

Capstone Head Start & Early Head Start

2017 Annual Report

Program Year Snapshot

Head Start's 2016-2017 program year was one of planning for the new opportunities and challenges in Vermont early education. Along with other Head Start programs we faced challenges in finding both qualified staff and eligible families, in part due to changes in Vermont's early childhood education system over the past few years. The expansion of universal Pre-K has reduced the population of preschool families looking for services and has made it challenging to find and retain qualified teachers. Part of our mission is to move families out of poverty and as we succeed in doing this we further reduce the number of eligible families in the populace. Due to our commitment to children and families we persevered and were able to fill vacancies in both arenas; parents and children deserve the best that we can offer them.

Other challenges we have faced in the past year or two are the increasing numbers of people experiencing homelessness and the repercussions of the opioid crisis. We have seen escalating numbers in ACES reported, increased numbers of reports made to DCF, and decreased numbers in the 0-5 age population while the senior population is increasing annually in Vermont.

Capstone's Early Head Start Child Care Partnership ended the year within striking distance of its enrollment of 34 children receiving care in family child care or licensed centers. Act 166, Vermont's universal preschool legislation, provides 3 and 4 year olds with 10 hours of high quality early education during the school year regardless of family income. Act 166 was fully implemented as of July 1, 2016. The state of Vermont won a U.S. Department of Education PreK Development Expansion (PDE) grant that provides 4 year old children at or below 200% of poverty with 6 hours per day of high quality early education during the school year, and Capstone was funded to serve children through this grant.

Capstone developed two new collaborative classrooms, one with Union Elementary School in Montpelier and one with the Orange County Parent Child Center. PDE funds supported services to preschoolers at the Learning Together Center in Barre. In the end the outcome of these changes has been positive. We were the recipient of a duration and expansion grant and have been working toward opening our new center in Lamoille County. Construction is underway and we have a projected opening date of January 2018. The center will house three preschool classrooms, its own kitchen facility and a nature-based playground.

We continue to provide both Head Start and Early Head Start home-based services in all three counties for families best served by this option.

Taking into account the challenges we are all facing in the current environment, we have fared well this past year.



Parent Engagement

Our birth to five Head Start/Early Head Start program encourages parent engagement in every aspect of the program. In our 2016-2017 program year we had many Head Start and Early Head Start parents volunteering their time.

The program offers family outing socialization opportunities, which consist of a shared meal or snack, and a structured activity designed to enhance parent/child interaction and help parents to further promote their child's development. Parent trainings are offered on family literacy, preventing child abuse and neglect, social emotional development, family budgeting, and the importance of well-child visits. Parent workshops are offered on topics that parents have indicated are of interest to them through a survey. Some workshops offered this year were toddler and baby yoga, cooking on a budget, fire safety, financial literacy, pre-employment readiness, family photos—making family picture frames/photo books. Family outings are welcoming events for all family members and provide opportunities for each parent to meet other parents with children of the same age.

Parents also participate in program leadership opportunities such as planning committees, Policy Council, staff hiring committees, Vermont Head Start Association and New England Head Start conferences and meetings and the Capstone Board of Directors. Families take part in field trips to apple orchards, local libraries, maple sugaring operations, and more.

Head Start / 155 children ages 3-5 in 142 families

- Average monthly enrollment: **95%**
- Medical Exams: **79%**
- Dental Exams: **59%**

Early Head Start / 183 children birth to 3 in 145 families

- Average monthly enrollment: **100%**
- Medical Exams: **85%**
- Dental Exams: **0%***

Early Head Start Child Care / 42 children birth to 4 in 40 families

- Average monthly enrollment: **76%**
- Medical Exams: **74%**
- Dental Exams: **0%***

**Early Head Start children generally receive dental screenings as opposed to exams. They are provided both by their family dentists and our program's Tooth Tutors who are certified dental hygienists.*

82% of eligible applicants served through Head Start.
72% of eligible applicants served through Early Head Start.
100% of eligible applicants served through Early Head Start Child Care Partnerships.

Ready for Kindergarten

At Capstone Head Start we believe that school readiness means children are ready for school, families are engaged in supporting their children's development and well-being, and receiving schools are ready for children. The *PY 2016-2017 Capstone Head Start School Readiness Goals* serve as a guide for staff and families while preparing young children, birth to five years, for school.

Staff partner with parents to prepare young children for school. Staff facilitate parents' understanding of their children's development and together, staff and parents, implement a broad range of strategies that lead to positive child outcomes. Capstone Head Start recognizes play, both facilitated and child initiated, as the primary mode of learning for young children. We incorporate "*I am Moving, I am Learning*" into our program for physical development.

By articulating school readiness goals linked to the *Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework: Ages Birth to Five*, *Capstone Head Start Program Goals*, the *Vermont Head Start Association School Readiness Goals* as well as the *Vermont's Early Learning Standards*, we create a culture of educators, caregivers, and families that work together to prepare children for school.

This year our program continued using *Teaching Strategies GOLD* to measure children's progress in learning and our program's progress in meeting school readiness goals. We also implemented the PAT research-based tool for families receiving home-based services. *Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework: Ages Birth to Five*. The framework is used to address the five developmental domains for school readiness.

Preschool teachers are observed using a research-based tool (CLASS). This tool assesses teacher interactions in the domain areas of emotional support, classroom organization, and instructional support.

School Readiness Goals 2016-2017

The five developmental areas for school readiness are:

- Social Emotional
- Physical Development and Health
- Approaches to Learning
- Language and Literacy
- Cognition

The School Readiness meeting was held on March 13, 2017, at which time the group reviewed the 2015 – 2016 goals and strategies, recent data and updated the strategies for the current year. Capstone Community Action Head Start's school readiness goals and strategies are linked to the:

- *Capstone Community Action Head Start Program Goals*
- *Vermont Head Start Association School Readiness Goals*

The School Readiness Plan articulates alignment of goals with the:

- Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework Domains
- Teaching Strategies GOLD Areas of Development and Learning, and
- Vermont Early Learning Standards Domains

These linkages create a culture of educators, caregivers and families that work together to prepare children for school. From the onset of enrollment into our program to the time a child transitions to their next placement, school readiness is a priority for their experiences while in Head Start.

A full *Teaching Strategies GOLD* report and *School Readiness Plan* are available upon request.

Head Start Program Sources of Funds

\$ 4,801,906 — U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
\$ 279,697 — U.S. Department of Education

Statement of Expenditures

	FY 2017 Proposed Budget	FY 2017 Actual
Expenditures		
Direct		
Personnel	\$ 2,304,214	\$ 2,134,353
Fringe	1858,956	743,010
Travel	124,084	119,572
Contractural	342,640	475,934
Supplies	160,742	183,627
Other	534,604	509,190
Indirect	756,364	701,070
Total Expenditures	\$ 5,081,604	\$ 4,866,756

Program Review Results

Financial and Compliance Audits (Federal Uniform Administrative Requirements) are conducted annually by the certified public accounting firm of Leone, McDonnell & Roberts. The results of the most recent audit (FY2017) found that financial statements were presented fairly and identified no significant material weakness. The audit found no instances of non-compliance or other matters required to be reported under Government Auditing Standards.

We were not scheduled for any Head Start performance reviews during the 2017 program year.

