

# HEAD START COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT 2015



## OUR MISSION

The Head Start program promotes school readiness by enhancing the social and cognitive development of children through the provision of culturally inclusive educational, health, nutritional, social and other services to Head Start-eligible children, their families and pregnant women.

Fairfax County Department of Family Services - Office for Children



## LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends:

I am very pleased to provide you with an update of our Community Assessment for 2015. The Community Assessment is the first step in our strategic planning for the coming year. Eventually, the work from the Community Assessment will be reflected in our program plans and future grant applications. The Community Assessment includes the latest information on relevant data and trends in our service area. This includes demographic information about children eligible for Head Start services; other child development programs available; data regarding health, dental, nutritional, and special education needs of the children; and resources in the community that could help address these needs. I would like to extend my appreciation to the many County departments and private non-profit agencies who have been our partners in serving our children and families throughout the years.

On April 10, 2015, the Fairfax County Head Start/Early Head Start program conducted a Community Focus Forum. Twenty-five community leaders from various local departments and community agencies participated in this event which was led in a focus group format with room for open discussion and sharing of trends and resources.



In addition; recently, the “Trends and Emerging Needs Impacting the Fairfax County Human Services System” document was published by the Department of Neighborhood and Community Services (NCS) for the Human Services Policy Council. Another valuable resource, “Economic Need in Fairfax County” was published in September 2014 by the Economic, Demographic and Statistical Research unit of NCS.

The following issues were identified from the dialogue with community partners and information in the reports.

- Housing trends impacting families such as increasing housing costs; and revitalization of lower-income neighborhoods.
- Health care industry trends impacting families such as confusing health care plans, and the rising cost of medications and treatment. Personal health trends impacting families: emergent behavioral health issues faced by all ages; unmet dental needs; increase in the incidence of autism and children with developmental delays.
- Other trending issues impacting families: more variety in the number of languages spoken by families; and increase in the number of domestic violence victims, sometimes causing homelessness.
- The above identified trends result in increasing poverty among children and higher representation in food assistance programs including free school lunches; more two-adult working households living at 125% of the federal poverty level; current residents losing economic ground; and a continued rise in the number of families receiving and applying for public assistance.

These and other long-standing issues are discussed in more detail within this document. If you have any questions or comments regarding this report, please contact me at 703-324-8920. I extend my sincere appreciation for your interest in the health and well-being of the children in our county and our work to improve the lives of the children and families.

Sincerely, Jennifer Branch, Head Start and Early Head Start Director



# COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT 2014-2015

## FAIRFAX COUNTY OFFICE FOR CHILDREN HEAD START PROGRAM

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## I. INTRODUCTION

The Fairfax County Office for Children, a division of the Department of Family Services, was established in 1975 by the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors. The Office for Children advances the care, education, and healthy development of children from birth through elementary school. The Fairfax County Office for Children Head Start program is committed to providing high quality Head Start and Early Head Start programs and services to income-eligible expectant parents and families with children who are zero to five years of age. Fairfax County Office for Children Head Start is the grantee agency that administers, monitors, and provides technical assistance to its grantee-operated program and two delegates, Fairfax County Public Schools and Higher Horizons.

Head Start services include education, health, parent engagement and social services. The promotion of School Readiness is the primary focus for all children enrolled in the program. To meet the goals of the program service areas, as established by the federal government, Head Start Performance Standards and the Head Start Act outline the programmatic requirements which all Head Start Programs must fulfill.

## II. METHODOLOGY

In accordance with the Federal Head Start Program Performance Standards and Head Start Act, the Fairfax County Office for Children Head Start program conducted a Community Assessment in 2015 which provided the following information:

- Demographic make-up of Head Start-eligible children and their families, including their estimated number, geographic location, and racial, ethnic, and linguistic composition.
- Other child development and child care programs that are serving Head Start-eligible children, including publicly-funded state and local preschool programs, and the approximate number of Head Start-eligible children served by each.
- The estimated number of children with disabilities birth to age five, including the types of disabilities and relevant services and resources provided to these children by community agencies.
- Data regarding the education, health, nutrition and social service needs of Head Start-eligible children and their families.
- Resources in the community that could be used to address the needs of Head Start-eligible children and their families, including assessments of their availability and accessibility.

Publications and reports were examined and information analyzed for the trends that are important for future Head Start and Early Head Start program planning. Program staff:

- Hosted a Community Focus Forum with stakeholders from local non-profits and other county departments.
- Identified trends in 2015 ChildPlus reports and the 2013-2014 Program Information Report.
- Created program maps using a geographic information system (see **Appendix B**).

## III. FAIRFAX COUNTY OFFICE FOR CHILDREN HEAD START

During program year 2014-15, Fairfax County Office for Children Head Start was funded to serve 1,943 preschool children and their families in Head Start, and 300 infants, toddlers and expectant parents and their families in Early Head Start, for a total of 2,243 children and expectant parents. This includes all children, federally and locally funded, from the grantee-operated center and Family Child Care program, and the two delegate agencies, Higher Horizons Day Care Center and Fairfax County Public Schools. Office for Children Head Start provides training, technical assistance and monitoring to all programs. (See **Appendix B** for a map of Fairfax County Office for Children Head Start/Early Head Start programs.)

### OFFICE FOR CHILDREN GRANTEE PROGRAM

The Fairfax County Office for Children operates the grantee program, which includes the center-based Greater Mount Vernon Community Head Start (GMVCHS), as well as Family Child Care.

The total funded enrollment for Office for Children GMVCHS and FCC option is shown below, and includes the recently awarded Early Head Start Child Care Partnership and Expansion Grant, with a funded enrollment of 56 additional infants and toddlers (40 in family child care and 16 in center-based classrooms):

Early Head Start, pregnant women, and children birth to 3 years old (federally funded)	200
Head Start, 3-5 years old (federally funded)	104
3-5 years old (Fairfax County locally funded)	54

## Greater Mount Vernon Community Head Start

Greater Mount Vernon Community Head Start is located in the southern part of Fairfax County at two sites: Gum Springs Children's Center and Gum Springs Glen. Head Start and Early Head Start families in this program live along U.S. Route 1, in the Mount Vernon and Lee governmental districts. The Gum Springs area in southern Fairfax County is a historically African American community. The land was originally purchased by a former slave of George Washington's nephew who lived at Mount Vernon.

In the 1830s, West Ford purchased 214 acres of land on the north side of Little Hunting Creek known as Gum Springs Farm. The community of Gum Springs is now made up of approximately 1,800 people who reside on the 214 acres of land two miles north of Mount Vernon. At the Gum Springs Glen Early Head Start site there is a mural painted by a local artist that depicts the history of the Gum Springs community.

Over the past 10 years, the demographics of the families living in the Greater Mount Vernon area have undergone dramatic changes. The community demographics now include immigrant families from Pakistan, Korea, Vietnam, Ghana, Nigeria, Liberia, El Salvador, Honduras and Guatemala. As **Tables 1** and **2** illustrate, families are diverse and speak many languages.

GMVCHS delivers quality, comprehensive center-based services to Head Start/Early Head Start children and their families. GMVCHS provides full-day (7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.) and full-year services. The Gum Springs Children's Center offers Head Start services for 3–5 year-olds, and Gum Springs Glen offers Early Head Start for newborns to three year-olds. Forty-eight staff provide services at the two sites.

## Family Child Care

The Family Child Care (FCC) option serves 152 children and their families throughout Fairfax County. There are 30 family child care providers and six child care specialists who provide quality programming to children, pregnant women and families. Two additional child care specialists will be hired to work with the providers and families to be enrolled in the new expansion grant. Family Child Care is a full-year and full-day option with flexible hours for families who require non-traditional hours due to work and school schedules.

The family child care option is a collaborative effort among family child care providers, the Child Care Assistance and Referral program, Community Education and Provider Services, the USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program, and Early Head Start staff.

**Table 1**

Race/Ethnicity of OFC (GMVCHS and FCC) Children 2014-15		
Race	#	%
White	93	31%
Black	111	37%
Asian	9	3%
More than one race	27	9%
Other/Unspecified	61	20%
Ethnicity	#	%
Hispanic/Latino	155	51%
Non-Hispanic/Latino	145	48%

**Table 2**

Primary Language of Family OFC HS/EHS Children 2014-15		
Top 5 Most Common Languages	#	%
English	164	43%
Spanish	157	41%
Amharic	12	3%
Arabic	12	3%
Twi-Akan-Ashanti	8	2%

Tables 1 and 2 – Source: 2015 ChildPlus.

## HIGHER HORIZONS HEAD START

Higher Horizons Day Care Center, a private, non-profit delegate agency, is located in the former Lillian Carey Elementary School in central Fairfax County and serves families in the Mason and Providence governmental districts and the City of Falls Church. Higher Horizons is in the area known as Bailey's Crossroads.

Bailey's Crossroads was named after Hachaliah Bailey, who purchased 626 acres of land at the intersection of Leesburg and Columbia Turnpikes. Bailey's son used some of the land to winter his circus animals.

Today, Columbia Pike is a heavily populated road that connects Bailey's Crossroads to Annandale in Fairfax County and to Arlington County. Columbia Pike and Leesburg Pike are lined with government and private-sector office buildings, strip malls, and low-income apartment complexes located directly across from upscale townhouses and high-rise residential buildings.

Higher Horizons operates a full-day, full-year program, and offers center-based and home-based options. Sixteen Early Head Start children are served in two center-based classes, and 36 children are served in the home-based option. Eighty-eight Head Start children are served in center-based classrooms.

A staff of 53 is employed to provide quality, comprehensive services. Higher Horizons is funded to serve 224 children from birth to five years old as follows:

Early Head Start, pregnant women, and children birth to 3 years old (federally funded)	52
Head Start, 3–5 years old (federally funded)	88
3–5 years old (Fairfax County locally funded)	84

The racial and linguistic composition of the children enrolled in Higher Horizons has changed over the past 15 years. When the Head Start program was opened at this site, African American families were the majority. Recently, the demographics have shifted, and now the majority of families are from Central and South America, the Middle East, and Africa. **Tables 3 and 4** show the current racial and ethnic composition of Higher Horizons Head Start families, along with some of the languages spoken.

**Table 3**

Race/Ethnicity of Higher Horizons Children 2014-15		
Race	#	%
White	63	25%
Black	97	39%
Asian	11	4%
More than one race	2	1%
Other/Unspecified	78	31%
Ethnicity	#	%
Hispanic/Latino	124	48%
Non-Hispanic/Latino	135	52%

**Table 4**

Primary Language of Family Higher Horizons HS/EHS Children 2014-15		
Top 5 Most Common Languages	#	%
Spanish	98	51%
Arabic	37	19%
Amharic	24	12%
English	15	8%
Somali	8	4%

Tables 3 and 4—Source: 2015 ChildPlus.

## FAIRFAX COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS HEAD START

The Fairfax County Public School system is the 11th largest school district in the country, with 186,785 students in 2014–15 ([www.fcps.edu](http://www.fcps.edu)). Twenty-eight percent of the children enrolled are eligible for free and reduced-price lunch. Fairfax County Public Schools, a delegate agency, serves a total of 1,660 children in the following composition:

Early Head Start, pregnant women, and children birth to 3 years old (federally funded)	48
Head Start, 3–5 years old (federally funded)	242
3–5 years old (local/State/Title I funded)	1,370

The program is located in 64 Fairfax County Public Schools, with a total of 101 classrooms. Early Head Start serves children and pregnant women in the center-based option. The 3-5 year-old preschool program offers programs in the following models:

- Full-day school year.
- Dual programming for children who spend a half-day in Head Start and a half-day in a preschool special education classroom.
- Inclusion, where FCPS Head Start and preschool special education children are integrated in the same classroom.

**Tables 5 and 6** show the FCPS Head Start families' racial and ethnic compositions, along with some of the languages spoken.

**Table 5**

Race/Ethnicity of FCPS EHS/HS Children 2014-15		
Race	#	%
White	1,165	66%
Black	351	20%
Asian	219	12%
More than one race	12	1%
Other/Unspecified	21	1%
Ethnicity	#	%
Hispanic/Latino	1,016	57%
Non-Hispanic/Latino	752	43%

**Table 6**

Primary Language of Family FCPS HS/EHS Children 2014-15		
Top 5 Most Common Languages	#	%
Spanish	877	49%
English	454	25%
Arabic	135	8%
Urdu	60	3%
Amharic	53	3%

Tables 5 and 6 - Source: 2015 ChildPlus.

## IV. DEMOGRAPHICS

Fairfax County, Virginia is located just outside Washington, DC and at 407 square miles is the largest county in the Commonwealth of Virginia. According to U.S. Census data, between 1980 and 2010, Fairfax County's population almost doubled, and as of 2013 the estimated population is 1,130,924 and continues to grow. Fairfax County's population exceeds that of eight

states—Alaska, Delaware, Montana, North Dakota, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Vermont and Wyoming. As the population continues to grow, Fairfax County is experiencing unprecedented demographic changes in population and ethnic diversity. It is widely known that Fairfax County has ample job opportunities and economic growth, but the paradox of the regional economic prosperity is that there are still many living in poverty.

Fairfax County's poverty rate of 5.8 percent is relatively low; however, due to its large population, it has more residents living in poverty than any other single jurisdiction in Virginia. For example, the City of Richmond has a poverty rate of 26.2 percent, but has 56,000 residents living in poverty compared to Fairfax County's 65,000.

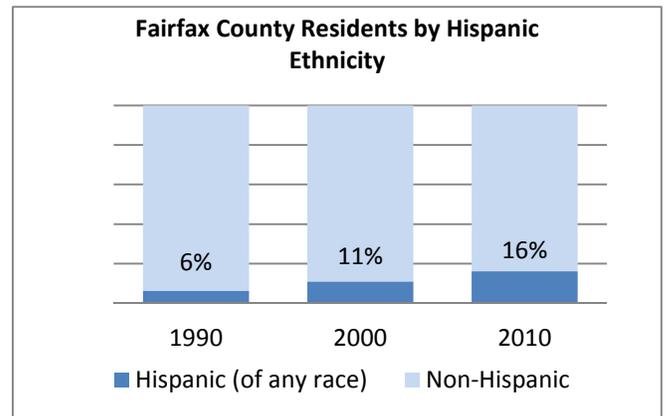
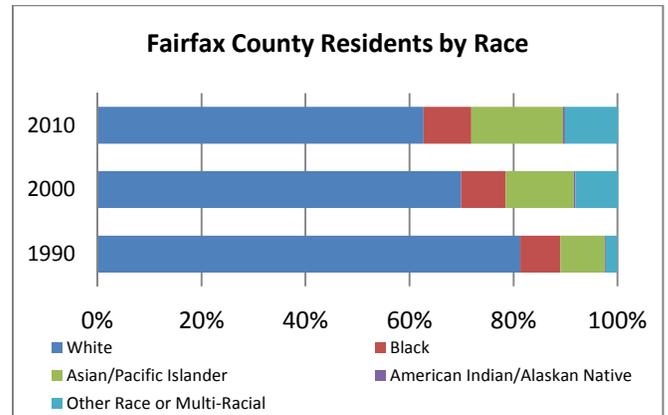
During this past recession, Fairfax County has seen a significant rise in joblessness and increased requests for assistance from programs, including Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF), Medicaid, and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). All of the programs within the Department of Family Services, including Head Start, are critical to the county's effort to help residents impacted by the weak economy. Economic decline increases stressors on families that can lead to substance abuse, mental health issues, child abuse and neglect, and family violence. For example, the number of residents receiving financial and medical assistance has increased by 75 percent since 2008, bringing the average monthly caseload totals from 51,939 cases per month in 2008 to almost 95,000 in June 2014. See the Public Assistance section for more details.

Fairfax County is one of the most culturally diverse communities in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area. The mosaic of cultures, languages, and support networks has strengthened local communities, but also presents new challenges. The white population remains a majority in Fairfax County, with 64 percent currently as compared to 1990, when 81.3 percent of the population identified themselves as white. The Hispanic population has more than doubled since 1990, rising from 6.3 percent to 15.5 percent in 2012. **Table 7** shows the racial/ethnic origin composition trend changes for Fairfax County from 1990 to 2013.

**Table 7: Race/Ethnic Trends, 1990-2013**

Race/Ethnic Origin	1990	2000	2013
White	81%	70%	64%
Black	8%	9%	10%
Asian/Pacific Islander	9%	13%	18%
American Indian/AK Native	<1%	<1%	<1%
Other Race or Multi-Racial	2%	8%	8%
Hispanic (of any race)	6%	11%	16%

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau. 1990, 2000, 2010 Decennial Census



Sources: U.S. Census Bureau. 1990, 2000 and 2013 American Community Survey

Fairfax County's diverse population has enriched the county with a variety of languages. The number of households in which English is not the first language has increased over the past decade. Approximately 37 percent of county residents who are five and older speak a language other than English at home. The percentage of county households considered linguistically isolated (meaning no one over the age of 14 speaks English "very well") stands at 13 percent (US Census, 2013 American Community Survey).

Fairfax County students come from all over the U.S. and the world, bringing with them a wide range of backgrounds, experiences, and knowledge. Fairfax County Public School (FCPS) students speak more than 160 languages and come from more than 200 countries. Limited English Proficiency among Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) students is increasing. The English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) program provides learning assistance to students whose first language is not English. The ESOL program currently supports more than 29,000 students at all education levels, including adults.

The increasingly diverse population for which English is a second language could impede the ability of residents to be economically successful and socially integrated within the county. For this population, cultural integration as a whole, not just language

related but a lack of knowledge of services, lack of transportation, and education can impede upward mobility.

## EMPLOYMENT

During the recent national economic downturn, Fairfax County's unemployment rate peaked at 5.6 percent in January 2010. This equated to over 33,000 unemployed residents. The slow economic recovery, which Northern Virginia has experienced since the middle of 2010, showed signs of stalling as total employment declined by 7,484 jobs or 0.6 percent between the fourth quarter of 2012 and fourth quarter of 2014, when it reached 4.6 percent. In 2014, there were over 43,488 job-seeker visits to the SkillSource employment centers. Prior to the downturn, the unemployment rate was 2.2 percent in 2007 and 2.9 percent in 2008.

While many Fairfax County residents benefit from a strong employment picture, the income of many Head Start-eligible families and working families with low incomes are far below levels to meet basic needs. In 2014, the federal poverty limit for a family of four was a yearly income of less than \$23,850. The poverty rate for Fairfax County was 5.8 percent of the population, or 65,000 people ([www.fairfaxcounty.gov](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov)).

In Fairfax County, children are more likely to live in poverty than adults. Seven point three percent of all children under the age of 18, over 6,000 children under age 5 and 4 percent of families are living in poverty in Fairfax County. **Table 8** shows the race/ethnicity of people living in poverty.

**Table 8**

Race/Ethnicity of People Living in Poverty 2013		
Race/Ethnic Origin	#	%
African American	10435	9.7%
Hispanic	18879	10.4%
Non-Hispanic Whites	22,138	3.8%

*Table 8—Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2013 American Community Survey, table S1701*

Of families with children with a female head of household and no husband present, 15.8 percent live in poverty. Two hundred percent of the federal poverty guideline in 2014 was an income of \$47,700 per year for a family of four; 18 percent of households had incomes less than this. (U.S. Census,2013).

According to the MIT "Living Wage Calculator", the amount of income needed by a family of four living in Fairfax County was more than \$50,930 per year. The proportion of monthly expenses is shown in **Table 9**.

**Table 9**

Monthly Expenditures 2015	
Housing	\$1,927
Child Care	\$1,262
Food	\$713
Transportation	\$764
Health Care	\$489
Taxes	\$885

*Table 9—Source: <http://livingwage.mit.edu/counties/51059>*

Many parents eligible for Head Start work in low-paying jobs within the service industry as housekeepers, taxi drivers, and wait staff. In 2014, the average annual salary for many of these professions was below or near the current poverty level for a family of four (May 2014 National, State, Metropolitan, and Nonmetropolitan Area Occupational Employment and Wage Estimates).

For example:

- Housekeeper: \$25,180
- Cashier: \$22,220
- Food Prep Worker: \$20,160
- Custodian: \$26,490

## PUBLIC ASSISTANCE

A better indicator of the level of need in Fairfax is the number of people living in households with incomes below 200% of poverty, which more closely approximates the level below which people have difficulty meeting their needs without some kind of assistance. In Fairfax County, approximately one in every six residents live in a household earning less than 200% of poverty.

As of FY 2014, public assistance (e.g., SNAP, TANF, Medicaid) caseloads rose to over 90,910 cases per month. The demand for this public assistance has been increasing steadily since 2001. Also, due to the rapid rise in the number of persons unemployed and/or underemployed in the county, the county has experienced a significant increase for basic needs assistance including utilities and rent payment to prevent eviction. While the economy begins to improve, experience shows that a significant lag time exists for closing the gap for the needy and those on assistance.

The county's Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program, which provides monthly cash assistance to families with low incomes to help meet their housing, food and child care needs, saw a 38 percent increase in their average monthly caseload between Fiscal Year 2008 (1,268) and Fiscal Year 2011 (1,754), when it peaked. In FY 2014, there were 2,672 applications ([www.fairfaxcounty.gov](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov)). The

maximum amount a participating TANF family receives ranges from \$242 per month for one person to \$570 for six or more people. Currently, a family of three receives less than \$3,840 per year, only a fifth of the federal poverty level. The average monthly TANF grant is \$328 ([www.fairfaxcounty.gov](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov)).

The Virginia Initiative for Employment Not Welfare (VIEW) program is the mandatory employment program for able-to-work parents receiving TANF who have children twelve months or older. In FY 2014, 1,215 clients were served by VIEW and 86 percent of them were placed in a work activity. The average monthly wage for employed clients in the VIEW program was \$1,321 a month which equates to \$15,852 a year ([www.fairfaxcounty.gov](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov)). Families become ineligible for TANF and VIEW at the 24-month limit for the program or when wages from employment combined with other available income reach 100 percent of the poverty level.

Fairfax County VIEW participants benefit from an array of employment, training and social services to support their transition to successful employment and independence. These include vocational and educational assessment and training, intensive job readiness workshops, customized job search guidance, English classes and screening and evaluation for hidden disabilities. Frequently used support services include transportation, child care assistance, emergency services, clothing and equipment needed for the workplace, and medical services not covered by Medicaid.

The Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP), formerly known as Food Stamps, has also had an increase in applications in Fairfax County in recent years. This program helps people with low or no income buy nutritious food by providing an electronic card that is accepted at most grocery stores. The average monthly caseload more than doubled from 11,610 in FY 2008 to 26,080 in FY 2014. In order to be eligible for SNAP benefits, households have to meet both a monthly gross income test and a monthly net income test. However, households in which all members are receiving Social Security or TANF are considered to be eligible based on income. Other households with one or more elderly or disabled members only have to meet the net income test.

## HOUSING

In Fairfax County, the lack of affordable housing and increasing rates of already high rental costs make it difficult for Head Start families to achieve self-sufficiency. A 2014 report commissioned by the Community Foundation for the National Capital Region and prepared by the Urban Institute and the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments revealed an under-reported fact about why it is so hard

for the region's poorest to find a place to live; that is – that there is a considerable lack of affordable housing for the middle class too, and these residents are occupying many of the units that would otherwise go to lower-income people. The recent housing crisis forced many households out of homeownership and strained an already overstretched rental sector in the region. Furthermore, as older garden-style apartments and high-rises are torn down to make room for new condominiums, particularly in the Mt. Vernon area, the competition for housing worsens. Residents are resorting to sharing housing with other families. There is a definite rise in the spread of over-crowded housing, situations in which families unable to cover their rent double and sometimes triple the number of occupants in apartments and large single family residences.

More than half of renters with household incomes of \$50,000 to \$75,000 spent more than 30 percent of their income in 2010 to remain in their homes. The median market value as of 2014 for a single detached home was \$557,678 ([www.fairfaxcounty.gov](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov)). The fair market rent for a one-bedroom apartment in the Fairfax-Falls Church community is \$1,230 and for a two-bedroom apartment is \$1,458 per month. To afford this, a household would need to earn over \$5,000 per month, and a single parent working full-time would have to earn nearly \$29 per hour ([www.fairfaxcounty.gov](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov)).

Many apartment complexes, landlords and owners require a renter to have a good credit record. Divorce, medical issues, poor decision-making and other factors can lead to the deterioration of credit and prevent people from securing housing. Lack of transportation also hinders one's ability to go to work, take one's children to day care or doctor's appointments or to other essential places that contribute to stability. The result is catastrophic and can lead to homelessness.

Public housing is available in communities where Head Start families live, but the supply is not adequate to meet the need. In FY 2014, the Fairfax County Redevelopment and Housing Authority (FCRHA) served 17,933 people through the federal Public Housing and Housing Choice Voucher programs and local Fairfax County rental programs. The average income of households served across these three programs was "extremely low income" or \$24,300 ([www.fairfaxcounty.gov](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov)).

FCRHA operates 3,025 units of public housing. One thousand sixty are Public Housing (units built or acquired using federal public housing funds) and 1,929 county units are managed and maintained by the Fairfax County Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD). Units include townhouses, garden apartments and condominiums, and are located throughout the county. HCD screens

applicants to determine if they meet the qualifications for the Housing Programs. Residents pay 30 percent of their household income for rent, and applicants must qualify by income, based on household size.

HCD also administers the Federal Housing Choice Voucher rental subsidy program (formerly known as Section 8 program) for Fairfax County, the City of Falls Church, the City of Fairfax, and the town of Herndon which serves 3,700 families. Due to the high cost of rental units, the gap has widened dramatically between rental costs and what households with low-income, disabled and elderly residents can afford. Participants in the Housing Choice Voucher program receive assistance to rent privately-owned housing units that are located in apartment complexes, condominiums, townhouses or single-family homes. Households with incomes at or below 30 percent of the median income for the Washington D.C. Metropolitan statistical area receive priority (see **Table 10** for federal income limits). The waiting list for this program has been closed since March 2007.

**Table 10**

Housing Choice Voucher Program 2015			
Household Size	Maximum Household Income Limits Extremely Low (30%)	Maximum Household Income Limits Very Low (50%)	Maximum Household Income Limits Low (80%)
1	\$22,500	\$37,450	\$47,950
2	\$25,700	\$42,800	\$54,800
3	\$28,900	\$48,150	\$61,650
4	\$32,100	\$53,500	\$68,500
5	\$34,700	\$57,800	\$74,000
6	\$37,250	\$62,100	\$79,500
7	\$39,850	\$66,350	\$84,950
8	\$42,400	\$70,650	\$90,450

*Table 10 - Source: Housing Choice Voucher and Public Housing Income limits for the Washington D.C. Metropolitan Statistical Area are as published by HUD; low-income limit is based on national median family income.*

Fairfax County funds the operation of six emergency shelters, all of which are managed by nonprofit contractors. Cornerstones (formerly known as Reston Interfaith) operates the Embry Rucker Shelter, which serves both individuals and families who are homeless. New Hope Housing operates the Eleanor Kennedy Shelter (adults) and Mondloch II Shelter (families). Volunteers of America operate the Bailey's Shelter (adults). Shelter House, Inc. operates two county family shelters: Shelter House and Katherine K. Hanley Family Shelter. The Katherine K. Hanley Family Shelter opened in FY 2008, increasing the county's

ability to serve more than 150 homeless persons in families. In January 2015, there were 1,204 people who were homeless, 488 single individuals, 715 people in families, and one unaccompanied minor. According to the Office to Prevent and End Homelessness, the number of homeless people in Fairfax County has decreased about 21 percent since 2012. Thirty-six percent of all persons who were homeless were children under the age of 18, and there were 201 children under the age of six. The count only includes those who are in shelters, in transitional housing or unsheltered living on the street.

In February 2009, the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors established the Office to Prevent and End Homelessness (OPEH). The OPEH manages, coordinates and monitors day-to-day implementation of the Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness in the Fairfax-Falls Church community. The mission of the agency is to end homelessness in ten years. "This commitment requires that no later than December 31, 2018, every person who is homeless or at-risk of being homeless in the Fairfax-Falls Church community will be able to access appropriate affordable housing and the services needed to keep them in their homes" ([www.fairfaxcounty.gov](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov)).

**TRANSPORTATION**

Reliable transportation is a key component for securing and maintaining employment for Head Start families. Families who do not own personal vehicles often cannot find suitable transportation to and from home, work and other destinations. While Fairfax County has public bus and other transportation systems, these services are not currently able to meet the diverse transportation needs of many Head Start families. For example, many bus routes are only available during peak rush hours, leaving many working families with low incomes who work non-traditional hours (evenings, weekends) without viable transportation services.

Recently, several new bus routes have been added to provide service from the Lorton/Springfield/Burke area to the Tysons area. However, bus routes that connect the southern part of the county to the Dulles Corridor are limited. The Department of Transportation has plans to purchase buses and improve service levels on bus routes serving Richmond Highway, Kingstowne, and Springfield but this project will not begin for several more years. A family living in the southern part of Fairfax County may currently have to take four buses to get from their home in Alexandria (south county) to Reston (north county) where employment opportunities may be more readily available.

The Metrorail system is in the process of expanding 23 miles from Falls Church to Dulles Airport. As of

2014, the expansion to Tysons Corner and Reston was completed. The second phase will be completed in 2018. While the Metrorail expansion has and will further alleviate some transportation issues - the cost of trips continue to rise, moreover, it will not resolve the issue of traveling easily from the southern end to the northern end of the county.

## ADULT LITERACY

According to the Literacy Council of Northern Virginia, more than 129,000 adults in Northern Virginia function at the lowest literacy levels. Seventy-two percent of all Virginians on welfare have not completed high school (Virginia Department of Education). As stated previously, over one third of the residents in Fairfax County speak a language other than English at home (U.S. Census). Out of those individuals, 37 percent reported they did not speak English very well. The Literacy Council of Northern Virginia reported providing literacy classes for more than 1,126 students in program year 2014. The four main programs include Basic Adult Literacy, English for Speakers of Other Languages Tutoring, English for Speakers of Other Languages Learning Centers, and Family Learning Program.

## V. OTHER CHILD DEVELOPMENT AND CHILD CARE PROGRAMS

The Fairfax County Office for Children provides services to support the care, education and healthy development of children from birth through elementary school. The Office for Children helps families find and pay for child care, issues the Home Child Care Facility permit for home child care providers to offer child care for up to five children in their homes, and offers professional development for early care and education providers. The Office for Children also provides services to children and their families through the Virginia Preschool Initiative program and the School Age Child Care program.

Since 1975, a variety of child care options have been offered to serve families.

- The Office for Children receives state funds through the Child Care Development Block Grant to provide child care assistance for eligible children and families in Fairfax County. The Child Care Assistance and Referral program provides financial assistance for child care to Fairfax County families with low and moderate income who are working or in education/training programs.
- In 1979, the Office for Children established the School Age Child Care (SACC) program to provide professional child care services for working families during non-school hours. SACC centers are located in most elementary schools throughout Fairfax

County, as well as in centers that offer services for children with disabilities. For residents of Fairfax County, the program is offered on a sliding scale based on income.

## CHILD CARE ASSISTANCE AND REFERRAL

The Child Care Assistance and Referral (CCAR) program assists families in finding and selecting child care, and supports self-sufficiency for working parents with low and moderate-income by subsidizing child care fees in participating child care centers and family child care homes.

CCAR subsidizes a portion of the cost of care in centers and family child care homes. Eligible families pay for child care on a sliding scale. Families are eligible for child care assistance if they meet the following guidelines:

- Have low or moderate income and who work or are in training (see **Table 11**).
- Receive Temporary Assistance for Needy Families.
- Participate in the Virginia Initiative for Employment Not Welfare program.
- Care for Fairfax County children who are in foster care.
- Are involved with the Child Protective Services system.
- Are caring for children with special needs.
- Are homeless and living in a shelter.

In FY 2014, the CCAR program served 3,253 children.

**Table 11**

CCAR Eligibility Chart Effective 1/1/2014	
Family Size	Yearly Income Up To
2	\$42,660
3	\$53,724
4	\$64,776
5	\$75,828
6	\$86,880

*Table 11 – Source: Child Care Assistance and Referral, 2014*

The Office for Children maintains a database of legally operating child care programs which families can search online. As of April 2015, there were 399 licensed child care centers, 1,835 county permitted family child care homes, and 430 state licensed family child care homes in the county.

The cost of full-time child care for children ages six weeks to five years in Fairfax County in 2014 ranged from \$8,580 to \$18,824 per year (see **Table 12**).

**Table 12**

2014 Weekly Child Care Rates		
Age	Family Child Care	Child Care Center
Infants	\$200 - \$240	\$320 - \$362
Toddlers	\$185 - \$225	\$302 - \$352
Preschool	\$165 - \$200	\$257 - \$300
School-Age (full-time)	\$150 - \$180	\$228 - \$276
Before and After School	\$95-120	\$140-163

Table 12 – Source: Office for Children Community Education and Provider Services, based on data reported by local child care programs

## VIRGINIA PRESCHOOL INITIATIVE

In 1995, the Virginia General Assembly created the Virginia Preschool Initiative, a preschool program for at-risk 4-year-olds not being served by federal programs such as Head Start and Title I. The purpose of VPI is to reduce disparities among young children upon formal school entry, and to reduce or eliminate those risk factors that lead to early academic failure.

Currently, 1,584 children are served in the VPI program throughout the county. One thousand three hundred fourteen are enrolled in VPI through Fairfax County public schools, 255 in community-based child care centers, and 15 in family child care provider homes.

Each program must comply with VPI standards, including the implementation of appropriate curriculum, defined group size and child-to-staff ratios, qualified staff trained on early childhood development, in-service training for all staff, home-program communication, child assessment, program assessment, and family visits. Comprehensive health services are required for all children enrolled in VPI, as well as social services as needed.

## SCHOOL AGE CHILD CARE

SACC provides safe and enriching learning experiences before and after school, and during winter, spring and summer vacations in most county elementary schools for children in kindergarten through sixth grade. Approximately 13,300 children are served each month in 138 sites. **Table 13** illustrates the current fees (on a sliding fee scale) charged per month based on the child care arrangement.

**Table 13**

School Year 2014-2015 SACC Monthly Fee Schedule		
Adjusted Household Income	Before School (One Child)	After School (One Child)
\$54,000 and above	\$162	\$357
\$47,000 - \$53,999	152	337
\$41,000 - \$46,999	148	329
\$36,000 - \$40,999	138	297
\$32,000 - \$35,999	126	273
\$28,000 - \$31,999	110	246
\$25,000 - \$27,999	102	223
\$22,000 - \$24,999	79	174
\$19,000 - \$21,999	57	125
\$16,000 - \$18,999	30	86
\$15,999 and below	7	13

Table 13 - Source: School Age Child Care, 2015

## VI. CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

Young children and infants with disabilities and their families receive services through the Infant and Toddler Connection (ITC) program of Fairfax-Falls Church, and the Fairfax County Public Schools Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) program. ITC provides services for infants and toddlers, birth through age two, and ECSE provides services to children from two to five years of age.

In addition to therapeutic services, ITC specialists integrate family goals and provide educational services to parents and caregivers. Special education services are delivered through a continuum of services depending on the child's level of need. Both agencies work with children and families in the least restrictive environment (i.e., home, family child care, classroom). ITC and ECSE staff assist Head Start and Early Head Start teachers with supporting a child with a disability and incorporating either Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP) or Individual Education Program (IEP) goals into the daily learning activities and experiences.

Head Start maintains active partnership agreements with both ITC and ECSE to ensure that Early Head Start and Head Start children with disabilities receive services in natural settings with typically developing peers. The partnerships include ongoing joint recruitment and referrals. This ensures at least 10 percent of Head Start/Early Head Start enrollment slots provided are for children with identified disabilities.

Children in the Head Start and Early Head Start program with non-categorical/developmental delays and speech/language delays continue to be the groups of children most served by early intervention and special education (**Table 14**). Other identified disabilities include autism, hearing impairment, orthopedic impairment, and visual impairment.

**Table 14**

<b>Children with Disabilities in Head Start and Early Head Start by Disability Type 2014-15</b>		
<b>Disability Type</b>	<b>Children</b>	
	<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>
Non-categorical/Development Delay	212	91%
Speech/Language Impairment	10	4%
Autism	6	3%
Other (orthopedic impairment, emotional/behavioral, deaf/blind, and intellectual disability)	6	3%

Table 14 Source: ChildPlus April 2015

The CSB continues to see an upward trend in demand for Infant and Toddler Connection (ITC) services and it is anticipated that ITC will continue to grow at an average rate of six to eight percent annually. As the benefits of early intervention have become more widely known throughout the nation, the average monthly number of children seeking and/or receiving ITC services has grown by more than 50%, from 909 per month in FY 2010 to 1,380 per month in FY 2014.

As heard at the Community Forum, the prevalence of autism in the U.S. increased; which could be partly due to the wider definition, better efforts in diagnosis and at earlier ages, or greater awareness about symptoms. In any event, ITC has seen this increase as well, and has been sending more referrals to ECSE.

The ITC Director reports that Fairfax-Falls Church Infant & Toddler Connection served 3,164 children in FY 2014, its highest number served to date. The state and Fairfax County government increased funding for FY 2014, which enabled ITC to increase service coordinator positions. This year, they will be focusing outreach efforts on underserved populations and adding more group experiences for children who go on to Fairfax County Public Schools.

## VII. NEEDS OF HEAD START-ELIGIBLE CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES HEALTH

Children living in families with low incomes are susceptible to a wide array of health issues, including but not limited to anemia, early childhood dental cavities, obesity, and asthma. In addition, many Head Start-eligible children live in housing conditions that can exacerbate health concerns. All of these conditions have been documented as having adverse effects on the health and ability of children to learn.

So far, during the 2014-15 program year (as of April 2015), 44 children in Fairfax County Office for Children Head Start and Early Head Start programs were classified as anemic, 56 were diagnosed with asthma or reactive airway disease, 80 have vision problems, and 34 have hearing difficulties. There are 124 children

with food allergies and intolerances and 71 children with non-food allergies.

Many Head Start-eligible children in Fairfax County continue to benefit from improved access to comprehensive health care. The Virginia Medicaid program, Families' Access to Medical Insurance Security Plus (FAMIS Plus) and the FAMIS program (Virginia CHIP) provide medical and health care benefits for eligible children ages 0-21. Centralized enrollment for both programs is available in each of four county governmental centers. As of 2013, there were over 54,732 low-income adults and children in Fairfax County receiving Medicaid. One in three children in the Greater Mount Vernon area (44<sup>th</sup> District) receive Medicaid.

For children who are not eligible for FAMIS Plus or FAMIS, health services are available through the Inova Health System's Partnership for Healthier Kids, which includes coverage from a variety of sources, including the Fairfax County Department of Family Services Medical Care for Children Partnership and the Kaiser Permanente Bridge Program. Specialty care for children with chronic health conditions is available through the Care Connection for Children. The Fairfax County Health Department offers a range of services to all county residents, including immunizations, infant development services, and environmental health services. Services for maternity care are offered on a sliding scale to uninsured women who are not eligible for Medicaid.

Comprehensive dental services for children enrolled in FAMIS Plus or FAMIS are provided through the Smiles for Children program. There is a single telephone number across the state for access to participating dentists, and assistance is provided to families not only in locating a dental professional, but also in making appointments. Families do not pay fees or co-payments for this program. The Smiles for Children program is managed by DentaQuest. In addition, the Fairfax County Health Department operates three dental clinics for routine dental care to children eligible for Head Start, four years of age and older, who are not eligible for FAMIS Plus or FAMIS.

There is still much work to be done in assisting families in navigating the options for the new, more affordable health insurance plans which became available since the passing of Affordable Care Act. Although these services and free clinics are available, there are still barriers for some families in accessing them. Two common obstacles are language barriers and misinformation about programs considering immigration status. In addition, obtaining transportation to appointments can also sometimes be a concern. To address this, Neighborhood HealthVA provides health services via clinics and buses to those with any type of insurance, including Medicaid, and a sliding scale fee

for uninsured families. Access to prescription medications is critical in addressing chronic illnesses. The fact that medications are increasingly more expensive, and formularies becoming restrictive cannot be ignored. NOVAScriptsCentral is a nonprofit collaborative pharmacy which exists to provide quality pharmaceutical care as an integral component of health care for the uninsured working poor (below 200% of Federal Poverty Level) residents of Northern Virginia and their children.

## NUTRITION

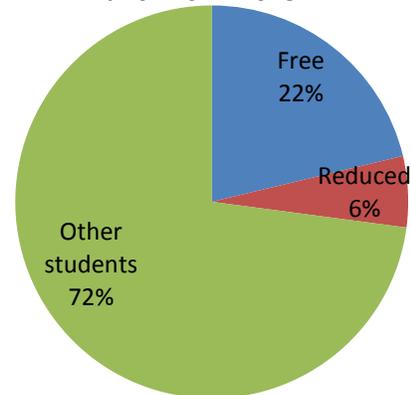
This year, 22% of Head Start children were “obese” defined as having a body mass index at or above the 95th percentile for age and gender. Childhood obesity increases the risk for a variety of severe health issues, including bone and joint issues, sleep apnea, cardiovascular disease, and low self-esteem. Misinformation, as well as personal behaviors -- including poor nutritional, environmental, or exercise choices -- play a large role in causing people to be overweight and obese. Community Forum participants discussed whether this was related to limited access to healthy food or parents not knowing what is nutritional. More data needs to be gathered to understand the causes. It is important to note that for some families under stress and financial limitations, it may largely be a convenience and cost consideration.

The Women, Infants, and Children nutrition program is available to income-eligible individuals. The WIC Program provides specific nutritious supplemental foods, nutrition education, and health care referrals at no cost to participants. Pregnant women with low incomes, infants, and children up to five years old who are at nutritional risk are eligible for WIC. Currently, 12,987 infants and young children receive WIC

misinformation surrounding WIC makes families hesitant to apply. Since Spring of 2015, WIC and Head Start have partnered to provide clinics on-site at some centers.

WIC and free- and reduced-lunch eligibility numbers are used as an indicator of poverty in communities. The graph below shows the number of students receiving free and reduced lunch in Fairfax County Public Schools as of October 31, 2014.

**Students Eligible for Free and Reduced Lunch 2014-2015**



Graph 16 Source: Fairfax County Public Schools

The FCPS system had 139 elementary schools in 2014-15. In 33 of these elementary schools, more than half of the students received free- or reduced-price meals. In six elementary schools, where Head Start classrooms are located, approximately three-quarters or more of the children received free- or reduced-price meals: Hybla Valley – 90 percent, Lynbrook – 81 percent, Mount Vernon Woods – 81 percent, Lynbrook – 81 percent, Weyanoke – 77 percent, Graham Road –

**Table 15 Location Where Families Receive WIC Services Jan – Dec 2014 (Fairfax County)**

Office Location	Fort Belvoir	Falls Church	Herndon/Reston District Office	Annandale District Office	Herndon Health Works	Springfield District Office	Centre ville	Mt. Vernon District Office	Joseph Willard Health Center	Total
Pregnant, Breast Feeding, and Post Partum Women	97	371	707	952	218	536	264	851	249	<b>4764</b>
Infants	206	889	1261	1623	674	1344	679	1828	545	<b>3962</b>
Children	109	411	536	769	234	512	279	790	238	<b>9921</b>

Table 15 - Source: Fairfax County Health Department 2015

services in Fairfax County. **Table 15** shows locations in Fairfax County where families receive WIC services. Community Forum participants noted that

76 percent, and Mount Eagle – 76 percent. Among students of all ages who received free- or reduced-

price meals, four out of every five of these students received free meals.

## MATERNAL HEALTH

Early prenatal care is available through the Fairfax County Health Department. The timeframe to enter care for income-eligible pregnant women is typically 14.6 days from the date of the positive pregnancy test to the initial examination with a provider. In FY 2013 (July 1, 2012 to June 30, 2013), the Health Department served 2,404 pregnant women. Approximately seventy-two percent of Health Department maternity clients entered care in the first trimester of pregnancy, and 28 percent entered care in the second trimester. Women who were 24 weeks or more in gestation were referred directly to the Inova Fairfax Hospital's Obstetrics Clinic (Maternal Child Health FY 2013 Annual Report).

In 2013, the Virginia Department of Health reported a total of 432 teen pregnancies (down from 759 in 2009) and 3,252 births to unmarried women residing in Fairfax County (down from 3,747). **Table 17** provides additional statistics from 2009 to 2013.

There are a number of programs in Fairfax County that provide services to teenagers and/or single mothers in addition to Head Start and Early Head Start. Resource Mothers and Healthy Families Fairfax are prevention programs that have been successful in assisting families with prenatal care. Resource Mothers provides services to pregnant teenagers who are 18 years of age or younger, and assists them with keeping medical appointments and attending parenting classes. Healthy Families Fairfax is a Department of Family Services, Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Services program that is administered in partnership with the Fairfax County Health Department and three nonprofit agencies: Northern Virginia Family Services, United Community Ministries Community Solutions, and Cornerstones. The program provides educational, therapeutic and supportive services to first-time parents who are at high risk for child abuse and neglect, from the prenatal period to the child's fifth birthday.

In FY 2013, the Health Department was awarded a grant from the Virginia Department of Health funded by the federal Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) Program established by the Affordable Care Act to support the implementation of a Nurse Family Partnership Program (NFP) in Fairfax County. In this program, public health nurses provide home visits to pregnant women and new moms to ensure a healthy pregnancy, support child health and development and set goals toward self-sufficiency. Research shows the program results in a reduction in child abuse and neglect, fewer childhood injuries, improved school readiness, and a reduction in behavioral and intellectual problems in early childhood.

The start-up phase began in January 2013 with the hiring of two Maternal and Child Health (MCH) Field Supervisors and four nurse home visitors. The program serves 100 new mothers in the Bailey's Crossroads/Annandale and Mount Vernon areas. The first parent will "graduate" when the child turns two in December 2015.

**Table 17**

Fairfax County Selected Birth Statistics					
Year	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Live Births to Teens	503	394	397	370	312
Live Births to Unmarried Women	23%	22%	22%	22%	21%
Low Birth Weight	7%	7%	7%	7%	7%

*Table 17 Source - VA Dept. of Health, Health Statistics (2014) Fairfax Co. and Fairfax City*

## MENTAL HEALTH

The document "Trends and Emerging Needs Impacting the Fairfax County Human Services System" reports emergent behavioral health issues (mental illness, risk for suicide) faced by all ages – youth, adults, and older adults.

Many families in our community are facing increased stress, not only due to the economic climate, but also due to personal situations such as recently immigrating to this country or dealing with domestic violence and unstable home situations. Immigrant families in the community have reported feeling isolated due to poor language skills, and being separated from personal and family supports. In addition, many immigrant families have arrived in this country after fleeing violence and war in their home countries. This has led to an increase in service requests for the treatment of depression and post-traumatic stress disorder. Some immigrant families in our community have children they have left behind in their home country in the care of relatives. When families are reunited, they face additional social-emotional issues and adjustments. In program year 2013-14, Head Start and Early Head Start staff across all programs and options participated in the certification course "Adult Mental Health First Aid". The course introduced participants to risk factors and warning signs of mental health problems, built an understanding of their impact and gave an overview of common treatments. The course included training in implementing a 5-step action plan to help an individual in crisis connect with appropriate professional care. This course will be repeated in 2015-16.

Early childhood education programs across the county have expressed concerns regarding an increase in behavioral issues among the children they serve and have noted interactions between parents and children that are potentially harmful to the child's

developing social-emotional skills. Head Start and Early Head Start programs are providing parent education and information regarding supporting their children's healthy pro-social development. In response to the mental health service needs of young children, the Fairfax-Falls Church Community Services Board began the Early Childhood Program (EC) in 1999 (formerly called Infant and Early Childhood Program, or IEC) which serves children and their families. The EC clinical team conducts meetings on a regular basis to focus explicitly on early childhood issues. The program has eight therapists on staff with an average caseload of 25 children to provide services for behavioral, emotional and/or developmental concerns that affect the children's daily functioning at home and school. The EC program has the capacity to serve about 170 children and currently there is no waiting list. Through a memorandum of agreement, the EC program provides services to Head Start and Early Head Start children and families in the grantee program at GMVCHS and FCC.

The Higher Horizons program contracts with a private mental health consultant and makes referrals to other community mental health agencies or professionals, as needed, for their Head Start and Early Head Start children. The FCPS Head Start/Early Head Start has developed a strength-based, proactive and child- and family-centered approach to mental health. The model includes screening all children using the Devereux Early Childhood Assessment (DECA), tracking and providing support to children who show a lack of protective factors, and providing individualized professional development for staff on how to support children who are at risk for developing social and emotional concerns. In addition, FCPS has two Mental Health Specialists on staff to provide individualized onsite modeling and coaching as necessary to classroom teachers.

Families with children who have serious emotional or behavioral problems are also eligible to receive services provided under the Comprehensive Services Act. In Fairfax County, the first step to accessing home-based services involves the coordination of a Child-Specific Team. Family members then meet with representatives from various county and community agencies for assistance in identifying services and developing a family service plan.



## COMMUNITY RESOURCES

Fairfax County, through its local government structure, administers a variety of human service agencies and linkages to community organizations. Residents of Fairfax County can access a wide variety of services and resources through regional governmental centers within each planning district. As evident in the preceding pages of this report, Fairfax County Head Start/Early Head Start has partnered with and utilized many of them in its efforts to assist families. An annual "Quick Guide: An Index of Public and Private Agencies Offering a Wide Variety of Services to Northern Virginians" is provided as a resource to families ([www.novaregion.org/ggonline](http://www.novaregion.org/ggonline)).

## VIII. SUMMARY

Fairfax County is a demographically diverse county with many resources and supports for families. However, even with a wealth of resources, there are several community issues which impact families with low incomes, including: the need for quality affordable child care and dental services for children age birth to five, an increase in families who need social services (e.g., TANF, SNAP), affordable housing, additional transportation services and resources, and an increased number of families needing English for Speakers of Other Language services.

The Head Start program is a vital service for the community. With more than 6,000 children age birth to five living in poverty in Fairfax County, the Head Start program has developed program goals and strategies to meet the changing and diverse needs of families with low-income in Fairfax County (**Appendix D**; Fairfax County Department of Family Services Strategic Plan).



## Appendix A

### SOURCES

**2015 Point-in-Time Count of Homeless Persons**

Fairfax-Falls Church Community Service Board  
[www.fairfaxcounty.gov/homeless](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/homeless)

**Advisory Social Services Board Annual Report 2014**

<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dfs/pdf/assb.pdf>

**American Community Survey, 2013**

[www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov)

**Building Economic Security for VA Families, 2012**

[www.coopercenter.org/demographics/publications/building-economic-security-virginia-families](http://www.coopercenter.org/demographics/publications/building-economic-security-virginia-families)

**ChildPlus, 2014-15**

Fairfax County Head Start/Early Head Start Database

**Economic Need in Fairfax County (2014)**

[http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/demogrph/pdf/economic\\_need\\_in\\_fairfax\\_county.pdf](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/demogrph/pdf/economic_need_in_fairfax_county.pdf)

**Fairfax County Community Education and Provider Services**

[www.fairfaxcounty.gov/ofc/child-care-provider.htm](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/ofc/child-care-provider.htm)

**Fairfax County Economic Development Authority**

[www.fairfaxcountyeda.org](http://www.fairfaxcountyeda.org)

**Fairfax County Department of Family Services**

[www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dfs](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dfs)

**Fairfax County Redevelopment and Housing Authority**

[www.fairfaxcounty.gov/rha](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/rha)

**Fairfax County Government**

[www.fairfaxcounty.gov](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov)

**Fairfax County Health Department**

[www.fairfaxcounty.gov/hd](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/hd)

**Fairfax County Infant and Toddler Connection**

[www.fairfaxcounty.gov/csb/ITC](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/csb/ITC)

**Fairfax County Office for Children Child Care Assistance and Referral Program**

[www.fairfaxcounty.gov/ofc](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/ofc)

**Fairfax County Public Schools**

[www.fcps.edu](http://www.fcps.edu)

**Fairfax County School Aged Child Care**

[www.fairfaxcounty.gov/ofc/sacc.htm](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/ofc/sacc.htm)

**Fairfax Department of Neighborhood and Community Services**

[www.fairfaxcounty.gov/ncs](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/ncs)

**Homelessness in Our Community**

[www.fairfaxcounty.gov/homeless](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/homeless)

**Housing Security in the Washington Region**

<http://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/alfresco/publication-pdfs/413161-Housing-Security-in-the-Washington-Region.PDF>

**Literacy Council of Northern Virginia**

[www.lcnv.org](http://www.lcnv.org)

**Neighborhood Health VA**

<http://www.neighborhoodhealthva.org/>

**NOVA ScriptsCentral**

<http://www.novascriptscentral.org/>

**Parenting Resources and Assistance**

[www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dfs](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dfs)

**Percent of Elementary Students Eligible for Free and Reduced Price Lunches**

[http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/demogrph/datavis/datavis\\_pdf/free\\_reduced\\_lunch2015\\_datavis.pdf](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/demogrph/datavis/datavis_pdf/free_reduced_lunch2015_datavis.pdf)

**SkillSource Annual Report, 2013**

[www.myskillsource.org](http://www.myskillsource.org)

**Trends and Emerging Needs Impacting the Fairfax County Human Services System**

[http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/hscouncil/pdf/trends\\_emergingneeds\\_jan15.pdf](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/hscouncil/pdf/trends_emergingneeds_jan15.pdf)

**US Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics**

[www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes\\_47894.htm](http://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_47894.htm)

**Virginia Dept. of Education**

[www.doe.virginia.gov](http://www.doe.virginia.gov)

<http://doe.virginia.gov/support/nutrition/statistics/index.shtml>

**Virginia Department of Social Services, TANF Reports**

[www.dss.virginia.gov](http://www.dss.virginia.gov)

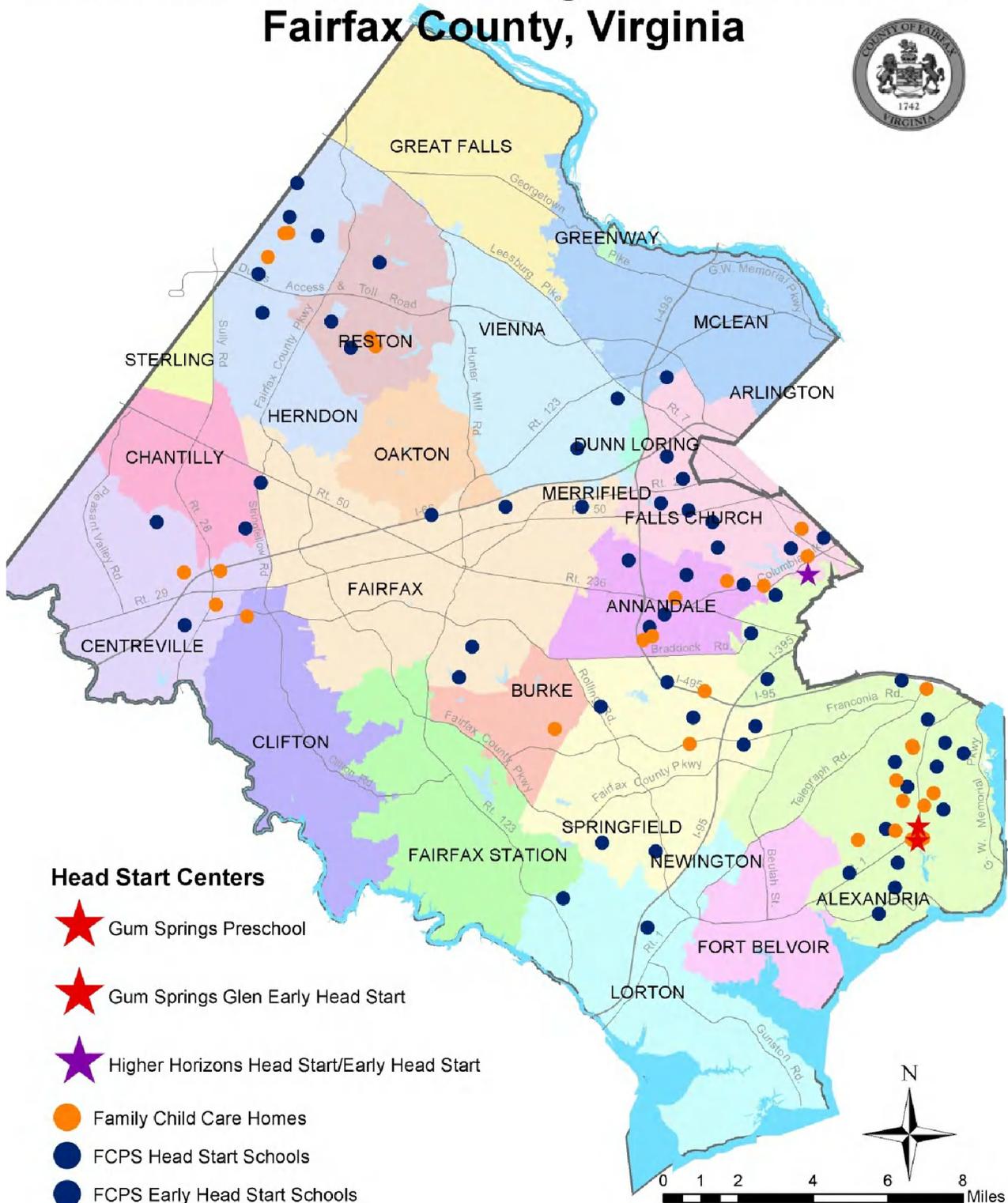
**Virginia Department of Social Services**

[www.dss.virginia.gov/facility/search/cc.cgi](http://www.dss.virginia.gov/facility/search/cc.cgi)

**Virginia Employment Commission, 2014**

[www.vec.virginia.gov](http://www.vec.virginia.gov)

# Head Start Locations: Program Year 2014-2015 Fairfax County, Virginia



## Appendix C

### FAIRFAX COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY SERVICES OFFICE FOR CHILDREN HEAD START PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY GUIDELINES 2015

#### POLICY

The Fairfax County Head Start Program has adopted a point system for the equitable enrollment of children ages birth to five years old and pregnant women. This system does not change the federal or local guidelines, but rather assigns points to facilitate prioritizing children according to existing guidelines. The Head Start Program will continue to serve the lowest income families and give priority to children four years old and children with disabilities. The eligibility point system will enable our program to enroll children in an expeditious manner and maintain waiting lists. The Program has a ceiling for income eligibility and will only consider enrollment for children of families whose incomes are within or lower than the Reduced Meals Guidelines published by the USDA and meet the over-income criteria.

#### **Head Start Definition of Family** (45 CFR 1304.3)

Family means all persons living in the same household who are: (1) supported by the income of the parent(s) or guardian(s) of the child enrolling or participating in the program, and (2) related to the parent(s) or guardian(s) by blood, marriage, or adoption.

#### **Head Start Definition of Income** (SEC. 637. [42 U.S.C. 9832] AND ACF-IM-HS-09-02)

Income means total cash receipts before taxes from all sources, with the exceptions noted below:

- Income includes money wages or salary before deductions; net income from non-farm self-employment; net income from farm self-employment;
- Regular payments from Social Security or railroad retirement; payments from unemployment compensation, strike benefits from union funds, workers' compensation, veterans benefits;
- Public assistance (including Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, Supplemental Security Income, Emergency Assistance money payments, and non-

Federally funded General Assistance or General Relief money Payments);

- Training stipends; alimony, child support, and military family allotments or other regular support from an absent family member or someone not living in the household;
- Private pensions, government employee pensions (including military retirement pay), and regular insurance or annuity payments;
- College or university scholarships, grants, fellowships, and assistantships; and dividends, interest, net rental income, net royalties, and periodic receipts from estates or trusts; and net gambling or lottery winnings.

#### **As defined here, income does not include:**

- Capital gains; any assets drawn down as withdrawals from a bank, the sale of property, a house or a car; or tax refunds, gifts, loans, lump-sum inheritances, one-time insurance payments, or compensation for injury.

#### **Also excluded are:**

- Non-cash benefits, such as the employer-paid or union-paid portion of health insurance or other employee fringe benefits;
- Food or housing received in lieu of wages; the value of food and fuel produced and consumed on farms; the imputed value of rent from owner-occupied non-farm or farm housing;
- And such Federal non cash benefit programs as Medicare, Medicaid, food stamps, school lunches, and housing assistance.

Family income must be verified by the Head Start program before determining that a child is eligible to participate in the program. The period of time to be considered for eligibility is the twelve months immediately preceding the month in which application or reapplication for enrollment of a child in a Head Start program is made, or for the calendar year immediately preceding the calendar year in which the application or reapplication is made, whichever more accurately reflects the family's current needs. (1305.4 (4)(a) and Sec. 645. [42 U.S.C. 9840] (a)(1)(C))

## ELIGIBILITY GUIDELINES

### 1. Proof of Income (45 CFR 1305.4(d))

Families may provide a 1040 and W2s for income verification. If the family is unable to provide this documentation the following may be substituted: a minimum of two of their most recent consecutive pay stubs (original preferred) or W4's. Virginia Independence Program recipients must provide TANF stubs or verification from their caseworker.

Seasonal workers must provide a notarized letter (at the program's discretion) from their employer and tax returns from the previous year (If unable to produce documentation, refer to the Family Service Supervisor and evaluate on a case-by-case basis).

Self-employed workers must show the Schedule C and 1040 tax forms.

Workers with unreported wages must show a letter from their employer(s) if no other proof can be provided. If an employer will not provide a statement on company letterhead, then the worker can use the County Office for Children Employment Verification form which indicates the amount of wages and place of employment.

Families with no income, who receive support (housing, food, financial, etc), must provide a notarized statement from the major source(s) of support indicating the total amount/type assistance provided or a signed declaration to that effect.

### 2. Proof of Categorical Eligibility (45 CFR 1305.4(j))

If a child is in foster care, a court order or other legal or government-issued document or a written statement from a government child welfare official (such as a county CYF caseworker) demonstrating the child is in foster care.

If a family is homeless, there must be a written statement from a homeless services provider, school personnel, or other service agency attesting that the child is homeless. If a family cannot provide one of the documents, a family may sign a written declaration.

### 3. Proof of Residency (OHS-PC-I-043, 45 CFR 1305.3(b); 1305.4(a))

- Families may show a current lease, deed, resident manager's letter, lease, affidavit, rental

agreement, telephone bill or utility bill which is addressed to them or lists the parent as an occupant.

- When residing with others, families must show documents with their name and address (bills, credit card statements), a signed statement from the program coordinator or designee when documents or notarized statements are impossible to obtain.
- When a child resides with a guardian (or is in the process of custody determination), legal documentation must be presented to show proof of custody.
- Full-time students or parents (teens or young adults) in training must complete an affidavit form completed by parent/guardian stating student's name, address and school. School schedule must accompany this form.
- Families must submit new residency verification when they move.

### 4. Families with income between 100% and 130% (or 185% at FCPS)

- Families with incomes that fall within the USDA free or reduced meals will be considered for enrollment under the local income guidelines.
- Up to ten percent of the children enrolled may be from families that exceed the low-income guidelines - (Sec.1305.2(g)).
- Grantees may, subject to the specific requirements of Section 645(a)(1)(B)(iii)(II), serve up to 35% of their children from families with incomes of up to 130% of the poverty line. This authority is effective immediately; grantees do not need prior approval to exercise this authority. OHS will, through its monitoring process, assure that all grantees exercising this new authority meet the conditions enumerated at Section 645(a)(1)(B)(iii)(II). OHS will provide more information on the reporting requirements associated with this provision at a future date.

### 5. Disabilities

The Head Start Act requires that at least 10% of the total number of enrollment opportunities in each grantee and delegate agency during an enrollment year are for children with disabilities who meet the definition for children with disabilities (Sec. 1305.2(a) and 1308). This mandate must be met by January 31. All children with diagnosed disabilities whose families

meet the income eligibility guidelines are given enrollment priority.

A grantee may not deny placement on the basis of a disability or its severity to any child when: the program has space to enroll more children, even though the program has made ten percent of its enrollment opportunities available to children with disabilities. In that case children who have a disability and non-disabled children would compete for the available enrollment opportunities. (Sec. 1308.5(c)(4)).

## 5. Re-enrollment

If a child has been found income eligible and **is participating\*** in a Head Start program, he or she remains income eligible through that enrollment year and the immediately succeeding enrollment year. (45CFR 1305.7(c)). Children who are enrolled in a program receiving funds under the authority of section 645A of the Head Start Act (programs for families with infants and toddlers, or Early Head Start) remain income eligible while they are participating in the Early Head Start program. When a child moves from a program serving infants and toddlers to a Head Start program serving children age three and older, **the family income must be re-verified**. If one agency operates both an Early Head Start and a Head Start program, and the parents wish to enroll their child who has been enrolled in the agency's Early Head Start program, the agency must ensure, whenever possible, that the child receives Head Start services until enrolled in school

If there are compelling reasons for the child not to remain in Head Start, such as when there is a change in the child's family income and there is a child with a greater need for the Head Start services, then in consultation with the Head Start Division Director a decision may be made to not reenroll that child (1305.7(a)).

\*Re-enrollment refers to children continuing from one program year into the next. For children who left the program (terminated) and are returning, the income of that family must be re-verified before the child(ren) can be re-enrolled. **OHS – PC – I – 023**

## 6. Selecting an Option

Parents interested in applying for **Early Head Start** can select from three different options, based on income eligibility:

### a) Family Child Care

For a family enrolling in family child care, it is required that parents meet with the Head Start Child Care Specialist to determine eligibility. If the family is eligible and chooses to enroll in the Early Head Start family child care option, they must select an approved Early Head Start provider and be eligible for the Child Care Block Grant (see #7 below). Parents will receive a list of approved providers from whom they may select childcare.

### b) Center-Based

Center-Based slots fall under Federal Income Guidelines. Children can be enrolled based on their eligibility and the program's space availability.

### c) Home-Based

Parents interested in Home-Based with Early Head Start must meet Federal eligibility criteria. A parent must be available for 90 minute weekly home visits and participation in group socialization activities during program operating hours.

## 7. Child Care Block Grant Eligibility

For a family to be eligible for the Child Care Block Grant, the total family income must be within the Federal income eligibility guidelines. Under Virginia law the following person's income shall be counted when determining eligibility: parents (natural and adoptive); a stepparent residing with the child; the father of a child born out-of-wedlock, and a person cohabiting with a parent.

The parent must be working or in an educational or training program. If it is a two parent household, both parents (including stepparents and cohabiters) must be working or in an educational or training program during those hours. The following are guidelines for educational and training programs:

Parents must be a resident of Fairfax County; approximately one hour is allowed for travel time from work.

Education and training shall be limited to activities that lead to full time employment and self-sufficiency.

Training must develop skills leading to job readiness as well as the development of specific technical or vocational skills that lead to full time employment. Training or educational activities may include undergraduate college courses, GED, non-traditional

credentialing programs, ESL, on-the-job-training, and internships.

## 8. Transitions

### a. Across Program Options

If a child has been found income eligible and enrolls in Center-Based or Home-Based they remain income eligible through that enrollment year. In the event a family wishes to change options during that enrollment year, the following procedures must be followed:

A child enrolled in Home-Based may move into an available Center-Based slot without having their income recertified (families need to be working, in school or in training to move into Center Based). A child enrolled in Center-Based may move into Home-Based without having their income recertified.

Families who are enrolled in Home-Based/Center-Based and are interested in enrolling in Family Child Care during that enrollment year, must have their income recertified for participation in Child Care Assistance and Referral (CCAR) (See #7 above).

### b. From Early Head Start to Head Start

To ensure the most appropriate placement and services following participation in Early Head Start, transition planning must be undertaken for each child and family at least six months prior to the child's third birthday (*Sec. 1304.41 (c) (2)*).

Parents should participate together with Early Head Start staff in developing plans for transition so that when their child turns three (and there is a slot available), the plan is ready to be implemented. Upon the child's third birthday, it is required that the transition go into effect. When a child moves from a program serving infants and toddlers to a Head Start program serving children age three and older, the family income must be re-verified. If a family is found ineligible for Head Start, then staff will assist families with identifying other child care alternatives.

## 9. Policy on Fees

Families who choose the Family Child Care option are responsible for the co-payment for child care.

According to Sec. 645. (42 U.S.C. 9840) (a)(2)(D)(1) (b) of the Head Start Act, a Head Start agency that provides a Head Start program with full-working-day services in collaboration with other agencies or entities may collect a family co-payment to support extended day services if a co-payment is required in conjunction with the collaborative. The co-payment charged families receiving services through the Head Start Program shall not exceed the co-payment charged to families with similar incomes and circumstances who are receiving the services through participation in a program carried out by another agency or entity.

## 10. Statement of Certification by Family

The following statement is included on the application form:

“I certify that this information is true. If any part is false, my participation in this agency’s programs may be terminated and I may be subject to legal action. I also understand that the information in this application will be held in strict confidence within the agency and is accessible to me during normal business hours.”

### FEDERAL POVERTY GUIDELINES<sup>1</sup>

Household Size	Yearly
1	11,770
2	15,930
3	20,090
4	24,250
5	28,410
6	32,570
7	36,730
8	40,890
<b>For Each Additional Family Member Add</b>	<b>+4,160</b>

<sup>1</sup> The 2015 Poverty guidelines established by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services were published in the Federal Register on January 20, 2015 and became effective on that date. The Federal Poverty guidelines are used to determine eligibility for federally funded classrooms and slots.

## LOCAL GUIDELINES<sup>2</sup>

Household Size	Tier 1	Tier 2
1	15,301	21,775
2	20,709	29,471
3	26,117	37,167
4	31,525	44,863
5	36,933	52,559
6	42,341	60,255
7	47,749	67,951
8	53,157	75,647
<b>For Each Additional Family</b>	<b>+\$5,408</b>	<b>+\$7,696</b>

## ELIGIBILITY POINT SYSTEM

CATEGORICALLY ELIGIBLE	Federal Eligibility Points	Local Eligibility Points
Foster Care	999	9
Homeless	999	9
INCOME ELIGIBLE	Federal Eligibility Points	Local Eligibility Points
Public Assistance (Temporary Assistance to Needy Families/TANF and Supplemental Security Income/SSI only)	999	9
Income Eligible ( $\leq$ 100% of FPL, see page 6)	10	9
Over Income	0	0
AGE	Federal Eligibility Points	Local Eligibility Points
EHS Transition	999	0
4	20	9
3	10	8
Birth to two years six months	10	NA
Pregnant Woman (EHS)	10	NA

SPECIAL CONDITIONS <i>*(Will be documented in the child's file)</i>	Federal Eligibility Points	Local Eligibility Points
Domestic Violence	10	9
Documented Mental Health	10	9
Low Parental Education (9 <sup>th</sup> or Below)	10	9
Child/Parent Diagnosed Disability	10	9
Military	10	9
Child Protective Services or Family Pres.	10	9
Teen Parent	10	9
Child/Parent/Sibling Chronic Health	10	9
Substance Abuse	10	9
Incarcerated Parent (or deported within 12 months)	10	9
Parent Death	10	9
Gang Involvement	10	9

### Revision dates:

Suggested changes by Fairfax County Head Start Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment, and Attendance Work Group, 11/17/08  
 Fairfax County Head Start Directors Review and Approval, 1/22/2009  
 Review and Approval Fairfax County Head Start Policy Council 1/22/2009;  
 2/3/2011; 2/23/2012; 2/28/2013; 3/27/2014  
 Suggested changes by Fairfax County Head Start ERSEA Work Group,  
 1/21/15  
 Review and Approval Fairfax County Head Start Policy Council 3/20/2015

<sup>2</sup> The Local guidelines are used to determine eligibility for locally funded classrooms and slots. Tier 1 is 130% of poverty, Tier 2 185% of poverty. The income levels correspond with the USDA Food program.

## Appendix D

### FAIRFAX COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY SERVICES STRATEGIC PLAN



#### Vision

By 2016, we will be a model social service agency, understanding and effectively responding to the needs of our community.

#### Mission

Promote the well-being of our diverse community by protecting and improving the lives of children, adults and families through supportive services, education and advocacy.

#### Goals

- Customer – we are customer centered
- Community – we work together in partnership with the community for the well-being of the people of Fairfax County
- Service – we provide service to our diverse community that is outstanding in quality, responsiveness and results
- Workforce – employees are encouraged to develop and maximize their talents and leadership skills
- Innovation – we cultivate an environment that encourages and supports creativity and opportunities for continuous improvement

#### DFS Core Values

Integrity and Accountability: Our actions are guided by ethics and honesty

Collaboration/Teamwork: We collaborate to maximize resources and achieve success

Excellence: We continually strive for excellence

Customer Focus: The customer is our top priority

Respect: Be kind – be supportive – be the difference

Value Employees: Every employee is respected, appreciated and supported

<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dfs/about/strategicplan.htm>





**O F C** Office for Children

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