



NCO Head Start

Child Development Program

Annual Report

2023-2024

www.ncoheadstart.org



NCO HSCDP ANNUAL REPORT 2023-2024

The Head Start Act requires that each Head Start agency make available to the public an annual report. We are pleased to present to the community the 2023-2024 NCO Head Start Child Development Program Annual Report.

About Us

The North Coast Opportunities, inc. Head Start Child Development Program (NCO HSCDP) is a non-profit agency offering a family-focused holistic approach to child development. The program focuses on positive child and family outcomes to close the achievement gap, and build a better future for children, families, and their communities. Services are offered in both English and Spanish.

The program serves low-income pregnant women and children from birth to five-years of age in Lake and Mendocino counties. Ten percent of the program’s enrollment must be children with a certified disability. Another ten percent of our enrollment may be children whose family income exceeds the federal poverty guidelines.

2023-2024 Funding

The total funding for 2023-2024 was \$9,494,224.

61.9% Head Start Grant	13.5% Early Head Start	0.6% Head Start Training and Technical Assistance	0.3% Early Head Start Training and Technical Assistance
2.7% Head Start USDA Food Program	0.9% Early Head Start USDA Food Program	9.2% State Preschool Reimbursement	10.8% State CCTR Reimbursement

Income and Budgetary Expenditures 2023-2024

Each grant and reimbursement program has its own budget that is monitored and updated.

Categories	Budget	Budget %	Actual	Actual %
<i>Total Personnel (Total)</i>	\$7,226,633	76%	\$7,121,141	72%
<i>Occupancy</i>	\$772,601	8%	\$895,627	9%
<i>Supplies</i>	\$361,394	4%	\$441,453	4%
<i>Client Assistance</i>	\$6,520	<0%	\$3,502	<0%
<i>Volunteers</i>	\$8,511	<0%	\$9,718	<0%
<i>Equipment and Vehicles</i>	\$57,414	1%	\$122,128	1%
<i>Insurance</i>	\$54,384	1%	\$66,783	1%
<i>Travel</i>	\$33,712	<0%	\$41,563	<0%
<i>Other Costs (Total)</i>	\$205,150	2%	\$387,564	4%
<i>Indirect Costs (Total)</i>	\$767,905	8%	\$779,299	8%
TOTAL	\$9,494,224		\$9,868,778	100%

Most Recent Audit & Review

The results from the most recent financial audit found that NCO finances were in order. The outcome of the most recent Federal Monitoring Review (2023) found the program to have met the requirements of applicable Head Start

Program Performance Standards, laws, regulations, and policies except in the area of family service staff qualifications where the program received an area of non-compliance. The program has updated its policies and procedures to address the issue, ensuring it meets the Office of Head Start's satisfaction.

Eligibility, Enrollment, and Children Receiving Services

The program served 330 participants during the 2023-2024 school year, including one pregnant woman. Participants were served at four Head Start centers located in Lake County, six Head Start / Early Head Start centers, and one Early Head Start Home Based program located throughout Mendocino County. The average monthly enrollment for the 2023-2024 school year was 90% for Head Start, and 99% for Early Head Start. The program served 19% of the eligible population of 0-5 children in the community.

Health Services

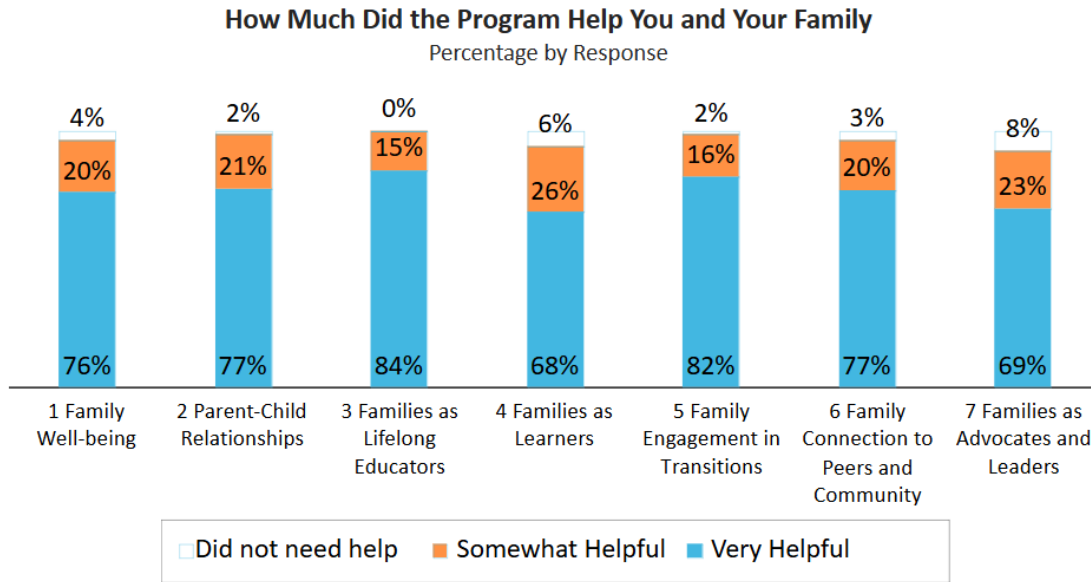
In Early Head Start, 97% of children received well child checks, and in Head Start, 99% of children received physical exams. 95% of Early Head Start and 98% of Head Start children received dental exams.

Parent Involvement

The program focuses on family/household engagement and school readiness in an effort to produce positive child outcomes. The program acknowledges the parent(s)/caregivers to be their child's first teacher and supports their efforts with weekly educational home activities for children. The program provides a welcoming and comfortable environment for all with various opportunities for involvement including Health Services Advisory Committee, Parent Committee, Program Policy Council, parent meetings, socializations (Early Head Start) and volunteering in classrooms and gardens. For the 2023-2024 program year 298 parents/guardians participated in classroom volunteering, Program Policy Council, Home Activities for School Readiness and/or other volunteering activities.

Program staff build partnerships with the parent(s)/caregivers and encourage them to develop family goals and attend parent events. For the 2023-2024 program year, 87% of all families in Early Head Start and 94% of Head Start families set and completed at least one Family Goal. From its beginning, the program has used a dual-generation approach to involve the parent(s)/guardians/caregivers of enrolled children. Parent involvement is a part of a larger construct of family engagement framework, made of research-based strategies resulting in seven Parent and Family Engagement Outcomes: Family Well Being, Positive Parent-Child Relationships, Families as Lifelong Educators, Families as Learners, Family Engagement in Transitions, Family Connections to Peers and Community, and Families as Advocates and Leaders. Schools Readiness is achieved through goal-directed relationships between staff and families that are mutual, culturally responsive, and that support what is best for children and families, both individually and collectively. Staff and families share responsibility for children's learning and development, the progress toward outcomes for children and families, and for parent/guardian/caregiver involvement in the program.

Program Helpfulness by Outcome Area



School Readiness

School readiness is a high priority for all Head Starts. Program staff works in partnership with parents, school districts, and the community to ensure all children are equipped with the necessary skills to be successful in the public-school setting and in life. We build on children’s strengths and individualize experiences to meet their personal needs, including supporting the child’s home language.

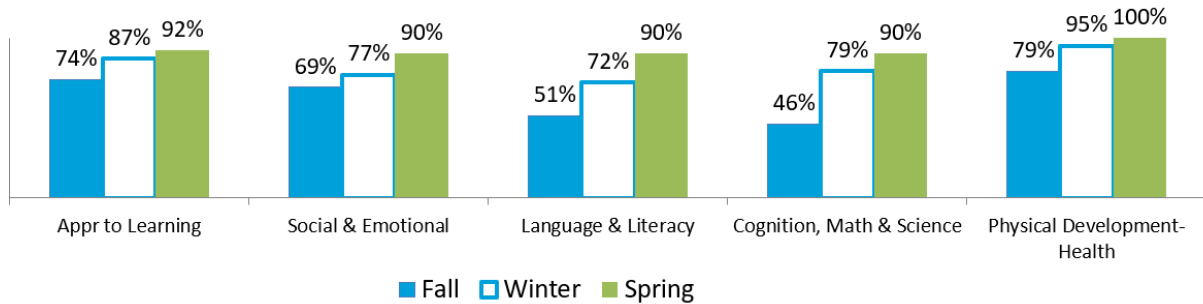
The program partners with parents in establishing school readiness goals that support children’s progress across five early childhood learning domains. These domains include:

1. Approaches to Learning
2. Social and Emotional Development
3. Language and Literacy
4. Cognition, including Math and Science
5. Physical Development and Health

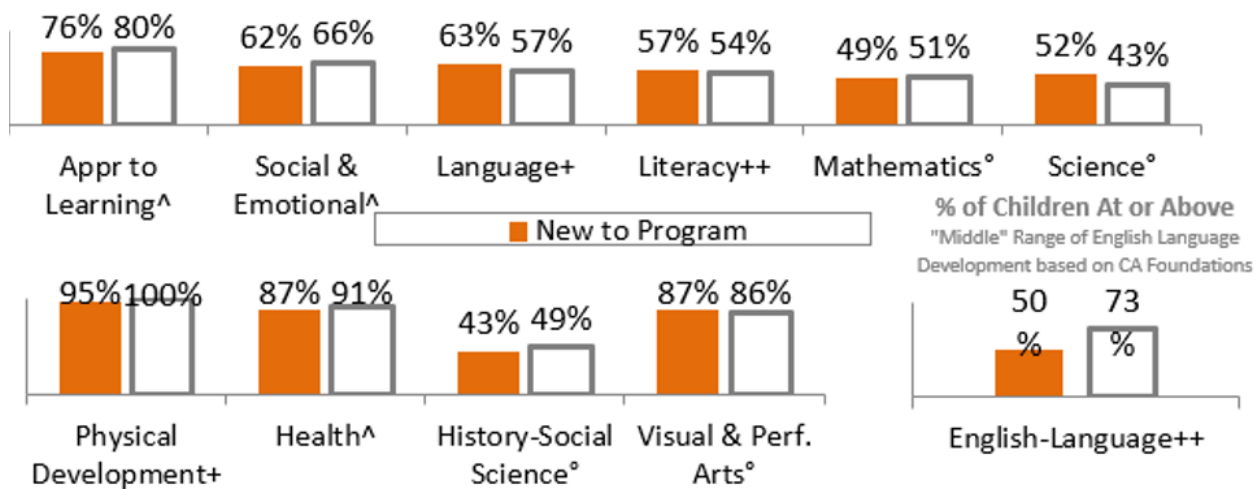
These domains apply to infants, toddlers and preschool-aged children and represent a critical area of learning and development for young children. All goals are aligned with the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework, State Early Learning Standards, Program Performance Measures and local school expectations.

Kindergarten transition activities are developed and implemented by the center staff (site supervisor, teachers and family support specialist) and parents to support kindergarten transition planning and preparation through the school year. The focus of kindergarten transition is to facilitate a smooth transition to the public-school setting. Teachers provide parents with resources such as “Connecting Head Start Parents to the Public-School Setting” and “100 Days of Summer”, a series of learning activities and family engagements to do during the summer break.

**Head Start Domain Comparison Spring 2023-2024
Percentage of Children At or Above Foundation Expectations**



**Head Start Domain Comparison Spring 2023-2024
Comparison of Children Newly Enrolled This Year**



Summary of 2024 Community Needs Assessment

The 2024 Community Assessment for North Coast Opportunities (NCO) Head Start Child Development Program (HSCDP) highlights updates and trends since the last comprehensive review in 2019. It evaluates the socioeconomic and demographic characteristics of Lake and Mendocino Counties, both rural areas with distinct challenges and resources

Significant changes reported in the recent Community Assessment include demographic shifts, with Lake County experiencing a slight population increase and Mendocino County seeing a decrease. Both counties report higher poverty rates for children under five and increased food insecurity, with meal costs rising sharply since the pandemic.

Housing remains a critical issue; average rents have increased significantly, and many families spend over 40% of their income on housing. Despite this, the number of families acquiring stable housing has improved slightly. Beginning in October 2024, Head Start programs were granted authorization to use housing costs towards the calculation of income eligibility. The comprehensive Community Assessment in 2025 will address these changes.

Educational trends reveal a rising preference for transitional kindergarten over Head Start, driven by extended service hours and logistical benefits. Workforce shortages persist due to low wages and competition from other employers, exacerbating staffing challenges for early childhood programs.

Health and nutrition indicators show modest improvements, including higher prenatal care rates and breastfeeding exclusivity. Nevertheless, obesity rates remain concerning, and access to preventive dental care is limited. The expansion of CalFresh and WIC programs has benefited families, but gaps in health equity and support systems remain significant. Overall, the report underscores the need for continued program adaptations to address evolving challenges and opportunities within these communities.