



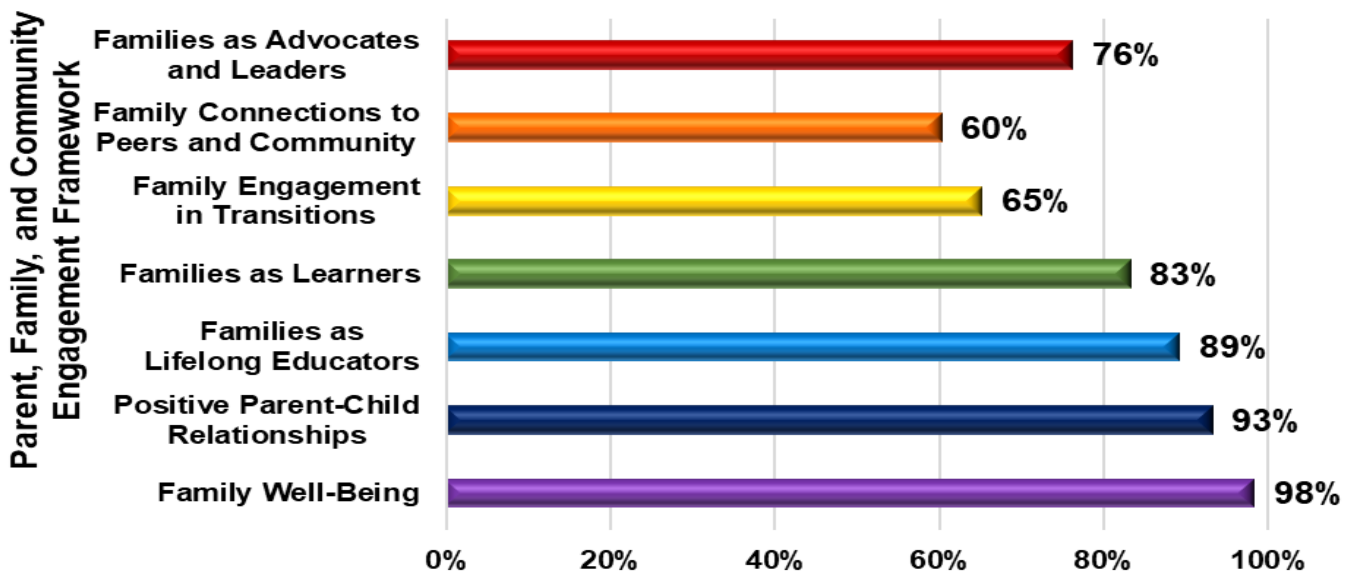
Head Start and Early Head Start State Early Childhood Education Program 2023/2024 Program Year-End Report



Parent, Family, and Community Engagement

Head Start and Early Head Start incorporates family engagement as a strength-based process to partner with families and build positive goal-oriented relationships. The Parent, Family, and Community Engagement Framework (PFCE) identifies seven family outcomes which research has shown to promote positive child outcomes. Our Family Support Specialists collaborate with parents to help identify and develop at least one goal within the seven areas of the PFCE Framework. This year **818** families participated in goal setting. Of which **92%** were achieved during the program year. Kudos to our families! Outcomes in the seven PFCE Framework areas where families set goals are graphed below.

Family Partnership Goals Achieved



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Program Funding

The annual Head Start and Early Head Start program budget represents the following funding:

\$16,453,122.00 Federal Share (operating budget)

\$3,755,129.00 Non Federal Share/In-kind

The Head Start and Early Head Start program remains in compliance with no findings in program financial audits.



Highest Quality Rating Maintained

All **10** of our Head Start and Early Head Start Child Development Centers are five-star rated!

We continue to maintain the highest star rating in Step Up to Quality, the State of Ohio's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement system!



Fathers and Father Figures Engagement

Male involvement is always encouraged in the Head Start and Early Head Start program. Fathers and father figures engagement is a vital and integrated aspect of parent, family, and community work. Head Start and Early Start staff engage and partner with fathers and father figures as advocates, lifelong educators, and first teachers of their children. Fathers and father figures serve key roles in the healthy development of their children and families. By promoting positive outcomes, fathers and father figures have much to offer to their Head Start communities. Way to go father and father figures! The numbers below represent male involvement this program year.

- ◆ 148 fathers/father figures participated in early learning development experiences (e.g. Parent/Teacher Meetings, Home-School Connection and Classroom Activities).
- ◆ 56 fathers/father figures engaged in the program Family Goal Setting.
- ◆ 53 fathers/father figures engaged in learning through Parenting Education Workshops.
- ◆ 37 fathers/father figures engaged in the program Family Assessment.
- ◆ 7 fathers/father figures participated in Program Governance (e.g. Policy Council or Center Policy Committees).



Services to Pregnant Women

Throughout the school year **29** pregnant women were served in our Early Head Start Pregnant Women and Expectant Families program. The outcomes of service delivery is provided below.

- ◆ 100% had access to care (i.e. medical and dental home)
- ◆ 94% had health insurance
- ◆ 100% received prenatal and postnatal care
- ◆ 34% received dental exams
- ◆ 45% needed and received mental health intervention and follow up
- ◆ 100% received prenatal education (topics include nutrition, oral health, parental depression, fetal development, substance misuse and abuse, breastfeeding, safe sleep, and more).

“A healthy pregnancy has a lasting influence on a child’s health and development.”
 Unknown



Home Based Services for Infant and Toddlers

The home-based services provides early learning opportunities with families. This approach offers actively engaging home visits with families. One area of focus is empowering families to serve as their children’s first teachers.

Beyond home visits, group socialization opportunities occur in diverse settings, such as Early Head Start classrooms and community spaces. This year many socializations were held at the Akron Children’s Museum, where our families gathered and participated in enriching activities. Families shared a meal and actively participated in discussions on topics aimed at supporting family well-being and child development.

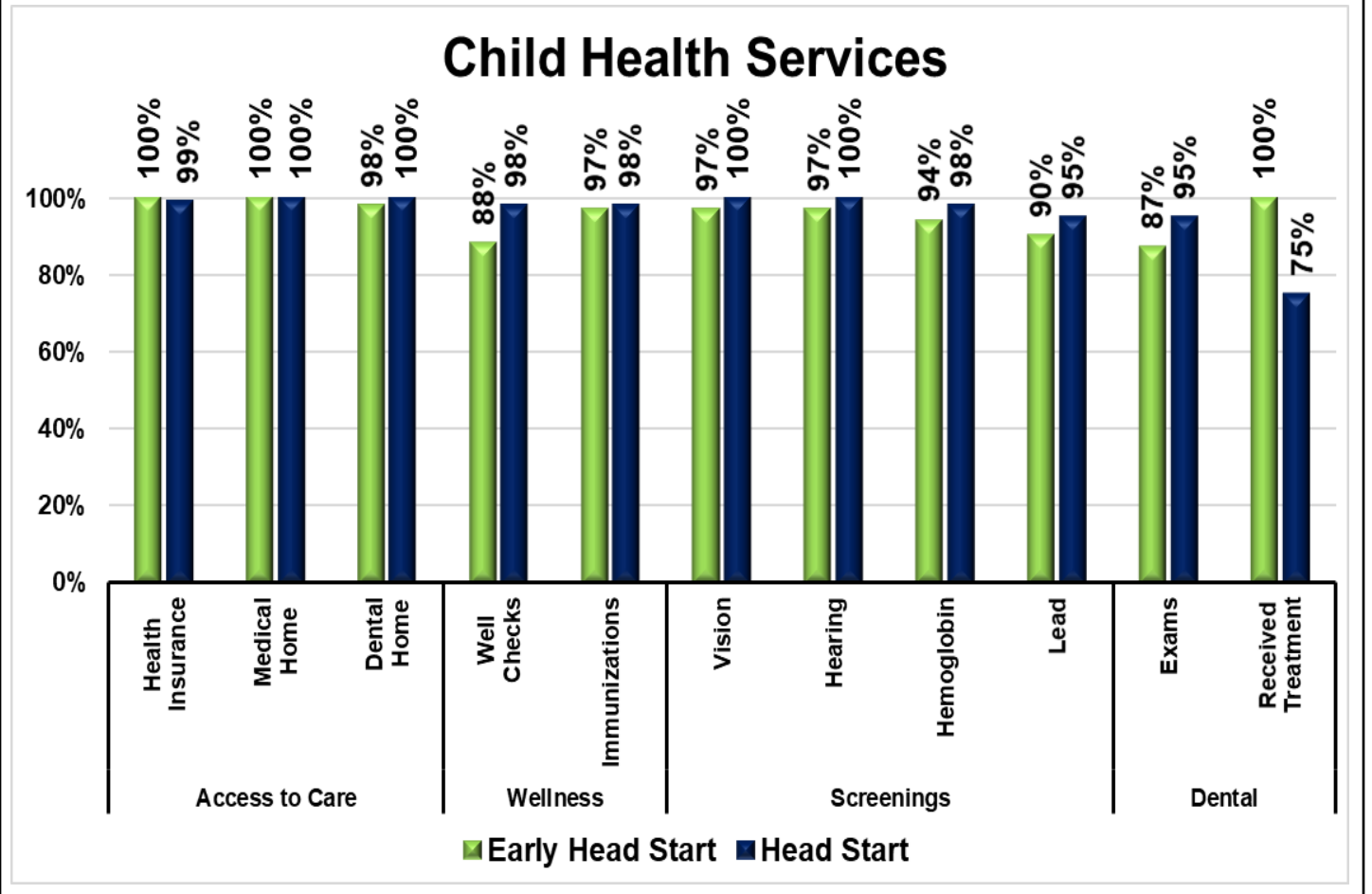


Enrollment and Attendance

<p>779 Head Start (Ages 3 - 5)</p>	<p>140 State Early Childhood Education Program (Age 4)</p>	<p>99 Early Head Start (6 Weeks - Age 3)</p>	<p>29 Early Head Start Pregnant Women</p>	
<p>77% Head Start Average Daily Attendance</p>	<p>80% State Early Childhood Education Program Average Daily Attendance</p>	<p>79% Early Head Start Average Daily Attendance</p>	<p>124 Foster Care or Homeless (Head Start and Early Head Start)</p>	

Health Services

School readiness begins with Health because healthy children are ready to learn. The Head Start and Early Head Start program supports families in staying up to date with medical appointments and immunizations while teaching healthy habits. We partner with families and community agencies to help families access healthcare. We want to recognize all of the hard work and dedication our families put in to promoting their child’s health. Keep up the great work parents! The graph below illustrates the percentage of children who received health services during the program year.



Nutrition Services



Our program communicates with families about their child’s nutritional health needs (e.g. food allergies and special dietary requirements). Child growth assessments are completed at enrollment for all children and Body Mass Index (BMI) is calculated for children ages three through five (BMI is not applicable for children under age three). Children who fall into the categories of underweight, overweight, or obese are monitored during the program year. The numbers below represent the growth assessments from this program year for **779** Head Start children based on the BMI chart.

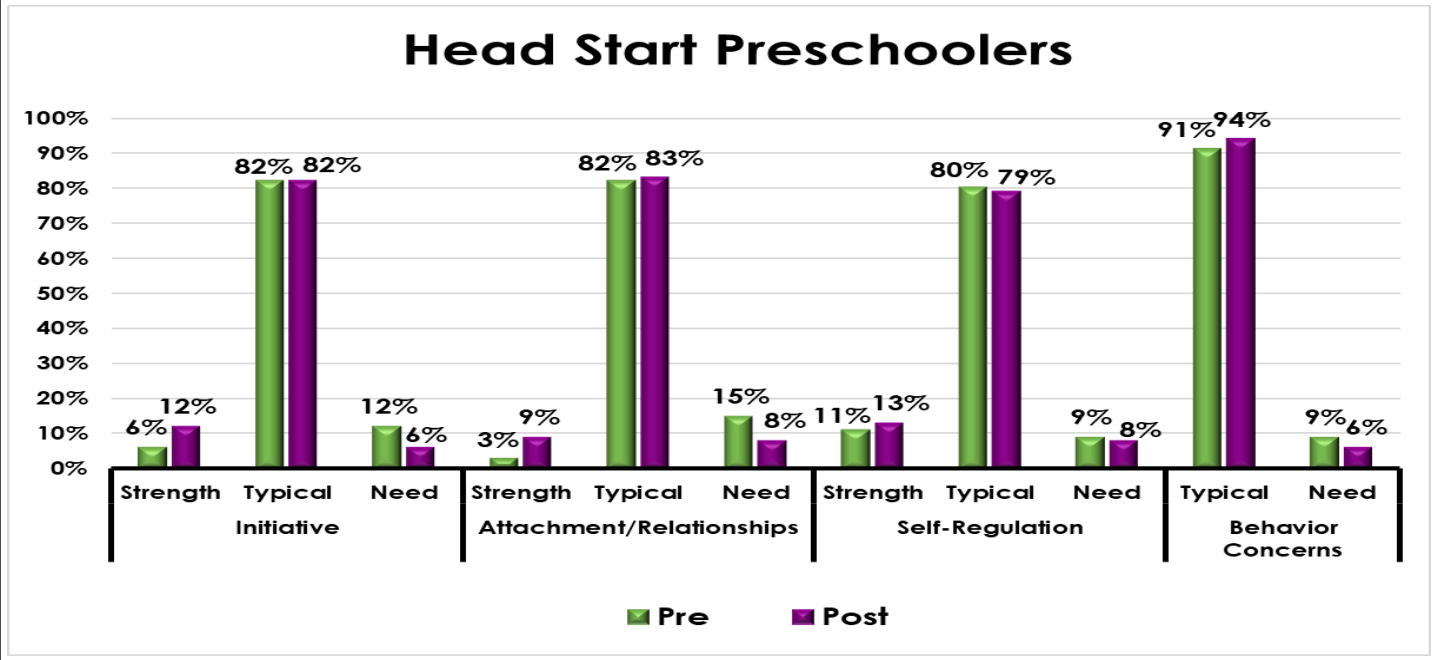
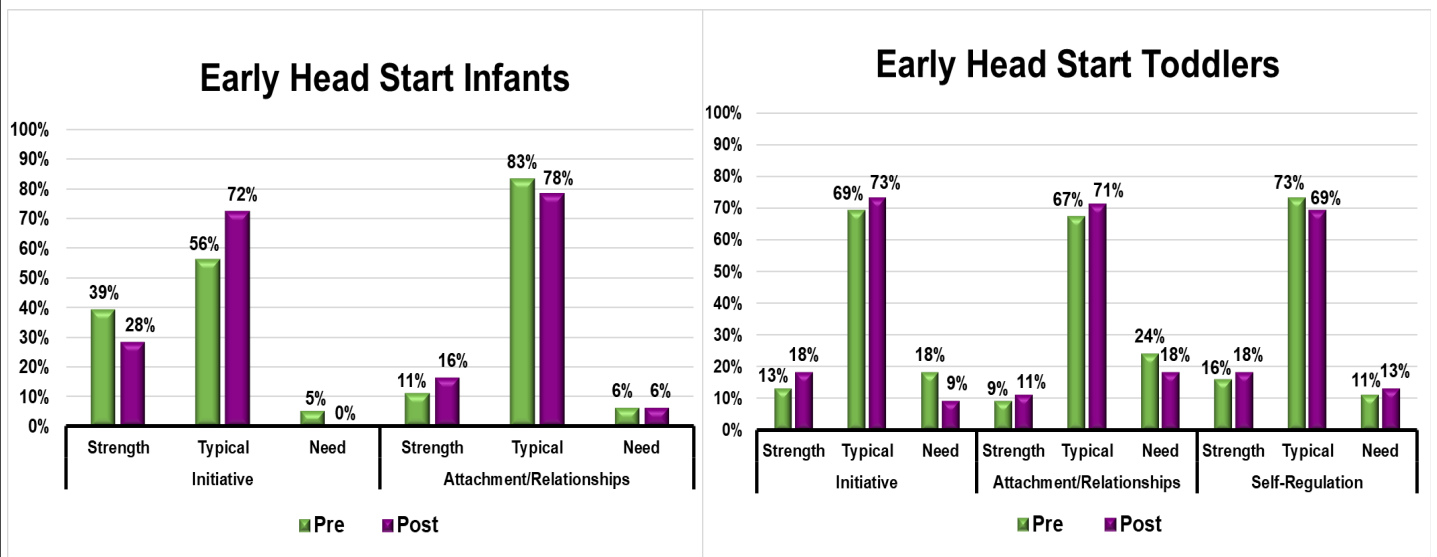
- ◆ **28** children were underweight (BMI less than 5th percentile for child’s age and gender)
- ◆ **488** children were normal children (BMI at 5th percentile and below 85th percentile for child’s age and gender)
- ◆ **140** children were overweight children (BMI at 85th percentile and below 95th percentile for child’s age and gender)
- ◆ **123** children were obese children (BMI greater than 95th percentile for child’s age and gender)

A child’s BMI is important, but it is only one piece of the picture. If a BMI percentile indicates a child is not within the normal range, parents are encouraged to speak with their child’s pediatrician for guidance. Nutrition education and monthly nutrition packets are provided to all families and include nutrition information such as recipes and healthy eating tips.

Mental Health Services

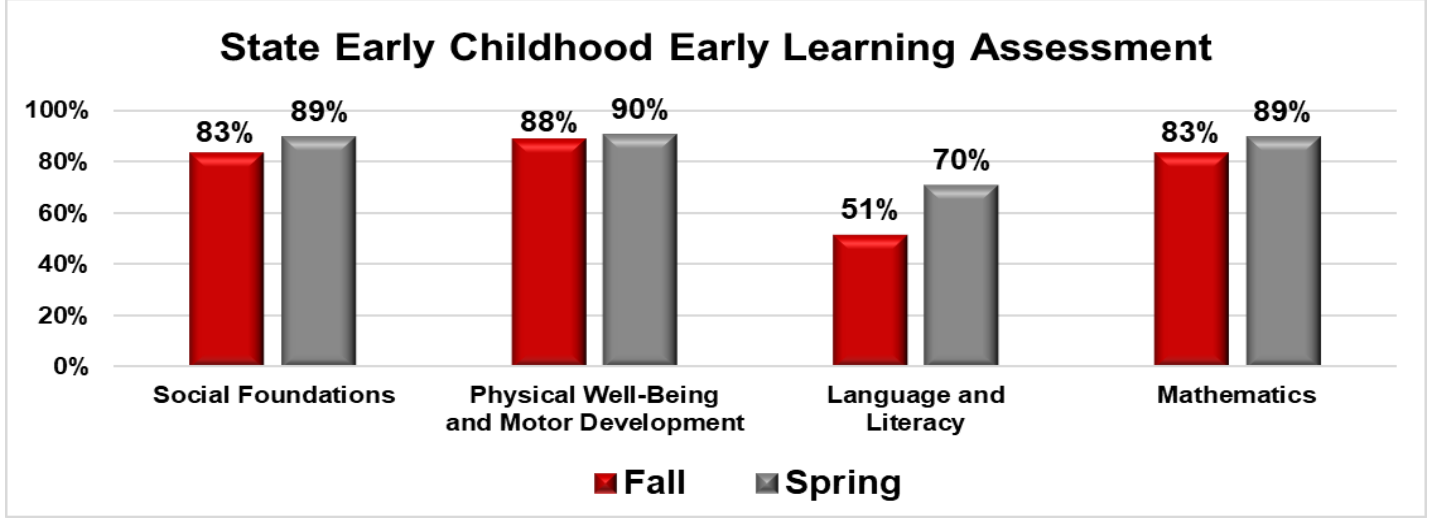
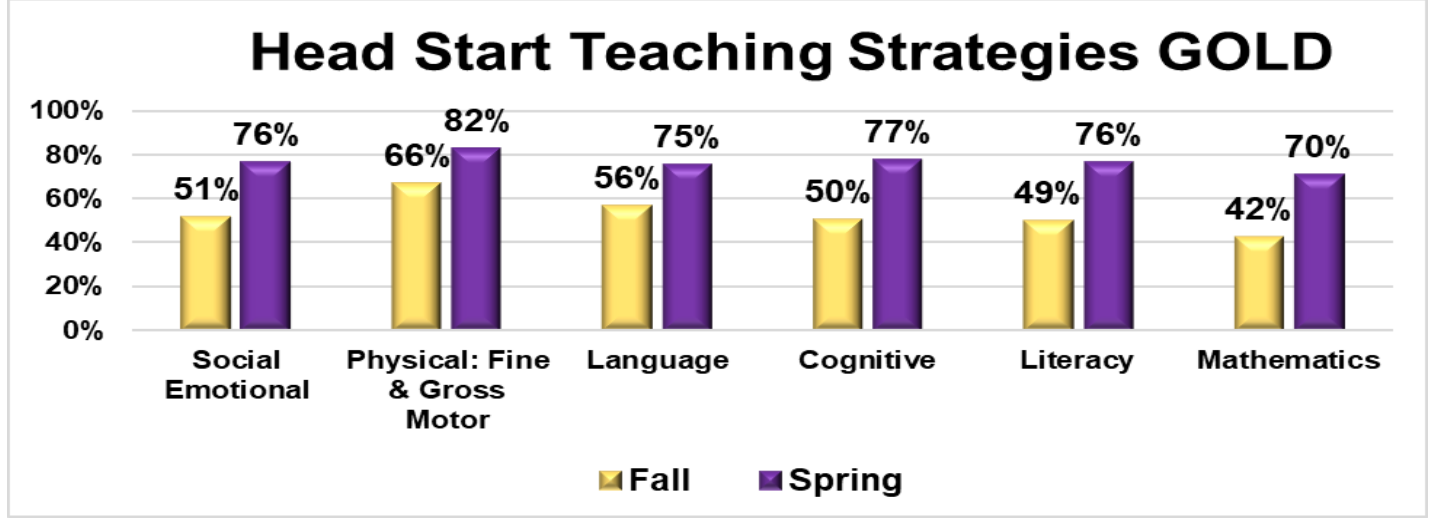
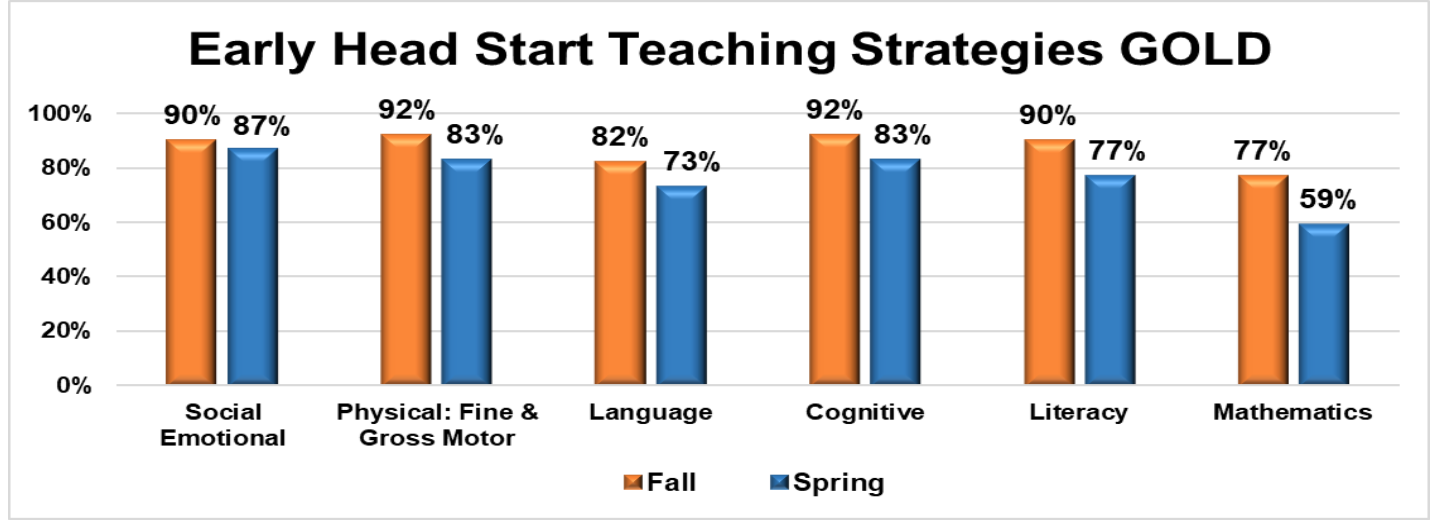
Mental Health services focuses on social-emotional outcomes for children. The *Devereux Early Child Assessment* (DECA) is the social emotional assessment tool completed twice during the school year to help teachers identify social and emotional strengths in children and provide opportunities for enhancing resiliency. The DECA tool assess for the presence of three protective factors in children: **Initiative** (a child’s ability to use independent thought and action to meet his or her needs), **Attachment/Relationships** (a child’s ability to seek out and maintain mutual, positive connections with other children and adults), and **Self-Regulation** (a child’s ability to express emotions and manage behavior in healthy ways). Protective factors in children are strengthened throughout the program year through strategies offered within the DECA Program resources and connections to the curriculum. The DECA preschool assessment also includes a screener for **Behavioral Concerns** (a child’s actions that interfere with learning or development).

DECA scores fall into three score ranges of **Strength** (child is showing many positive behaviors and teachers continue to encourage and support these behaviors), **Typical** (child is displaying behaviors common for their age and teachers work on building and strengthening these skills), or **Need** (child is not displaying positive behaviors as frequently and teachers use strategies and intervention to build a child’s skills). The data graphed (below) represents the DECA scores of **18** infants, **45** toddlers, and **656** preschoolers who received Pre-test and Post-test assessments this program year.



Education Services

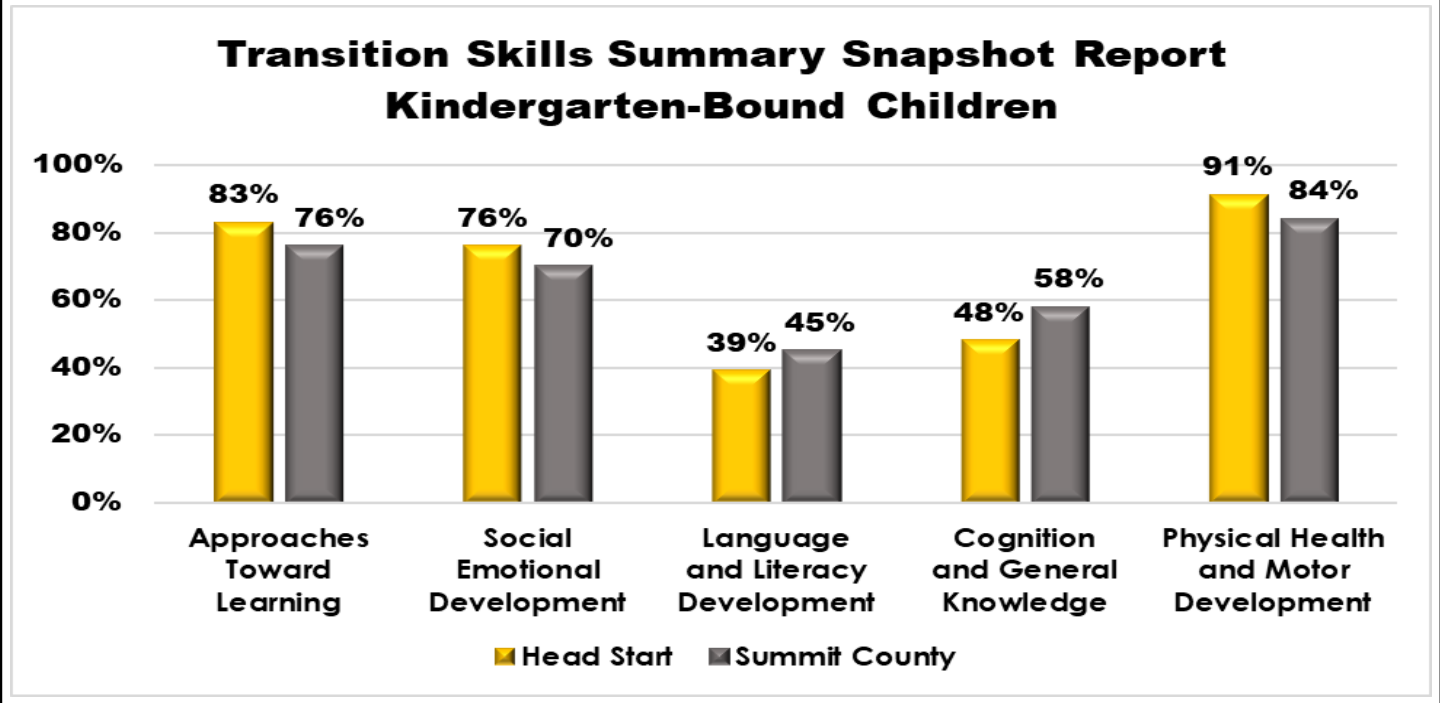
The Teaching Strategies GOLD Online Assessment and Early Learning Assessment tools utilized in Head Start and Early Head Start programs measure children’s learning development during the program year. The graphs below show the percentage of children meeting or exceeding developmental levels for their age range in Fall 2023 and Spring 2024. As developmentally appropriate, the data may fluctuate according to a child’s overall time enrolled in the program.



Kindergarten Transition

This year Head Start continued to partner with Summit Education Initiative to complete the *Transition Skills Summary (TSS)* assessment for children transitioning to kindergarten. The TSS assessment is a snapshot of a child’s readiness for kindergarten based on 47 skills at the end of their time in a preschool program. The TSS is aligned with the Early Learning and Development Standards used in early learning programs throughout Ohio. This year **370** Head Start Kindergarten-Bound children were counted in the 2,137 Summit County children who participated in the countywide assessment. The graph below shows the outcomes of the five domains assessed and displays Head Start children who will be entering Kindergarten “On Track¹” to begin a successful kindergarten school year.

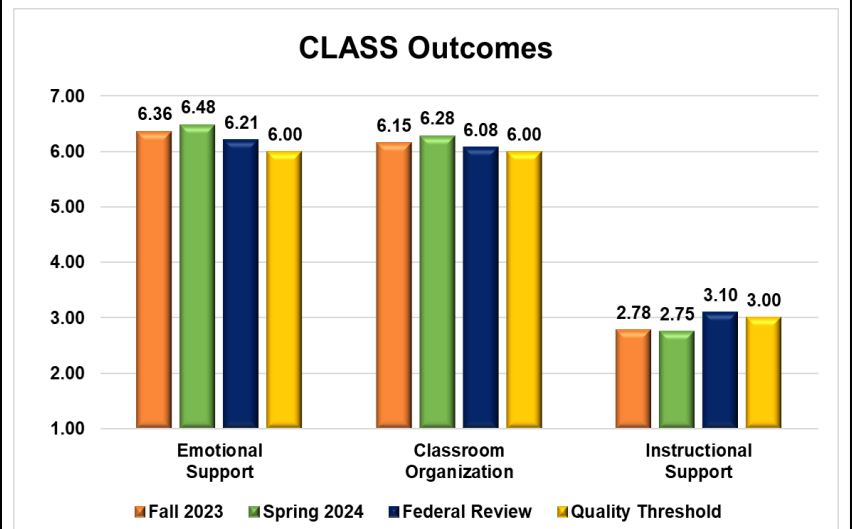
¹“On Track” means children demonstrate having 90% or more of the skills in each domain.



Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS)

The Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS[®]) focuses on enhancing teacher-child interactions using observational assessment in the following areas on a seven point scale.

- ◆ **Emotional Support:** assesses the degree to which teachers create a positive nurturing climate in the classroom through their daily interactions with children.
- ◆ **Classroom Organization:** pertains to the routines and practices teachers implement to effectively manage the classroom learning environment and addressing behavior.
- ◆ **Instructional Support:** evaluates the ways in which teachers implement the educational curriculum to promote children’s cognitive and language development.



The graph (above) shows our Head Start Fall 2023, Spring 2024, and Federal Review scores in comparison to the Quality Threshold scores.

Services to Children with Disabilities

Inclusion is in the foundation of the Head Start/Early Head Start program by enrolling children of all abilities regardless of delay or disability. This year, we provided services to **75** children with disabilities who were determined eligible under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Of which, **17** children were enrolled in Early Head Start with an Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP) and **58** children were enrolled in Head Start with an Individual Education Program (IEP). IDEA aims to support all children with disabilities by making educational resources available and addressing their unique needs. Early identification of delays along with early intervention are extremely important to improve children’s success and school readiness. The Early Head Start and Head Start graphs below show the eligible categories for our children.

To support children’s growth and development, we partner with community agencies to provide Speech Therapy and Occupational Therapy. **Speech Therapy** builds upon children's language development through playful conversations. The Speech Language Pathologists from Community Speech works with children individually and in small groups using pictures, storybooks, and games. During the program year, **302** children in Head Start required a speech evaluation after a failed speech screening. From these evaluations, **263** children were determined eligible and received speech services. **Occupational Therapy** (OT) strengthens children's fine motor skills, hand-eye coordination, visual motor, and sensory processing. The Occupational Therapists from Kid’s Choice Pediatric Rehab and Therapy Center completed evaluations on **198** toddlers and preschoolers, of which, **190** children were eligible for and received therapy services.

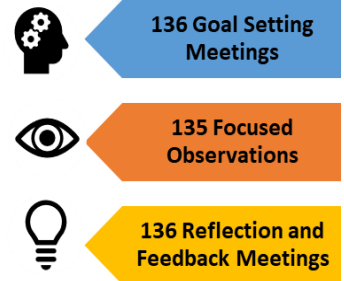


Practice Based Coaching

The Head Start and Early Head Start Practice Based Coaching program is a cyclical process for supporting the use of effective teaching practices that lead to positive outcomes for children and families. Coaching supports teaching staff and improves teaching practices. This non-evaluative process provides tools to improve teaching and supports teachers for successful application in the classroom. Through coaching, staff set goals, implement action plans, and reflect on teaching practices. This school year, **24** Head Start and Early Head Start teaching staff participated in coaching.

Staff reflections regarding their coaching experience:

- ◆ Coaching is an “awesome program that really helps and supports the teaching staff. Thank you coaches!”
- ◆ “Everyone should be in coaching at some point. It helps to gain an outside perspective of your teaching and to really dig deep in self-reflection and improvement. New staff this will be extremely helpful to get organized and have a good mindset starting off.”
- ◆ “I am glad that we have coaches now and I think it is an awesome idea. My classroom, the children and I have benefited from using coaching (Alyse) a lot!”
- ◆ Due to coaching “I am making everything more intentional. I am always thinking about what could be improved in my teaching. My coach helps me put those thoughts into goals and helps me meet those goals.”



Parents and Families Spotlight

Hope For The Holiday

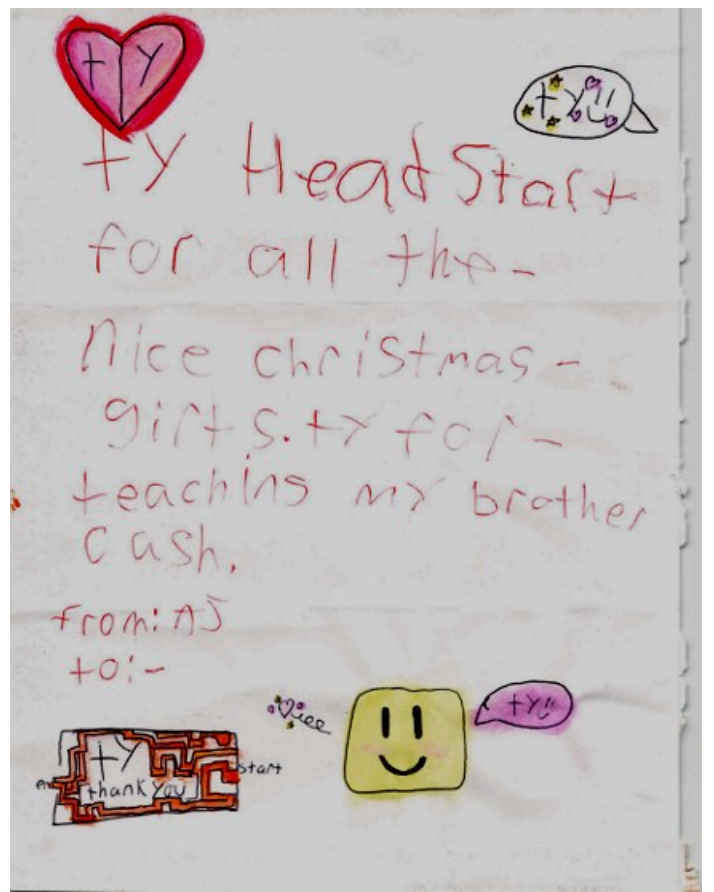
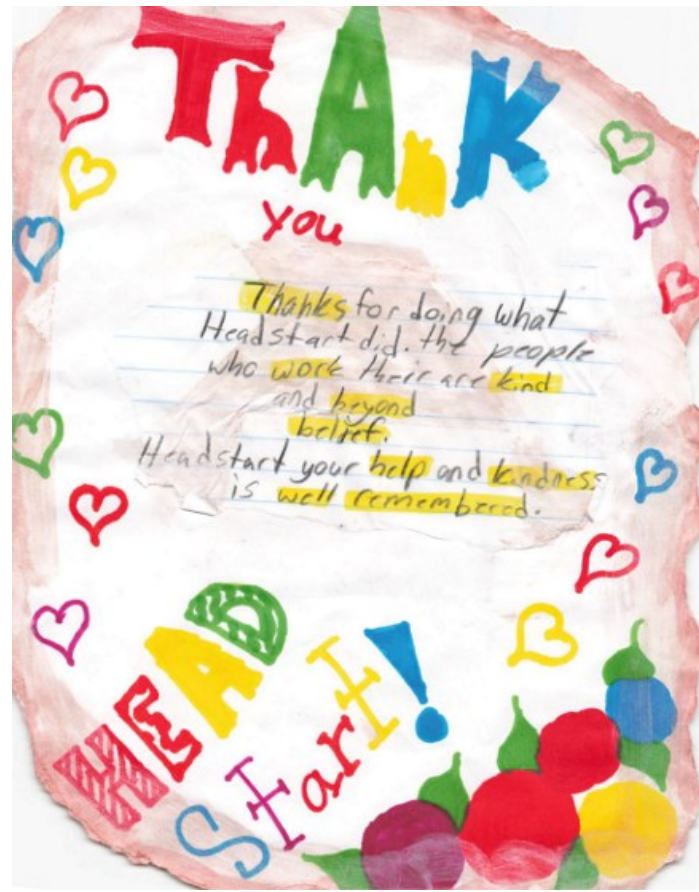
The spirit of **Family Connections to Peers and Communities** within the Parent, Family, and Community Engagement Framework (PFCE) glowed brightly in the lives of our Head Start and Early Head Start families. Charity and compassion became threads, weaving a network of support and kindness. Even seemingly small gestures left an imprint, reminding us that together, we create something beautiful. During the 2023 holiday season, donations were received from Faith Lutheran Church Preschool, LongHorn Steakhouse employees, Boy Scout Troop 390, St. Hilary's Church, Guardian Angels Church, St. Matthew's Church, Geri's Closet, Open M, and several private donors. The kindness and generosity of donors not only brought tangible gifts, but infused hope and joy into the lives of those they touched.

Here's a glimpse into the heartwarming moments:

- ◆ **Head Start Family** - During the holidays, a grandmother and her three grandchildren faced an incredibly stressful period that included housing issues, which left her feeling overwhelmed. In her time of need, she reached out to her Head Start Center. The Head Start Center team stepped in, advocated for her with various community agencies and provided crucial referrals to support the family's activities of daily life and holiday gifts for the children. When the holiday gifts were delivered, the grandmother expressed her astonishments. She did not expect support of that magnitude. The children received clothing, books, learning games, and art supplies. The generosity did not stop there; the family also received non-perishable food, cleaning items, and essential health care products. The grandmother remarked, *"I didn't realize there were still kind people out there. This will truly make their Christmas."*
- ◆ **Early Head Start Family** - This family expressed their thanks for the holiday support they received from generous community support. Pictured below are their thank you notes.

These stories remind us that even small acts of kindness can have a profound impact. Our ongoing collaborations and the community truly made a difference in the lives of numerous Head Start and Early Head Start families.

Thank You notes from Early Head Start Family



Community Partners Spotlight

Summit Education Initiative

The CLASS Act Scholars program aims to "Elevate—Celebrate—Support" early childhood teachers by using the CLASS® model through coaching, peer-to-peer learning, mentoring, and professional development (Source: SEI).

Our Head Start Teacher **Tanya Lin** (left) and Head Start Teacher Assistants **Bonita Dancy** (center), and **Sahar Badwan** (right) were three of thirteen early childhood educators selected to participate in the Summit Education Initiative (SEI) sixth cohort for the CLASS Act Scholars of Summit County program. To date, **fifteen** Head Start teaching staff have graduated from the CLASS Act Scholars program.

Congratulations to Tanya, Bonita, Sahar, and all graduates in the sixth cohort of the CLASS Act Scholars of Summit County program!



Magical Theatre Company

This spring the Magical Theatre Company brought Mother Goose to our all of our Head Start centers. Mother Goose brought her big book of nursely rhymes to share with the children.

During the performance Mother Goose read rhymes and encouraged children to participate. The children and teachers eagerly interacted in the performance of classic rhymes and songs.

Rhymes and songs naturally help children develop phonemic awareness skills, which are the necessary building blocks young children need before they can begin to read.



Community Partners Spotlight

Cleveland Clinic Akron General

Exciting news for our Head Start/Early Head Start families! We are thrilled to announce our new partnership with Cleveland Clinic Akron General Partners Physician Group. This collaboration is designed to provide comprehensive well-child visits for all children enrolled in our program.

Our goal is to ensure that every child in our program receives the best possible start in life with access to high-quality healthcare. This partnership is a step forward in achieving that goal and supporting the well-being of our community's children. For more information or to schedule an appointment, please contact your Family Support Specialist today!



Akron Symphony Orchestra

The Akron Symphony Orchestra presented an ensemble of musical selections for our Head Start and Early Head Start children.

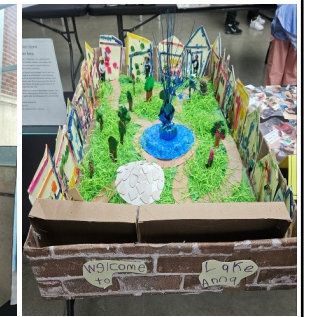
Children were introduced to the sounds of multiple orchestra instruments and musical concepts through an engaging show-and-play session. Children enjoyed listening to storytelling with the music. Some children pretended to play along while others listened and watched as the instruments were played loud, soft, slow, and fast.



Community Partners Spotlight

Akron Art Museum

The Head Start/Early Head Start program continues our annual collaboration with the Akron Art Museum to present the Night at the Museum event. In March, Head Start and Early Head Start teaching staff from our centers at Arlington, Barberton, Cedar, David Bacon, Oak Creek, and Waterloo attended training at the Akron Art Museum to learn about this years featured artist, **Michelangelo Lovelace**. On May 9th, more than **150** of our parents, children, and staff attended the annual Night at the Museum event to view the children’s artwork showcasing their interpretation of Michelangelo Lovelace works. Kudos to our children and staff for their creativity and amazing artwork!



Akron Police and Akron Fire Departments

During the end-of-year celebration, Five Points II extended invitations to the Akron Fire and Police Departments to bring vehicles to participate in a ‘Touch A Truck’ event for the Head Start children. The Police Department provided a police car and a police truck, while the Fire Department provided a fire truck. The children enjoyed exploring the car and trucks.

