



Fairfax County Head Start/Early Head Start Program 2013-2014 Annual Report



Head Start Mission

The Fairfax County 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 eligible children, their families, and pregnant women.

Overview

The Fairfax County Office for Children Head Start and Early Head Start program provides quality integrated services to income-eligible families in Early Head Start — which serves infants, toddlers and expectant parents — and Head Start which serves 3 to 5 year-old children. Head Start services are designed to meet the needs of the children and families within the cultural context of their family, school and community. This cultural context is an important factor in the development of critical life skills vital to children’s readiness for kindergarten, success in school and lifelong well-being.

The federal Head Start and Early Head Start grant is awarded to the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors. Fairfax County Public Schools and Higher Horizons are delegates that manage and operate programs. Services are provided in family homes, family child care provider homes and in classrooms.

Families participating in the program receive assistance with:

- Early childhood education and disability services.
- Social services.
- Connections to community resources.
- Health services (medical, dental, nutrition, mental health and prenatal care).
- Parent education.
- Family literacy and English for Speakers of Other Languages.

Financials

FY 2014 Total Funds Received \$29.9 million

Source Amount

U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services
\$7.3 million

U.S. Dept. of Agriculture/Virginia Dept. of Health
\$1.3 million

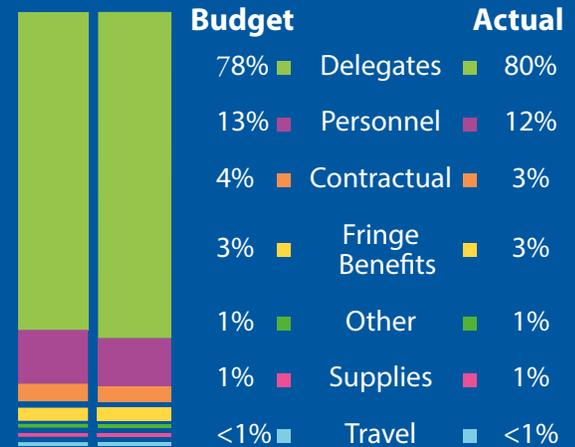
Local County Board
\$8.0 million

Local School District
\$9.5 million

Virginia Department of Education
\$3.5 million

In-Kind
\$0.3 million

FY 2014 Budget and Actual Expenditures



Number of Children Served

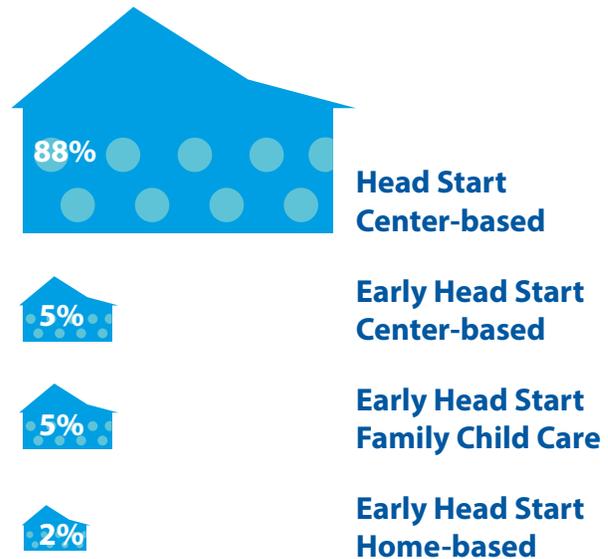
The Fairfax County Office for Children Head Start/Early Head Start (HS/EHS) program provides services at Greater Mount Vernon Community Head Start in Alexandria, Higher Horizons Day Care Center, Inc. in Bailey's Crossroads, Fairfax County Public Schools and family child care homes throughout the county.

The program is funded to serve 2,049 children in program options that include a) center based (children are in a classroom setting), b) home based (services are provided by a home visitor in the family's home), and c) family child care (children are cared for in permitted and/or state-licensed family homes). The composition is as follows:

- **Greater Mount Vernon Community Head Start and Family Child Care** (31 providers)
 - 144 Early Head Start (32 in center-based and 112 in family child care).
 - 158 Head Start.
- **Higher Horizons Day Care Center, Inc.**
 - 52 Early Head Start (16 center-based and 36 home-based).
 - 172 Head Start.
- **Fairfax County Public Schools**
 - 48 Early Head Start (center-based).
 - 1,475 Head Start.

The county's Head Start program blends multiple funding streams (federal, state and local) to comprehensively serve the children. Children in Fairfax County Public Schools' Head Start program are in a school year program. All other options are year-round programs.

All programs and options were fully enrolled for the greater part of the school year. In September and October, the program was 99% enrolled while Early Head Start children who were still eligible transitioned to the Head Start program. By November, all slots were filled in all options and remained at 100% enrollment.



Our Children Our Families

During program year 2013-2014, 2,230 children and 2,076 families were served. Some families have more than one child in the program.

Head Start children come from diverse family backgrounds.

- About half (46%) of our children are from single parent families.
- Of the children served in Head Start and Early Head Start, 90% of children were eligible because their families met the income guidelines, 10% were categorically eligible (TANF/SSI, foster care, or homeless).

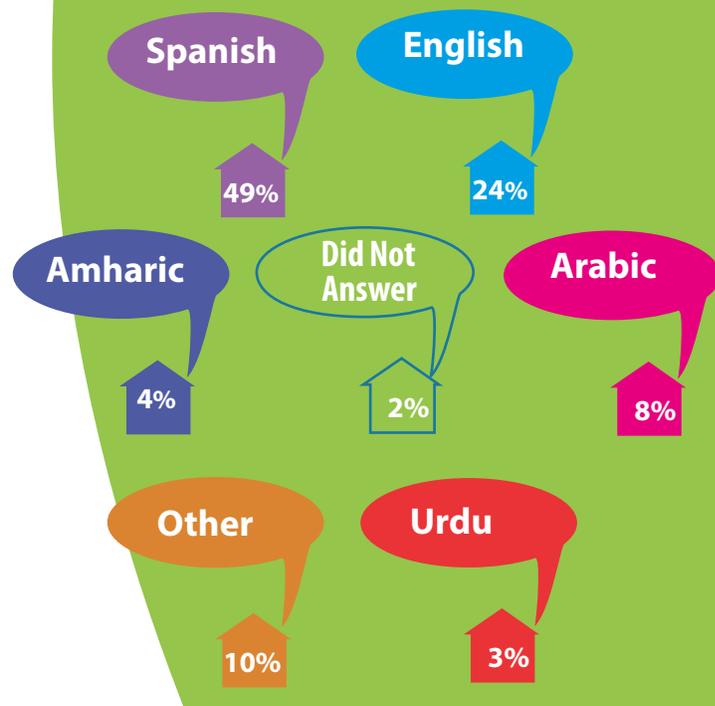
Race/Ethnicity of Children

- 0% American Indian/Alaska Native (4)
- 9% Asian (213)
- 25% Black or African American (553)
- 56% Hispanic of any race (1239)
- 1% Multi-racial/Biracial (23)
- 0% Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander (2)
- 9% White (196)

Highest Level of Education by Family

- Advanced/Bachelors
9%
- Associate/Vocational/Some College
19%
- High School Graduate/GED
25%
- Less than High School Graduate
42%

Primary Language in Child's Home



Family Engagement

Because engaging parents and families in their child's educational experience is central to Head Start's mission as well as an important element of school readiness, the Head Start family services staff works with parents to develop a Family Partnership Agreement (FPA). In the FPA, parents identify their own strengths, needs and interests; craft solutions to problems and issues; nurture the development of their children within their family and culture; and build trusting collaborative relationships among parents, staff, and the community.

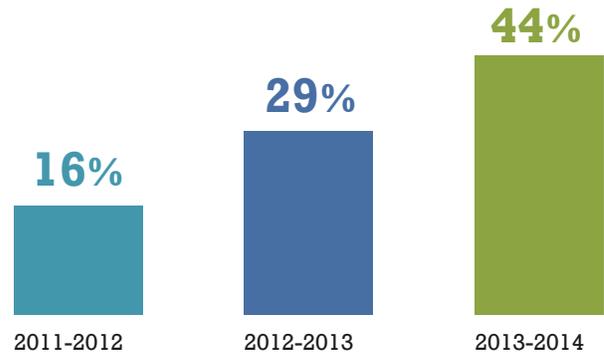
As their children's primary teacher and advocate, all parents were provided with health resources and parenting education information during PY 2013-14.

Percentage of Families Receiving Services and Referrals in 2014

100%	Health Education
100%	Parenting Education
47 %	Emergency/Crisis Intervention
25%	English as a Second Language
20%	Adult Education
12%	Housing Assistance
11%	Job Training

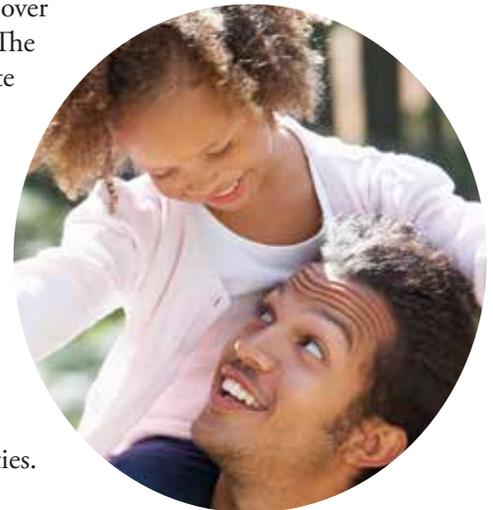
Other services and referrals include mental health, substance abuse prevention and treatment, domestic violence services, child support assistance.

Percentage of Children Who Had a Male Family Member Involved



Children are more likely to lead healthy, productive lives when both their parents are actively involved in their lives in positive ways. Research shows that, in particular, fathers significantly affect the development of cognitive abilities and achievement motivation.

Participation in male engagement activities increased over the last two years. The grantee and delegate programs set aside funds that were specifically devoted to supporting activities designed to involve fathers/father figures. The program continues to enhance parent involvement activities.



Our Teachers and Classrooms

Education/School Readiness Initiative in HS

The program recognizes that staff qualifications and skills strongly correlate with overall quality of classroom instruction and that investments in teacher credentialing improve child outcomes.

Teachers

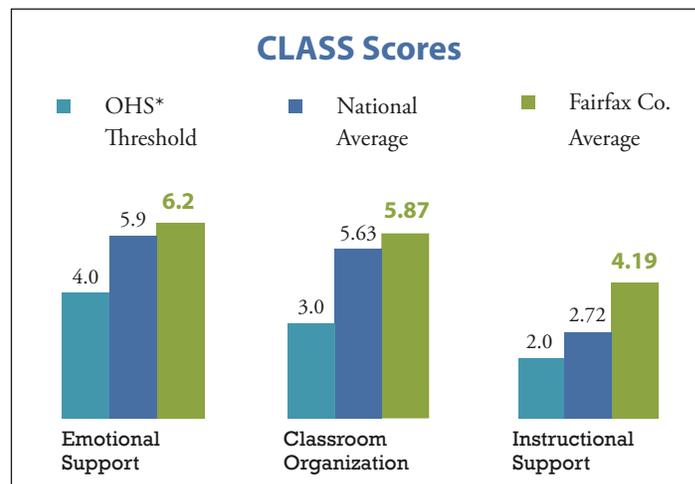
In PY 2013, a national requirement mandated that 50% of Head Start lead classroom teachers hold a bachelor's degree by the end of September 2013. Fairfax County well exceeded this requirement in that 86% of our teachers held a bachelor's degree or higher, and all teachers met credentialing requirements.

Classroom Assessment Scoring

The CLASS (Classroom Assessment Scoring System) is a nationally recognized standardized assessment tool that measures teacher/child interactions and the emotional and instructional climate of the classroom. Research indicates that at the preschool level more effective teacher-child interactions are associated with higher scores in vocabulary and math for children about to enter kindergarten (Marshburn et al., 2008). Results from the CLASS administered in Fairfax in 2013-2014 were used to support professional development plans for staff including training opportunities and resources for strengthening teacher/child interactions.

The CLASS tool organizes teacher-child interactions into three broad domains:

- Emotional Support captures how teachers help children develop positive relationships, enjoyment in learning, comfort in the classroom, and appropriate levels of independence.
- Classroom Organization focuses on how teachers manage the classroom to maximize learning and keep children engaged.
- Instructional Support involves how teachers promote children's thinking and problem solving, use feedback to deepen understanding, and help children develop more complex language skills.



*OHS – Office of Head Start

**National Average – mean of scores for 359 classrooms from Head Start grantees who have had a federal review in 2013

Child Outcomes

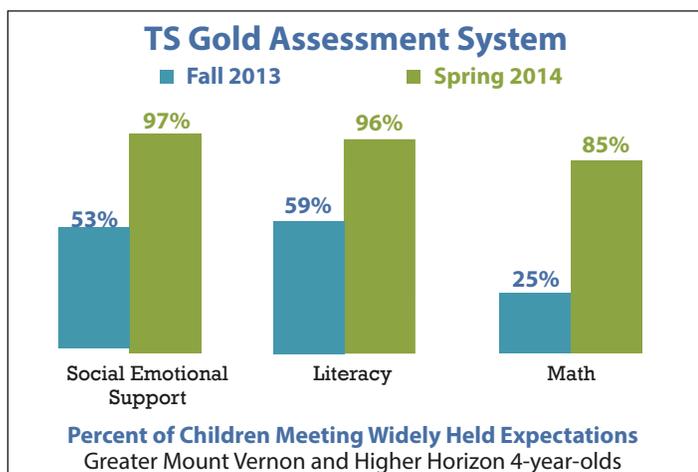


Head Start programs prepare children to succeed in school. In PY 13-14, 1,512 children transitioned to kindergarten. Teachers observed, documented and evaluated each child's progress on an ongoing basis and entered developmental level scores at specified checkpoints during the year. Teachers used the assessment information to develop lesson plans and individualize each child's learning. There are two curricula and assessment tools used in the Head Start program. Outcomes data from both curricula and assessments showed that children made substantial progress from the beginning of the program year to the end. This progress is illustrated in the tables below for three key areas of development.

The Creative Curriculum for Preschool

Greater Mt. Vernon Community Head Start and Higher Horizons

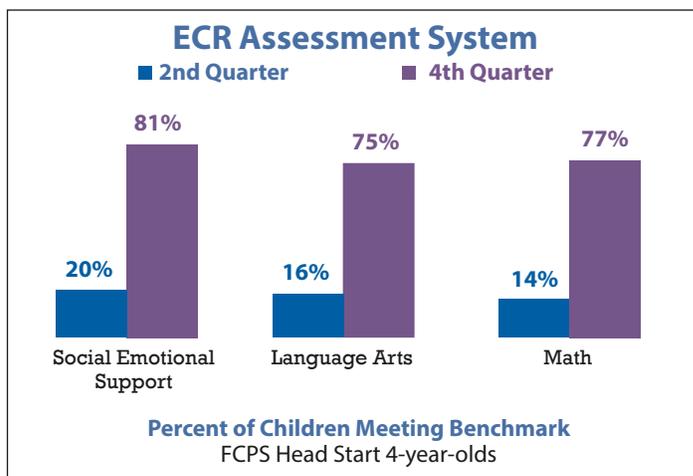
The Teaching Strategies GOLD assessment system is used with The Creative Curriculum for Preschool at GMV and Higher Horizons. Data on children's progress is entered into TS GOLD three times a year: fall, winter and spring checkpoints.



Pre-K Program of Studies Curriculum

Fairfax County Public Schools

The Early Childhood Rubric assessment system is used with the Pre-K Program of Studies at FCPS. Data collected by the ECR is submitted to the FCPS Accountability Office three times a year: 2nd, 3rd and 4th Quarters.



Services

Fairfax County's Head Start disabilities, health, mental health, and nutrition services support school readiness and make sure that health and development issues do not adversely affect children's learning. Screenings and referrals are conducted to identify concerns as early as possible in the life of the child. Staff works with families so that children get individualized services that promote healthy development.

Services for Children with Special Needs

Head Start programs are required to have at least 10% of their enrollment composed of children with disabilities. In PY 13-14, children with disabilities made up 11% of Head Start enrollment (238 children). Head Start staff screens every child for overall development of sensory, auditory, behavioral, motor, language, social, cognitive, perceptual and emotional skills within 45 days of enrollment.

Interagency agreements exist between our program and Fairfax County Public Schools' Early Childhood Special Education and Infant & Toddler Connection to provide special education services that ensure timely referrals and intervention services.

Disabilities Identified

- 179** Children had disabilities identified BEFORE entering Head Start.
- 59** Children had disabilities identified AFTER entering Head Start.

Primary Disabilities (Preschool)

94%	Non-categorical/ developmental delay*
3%	Speech
3%	Hearing/Visual impairment
1%	Orthopedic
1%	Health impairment**

* Includes communication (expressive language), social emotional, and cognitive.

** Includes febrile seizures, Spina Bifida, Dandy Walker Malformation, and hypoplastic left heart with g-tube feeds

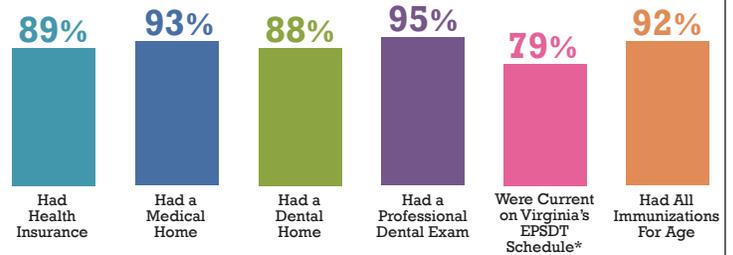


Health Services

As physical well-being contributes to a child's readiness for school, Head Start places a strong emphasis on the overall health and well-being of the children served. Head Start and Early Head Start provide developmental and health screenings for children during enrollment, and health and family services staff follow up with families to ensure medical and dental treatments are received. The chart titled Health Outcomes for Children provides information on the percentage of children meeting specific health requirements by the end of the year.

Health referrals and services were also rendered to parents in PY 2013-2014. This year, for the second consecutive year, parents were provided with the opportunity to receive free dental services through the Mission of Mercy Project held by the Northern Virginia Dental Society. Head Start family service managers arranged appointments and transportation for 45 parents to receive dental services including cleanings, extractions, fillings and prophylaxis.

Health Outcomes for Children in Head Start/Early Head Start 2013-14



* Virginia Early Periodic Screening Diagnosis and Treatment schedule for well-child care, www.dmas.virginia.gov/content_atchs/ln/ln-epstdt.pdf.

Mental Health Services

Head Start has always recognized that ensuring the healthy development of children includes attention to their mental health. As with physical health, Head Start's primary strategy is to prevent problems by reducing risks and encouraging healthy habits. Each child received a social/emotional screening by Head Start staff when they entered the program to identify any possible need for services, such as skill building, behavior support or counseling services. In the 2013-2014 program year, 192 children were provided with mental health services through Head Start. This is a 16% increase from the 2012-2013 program year. Twenty-two of these children were referred for services in the community.

All programs have a qualified mental health professional on site for 10-40 hours a month. Consultation is also available to parents, teachers, family advocates and any other staff working with children.



Reston Chapter of The Links

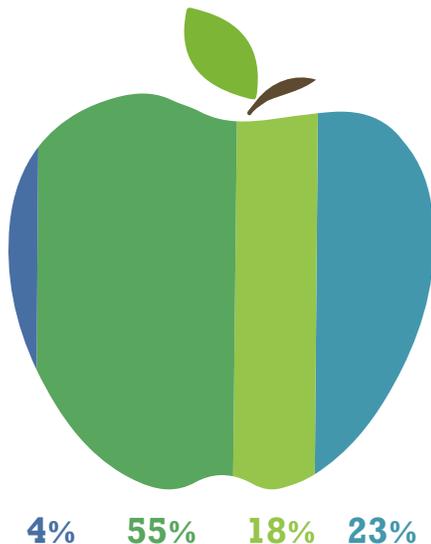
During National Nutrition Month (March 2014), Head Start and Early Head Start programs partnered with the Reston Chapter of The Links to hold three events for HS and EHS families focusing on the health and nutrition of children. The main speaker was pediatrician, and member of The Links, Dr. Regina Milteer-Rock. She spoke with families about the benefits of eating fruits and vegetables, the value of a good night's sleep, how to stay active and incorporate indoor physical activity. Dr. Milteer-Rock also suggested questions parents could ask pediatricians to better understand their child's individual health and nutrition needs. Families from Higher Horizons, Greater Mt. Vernon Community Head Start/EHS and Early Head Start Family Child Care enjoyed the events. They especially appreciated receiving a full bag of fresh fruits and vegetables courtesy of the Reston Chapter of the Links.

Nutrition

As part of a national initiative, Head Start focused on childhood obesity, a growing problem that is linked to short and long term negative physical, social, and emotional outcomes. This year, 41% of the children were "overweight" or "obese" at enrollment, which is defined as having a body mass index at or above the 85th percentile for one's age and gender. To promote good health in the classroom, all meals and snacks were planned by registered dietitians and met the nutrition standards established by Child and Adult Care Food Program. During breakfast, lunch, and snack times, children learned about foods and beverages that are healthy for their bodies as well as how much of each item they should consume to stay healthy and strong. Activities are utilized to teach children the value of healthy eating and exercise.

Weight of Head Start Children

- Underweight
- Healthy Weight
- Overweight
- Obese



From left to right: Reston Chapter of The Links-Angela Butler, president; Marilyn Lightfoote, Health and Human Services Facet chair; Joan Coleman, HHS Facet member; Regina Milteer-Rock, speaker and member; and Anita LaRue- McAfee, Facet co-chair.

Our Community

Partners and Volunteers

Head Start collaborates and coordinates with public and private organizations and agencies to improve the availability and quality of service to children and families in the program. Established partnerships have enhanced services to ensure that the program is responding to the needs of the families and community in the areas of health, mental health, education, disabilities, nutrition and professional development. Below are some examples of partnerships in Fairfax:

- Fairfax County Fire and Rescue – coats, backpacks and toys for enrolled children.
- Virginia Tech and George Mason Health and Nutrition Departments – dietetic interns.
- Northern Virginia Dental Society – free dental services for Head Start parents.

- The Junior League of Northern Virginia and Reston Chapter of The Links – seminars on healthy eating, physical activity and cooking demonstrations.
- VA Cooperative Extension – parent classes and circle time.

The program's work with the community also included assistance from volunteers. Parents and family members volunteered in classrooms, attended field trips, and assisted with other program services. Community volunteers have offered their services in providing expertise for the policy/parent committees/councils and working in the classrooms with children to read and provide interactions with them during their play.

In 2013-14, there were 2,167 volunteers. Of those, 1,884 (87%) were parents.

Shared Governance

The Head Start Policy Council and Fairfax County Board of Supervisors share decision-making responsibility regarding program goals and plans, setting program policies and procedures, budget allocations, and personnel functions. The Board of Supervisors and Policy Council approve the bylaws, the self assessment, and shared governance policies; and they review all major program reports and policies including personnel policies, financial

policies, major program policies, grant applications, the financial audit, the Program Information Report and the Community Assessment. They are active in program planning and monitoring. The Policy Council is a formal structure of Head Start program governance that provides parents and other community representatives with the responsibility and opportunity to participate in shared decision-making.

Board of Supervisors



In the picture above from left to right:

Catherine M. Hudgins Hunter Mill District

Michael R. Frey Sully District

John C. Cook Braddock District

Gerald W. Hyland Mount Vernon District

Sharon Bulova Chairman, At-Large

Penelope A. Gross Mason District, Vice Chairman

John W. Foust Dranesville District

Jeffrey C. McKay Lee District

Pat Herrity Springfield District

Linda Q. Smyth Providence District

Head Start Policy Council

Parents of children in Head Start/Early Head Start make up more than half of the membership of the Policy Council. These members are elected by their peers. The remaining members are community representatives. During monthly meetings and trainings, parents and community representatives learn more about changes and opportunities in Fairfax County Head Start and offer their own insights into the future of the program.

This year, the elected community representatives were Elizabeth Austin, Community Health Nurse from the Fairfax County Health Department and Patricia Aldas, Community Relations Representative from INTotal Health.

(Photo: Mauricio Barraza, Former PC Chair and HS representative to the Community Advisory Action Board, Sheena Jones, treasurer; Abdeltif Bensouda, parliamentarian; Rubi Colchao, chair; Mira Martinez, vice chair; not pictured Daniel Gebissa, secretary.)



Highlights

Abriendo Puertas “Opening Doors” Pilot

Abriendo Puertas (Opening Doors) is the nation’s first evidence-based comprehensive training program developed by and for Latino parents. Centered on the cultural values, strengths and experiences of Latino families, the curriculum engages parents at a very personal level and results in transformative learning. This is a peer-to-peer training that encourages family success, as well as boosts parents’ confidence to be strong advocates, and first and best teachers of their children.



This summer, 13 OFC Head Start parents participated in a pilot led by certified trainer Glendy Bowman, former Head Start Policy Council chairperson and former Head Start parent. Staff including Bogueban Dogomangue and Karle Finley helped with supporting Bowman and organizing the training.

Rubi Colchao, current Chair of the Policy Council, participated in the pilot and said, “Abriendo Puertas/Opening Doors, has shown me how to become a better advocate for my children and my community. I’ve learned how a few Latinos in the community have made a big difference through Abriendo Puertas/Opening Doors.”

Following on the success of this pilot program, the training is set to continue into the new school year.

Sign Language Training



In the past year, EHS family child care providers attended a series of sign language classes to enable them to use American Sign Language with the young children in their care. In the classes, participants learned about the many benefits of using ASL including its positive impact on the social-emotional development, receptive and expressive language development, and academic literacy skills of young, preverbal, hearing children, as well as children with disabilities.

Signing serves as a language bridge for children and staff who do not necessarily speak or understand the same language and in cases where children are delayed in their speech.



Activities Planned for Next Program Year

Extended Summer Program at FCPS

During the Summer of 2013, 64 children from FCPS Head Start classes were enrolled in an extended four-week program* for kindergarten-ready children who had been in Head Start the prior school year. This program provides an extended school year for students to have learning experiences and opportunities for continued practice in school routines and social interactions. The program also supports retention of school readiness skills and provides a smooth transition to the start of the school year in September. This summer program is expected to continue and expand in coming years.

2013 Federal Review

Fairfax County Head Start/Early Head Start had an on-site monitoring review conducted by the Administration for Children and Families/Office of Head Start in December of 2013. A random selection of child files, staff files, and class, center, and group observations was conducted and found compliant in 92 performance standards within the areas of governance, management systems, fiscal integrity, eligibility/ recruitment/ selection/enrollment/attendance (ERSEA), child health and safety, family and community engagement, and child development and education. Corrective actions were required in the two specific areas of health and safety and monitoring; during a follow-up review, all classrooms were found to be in compliance and it was determined that the revised monitoring process had been well established. The triennial monitoring review was a positive learning experience for all staff, parents, family child care providers, and members of the board of supervisors who participated in the process. The next review will be scheduled some time during the 2016-17 program year.

**Children at Greater Mt. Vernon Community Head Start and Higher Horizons are in a year-round program.*

As part of President Obama's Early Learning Initiative, ACF has set aside \$500 million for new Early Head Start-Child Care (EHS-CC) Partnerships. These grants will allow new or existing Early Head Start programs to partner with local child care centers and family child care providers serving infants and toddlers from income-eligible families. Fairfax County will be submitting a proposal to partner with additional family child care providers to serve 40 new children and to expand services at Gum Springs Glen by adding two new classrooms that will serve a total of 16 additional children.

Additionally, the President's Pre-school for All initiative will improve quality and expand access to preschool for all low- and moderate-income four-year-olds from families at or below 200% of poverty. Fairfax County Public Schools will participate in Virginia's proposal and intends to serve children in four added classrooms; two at FCPS and two in community-based centers.



Fairfax County Head Start Locations

- Gum Springs Preschool
- Gum Springs Glen
Early Head Start
- Higher Horizons Head Start
/Early Head Start
- Family Child Care Homes
- FCPS Head Start Schools
- FCPS Early Head Start
Schools



Fairfax County

O F C Office for Children

Fairfax County Department of Family Services
12011 Government Center Parkway Suite 920
Fairfax, VA 22035

703-324-8000 • www.fairfaxcounty.gov/ofc



Fairfax County Department of
Family Services



Reasonable accommodations made upon request;
call 703-324-8290 or TTY 711.



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