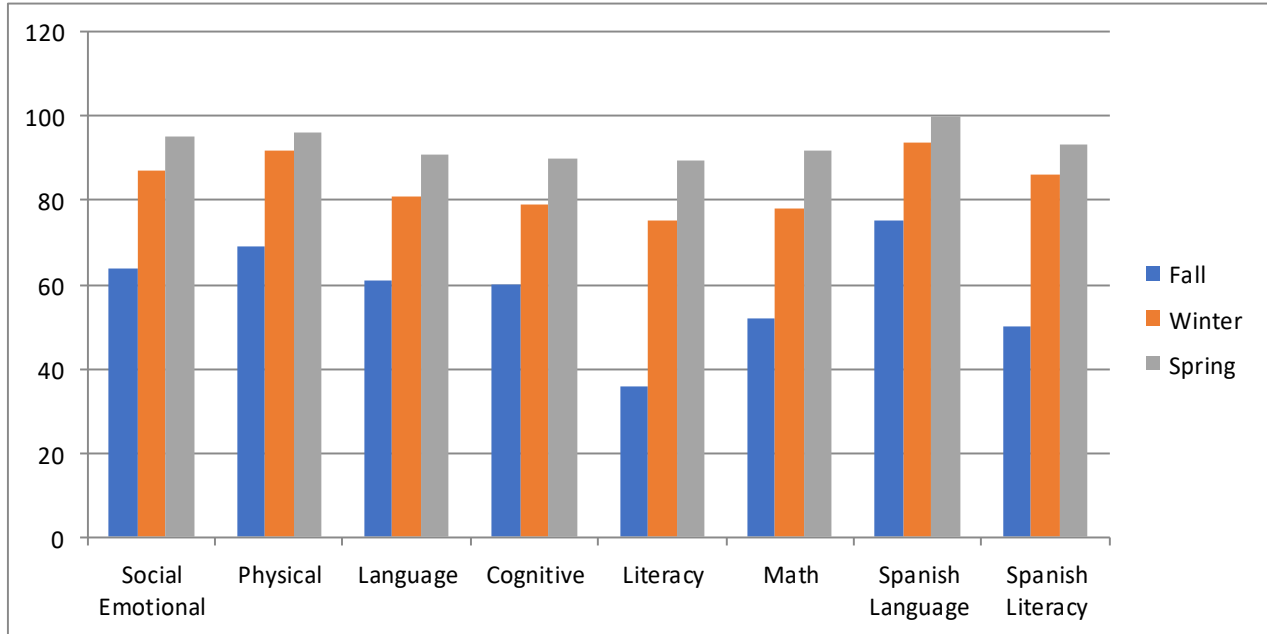


Two to three year olds meeting/exceeding expectations

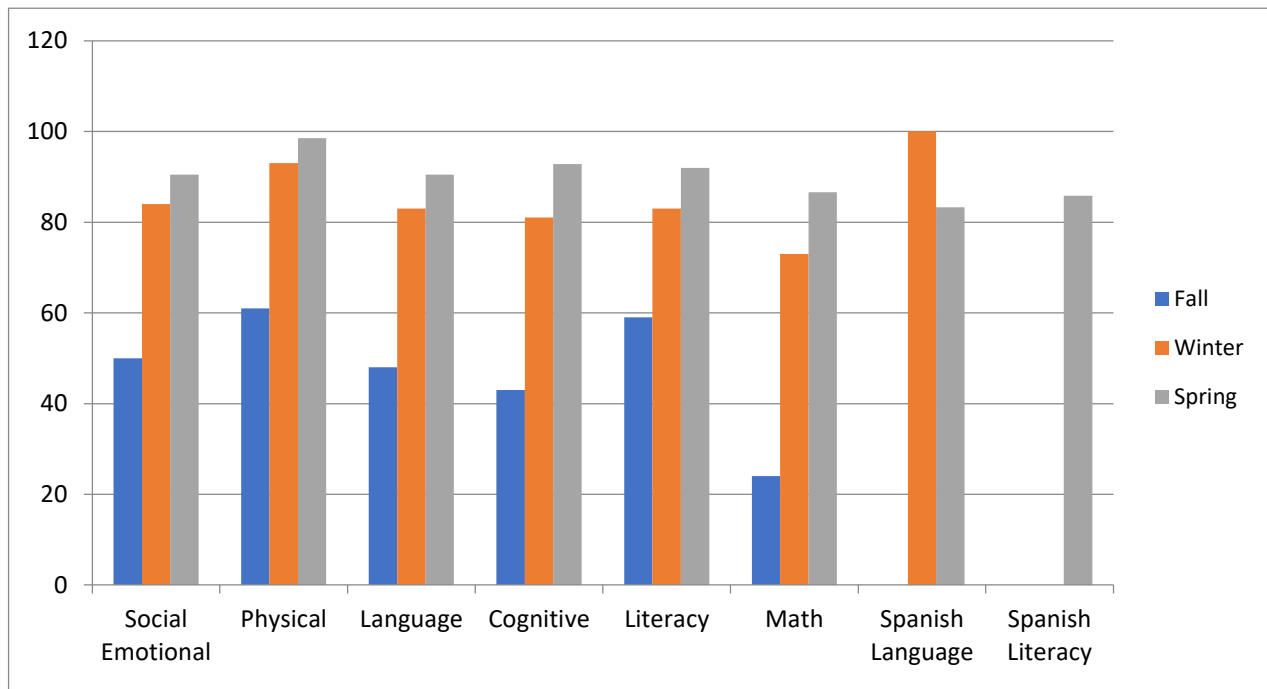


NORWESCAP Early Head Start 2017-2018 School Readiness Data

Three year olds meeting/exceeding expectations



Four year olds meeting/exceeding expectations



Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS)

The Classroom Assessment Scoring System™ (CLASS™) is an observational instrument developed to assess classroom quality in PK-12 classrooms. It describes multiple dimensions of teaching that are linked to student achievement and development and has been validated in over 2,000 classrooms. The CLASS™ can be used to reliably assess classroom quality for research and program evaluation and also provide a tool to help new and experienced teachers become more effective.

The National Head Start CLASS average in each of the three domains is depicted in blue.

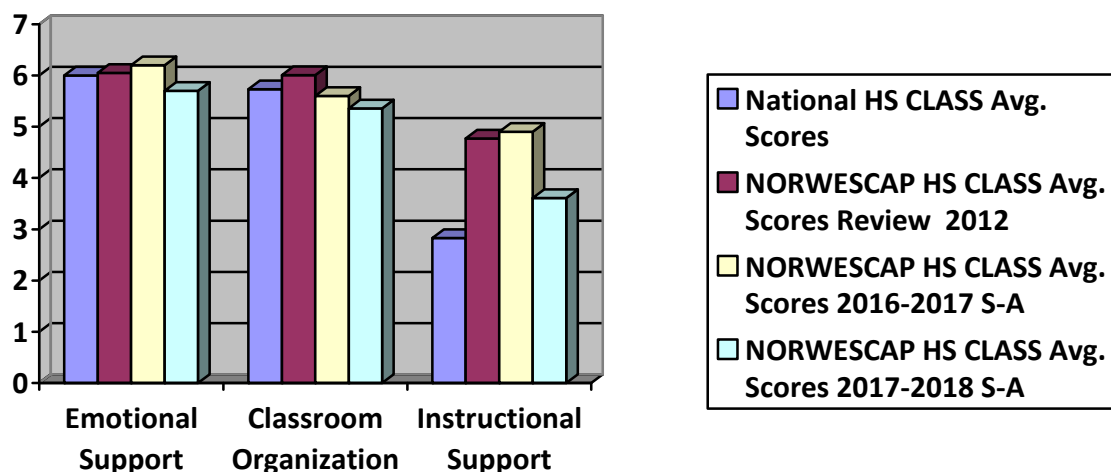
In January of 2012, the Office of Head Start conducted an on-site CLASS review. The average scores are shown in red.

During the 2016-2017 and 2017-2018 program self-assessment (SA) process, Head Start and Early Head Start conducted 17 of the 19 NORWESCAP Head Start classrooms. The NORWESCAP average score for 2016-2017 is depicted in yellow and 2017-2018 is depicted in green.

Emotional Support: Assess the degree to which teachers establish and promote positive climate in their classroom through their everyday interactions. (National Average- 6, NORWESCAP Review Average- 6.05, 2016-17 SA- 6.2, 2017-2018 SA- 5.7)

Classroom Organization: Assess classroom routines and procedures related to the organization and management of children’s behavior, time, and attention in the classroom. (National Average- 5.73, NORWESCAP Review Average- 6.01, 2016-2017 SA- 5.6, 2017-2018 SA- 5.36)

Instructional Support: Assess the way in which teachers implement the curriculum to effectively promote cognitive and language development. (National Average- 2.83, NORWESCAP Review Average- 4.77, 2016-2017 SA- 4.9, 2017-2018 SA- 3.61)



Summary

NORWESCAP Head Start and Early Head Start provide services to 562 children and families in four counties of New Jersey. Hunterdon, Morris, Sussex, and Warren Counties are located in the northwest region of the state. The geographic location and rural environment allows for an innovative approach to the delivery of services. However, it also presents unique challenges requiring creative collaborations, ideas and solutions.

The counties served by NORWESCAP Head Start and Early Head Start are recognized as some of the wealthiest and healthiest counties of New Jersey. Advocates for Children of New Jersey (ACNJ) ranks each county on a set of indicators of child well-being. In 2017, ACNJ organized and ranked counties according to four different domains: child and family economics, child health, safety and well-being, and education. Following National KIDS COUNT project of Annie E. Casey Foundation's lead, domain includes three indicators. The overall domain ranks for each county served by NORWESCAP Head Start and Early Head Start is listed below.

Domain	Hunterdon County	Morris County	Sussex County	Warren County
Child and Family Economics	4	1	7	8
Child Health	1	5	2	5
Safety and Well-Being	10	3	6	8
Education	3	2	12	6

The referenced indicators reveal a relatively high ranking for the four counties within the state of New Jersey. However, within these counties, there is a wealth gap for a portion of the population resulting in "pockets of poverty". Meeting the needs of this vulnerable population is challenging for many different reasons. The NORWESCAP Head Start and Early Head Start Community Assessment provided the opportunity for community members, stakeholders and staff to discuss the assets, needs and trends in each community. The Community Assessment

also provided the opportunity to collectively discuss ideas on the group’s ability to leverage resources in order to close gaps.

Head Start and Early Head Start Population

High concentrated areas of poverty often lack basic resources to allow individuals to obtain and maintain sustainability. NORWESCAP Head Start and Early Head Start (HS/EHS) has identified those areas within each county. The percentages listed below indicate the HS/EHS services provided to the estimated eligible population within each county.

Hunterdon County		Morris County		Sussex County		Warren County	
HS	EHS	HS	EHS	HS	EHS	HS	EHS
42%	27%	N/A	14%	28%	4.7%	31%	10.5%

Concerns, Gaps, Trends

During the 2017-2018 Community Assessment, participants reported assets, gaps and trends within each of the four counties. The areas of concern and key trends remain relatively constant within the four counties and are similar to the concerns raised during the 2016-2017 Community Assessment.

Housing- A lack of affordable housing within each county exists. In addition, some families are sharing housing to defer costs. During the community assessment, a home visitor explained that families are stacking- multiple families living in one dwelling in which housing costs and childcare is shared among dwellers. In extreme circumstances, lease-holders will rent out the use of a couch or bathroom. “Stacking” presents various health and safety concerns including established primary caregivers for infants and toddlers, disruptive routines for children and families, exposure to transient individuals with unidentified health concerns and basic building safety concerns. Twenty-seven percent (27%) of the NORWESCAP Head Start and Early Head Start families have either shared housing because of economic hardship or considered themselves homeless. The families located in Morris County experienced the highest rate of homelessness at 42%- a 4% jump since last year. This is consistent with the median rent cost of \$1,388 and the

fact that 42% of Morris County households pay more than 30% of their income on housing. Although the counties served by NORWESCAP Head Start and Early Head Start are considered to be the wealthiest in the nation, housing is an issue. Households paying more than 30% of their income on rent are as follows: Hunterdon County- 50%, Morris County- 42%, Sussex County- 51% and Warren County- 47%. Unstable housing contributes to family stress impacting family engagement, school readiness, and the health and safety of the occupants.

Affordable, quality childcare- The cost and availability of childcare in general and infant-toddler care specifically is a concern. Many counties experienced a decrease in the capacity of their licensed childcare center, indicating that the remaining centers serve even fewer children than before. Within Hunterdon County, Morris County, Sussex County and Warren County, the number of licensed childcare centers and the capacity of those centers have experienced a steady decline for the past five years. Specifically, the number of slots available for infants and toddlers likely to need childcare does not meet the demand. The following indicates the percentage of infants and toddlers that could be served in each county.

Hunterdon County- 28.7%

Morris County- 40.6%

Sussex County- 25.3%

Warren County- 20.7%

In New Jersey, a family living in poverty will spend 88% of their family's income on childcare expenses. Families are often utilizing unlicensed, unregulated childcare options. As reported previously in the 2016-2017 Community Assessment, Advocates for Children of New Jersey (ACNJ) conducted a statewide survey and focus group revealing childcare providers...“struggle to offer quality care at a price that families can afford. State subsidized childcare is too low to even cover the scope of staff, rent and utilities.” The National Institute for Early Education Research at Rutgers University reported that the level of care provided for infants and toddlers was below average. Determination of program options, placement and transition outside of Head Start and

Early Head Start requires careful consideration of family needs, transportation, and employment. This information remains relevant to the childcare trends within the counties served by NORWESCAP.

Transportation- (As reported in the 2015-2016, 2016-2017 and 2017-2018 Community Assessment) the rural nature of the four counties makes transportation a challenge. The cost of gas, insurance and related automobile expenses put a heavy burden on families. The lack of public transportation and the remote location of each county hinder families from obtaining the necessary services.

Employees work diligently to connect families to services. However, services can be delayed while appropriate transportation arrangements are coordinated. As a program, NORWESCAP is challenged to employ qualified bus drivers. Further research revealed a national driver shortage. The National School Transportation Association reported "...the pool for traditional driver applicants is shrinking." This means contractors and school districts are forced to be more resourceful in attracting new driver candidates with additional programs, such as recruitment and sign-on bonuses, which in turn increase costs. Added challenges include the rise in healthcare premiums, workman's compensation and vehicle insurance. In addition, the cost to replace school busses that cost \$55,000 to \$65,000 with new busses that cost between \$85,000 to \$100,000 is strangling budgets. In the 2019-2020 program year, NORWESCAP Head Start will need to replace two busses. These busses have "aged-out" - the busses can no longer be utilized for transporting children.

The 2017-2018 NORWESCAP Head Start and Early Head Start Wage Comparability Study indicates an inequity in bus aide pay and can be linked to our inability to hire and retain transportation staff.

Mental Health Services- Community mental health services have been reduced in all four counties. In addition, families have reported a reluctance to seek out mental health services because of a perceived stigma. Three percent (3%) of NORWESCAP Head

Start and Early Head Start parents/caregivers have mental health concerns. In addition to parental health concerns there is a rise in the number of preschool children presenting with severe challenging behaviors- 3.6% of the HS enrollment.

Hunterdon County

NORWESCAP Head Start and Early Head Start are providing services to 52 Head Start children in a center-based program, 6 Head Start and 30 Early Head Start children in a home-based program. In the near future, 24 additional Early Head Start children will be served in a center-based option. Currently, these children are served in a home-based option. Hunterdon County reports 4.5% of the population living in poverty. Flemington-Raritan reports 7.2% of the population is living below the poverty level. The Head Start and Early Head Start waiting lists are lengthy and indicate a need for services. Utilizing the US Census information, the data suggests HS/EHS is serving a significant percent of the population, 42% HS and 27% EHS. However, the long waitlists indicates a contradiction in current experiences.

Hunterdon County, characterized by farmland and rolling hills, has been New Jersey's third fastest growing county since 1970. The projected population growth rate is 7.4% from 2008-2018. This is nearly double the state rate of 3.9%. In addition, Hunterdon had the third-fastest growing Hispanic population among New Jersey counties. Hunterdon County has an increased population in which a language other than English is spoken in the home.

Overall, the Flemington-Raritan area has the highest percentage of people who speak a language other than English; 35.5% as compared to the county at 10.2%. The Head Start and Early Head Start families are predominantly Spanish speaking.

Community members, Head Start and Early Head Start families, and staff identified the following trends, issues or barriers to services specifically within the county:

Transportation- Hunterdon continually struggles with transportation issues. Thirty-two percent of the families do not have reliable transportation. In addition, Head Start and Early Head Start has been challenged to locate qualified transportation staff.

Affordable Childcare- Locating affordable, quality childcare, specifically infant-toddler care, is a struggle for families living in this area. Hunterdon County saw a 12% decline in

the number of childcare centers and a 9% decline in the capacity of childcare centers. The average annual cost for full-time center-based care for an infant 18 months or younger is \$14,532. This is 10% of the median income. The average cost for a preschooler in full-time center-based care costs \$11,890 and is 8% of the median income (Advocates for NJ - County Profile).

Staffing- The Hunterdon center has experienced a relatively high turn-over in staff. Hunterdon County is recognized as one of the wealthiest counties in New Jersey. The living wage is \$29.85 per hour for one adult and one child. This represents a \$2.28 per hour increase since the 2016-2017 Community Assessment. This is the highest of all of the counties served by NORWESCAP Head Start and Early Head Start. The wage comparability study conducted by NORWESCAP indicates that the average NORWESCAP salary is a fair and equitable salary as compared to similar positions within the four counties. However, those salaries are skewed as compared to Hunterdon County salaries. According to Kids Count Data Center- 2014, the Median Income of Families with Children (currency) is \$108,177. Living in Hunterdon County costs more and therefore, employees expect more. The majority of Hunterdon employees live outside the county and commute to work. The commute can be an added burden to staff resulting in staff burnout and decreased staff retention rates.

Morris County

NORWESCAP Early Head Start serves ninety-three children and families within the county. Sixty-one children are served through the home-based option. Thirty-two children participate in the center-based option. The center is located in Denville, just outside of the town of Dover. The town of Dover is rich in diversity and strong family engagement. Through the community assessment process, the following were identified assets within the community: health care system, public school system, the relationship with Morris County Early Intervention, available resources and community collaborations such as Wind of the Spirit, Zufall and Hispanic Affairs, parent engagement and education, diversity, available bilingual services and the County Council for Young Children.

Areas of this county experience a greater concentration of people living below the poverty level in specific areas. For example, the percentage of the population living below the poverty line in Dover is 8.5%, which is 1% higher than last year. Other areas, such as Wharton and Mount Olive, have increased levels of poverty. Wharton has 5.3% of the population below the poverty level. Language continues to be a barrier to services. Dover reports 68.6% of the population as having a language other than English spoken in the home. Wharton reports 49.4% of the population as having a language other than English spoken in the home. In total, 24.4% of the population speaks a language other than English in the home. Although Morris County has more bilingual services as compared to the other counties served, the lack of bilingual services in health and mental health can cause confusion, frustration and fear.

Community members, Head Start and Early Head Start families, and staff identified the following trends, issues or barriers to services specifically within the county:

Affordable Childcare- The specific issues for Morris County include the inability for families to qualify for vouchers and provide required documentation. In Morris County, the average full-time center-based care for an 18-month old or younger is \$15,377. This represents 11% of the average median income. The average cost for a preschooler is \$11,573, representing 8% of the median income. The financial burden to implement infant-toddler care for private centers is cost-prohibitive. A family with one infant and one preschooler will pay 20% of the family's income on childcare.

Housing- Housing costs in Morris County are extremely high. Forty-two percent of the households in Morris County are paying more than 30% of their income on rent. Families often choose to share housing. Shared housing and "stacking" presents health and safety risks including the spread of communicable disease and/or failure to evacuate tenants during an emergency situation. Forty-two percent of Morris County families have reported homelessness during the 2017-2018 program year.

Transportation- Although the town of Dover has public transportation, 41% of the enrolled families report that they do not have reliable transportation.

Citizenship- Citizenship is receiving renewed attention. This growing concern among families is influencing all areas of well-being. The health and wellness of families is impacted by the stress caused by this issue. Families are afraid and desire more information regarding the issue.

Sussex County

NORWESCAP Head Start and Early Head Start serve 24 Early Head Start children and 92 Head Start children. This area of Northwest New Jersey has experienced a steady decline in population as noted since the 2010 census. Recruitment efforts are becoming increasingly more difficult. However, it is estimated that only 28% of the HS eligible population and 4.7% of the estimated EHS eligible population is served. Sussex County reports a 6% poverty rate within the county. This is a slight increase from last year. Newton has an elevated poverty rate of 17.2% and Hopatcong reports 6.2% of the population as living in poverty. Although Sussex County is the least diverse county in New Jersey, Hopatcong and Newton are experiencing an increase in the number of households where a language other than English is spoken at home. Overall, 9.9% of the Sussex County population speaks a language other than English. Specifically, 16.9% of the Hopatcong population and 13.7% of the Newton population report speaking a language other than English in the home. Twenty-nine percent of the HS/EHS families served speak a language other than English in the home. The need for bilingual staff is evident.

Community members, Head Start and Early Head Start families, and staff identified the following trends, issues or barriers to services specifically within the county:

Increase in need- Areas in the northwest region of the county are experiencing an increase in the need for services. School enrollment is declining, leaving the possibility of available space and collaborations with NORWESCAP Head Start. Families reported a need for summer care for their EHS/HS children and their siblings. Obtaining vouchers to cover care is a challenge.

Often families miss the “cut-off” to qualify for assistance because they work 28 hours instead of the required 30 hours or they make a few dollars more than the threshold.

In particular, the majority of the families enrolled in the Hopatcong Head Start center need full-day, full-year care because of their family working schedules. Newton families also expressed the need for such services. During the 2017-2018 Community Assessment, Sussex County families and community members reported difficulty in accessing available resources. This continues to be a pervasive problem. Transportation is identified as a major barrier in linking families with appropriate resources.

Affordable, Quality Childcare- The rural nature of Sussex County makes it difficult to access affordable, quality childcare options within the neighborhoods of families served. In addition the number of available centers is declining. Sussex County experienced an 11% decrease in the number of licensed childcare centers. This decrease in the number of facilities resulted in a decrease of 13% in capacity. Out of the four counties served, Sussex County has the most concern for affordable childcare options. In Sussex County, the average full-time center-based care for an 18-month old or younger is \$11,520. This represents 11% of the average median income. The average cost for a preschooler is \$9,723, representing 10% of the median income. A family with one infant and one preschooler will pay 21% of the family's income on childcare. Currently, childcare centers can meet 25.3% of the demand for infant and toddler care.

Increase in drug use- Increased drug use is consistently identified as an area of concern over the past decade. According to an article in the NJ Herald, dated 10/10/2017, accidental drug overdose deaths rose by more than 30 percent in Sussex County this year compared to the same time period last year.

The newspaper reported that Sussex County had 21 accidental overdose deaths from January through August 2017. There were 13 overdose deaths in the county over the first eight months of 2017. Narcan has been used more than 80 times in Sussex County in the last 18 months, according to The Center for Prevention and Counseling in Newton.

As reported in the 2014-2017 Community Assessments- Interstate 80 was identified as a major throughway used to supply drugs to the northwest area of New Jersey. The NJ Herald reported: *"The prescription pill and heroin epidemic has spread from Newark*

and Paterson up Route 23, known as "Heroin Highway," into Sussex County, a state report says. The report locally quotes Vernon Police Detective Sgt. Brian Jernick, who told the State Commission of Investigation that during a four-year period there were nine recent high school graduates dead from painkillers and/or heroin overdoses in Vernon alone."

Sussex County has experienced the highest steady increase, 68%, in drug use and treatment; specifically, heroin and opioid treatment increased by 78%. Less than half of the county's municipalities have a local police department. The New Jersey State Police provides services to these rural towns. However, response time can be longer as compared to urban response times.

Warren County

NORWESCAP Head Start and Early Head Start provide center-based, home-based, and combination services throughout the 357 square miles of Warren County. Similar to the above-mentioned counties, areas with high poverty exist. Warren County reports 8.3% of the population living below poverty. This is an increase from the previous year. Within the county, three distinct areas stand out as areas in need, Hackettstown, Phillipsburg and Washington. Phillipsburg, which was identified as an "Abbott" school district, has 19.69% of the population living below the poverty level. Washington Borough reports 8.1% of the population living below the poverty level. Hackettstown reports 13.9% of the population living below the poverty level. The waiting list reveals a large number of eligible children living in the Hackettstown area. Language barriers affect the ability of individuals to seek services. Hackettstown reports 26.5% of the population speaks a language other than English in the home. Washington reports 14.9% of the population and Phillipsburg reports 14.5% of the population speaking a language other than English in the home. This indicates an increased need for bilingual staff.

An alarming trend is the decrease in the number of women receiving early prenatal care. The most recent Kids Count Data revealed 69.9% of women received prenatal care, which dropped from 86% in 2011.

Community members, Head Start and Early Head Start families, and staff identified the following trends, issues or barriers to services specifically within the county:

Family Concerns- Families enrolled in the Warren County Head Start and Early Head Start programs are experiencing more difficulty with mental health, substance abuse, physical disabilities, developmental delays and involvement with the Department of Protection and Permanency than any of the other four counties served. Eighteen percent of the families enrolled in Warren County have or have had an open case with the Department of Protection and Permanency since September of 2017. These issues have an impact on the implementation of services and dictate staff training needs, support and reflective supervision.

Space- Currently, Washington Head Start is serving 68 children in a 4-day week, part day program. The increased number of eligible children in the area, mainly Hackettstown, supports the need for additional space.

Childcare - Before and After Care and Infant/Toddler Care- All of the counties reported concerns regarding quality childcare. Warren County experienced a 6% decrease in the number of licensed childcare centers. This decrease in the number of facilities resulted in a decrease of 6% in capacity. In Warren County, the average full-time center-based care for an 18-month old or younger is \$10,939. This represents 11% of the average median income. The average cost for a preschooler is \$9,353, representing 10% of the median income. A family with one infant and one preschooler will pay 21% of the family's income on childcare. NORWESCAP's inability to receive wrap funding impacts recruiting efforts.

Recruitment- Recruitment for Head Start in Phillipsburg has been a challenge in 2016-2017. The Roseberry and Fisher centers are consistently under-enrolled since September 2016. In the 2017-2018 program year, Warren County enrollment continues to be an issue. The chart below indicates Phillipsburg Pre-K enrollment since 2010. We have identified families eligible for Head Start in the Hackettstown area. However, they do not want to participate in the home-based option.

Phillipsburg School District Pre-K Enrollment

