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Head Start Policy Council

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April Lamica	Ann Robbins

Worcester Community Action Council, Inc.

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Southbridge, MA 01550
Co-Directors: Kathleen Dow & Evelyn Velez
508 765-4738
Jill Dagilis, Executive Director
508 754-1176



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Worcester Community Action Council, Inc.



Head Start & Early Head Start FY16 Annual Report

Worcester Community Action Council's (WCAC) Head Start and Early Head Start programs provide early learning services to children and support services to families in Southern Worcester County. Head Start classrooms, serving 221 children, are presently located in one location—at the former high school at 25 Cole Avenue in Southbridge (serving children from Leicester, Millbury, Oxford, Webster and Southbridge). Early Head Start serves 60 children in a home based model.



The mission of Head Start is to prepare low income children and their families so they may succeed in life. Head Start is a comprehensive program that provides children with learning experiences focusing on language and literacy, social and emotional needs, cognition and general knowledge, physical development and health, and approaches to learning which is the framework that ultimately prepares the child to achieve success in school. Head Start/Early Head Start is focused on preparing children for school readiness. The goal for families is to engage the family in a way that they develop achievable personal goals while developing strong relationships with their children that lead to positive learning environments.

WCAC's Head Start programs successfully collaborate with many community organizations and school districts to meet the needs of the children and families it serves. School readiness goals encompass the educational goals of local school systems, mental health services are provided to children who have behavioral concerns, early intervention services are provided to children who need extra assistance to ensure their development is on track for their age, and on-site dental services are provided to all children.

Financials

SOURCES OF FUNDS

Federal Funding Direct	2,511,438
InKind contributions	345,624
InKind Non GAAP	70,238
USDA Meals	161,776
EEC Salary Grant	100,337
EEC Agency Administration	16,144
UPK Southbridge (MA DOE)	89,886
Private Grants	15,261
Foundation Trusts	30,000
Total Operating Revenues	3,495,704



Financials

In-Kind Good & Services

Cardinal Construction, Inc.
City of Worcester Department of
Human Resources
Daniel Lewis, A1A
Guild of St. Agnes
Home Depot
Insulation
Retro-Fit Sys-
tems
MAPFRE
St. Joseph's
Parish of Au-
burn
Town of
Southbridge
United Way of
Southbridge,
Sturbridge,
Charlton
WGBH Educa-
tional Foundation
Worcester Business
Development Corporation



The Agency's complete audit is available upon request.
For more information please contact 508.754.1176

Head Start Heroes

On the Move

The Winter of 2015 presented many challenges with record setting snowfall and seemingly never ending frigid temperatures. WCAC's Head Start program in particular fell victim to the winter weather and in February 2015, faced the emergency evacuation of 87 children and staff from our program site in Oxford as the result of roof damage. WCAC is most grateful to our Head Start Heroes, St. Joseph's Parish of Auburn, Southbridge Public Schools and the Guild of St. Agnes, who stepped up and helped us quickly relocate to new classroom sites in Auburn, Southbridge and Webster for the balance of the 2015-16 school year. To begin the 2016-17 school year, classrooms were consolidated to a single site—the former Southbridge High School. Plans are underway to relocate several classrooms to a site in Webster, noted as WCAC's second highest community of need.



Coat Drive for Kids

WCAC conducts an annual Coat Drive to provide new winter coats to all of the children—infants through age 5—enrolled in the agency's Head Start and Early Head Start programs. Some 381 coats were donated as well as \$3,200 in contributions by area corporations to support the effort.

Special thanks is due to **National Grid** and **Commerce Bank** which led the way with their generosity, with the two combining to provide more than half of the donated coats. Additional coat donations were gratefully accepted from **PENTA Communications**, **Southbridge Savings Bank**, **AllCom Credit Union**, **City of Worcester employees**, **Family Services of Central Massachusetts**, **Knights of Columbus of Auburn**, **Webster Five** and countless individual donations. Generous financial contributions to support the purchase of new coats were received from **Worcester Rotary Club**, **Bay State Savings Bank**, **Harvard Pilgrim Health Care** and **Dr. Satya Mitra**. In addition, the Creative Hands group of the **Worcester Senior Center** donated more than 200 hand made hats and mittens.

Creative Collaboration



Making Music

The Greater Worcester Community Foundation awarded the Worcester Community Action Council, Inc. a \$15,000 grant to support a collaboration with Apple Tree

Arts of Grafton, MA, to provide weekly music sessions in each of the agency's fourteen Head Start preschool classrooms.

The grant funded one, 45-minute music session weekly through the school year, for each classroom, comprised of 17 students ages 3-5 years old. The classes are relaxed, engaging and a fun time where students learn to keep a steady beat, learn simple songs by rote, play percussion instruments and move to a variety of music.

Music classes have been provided at WCAC's classrooms since 2005 through a partnership with Apple Tree Arts. Previously, classes had been directly funded through WCAC's Universal Pre-Kindergarten (UPK) funding from the MA Dept. of Early Education and Care. With a decrease in UPK funding this year, however, the agency sought alternative resources to ensure the music instruction would continue uninterrupted for both existing and new children.



Early Head Start Home Visitors conducted 1, 250 home visits.



HEALTH SERVICES	# at start of school year	% at start of school year	# at end of school year	% at end of school year
With health insurance	80	100%	80	100%
With a medical home	80	100%	80	100%
With a dental home	70	87.5%	80	100%

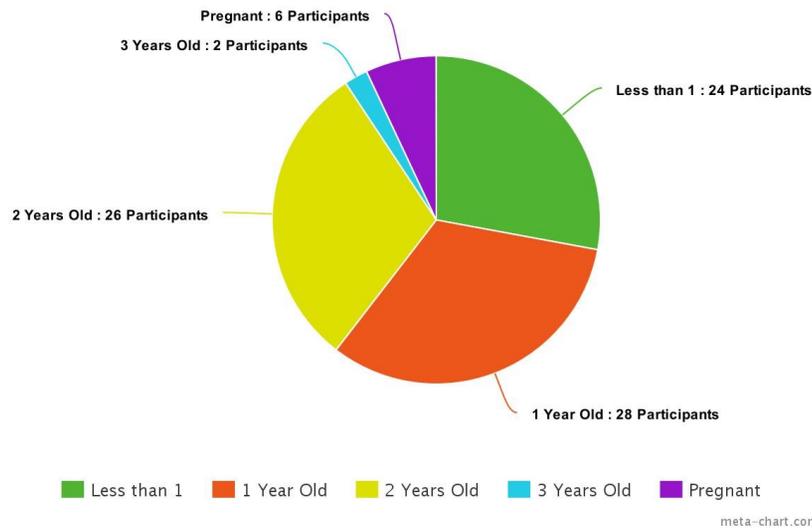


Early Head Start Profile & Outcomes



WCAC's Early Head Start program provides home visiting services for infants and toddlers, serving as a strong feeder program for Head Start with many families remaining enrolled from a child's birth to age 5.

The focus of the Early Head Start program is to involve the parent or the primary care giver in the education of their child. Early Intervention services are provided when needed.



Parent Participation

Parental involvement in young children's educational growth is critically important. The Head Start model encourages active parent participation in children's learning experiences.



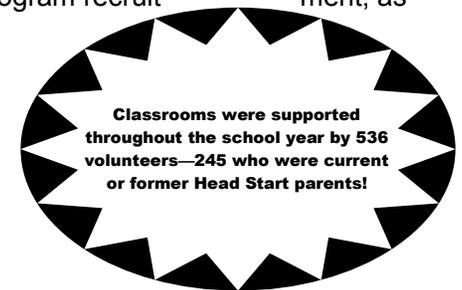
When parents and teachers work well together, everyone benefits. Parents and teachers can provide each other with unique insight and different perspectives about the same child, culminating in a more complete understanding of that child, their abilities, strengths, and challenges. The teacher will know much more about the curriculum and the school culture, while parents know more about a child's personality, tendencies, and family life.

A successful parent-teacher partnership also shows a child that an entire team of adults is on their side.

Policy Council

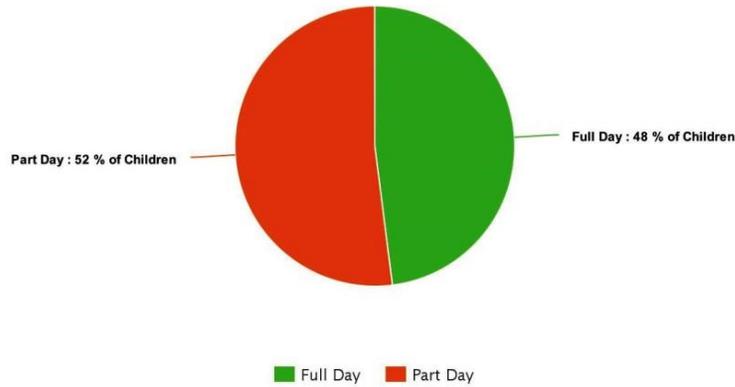
Head Start Policy Council is a group of parents elected to their post to assist with the governing of the Head Start program. Together the group works to create activities for parent involvement and engagements, program recruitment, as well as budget planning.

Parents participated in programs such as:
 Cooking Matters
 ESL
 HiSET
 Parenting Education
 Multicultural Week
 Read for the Record
 Community Reading Day



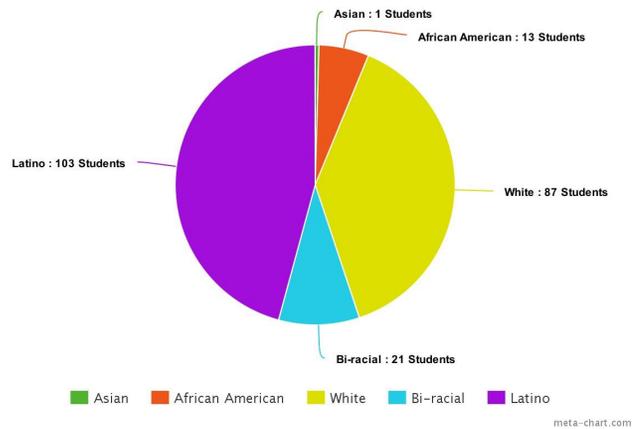
Head Start Profile & Outcomes

WCAC Head Start served 251 preschoolers from 238 families during the 2015-16 school year; 116 enrolled in full-day, 135 in a part-day program, which allowed 141 parents to hold employment and another 60 to be able to pursue school or job training.



WCAC is proud of our highly credentialed Head Start teaching staff: 5 hold Master's degrees; 16 hold Bachelor's degrees and 8 hold Associate's degrees

Race



Ninety-eight preschoolers 'graduated' from the agency's Head Start program, and enrolled in Kindergarten better prepared, ready and eager to learn due to the 'head start' afforded them.



HEALTH SERVICES	# at start of school year	% at start of school year	# at end of school year	% at end of school year
With health insurance	251	100%	251	100%
With a medical home	185	73.7%	251	100%
With a dental home	185	73.7%	251	100%

Child Development Outcomes

