



TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY
College of Human Sciences

Center *for* Early Head Start™



2022 - 2023

Annual Report

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Texas Tech University Center for Early Head Start (CEHS) makes available an annual report published at least once in each fiscal year that discloses the following information from the most recently concluded fiscal year. Reporting such information shall not reveal personally identifiable information about an individual child or parent.

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TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY
CENTER FOR EARLY HEAD START

From the Executive Director

We began the year with consolidated funding from the Department of Health and Human Services. Two grants for different funding periods were combined, allowing more administrative efficiency – and ultimately more time to devote to services for families and children. So much behind-the-scenes work goes on to ensure that we can purchase supplies, pay teachers, and provide training – hats off to Accounting Services, Research Services, Human Resources, and Procurement Services at TTU!

As we continue to negotiate the pleasures and challenges of working in our own building, we are grateful to the TTU Operations Division for supporting us by providing a new HVAC system. As temperatures soar we are grateful for climate control that keeps babies, toddlers, and teachers comfortable in their classrooms.

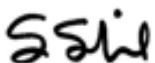
Our staff wellness initiative took off during the global health emergency and continues! In a wellness survey, staff identified resting, reading, studying, crafting, and exercising as activities that would allow them to recharge and rejuvenate. A space to support these activities was proposed by Service Learning students from the department of Human Development and Family Sciences in consultation with faculty from the Department of Design. We were grateful to receive funding to create a staff wellness room from the Provost's University Wellbeing Committee associated with the Wellness and Success Initiative under Institutional Enhancement Senate Bill 8.

Data literacy has been a key part of our program for the past several years to help us identify our strengths and challenges, report to families, train our staff, and improve our program. In 2021 two of our staff were awarded the Data Literacy Credential from the National Head Start Association. The leadership of these staff have allowed us to make in-roads in collecting, analyzing, interpreting, and disseminating information to help us provide a successful program and meet program goals.

We began an exciting collaboration with faculty and graduate students in the TTU Department of Landscape Architecture. Dr. Muntazar Monsur and students from his graduate studio course, Landscape for Learning, assessed our outdoor space and produced several extraordinary nature-based, interactive outdoor designs to enhance our children's health, well-being, learning, and curiosity. We look forward to implementing the designs which will provide joy, stimulation, discovery, and restoration in our children, families and staff.

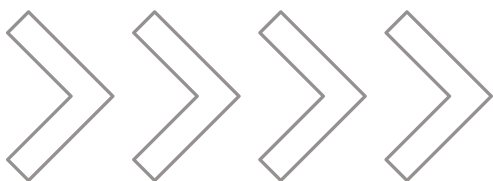
The spring ended on a high note as we successfully concluded a four month comprehensive Administrative Review of the Child and Adult Care Food Program by the Texas Department of Agriculture.

Thank you TTU faculty and staff, Policy Council, Governing Board, community partners, funders, volunteers, parents and our CEHS team for making a difference in the lives of infants and toddlers!



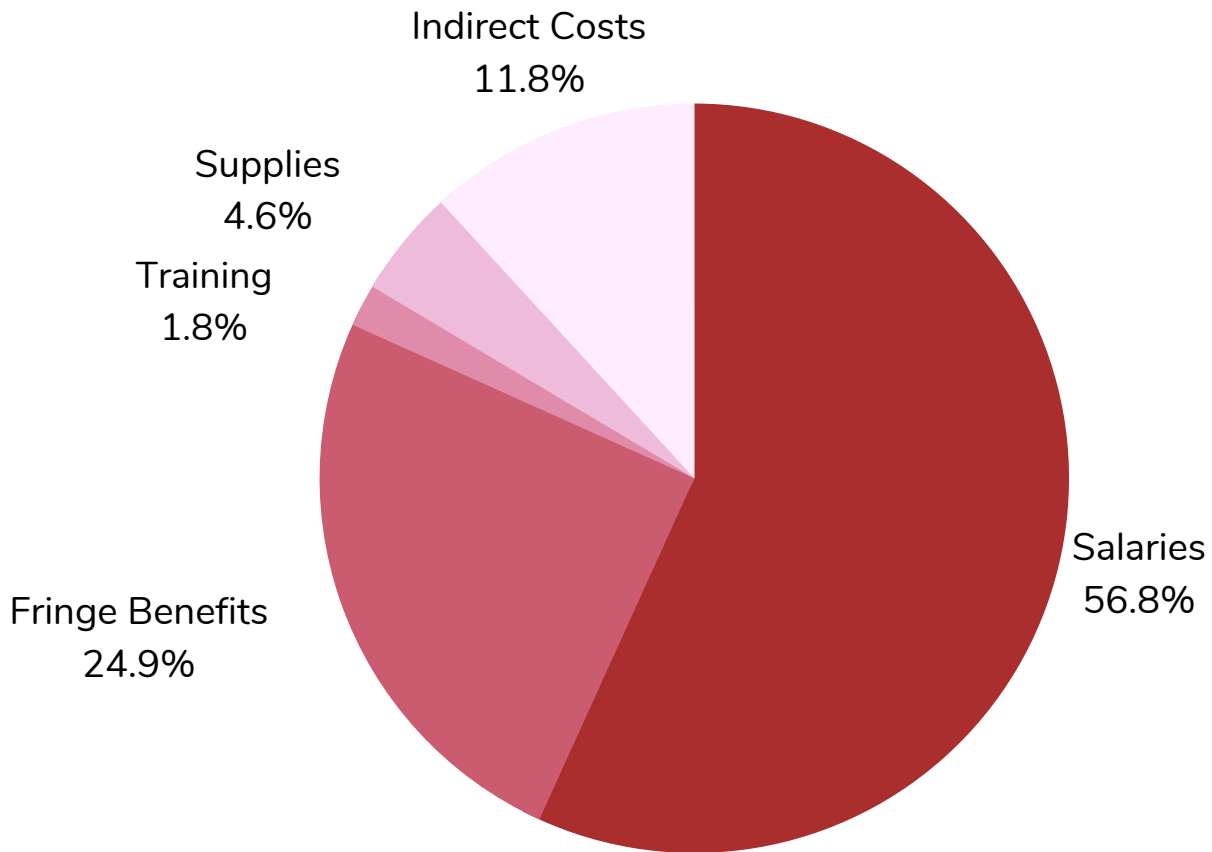
Stephanie Shine, PhD
Executive Director

Funding



Source of Funds	Amount of Funds
Department of Health and Human Services Base Funding	\$1,292,111
Department of Health and Human Services T&TA Funding	\$29,499
Non Federal Share, Texas Tech University	\$122,111
Non Federal Share, Talkington Endowment	\$149,433
Non Federal Share, Davidson Endowment	\$6,000
Non Federal Share, Donations and Volunteers	\$78,220
US Department of Agriculture, CACFP	\$100,346
TX Department of Agriculture, E3E Grant	\$10,000
DHHS Supplemental COVID Relief Funding	\$66,219
TWC Child Care Relief Funding	\$298,630
TTU HDFS Special Instruction Fees	\$5,564

Proposed 2023-2024 Budget



Grant 06CH011492 funds 96 children: 24 Home Based and 72 Center Based children and pregnant women. The chart above breaks down the total annual federal funding budget of **\$1,614,382**.

CEHS participates in USDA's Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), with a budget of **\$104,495**. To contribute the required Non Federal Share commitment, CEHS uses Texas Tech University matching funds, funds from the Talkington Endowment, and other donations for a total **\$397,770**.



Family and Health Services

TTU CEHS strives to engage each member of the family as an active participant in the child's education and believes that making parents the child's primary educators is extremely important to sustain the work that we accomplish.

Upon enrollment, teachers and support staff work toward developing relationships based on trust and open communication with families in order to engage them in the Family Partnership Agreement. Families are made to feel comfortable, welcome, and empowered to get involved in the program and their child's education. CEHS provides a variety of activities as well as a variety of times so that families can participate in activities that both interest them and work with their personal schedule. Staff actively encourage families to take advocacy and leadership roles within the community.

Family Engagement Activities

Parent Committee Meetings:

Offered in a variety of forums, including Parent Information Sessions.

Active Policy Council: During the monthly meeting, childcare and meals are provided to encourage consistent attendance and active participation in decision making.



Socialization: The Home Based program provides socialization opportunities twice each month, both at the center and at community functions.



Family and Health Services

Family Support:

Assistance with higher education, job placement, and social service connections in the community.



Annual Self-Assessment: Parents help facilitate the data collection for this annual process.

Family Literacy Program: Provides each family with a book and activity to be done at home each month. We also provide a Little Free Library for children and adults, and partner with others in the community to offer family literacy events, both at CEHS and in the community.



ReadyRosie: a research-based parenting curriculum that features both online and in-person opportunities for families to learn how to create meaningful home-learning environments.



Volunteer Opportunities: Family members, TTU students, and community members are encouraged to volunteer in the classroom, at special events, and as assistants to support staff.

Family and Health Services

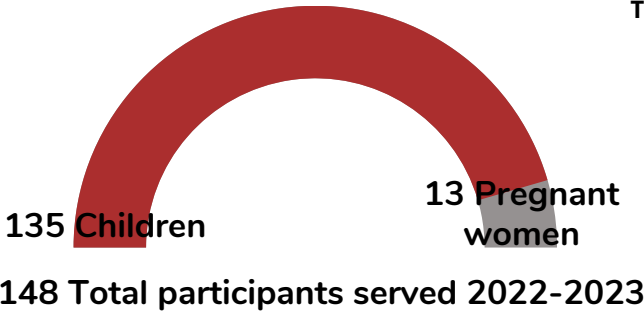
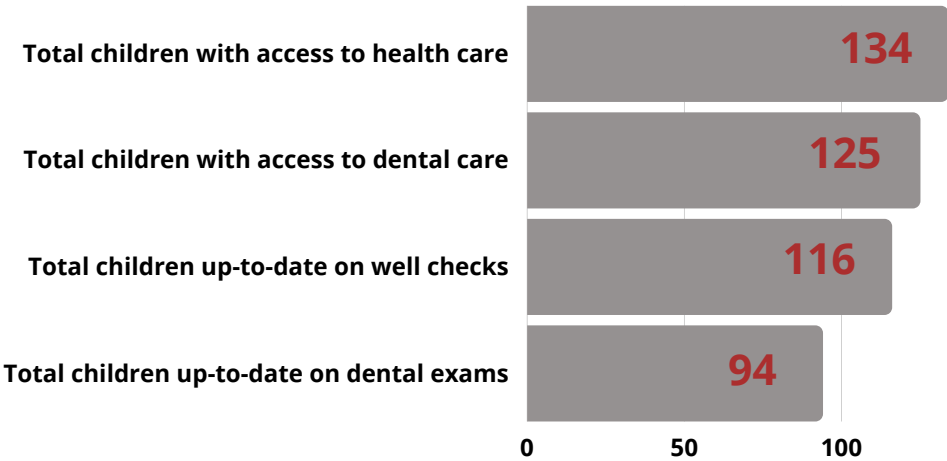
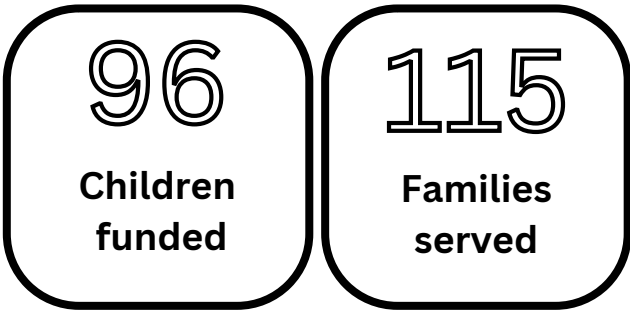
Resources: Texas Tech University and TTU Health Sciences Center resources are available for staff wellness, mental health services, and translation services for families who speak a language other than English.

Baby Bucks Store: An incentive program in which parents earn participation points for a variety of engagement activities. Families are then able to shop in the store for clothes and other items needed for their child.

Caring Closet: A resource for health, hygiene and home safety supplies that families can access monthly or when in crisis. This closet is supported through donations or TTU student service projects.



2022-2023 PIR Data



Research Efforts at CEHS

TTU Center for Early Head Start (CEHS) provides interdisciplinary research opportunities for faculty and graduate students in various fields across Texas Tech University.

2022-2023 Research Projects

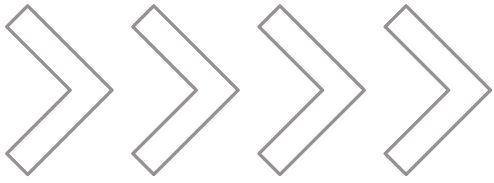
Dr. SuJung Park worked with TTU CEHS to examine past data from enrolled families regarding their involvement in the program, as well as their child and family outcome results. The work of this project continues.

CEHS staff carried out a joint research project, Veggies Win, with faculty from Nutritional Sciences, Agricultural and Applied Economics, and Human Development and Family Sciences to increase children's vegetable consumption at home and improve mealtimes with toddlers. Families received weekly veggie bags with ingredients and recipes to prepare at home, texts with nutritional and shopping hints, and targeted video clips to address challenging mealtimes (my child will not try anything new; mealtimes are stressful).

Families also gathered to celebrate healthy eating at Harvest Festivals where children were able to taste, touch, read about, and play with vegetables. We are grateful for the wonderful help of Casey Sherwood from Flatland Farms, Jessica Tullar-Caroom from Growing Together Texas, and AgriLife Extension Better Living Texas as well as for an Engaged Scholarship Collaboration Seed Grant from the College of Human Sciences.



School Readiness Goals



Approaches to Learning

Children will develop their natural curiosity and independence
Children will develop persistence and problem-solving

Social and Emotional

Children will develop positive relationships with friends and family
Children will develop the ability to understand and manage their emotions

Physical Development and Health

Children will demonstrate control of their large and small muscles
Children will begin to express their needs and do simple personal care tasks

Language and Literacy

Children will use and understand spoken language
Children will interact with pictures, books, and writing materials
Children will develop listening skills and new vocabulary through interaction with rhymes, stories, and songs

Cognition and General Knowledge

Children will gain new knowledge through daily routines and interaction with engaging materials and activities
Children will develop creativity and use their imagination in play



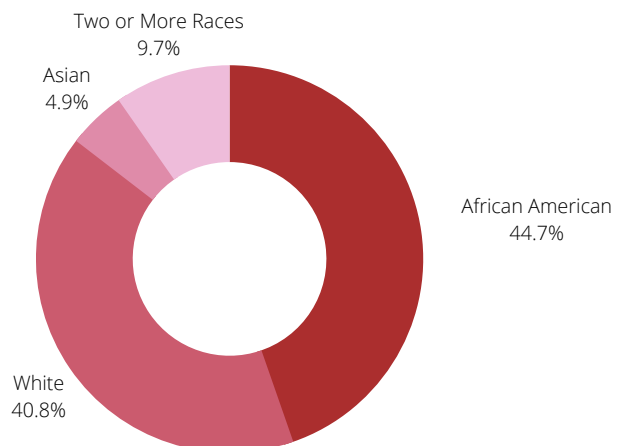
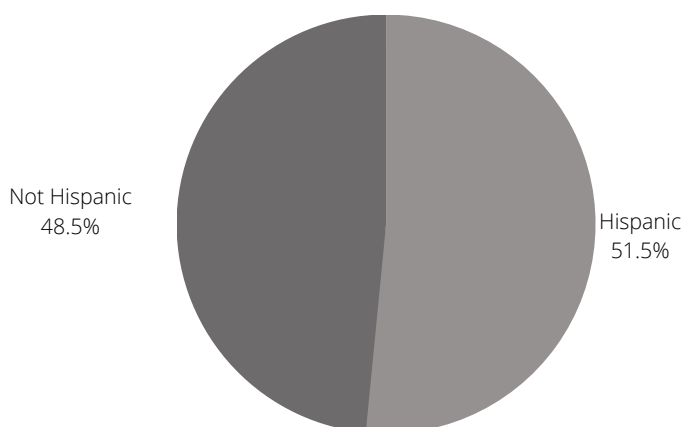
School Readiness Report

There are 96 children and pregnant moms enrolled at Texas Tech University Center for Early Head Start with a total of 72 in center-base and 24 in home-base.

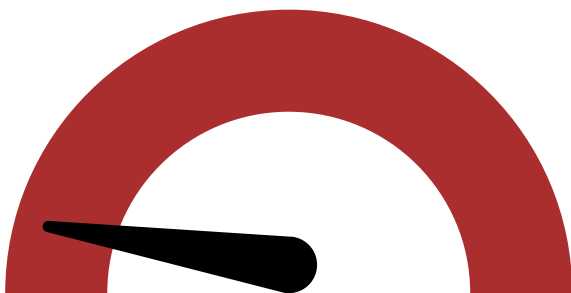
Children are assessed at least three times each school year, and results from the assessments are collected, analyzed, and aggregated. This report provides school readiness outcome data from the end-of-year assessment. This information is used to inform program goals and identify professional development needs.



For the 2022-2023 year, the assessment results show the following demographic information:



8% of children were considered Dual Language Learners



28% of children had an IFSP (Individualized Family Service Plan)



School Readiness Report

RESEARCH BASED CURRICULA

- Center Based Program: HighScope Curriculum
- Home Based Program: Partners for a Healthy Baby
- Assessment Tool: Child Observation Record (COR)



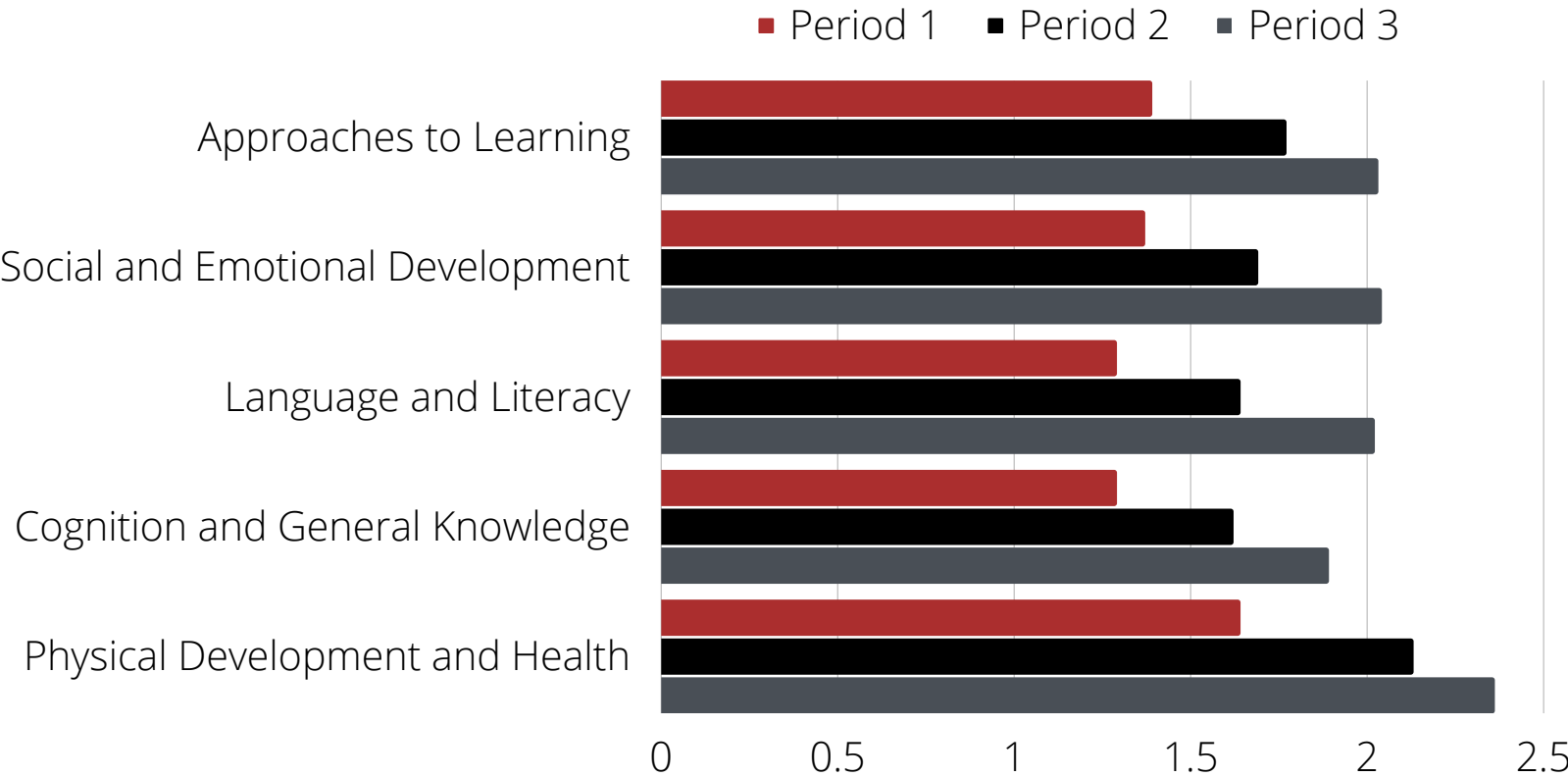
Classroom teachers, using the **HighScope** curriculum, focus on setting up an engaging environment for children, then spend time observing the children to determine their skill levels and interests. Teachers plan activities for the classroom designed to meet every child at their developmental level. These activities encourage children to progress to the next skill level in all developmental domains. Home Visitors utilize **Partners for a Healthy Baby** curriculum to support parents in creating appropriate learning experiences at home.



Teachers and home visitors use the **Child Observation Record (COR)**, which is developmentally, culturally, and linguistically appropriate and based on daily authentic observations of children's naturally occurring behaviors. Results are used to determine the interests and needs of individual children, assess developmental progress, and make modifications to lesson plans, teaching practices, and the classroom environment. Results are discussed with the families during home visits and parent conferences

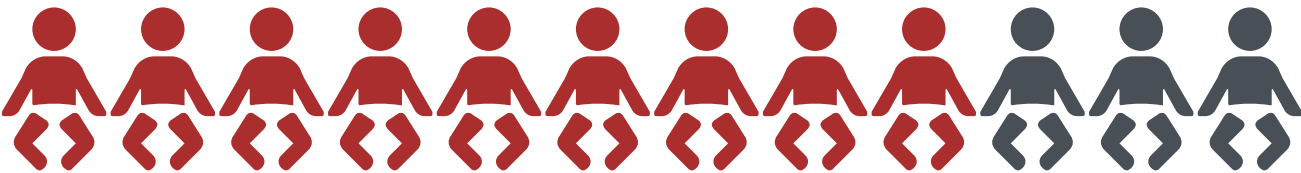
School Readiness Report

Program-wide data is gathered and aggregated three times each school year, to assess program progress towards School Readiness. In the chart below, the average COR Scores are displayed for each developmental domain, comparing the three time periods. This data is compiled using matched data sets only, to give an accurate picture of growth over the course of the year. The COR is designed to assess children ages 0-8, using an eight-level scale ranging from 0 (lowest) to 7 (highest).



During the 2022-2023 program year, children made gains in all developmental domains. The greatest areas of growth were in Physical Development and Health and Literacy. The areas of strength included Personal Care and Healthy Behavior, Building Relationships with Other Children, and Community. The areas for growth included Emotions and Data Analysis.

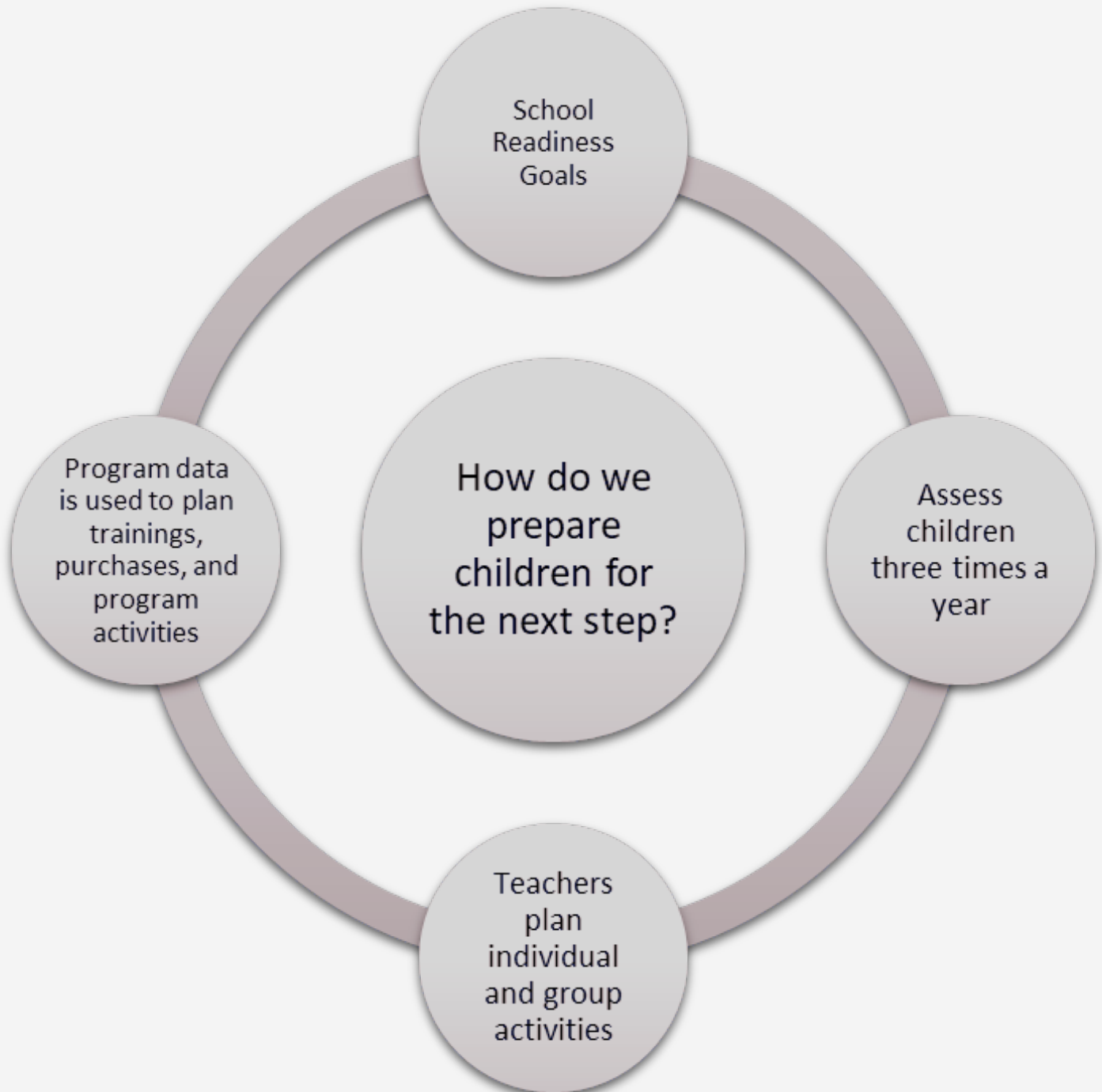
75% of children scored with or above their peers nationwide



Compared to other children nationally using the same assessment during the current school year, the majority of our children were meeting or above their peers. Our children are learning and growing every day!

Transition Efforts

Throughout a child's time in the CEHS program, child development and education services are planned to help prepare each participant for preschool and beyond. Every child is assessed on an ongoing basis, and activities are planned for their individual development. Data collected during the year contributes to the growth of the child as well as the program as a whole. At thirty months of age, teachers and families collaborate to make plans for the child to transition away from CEHS, by focusing on accomplishments and efforts to sustain learning in the future. TTU CEHS partners with local Head Start agencies to ensure a smooth transition for children as they age out of the program.



Statewide Single Audit

Texas Tech University engages the Texas State Auditor's Office to conduct the annual statewide single audit in accordance with 2 CFR 200 Subpart F. Texas Tech University has adequate reporting systems and internal controls to ensure federal awards are managed in compliance with laws, regulations, and the award terms and conditions. No questioned costs were reported for the research and development cluster or the SEFA.

- The Financial Portion of the Statewide Single Audit includes an audit of the Schedule of Expenditures of Federal Awards (SEFA). The Financial Portion of the Statewide Single Audit for state of Texas for fiscal year ended August 31, 2021, is available in its entirety <https://sao.texas.gov/reports/main/22-555.pdf>
- The Federal Portion of the Statewide Single Audit includes an audit of compliance and controls over the state's federal awards. The Federal Portion of the Statewide Single Audit report for the state of Texas for fiscal year ended August 31, 2021, is available in its entirety. <https://sao.texas.gov/reports/main/22-320.pdf>

For additional questions, please contact:
Sarah Cody, Managing Director
TTU Accounting Services
(806) 742-2985
sarah.cody@ttu.edu



Community Assessment Summary

Number of infants, toddlers, and pregnant women eligible for Early Head Start CEHS maintains an annual waiting list of up to 124 children who seek to enroll in our program testifying to a large number of infants, toddlers, and pregnant women. Other indicators reveal the high needs of young children and pregnant women in our community, including health at birth, food insecurity, vulnerable families and homelessness.

Health at Birth According to the Texas Department of State Health Services, in Lubbock County, the incidence of infant mortality is 6.2%, higher than the State rate and much higher among the African American population (10.7%). Low birth weight rates in Lubbock range from 8.5% to 9.2%, above the State rate, and higher for African American families (13.6%). African American families in Lubbock have the greatest health challenges in early life and hence can benefit from prenatal and infant services at TTU Center for Early Head Start.

Food Insecurity Food insecurity and inadequate nutrition reflect the needs of families within our service area. In the fall of 2022, the South Plains Food Bank saw a 70% increase in food insecurity in the South Plains. According to Feeding America, Lubbock County has a rate of 14.3% of food insecurity, meaning that people lack reliable access to a sufficient quantity of affordable, nutritious food. Compounding the problem of hunger, families eligible for Early Head Start also suffer from obesity. The nutritional profiles of those living in our service area highlight the need for food and nutrition education services that we provide to children and their families.

Homelessness According to the South Plains Homeless Consortium, 240 people were homeless during the Point in Time Survey in April 2023. It has been estimated that additional Lubbock residents have a form of homelessness more difficult to define - families forced to live doubled up due to economic hardship. Homeless families with young children have a particularly wide range of needs that can be addressed by comprehensive Early Head Start program services.

Social Services An indicator of need in families who could benefit from TTU Center for Early Head Start is the percentage and number of children who qualify for assistance to obtain food or healthcare. The State of Texas Children (Texas Kids Count Project) reports that 16.4% of children in Lubbock County receive Supplemental Security Income (SSI) while 33% of infants and children (birth to age 4) receive assistance through the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) food program. Families who receive social services for basic needs such as food and healthcare are likely to benefit from the comprehensive educational, health, and family services provided by our Early Head Start program.

Vulnerable Families Teenage parents have a particularly high constellation of needs in providing care for their children. Lubbock County has a teen pregnancy rate of 8.1%. Teen parents are in particular need of high-quality, comprehensive childcare services. TTU Center for Early Head home-based and center-based programs provide the interpersonal relationships and expertise to support vulnerable teen parents and their children.

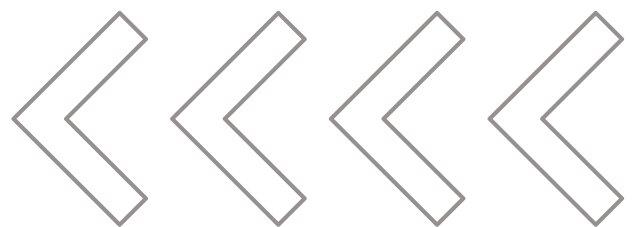
Community Assessment Summary

Schedules of Parents with Eligible Children Working families with young children need reliable high-quality childcare to be able to attend school, apply for jobs and seek gainful employment. Many young parents in East Lubbock need to complete their education to obtain sustainable employment. Whether determined by school, apprenticeships, job searches, or employment, parent schedules determine the need for year-round full-day childcare. Among the biggest employers of families in our community are Lubbock ISD, United Supermarket, the City of Lubbock, Lubbock County, and Walmart, which provide employment year-round when our Center offers childcare services.

Available Childcare Services TTU Center for Early Head Start is the only Early Head Start program in northeast Lubbock and the only NAEYC accredited program serving children in northeast Lubbock. Another Early Head Start program provides services in Lubbock to about 100 infants and toddlers in east and in south Lubbock. The Early Learning Centers of Lubbock offer childcare for a fee in four locations east of Interstate 27. A nearby child care center, Lil' Precious Steps, offers childcare for a fee to infants and toddlers.

Available Home Visiting Services Lubbock has a Nurse-Family Partnership program organized by Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center to provide services to pregnant mothers. This program provides home visits to first-time mothers and children through the age of two in Lubbock and surrounding counties. Because this program only serves first-time mothers, we collaborate to help ensure that all mothers seeking home visits obtain services that meet their needs. The Parenting Cottage, located in central Lubbock and funded by United Way, provides home visits to pregnant women in Lubbock with the Parents as Teachers program.

Resources and Strengths Lubbock has many community resources with whom we form partnerships. We work closely with Early Childhood Intervention (ECI) to recruit families, make referrals, and provide services to children with special needs. The Family Therapy Clinic at Texas Tech University is a long-standing partner, which provides high-quality therapeutic services to individuals, couples, and families on a sliding scale fee. We work closely with StarCare Specialty Health System which provides services for children, adolescents, and adults with mental illness, intellectual disabilities and/or substance use disorder. The Combest Community Coalition is a health and wellness organization with whom we partner to share information and referrals for the Nurse-Family Partnership Program and the Larry Combest Community Health & Wellness Center.



OHS Monitoring Review Report



ADMINISTRATION FOR CHILDREN & FAMILIES

Office of Head Start • 4th Floor • Sellsinger Memorial Building, 330 C Street SW, Washington DC 20024 ecfr@oahs.acf.hhs.gov

Program Performance Summary Report

To: Authorizing Official/Board Chairperson

Dr. Ann Mattinge
Texas Tech University System
3315 E Broadway
Lubbock, TX 79403 • 6127

From: Responsible OHS Official

Date: 01/13/2021

Dr. Deborah Bergerson
Director, Office of Head Start

From December 7, 2020 to December 11, 2020, the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) conducted a Focus Area One (FA1) monitoring review of the Texas Tech University System Early Head Start program. This report contains information about the grantee's performance and compliance with the requirements of the Head Start Program Performance Standards (HSPPS) or Public Law 110-134, Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007.

The Office of Head Start (OHS) would like to thank your governing body, policy council, parents, and staff for their engagement in the review process. The FA1 review allows the OHS to understand how programs are progressing in providing services in the 5-year grant cycle. The report includes the performance measures used to understand grantee progress towards program goals. You can use this report to identify where your program was able to describe progress toward implementing program services that promote quality outcomes for children and families. Please contact your Regional Office for guidance should you have any questions or concerns. Your Regional Office will follow up on the content of this report and can work with you to identify resources to support your program's continuous improvement.

DISTRIBUTION OF THE REPORT

Mr. Kenneth Gilbert, Regional Program Manager
Dr. Stephanie Shine, Chief Executive Officer/Executive Director
Ms. Denise Stovall, Early Head Start Director

Texas Tech University System • 06CH011492,06HFP000266



Program Design, Management, and Quality Improvement

Program Design

The grantee's program design and structure takes into account community strengths and needs.

Program Management and Quality Improvement

The grantee has an approach for providing effective management and oversight of all program areas and fiduciary responsibilities.

Program Governance

The grantee maintains a formal structure for program governance that includes a governing body, a policy council (or policy committee for delegate(s)), and parent committees.

Program Design, Management, and Quality Improvement Summary

Texas Tech University (TTU) Center for Early Head Start developed and implemented an organizational and governance structure to meet the community's needs, maximize staff and governance expertise, and ensure ongoing growth of quality Early Head Start services. The program provided home-based and center-based services to 93 children in Lubbock, Texas, serving a targeted area of six zip codes and within subsidized housing locations across the city. As part of the Texas Tech University System, the program created a unique organizational structure that included university faculty members who provided volunteer training and consultation on services in mental health, nutrition, education, and language services. This ongoing training with staff and governing body members was combined with regular, in-depth data reviews, which led to informed decision-making that was responsive to community and program needs. For example, the governing board responded to the upward trend of maternal depression in the community by recommending the addition of an objective to the program's Healthy Families goal. This led to a nearly 100 percent increase in the enrollment of pregnant mothers. The program further addressed the increase in maternal depression by providing additional staff training on early indicators to more quickly provide necessary resources, referrals, and support. The program responded to the high number of enrolled children with special needs by intentionally recruiting the local Early Intervention services director to join the governing board. Similarly, it recruited teachers and home visitors with expertise in serving children with disabilities and provided ongoing training to better meet children's needs. The program's education manager and the addition of this board member and the additional educator's expertise allowed the program to increase individualized support to children and families and resulted in children eligible under the Part C services receiving more timely services. The program's organizational and governance structure ensured quality services through expertise and services aligned with the community's needs.

TTU Center for Early Head Start's system for collecting, analyzing, and using program and community data provided the foundation for continuous improvements and enhanced service delivery. The program's ongoing monitoring system included regular and frequent data analysis using various internal and external data. Program data supported necessary oversight, program planning, and course correction. For example, when data indicated lower quality services were provided to children enrolled in the Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership setting compared to directly operated sites, the program dissolved that option. In August 2020, the program addressed this loss by adding two classrooms at the TTU Center for Early Head Start. Additional adjustments to continuous improvement were identified through the program's self-assessment. When a gap in staff supervision was identified, the program implemented a system to regularly monitor staff's progress as well as any barriers to the completion of these professional development goals. Regular and ongoing training, offered both virtually and in-person, allowed adult learners to build their knowledge and expertise. The program promoted a culture of learning the right way or cross-training during monthly in-service training and an annual week-long pre-service. These efforts proved helpful in the program's responsiveness to COVID-19. When the program began to offer families the choice of in-person or virtual learning, it had systems in place to train staff and parents on implementing virtual services. The program also leveraged staff expertise by developing workshops to analyze data that informed policy revisions so in-person learning could resume by late summer 2020. The program reported no evidence of learning loss, and data demonstrated increases in children's skills in all domains compared to the same period last year. The program's culture of continuous learning and data analysis supported the implementation and oversight of quality services.

Texas Tech University System • 06CH011492,06HFP000266

Glossary of Terms

Opportunity for Continuous Improvement (OCI)	An OCI is identified when the grantee is determined compliant in an area; however, through intentional, continuous improvement strategies, the agency has the opportunity to enhance overall program quality.
Area of Concern (AOC)	An area for which the agency needs to improve performance. These issues should be discussed with the grantee's Regional Office of Head Start for possible technical assistance.
Area of Noncompliance (ANC)	An area for which the agency is out of compliance with Federal requirements (including but not limited to the Head Start Act or one or more of the regulations) in one or more areas of performance. This status requires a written timeline of correction and possible technical assistance or guidance from the grantee's program specialist. If not corrected within the specified timeline, this status becomes a deficiency.
Deficiency	As defined in the Head Start Act, the term "deficiency" means: (A) a systemic or substantial material failure of an agency in an area of performance that the Secretary determines involves: (i) a threat to the health, safety, or civil rights of children or staff; (ii) a denial to parents of the exercise of their full roles and responsibilities related to program operations; (iii) a failure to comply with standards related to early childhood development and health services, family and community partnerships, or program design and management; (iv) the misuse of funds received under this subchapter; (v) loss of legal status (as determined by the Secretary) or financial viability, loss of permits, abatement from receiving Federal grants or contracts, or the improper use of Federal funds; or (vi) failure to meet any other Federal or State requirement that the agency has shown an unwillingness or inability to correct, after notice from the Secretary, within the period specified; (B) systemic or material failure of the governing body of an agency to fully exercise its legal and fiduciary responsibilities; or (C) an unresolved area of noncompliance.

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Designing Quality Education and Child Development Program Services

Alignment with School Readiness

The grantee's approach to school readiness aligns with the expectations of receiving schools, the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework (HSPEL-OF), and state early learning standards.

Effective and Intentional Teaching Practices

The grantee has strategies to ensure teaching practices promote progress toward school readiness.

Supporting Teachers in Promoting School Readiness

The grantee has an approach for ensuring teachers are prepared to implement the curriculum and support children's progress toward school readiness.

Home-based Program Services

The grantee has strategies to ensure home-based program services help parents to provide high-quality learning experiences.

Designing Quality Education and Child Development Program Services Summary

Texas Tech University (TTU) Center for Early Head Start established a combined education and family services model as its foundation for education service delivery. The education staff provided both education and family services to children and families. This model reflected the program's philosophy of building "family units" with children and parents to support relationship-building and continuity of care, beginning with pregnant women, infants, and toddlers. The program's staffing structure required each classroom to have one staff member with a bachelor's degree in early childhood education or related field. Additionally, the program's educators completed the Family Development Credential to support the provision of dual services. To support their work, teachers and home visitors participated in ongoing training in research-based curricula and assessment tools, including High Scope, Partners for a Healthy Baby, Conscious Discipline, Ready, Set, Go!, and the Child Observation Record (COR) assessment. The chosen curricula aligned with receiving school expectations and were responsive to special populations such as children with disabilities and dual language learners. When the program temporarily moved to virtual services, it implemented and trained staff on Teaching Strategies GOLD lessons and activities. Stakeholders felt it was the easiest arrangement to use and implement over a virtual platform. To strengthen virtual services, program staff also completed training on strategies for effectively engaging families in educational experiences virtually and incorporating parent observations in the child assessment process. The program's combined education and family services model was supported by coaching based on program data, staff self-assessments, and community trends. The program implemented the Practice-Based Coaching model and evaluated and analyzed coaching data to measure progress toward staff goals. Recent data indicated all teachers who set a goal to increase classroom management skills reported more confidence in their skills, improvements in classroom design, and higher child outcomes in social-emotional skills for children in their classroom. These strategies, along with regular supervision, annual evaluations, and formal and informal professional development feedback, led to low educator turnover and more continuity of care for families. The program's education and family services model was supported by qualified staff, intentional training, and a coaching system that increased educators' competencies and improved children's outcomes.

TTU Center for Early Head Start's staffing structure, community partners, and use of data supported all enrolled children's progress. On average, over 25 percent of the program's funded enrollment was comprised of children with disabilities. Understanding this data, the program designed a three-member team structure for each classroom to ensure low teacher-child ratio for increased individualization and to provide sufficient planning time for teachers to support the implementation of goals established in the child's Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP). The program assigned children to educators whose skills aligned with their needs. For example, children with disabilities were placed with the educators who had the most expertise with the disability, and dual language learners were assigned to a bilingual home visitor. Additionally, the program's secure partnership with the Part C provider had grown to include joint training, on-site services, and one-on-one coaching. Prior to COVID-19, a university intern was assigned to the classroom to support children's growth. The program collected and analyzed child and family outcomes data to further support individualized services for each child and family. The program's collection and analysis of data, education service structure, and established community partners supported individualized quality education services.

OHS Monitoring Review Report

Texas Tech University System - 06CB011492,06HEP000266



Designing Quality Health Program Services

Child Health Status and Care

The grantee has an approach for ensuring the delivery of high-quality health services.

Safety Practices

The grantee implements a process for monitoring and maintaining healthy and safe environments and ensuring all staff have complete background checks.

Designing Quality Health Program Services Summary

Texas Tech University (TTU) Center for Early Head Start's approach to health services was supported by ongoing data monitoring, partnerships within the medical field, and relationships with families. The program developed strong relationships with parents to support their understanding of the importance of health services. The health manager provided education to families regarding the use of primary medical providers instead of a hospital emergency room, which led to a reduction in emergency room use over the past several years. The program also achieved a historically high level of compliance in children's health services, which is attributed to a system of reminders sent in advance of upcoming services, data collected from the Texas Immunization Registry System, the Texas Community Partner program, and relationships with medical professionals. TTU Center for Early Head Start maintained children's medical information on ChildPlus and monitored it regularly. Despite COVID-19, 95 percent of enrolled children had health insurance as well as medical and dental homes. When the program reopened after the COVID-19 shutdown, it reported that families ensure all health services were up to date. This report led to 98 percent of children being current on immunizations and 96 percent of children being current on well-child visits. These efforts supported the thorough delivery of health services and enhanced well-being for children.

The program established a health and safety system that included insured staff, a Health Services Advisory Committee (HSAC), frequent monitoring, and an intentional focus on health and safety. These efforts aligned services with community needs and provided safe environments for young children and staff. The health manager relied on the HSAC membership's expertise, Texas child care licensing, and accreditation guidelines from Texas Rising Stars and the National Association for the Education of Young Children to guide program systems and procedures. To ensure safe, clean, and healthy learning environments, the program implemented a multi-level system of oversight, which required classroom staff, managers, maintenance staff, and landlords to complete a series of regular checklists and observations for addressing health and safety issues. Additionally, the HSAC helped the program develop and incorporate new policies to prevent the spread of communicable diseases. TTU Center for Early Head Start's human resources department ensured staff completed regular and ongoing training in standards of conduct, health, and safety practices and that staff passed required criminal record checks before beginning employment. Integrated health and safety practices supported children's learning in safe environments.

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Designing Quality Family and Community Engagement Services

Family Well-being

The grantee has an approach for collaborating with families to support family well-being.

Strengthening Parenting and Parent-Child Supports

The grantee has an approach for providing services that strengthen parenting skills.

Designing Quality Family and Community Engagement Services Summary

Texas Tech University (TTU) Center for Early Head Start developed practices and systems to support the culture of a 'family unit' inclusive of staff, children, and families. The same three-member team mentioned previously in this report ensured each family experienced a full range of services during their enrollment in the program. Just as family workers completed cross-training on the curricula, educators completed the Family Development Credential. Program curricula and staffing patterns provided time for staff to plan, train, and provide services. Family Partnership Agreements were tracked in ChildPlus, and locally designed family assessment tools aligned with the Head Start Parent, Family, and Community Engagement framework. Last year, 100 percent of families engaged in the Family Partnership Agreement, with approximately 80 percent completing at least one goal or objective set towards family well-being. To support more consistent attendance by families, home-based socialization events were provided weekly in partnership with the local Part C provider. Families benefited from the socialization, and the program noted a 20 percent increase in families developing new relationships with other families after attending events. During COVID-19, the program conducted socializations virtually, and average attendance continued to be strong each week as parents appreciated the networking and support from other families and staff. In May 2020, the program introduced Ready4One as its parenting curriculum, which was chosen based on parent, program, and community feedback. In particular, most parents reported the desire to have a virtual platform for their learning experiences. This model proved to be successful as 94 percent of families registered for the program, and 84 percent had used at least one of the learning components. The program's practices and systems provided cohesive, holistic family support.

The program used cumulative data to identify family outcome trends, progress, and areas needing improvement. Family outcomes data was aggregated and analyzed three times per year in alignment with the child outcomes collection periods. This approach allowed the staff to assess strengths and areas needing improvements for each family unit. The data was used to develop or adjust goals, enter into new partnerships, determine training, and celebrate family successes. When literacy outcomes in both family and child assessment data indicated a need for improvement, the program was intentional in building strategies to support growth in both program and home settings. These efforts led to 25 percent of the parents achieving a greater comfort level in reading and creating relationship-building opportunities with their children. Regular monitoring of family data prompted the program to increase their own financial literacy expertise when they experienced challenges in developing new partnerships to support this need. The program was able to offer the Money Smart program, which was individualized based on the audience and topics of interest. The use of data supported customized family services to improve family well-being.

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Developing Effective Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment, and Attendance (ERSEA) Strategies and Fiscal Infrastructure

Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment, and Attendance

At least 10% of the grantee's total funded enrollment is filled by children eligible for services under IDEA or the grantee has received a waiver.

The grantee enrolls children or pregnant women who are categorically eligible or who meet defined income-eligibility requirements.

Enrollment Verification

The grantee maintains and tracks full enrollment.

Fiscal Infrastructure, Capacity, and Responsiveness

The grantee's fiscal staff have the qualifications needed to provide oversight of the grant.

The grantee has a budget development and revision process that includes stakeholders and appropriate approvals, and ensures continuous alignment with program design, goals, and objectives.

Developing Effective Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment, and Attendance (ERSEA) Strategies and Fiscal Infrastructure Summary

Texas Tech University (TTU) Center for Early Head Start's ERSEA strategies and systems supported the recruitment, enrollment, and attendance of the children in need within the service area. Program staff conducted recruitment activities to reach targeted populations, such as pregnant women and children with disabilities, which supported program goals and met community needs. Family eligibility was pre-identified based on the program's selection criteria-point system. The criteria were reviewed annually as community trends were identified. For example, the program altered additional points to pregnant women to increase enrollment and to begin earlier work with the family to help reduce maternal depression in families. Program policies and procedures provided clear steps to support families struggling with attendance and to address barriers associated with chronic absences. Proactive parent education and ongoing support contributed to the program's average daily attendance of over 90 percent. Despite the challenges presented with COVID-19, the program continued to achieve full enrollment with an active waitlist of 42 eligible children/pregnant women. Knowledge of the community and established policies and procedures allowed the program to enroll children with the highest needs.

As part of a large institution, the Texas Tech University (TTU) Center for Early Head Start benefited from highly qualified financial experts committed to the philosophy of ensuring services, goals, and outcomes shaped the program budget. The program's Chief Financial Officer (CFO) was a Certified Public Accountant who provided financial services to the University for over 25 years. TTU Center for Early Head Start financial staff collaborated with the program's fiscal manager through joint meetings, regular communication, and integrated accounting systems. The CFO and fiscal staff visited the Early Head Start site to understand the services provided and the program goals' alignment. For example, during the last budget development process, funds were budgeted to purchase technology to increase fiscal efficiency. TTU Center for Early Head Start's program policies and procedures supported the oversight of federal funds. These practices provided the accounting framework, which integrated Comptroller A-6, Budget, and Economic Security (CARES) Act funds to enable oversight and integrity. The financial practices also led to prompt reporting and successful audits. The program encouraged fiscal staff to attend regular professional development to maintain a current understanding of requirements and responsibilities related to the oversight and allowable use of federal funds. The structure of the financial services and qualified, well-trained staff resulted in sound financial practices.

----- End of Report -----

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TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY
CENTER FOR EARLY HEAD START

THANK you!

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