

NCO HSCDP ANNUAL REPORT 2020-2021

The Head Start Act requires that each Head Start agency shall make available to the public an annual report. We are pleased to present to the community the 2020-2021 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 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.

During the 2020-2021 school year, HSCDP operated in-person services for the entire school year. Distance learning services were only utilized during cases of short-term classroom closures and/or staffing challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

2020-2021 Funding

The total funding for 2020-2021 was \$8,204,018.

64% Head Start Grant 12% State CCTR Reimbursement 3% U.S.D.A. Food Program

15% Early Head Start Grant 7% State Preschool Reimbursement

Income and Budgetary Expenditures 2020-2021

Each grant and reimbursement program has its own budget that is monitored and updated. The Head Start combined budgets were underspent \$5,163.00 which will be carried forward into the 2021-2022 program year.

Categories	Budget	Budget %	Actual	Actual %
<i>Total Personnel (Total)</i>	\$6,263,481	77%	\$5,944,890	73%
<i>Occupancy</i>	\$562,834	7%	\$732,489	9%
<i>Supplies</i>	\$285,962	3%	\$294,582	4%
<i>Client Assistance</i>	\$6,520	<1%	\$21,670	<1%
<i>Volunteers</i>	\$8,511	<1%	\$163	<1%
<i>Equipment and Vehicles</i>	\$76,208	1%	\$119,915	1%
<i>Insurance</i>	\$64,224	1%	\$43,760	1%
<i>Travel</i>	\$29,290	<1%	\$3,882	<1%
<i>Other Costs (Total)</i>	\$215,743	3%	\$371,744	5%
<i>Indirect Costs (Total)</i>	\$621,569	8%	\$596,085	7%
TOTAL	\$8,134,342	100%	\$8,129,179	100%

Special Budgets

This year, the program received COVID-19 (American Rescue Plan), and Disaster Funding (Disaster Relief Fund) to help improve the safety of the children, families, staff, and overall program.

The American Rescue Plan amounted in \$102,630. This fund was used for COVID-19 related items, such as (but not limited to): masks and shields for staff and children, sanitizers, safety supplies for kitchen staff, partitions, specialized janitorial services, remote services, nursing consultants, water coolers, and outdoor shade structures (to reduce indoor play and exposure).

The Disaster Relief Fund amounted in \$707,018 to be used over a period of two years. This fund is being used for disaster preparedness items, such as (but not limited to): a Safety Coordinator, emergency communication system, emergency go bags for families and staff, home safety bags for families and staff, emergency food for sites, air purifying systems, fire alarm system upgrades, independent study packs, portable generators, and site generators.

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 (2018) found the program to have met the requirements of all applicable Head Start Program Performance Standards, laws, regulations, and policy requirements.

Eligibility, Enrollment, and Children Receiving Services

The program serves 341 children (aged 0-5) and their families at four Head Start centers located in Lake County, six Head Start / Early Head Start centers located throughout Mendocino County and one Early Head Start Home Based program located in Mendocino County. In 2020-2021, two pregnant women were served in the Early Head Start Home Base program. The program served approximately 9% of the eligible population. Due to COVID-19, the allowed classroom ratios regulations changed per the State guidelines to reduce our classrooms to 50% capacity. The average monthly enrollment was 139 for Head Start, and 45 for Early Head Start.

Health Services

The program's health services fell within 87%-100% completion this year. The Health Services team noted challenges throughout the year in regard to obtaining physician appointments due to COVID-19 scheduling requirements. This has affected completion rates, with a slightly reduced rate throughout the program. In Early Head Start, 88% of children received well child checks, and in Head Start, 99% of children received physical exams. 87% of Early Head Start and 96% of Head Start children received dental exams.

Parent Involvement

The program focuses on family engagement and school readiness in an effort to produce positive child outcomes. The program acknowledges parents 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 families 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.

Program staff builds partnerships with parents and encourages them to develop family goals and attend parent events. From its beginning, the program has used a dual-generation approach to involve the parents 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 involvement in the program.

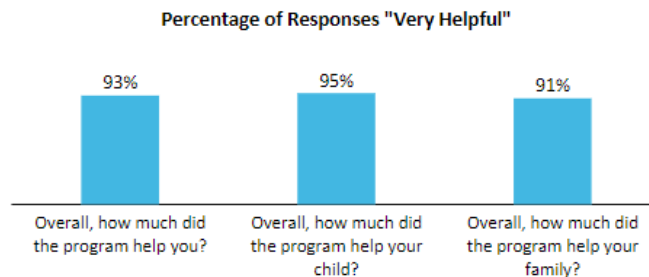
Every year, our teams work with families to develop goals to help them improve in areas such as communication, housing, safety, health, and education. Of the goals created for this year:

Goal:	% of EHS Families	% of HS Families
Assistance in Obtaining Jobs	14%	35%
Assistance in Obtaining Housing	8%	4%
Families Reached Goals	94%	94%

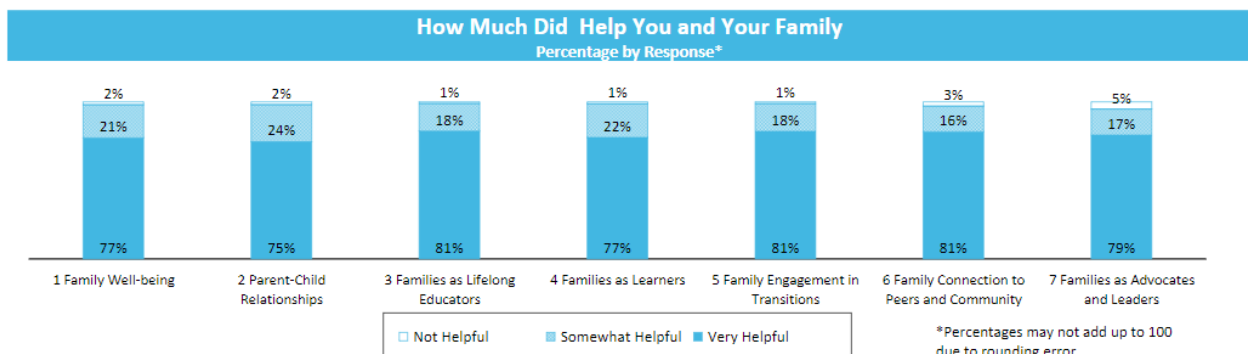
In addition to the goals, it was noted that the Education, Disabilities and Mental Health team was able to identify 16.7% of children serviced with a need for an IEP / IFSP.

In the Spring of the 2020-2021 school year, 196 parents and guardians of children enrolled in the program completed a survey about how they and their families benefitted from the variety of services they received.

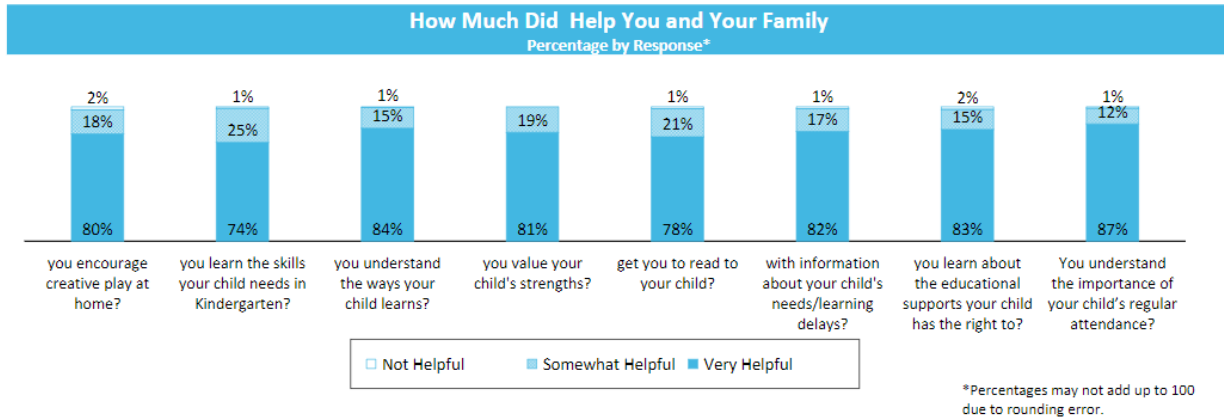
Overall Program Helpfulness



Program Helpfulness by Outcome Area



Focus on School Readiness and Home Literacy Practices



During COVID-19, the program followed all social distancing and health and safety measures, which resulted in our family engagement, events, and socializations being conducted virtually, as often as possible. When technology was not accessible for families, the program was able to accommodate by conducting one-on-one socially distanced meetings, following all health and safety protocols to provide services to the families.

The program also placed a high priority on keeping communication lines open for between the families and sites, which included utilizing apps such as Learning Genie and Remind. These apps gave families the ability to not only receive communications such as invitations to events, messages, and emergency alerts from staff, but also gave families the insight on what activities and projects their child was working on in the classroom and provide a “window” into the site. The program’s Family Support Specialists helped support families by providing assistance in creating email accounts, providing instructions, and basic app user knowledge, so that all families felt comfortable with the transition from in-person updates to virtual.

Another aspect of family engagement that became virtual was that of the Program Policy Council (“PPC”). For the entire 2020-2021, the PPC met virtually via Zoom due to COVID-19 safety measures and precautions. Although the social aspect of PPC became limited virtually, these changes benefited members who usually relied on travel time, childcare, or had scheduling difficulties and as such there was no loss to attendance or membership.

Kindergarten Transition / School Readiness

Kindergarten readiness is a high priority for all Head Starts. The Head Start approach to school readiness mean that children are ready for school and families support their children’s learning, and schools are ready for children.

The program partners with parents in establishing kindergarten 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

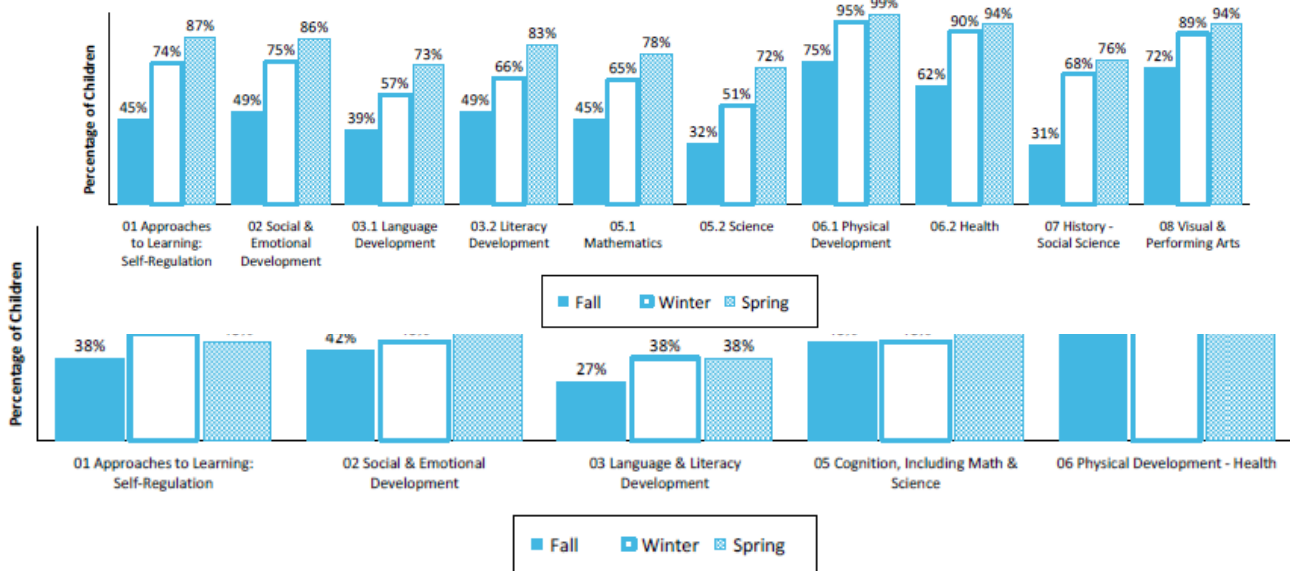
These domains apply to infants, toddlers and preschool-aged children and represent a critical area of learning and development for young children. All goals are aligned with the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework, State Early Learning Standards, Program Performance Measures and local school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

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. 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 main 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 2021

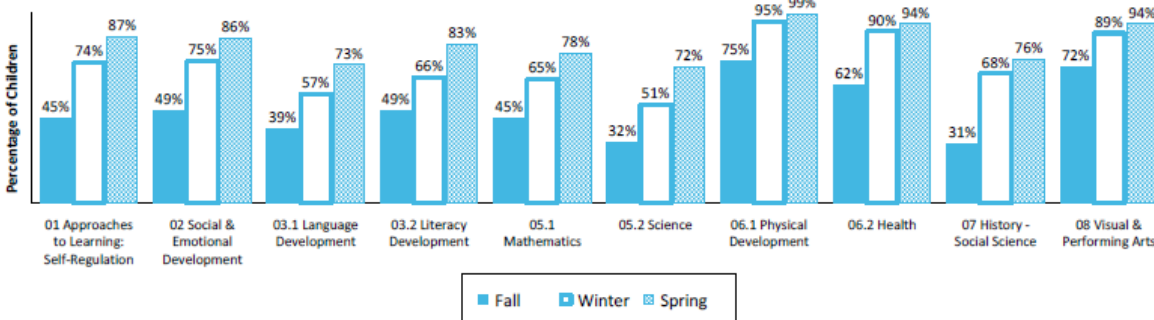
Percentage of children at Age Specific Developmental Level

Percentage of Children At or Above CA Early Learning Foundation Expectations All Checkpoints 2020-2021
Based on Age of Child at Time of Assessment

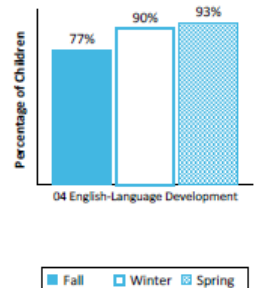


Preschoolers Domain Comparison Spring 2021

Percentage of Children At or Above CA Early Learning Foundation Expectations All Checkpoints 2020-2021
Based on Age of Child at Time of Assessment

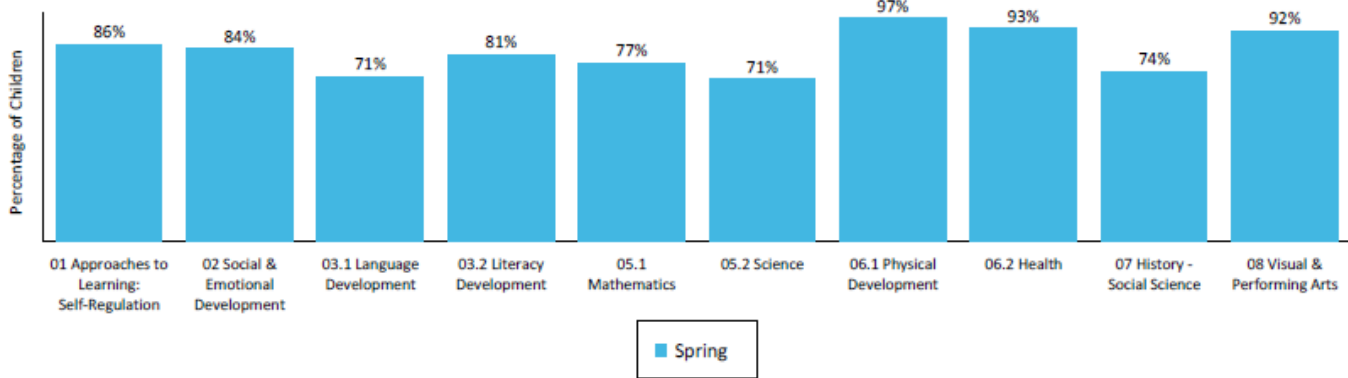


% of Children At "Middle" or Above Range of English Language Development based on CA Foundations



4-Year-Old Children going to Kindergarten Domain Comparison Spring 2021

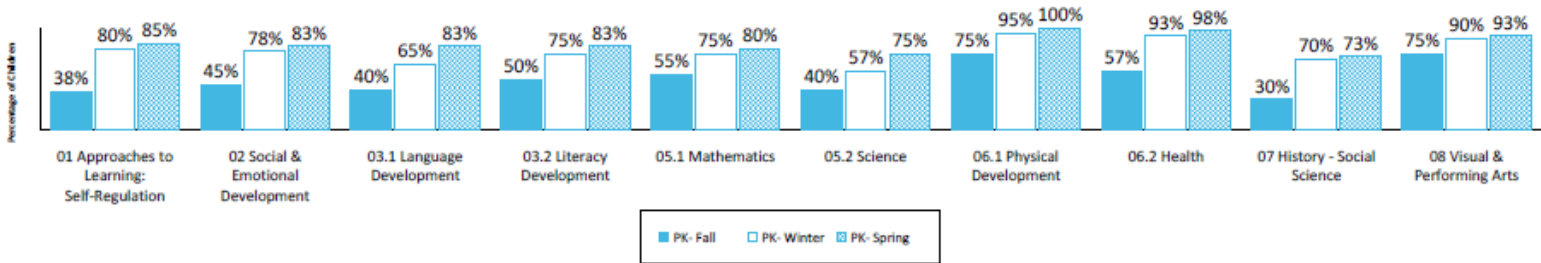
Percentage of Children At or Above CA Early Learning Foundation Expectations Only Spring 2020-2021
Based on Age of Child at Time of Assessment



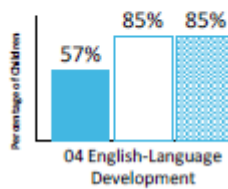
Percentage of children at Age Specific Developmental Level

DOMAIN LEVEL RESULTS

Percentage of 4 YO (K next year) At or Above CA Early Learning Foundation Expectations
Based on Age of Child at Time of Assessment



% of 4 YO At "Middle" Range of English Language Development based on CA Foundations



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COVID-19 Impact

In 2020, families were surveyed on how COVID-19 impacted their households and careers during the pandemic. For 2021, NCO HSCDP took a closer look at how families felt in regard to safety and communication.

- 88% felt their child was safe attending school during COVID-19.
- 75% felt that the program provided resources needed during COVID-19.
- 90% reported being informed about COVID-19 guidelines at the beginning of the school year.

The Program monitored updated COVID-19 guidelines and provided information to staff and families and soon as information was received. Most recently updated program guidelines are available on the website and the site for families to review.

Summary of 2021 Community Needs Assessment

- The 2020-2021 school year occurred during June 2020 – July 2021, which designates the full school year in the COVID-19 timeline. Although the program was impacted by COVID-19 in March 2020, the full effects of COVID, including staffing shortages, stricter health guidelines, and classroom restrictions began to heavily alter how the program operated during this school year. Other Head Start and other childcare programs reported similar challenges throughout the year, which have continued into late 2021.
- The unemployment significantly decreased slightly in both counties, with Lake County decreasing around 7%, and Mendocino by around 6%. This change may be due to all businesses, and not strictly essential, being able to reopen.
- The birth rate in California has decreased to 55.5%, which is noted as “falling below replacement levels”. This low birth rate affects age-eligible children for the program.
- Children enrolled in T-K programs has increased 48% in Lake County, and 25% in Mendocino County.
- The homeless student (K-12) population decreased 42% in Lake County, and 40% in Mendocino County.

Analysis

Current major challenges faced by HSCDP are:

- Remaining at full enrollment – With staffing challenges nationwide, and a decrease in EHS/HS age and income eligible children, the program competes with other State Preschool centers, and T-K classrooms to fill slots. Due to minimum wage increasing in California, many families are no longer eligible to qualify under poverty guidelines and are restricted to the 10% of slots available for “over-income” children.
- Staffing Challenges - The decrease in unemployment rates and the annual increase in California hourly minimum wage until it reaches \$15.00 may both be factors in recruiting and retaining employees. There are now other job options out there with comparable pay but far less responsibility. There is no four-year college or university campus in either county. This makes it difficult for current or potential staff to earn the Bachelor’s degree required for higher level teaching positions.