

2021

Kids' Corps, Inc. Annual Report



“We provide a head start to families
with children who need it most.”

Kids' Corps, Inc.

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

May, 2022

Starting in 1965 as an 8 week summer enrichment program for economically at-risk children who would be entering kindergarten that fall, Head Start and Early Head Start today serve one million children annually in thousands of communities across the country. At Kids' Corps, we are proud to provide Head Start and Early Head Start programs for the children and families of Anchorage. Much has changed over the decades, but our commitment to provide all children, regardless of the circumstances of their birth, with the opportunity to realize their unique potential remains the foundation of everything we do.

The information that follows provides a summary of the comprehensive services we provided and the results we achieved for the program year that ended in August, 2021. During this program year the world continued to experience the Covid 19 pandemic, which disrupted millions of lives across Alaska and the world. Our dedicated staff continued to provide our comprehensive child development services to Anchorage families at all our centers throughout the year.

We are honored to share our work with you during a year unlike any other we have ever experienced. As we emerge from the pandemic, we look forward to continuing to support children and families to achieve success in school and life.

Sincerely,

Dirk Shumaker
Executive Director



ABOUT KIDS' CORPS, INC.

WHO WE ARE

Kids' Corps, Inc. is a Head Start and Early Head Start grantee operating centers in eight Anchorage locations. Head Start is a comprehensive child development program that serves children 3 to 5 years old and their families. Kids' Corps, Inc. also provides Early Head Start services for children birth-3 years old. Our goal is to prepare children for success in school and life by supporting their social, emotional, cognitive, and physical development and promoting family well-being.

Kids' Corps, Inc. (KCI) is governed by both a Board of Directors and a Policy Council. The executive director and 4 managers oversee the daily operations and administration of KCI.

HISTORY

Kids' Corps, Inc. has been in existence for 35 years. Originally formed as a delegate agency providing Head Start services under the administration of RurAL CAP, Kids' Corps became an independent Head Start grantee in 1990. The following timeline provides a brief overview of KCI's history.

- 1987** Incorporated as a 501(c) (3) non-profit agency
- 1988** Davis Center acquired from the Municipality of Anchorage
- 1989** Kids' Corps becomes a Head Start delegate agency under RurAL CAP
- 1990** Kids' Corps awarded grantee status, allowing the agency to receive direct federal and state funding to provide Head Start services for 133 children. Classrooms are located in public schools.
- 1991** East Center opened. Classrooms are relocated from public school sites at the start of the 1991/1992 program year
- 1997** Kids' Corps becomes a United Way agency. Increased federal funding expands enrollment to 358 children.
- 1999** Muldoon Center opened in collaboration with the Muldoon Community Development Corporation. Full day Head Start services provided at a site in the Muldoon Job Center.
- 2000** South Center is opened to provide full day and part day Head Start services to families who live or work in south Anchorage.
- 2001** Mountain View Center is opened as part of the United Way's "Success by Six" initiative.
- 2009** In partnership with the Anchorage Schools District, KCI opens three Head Start classrooms in public schools
- 2010** Early Head Start (EHS) program begins. A Federal "stimulus" grant and a Community Development Block Grant result in creation of new classroom at East Center, expanding enrollment by 17 children.
- 2012** Parents as Teachers home visiting program begins its first year with an enrollment of 40 families.
- 2013** Federal sequestration budget cuts result in the closure of South Center and the loss of 20 enrollment slots in August.
- 2014** KCI opens a 4th partnership site with the Anchorage School District (now at Airport Heights Elementary School)
- 2016** In partnership with Cook Inlet Housing Authority, KCI opens a new classroom enrolling 20 children at the Ridgeline Terrace mixed housing development
- 2019** We receive a federal "Duration" grant to double the hours of 2 classrooms at East Center
- 2020** Covid 19 pandemic closure of all classrooms in March 2020. KCI develops virtual services option. Classrooms begin to reopen in July 2020 following strict health protocols.
- 2021** A Federal EHS expansion grant is awarded to KCI to add full year, full day center based services for infants & toddlers. EHS Home based services for 10 families also added.

WHO WE SERVED DURING THE 2020/2021 PROGRAM YEAR

We provide Head Start or Early Head Start programs at eight locations in Anchorage. More information is available on our website at www.kcialaska.org. During the 2020/2021 program year we were funded to serve 205 children in Head Start and 18 children in Early Head Start. A state Head Start grant provides about 45% of our required non-federal match.

Due to the pandemic, we opened classrooms with reduced enrollment (50%) to enhance safety. We also offered virtual services for families who elected them. Due to supply chain delays, tenant improvements required for our EHS expansion took longer than expected and were not completed during the 20/21 program year.

Full Day, Full Year Program: Children ages 3 to 5 attend Monday through Friday year round while parents work or go to school. Hours of operation are 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

- East Center, classroom 5 – 3710 East 20th, Anchorage, AK 99508 Tel: 272-0133

Full Day, Part Year Program: Children ages 3 to 5 attend Monday through Friday, September-May. Hours of operation are 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

- Ridgeline Center—185 Ridgeline Loop, Anchorage, AK 99501

Part Day, Full Year Program: Children ages 3 to 5 years attend classes five days a week for five hours a day, September through July.

- East Center classroom (classrooms 1 & 2)— 3710 E. 20th, Suite 2, Anchorage, AK 99508 Tel: 272-0133
- Muldoon Center—1251 Muldoon Road, Anchorage, AK 99504

Part Day, Part Year Program: Children ages 3 to 5 years attend classes five days a week for four hours a day, August – May (follows Anchorage School District schedule.)

- East Center classroom (classrooms 3a and 3b)— 3710 E. 20th, Suite 2, Anchorage, AK 99508 Tel: 272-0133
- Gladys Wood Elementary School—7001 Cranberry, Anchorage, 99502 Tel: 742-6760
- Airport Heights Elementary School*—1510 Alder, Anchorage, 99508 Tel: 742-0335
- Creekside Park Elementary School--7500 E. 6th, Anchorage, 99504 Tel: 742-1550
- Willow Crest Elementary School—1004 W. Tudor Road, Anchorage, 99503 Tel: 742-1000

*Airport Heights classroom moves to North Star Elementary, 605 Fireweed Lane, in August of 2021.

Early Head Start Center Based Program: Children ages 4 months to 3 years attend Monday through Friday year round while parents work or go to school. Program operates year-round.

- East Center classroom (classroom 4)— 3710 E. 20th, Suite 2, Anchorage, AK 99508 Tel: 272-0133
- Mt. View Center* – 3350 Commercial Drive, Anchorage, AK 99501 [Tel:646-7884](tel:646-7884)

*Opens for the 2021-2022 program year.

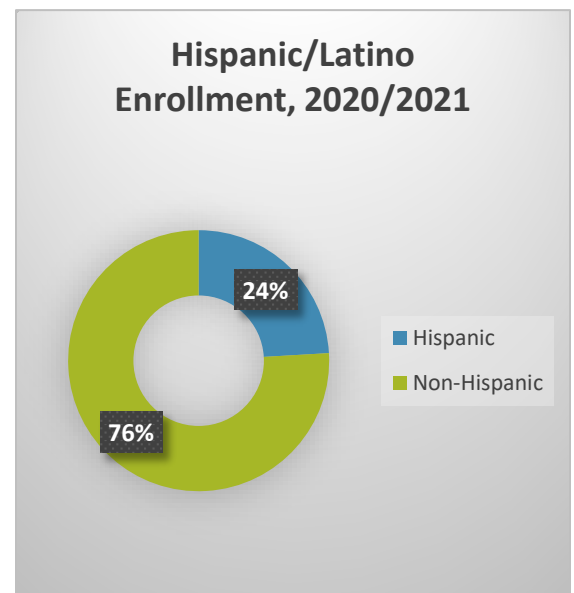
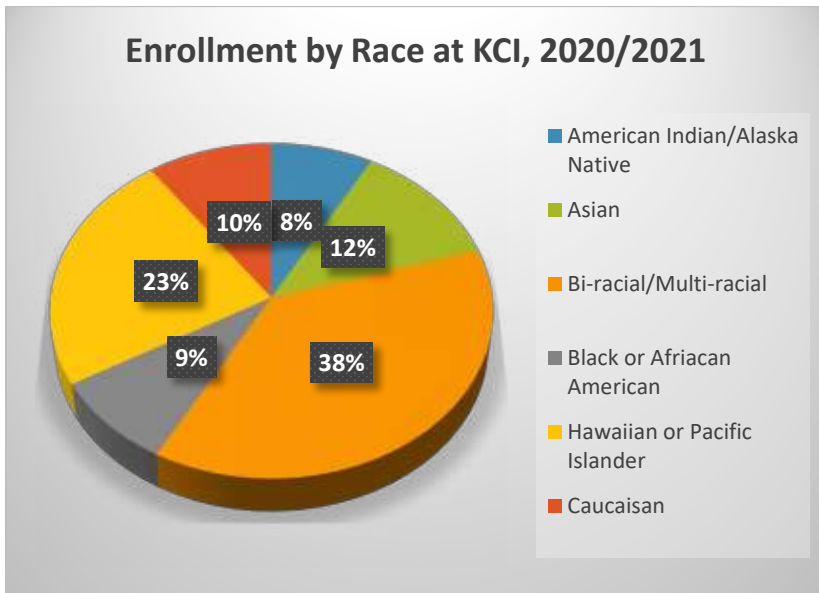
Early Head Start Home Based Program: Expectant families and families with children birth to 3 years of age receive weekly home visits with a trained parent educator. Home visits focus on child and family development and strengthening the parent-child bonds in families. Program operates year-round.

- Early Head Start Home Based – 101 Davis Street, Anchorage, AK. 99501 Tel: 279-2021

There were 136 *three to five-year olds* who participated in Kids' Corps Head Start programs during the 2020-2021 program year. This number represents about 20% of the Head Start eligible children in Anchorage. Twenty-six children and pregnant women participated in the Early Head Start program.

- 🌐 90% met federal poverty guidelines or were categorically eligible (homeless, foster care etc.) 🌐 14% of enrolled children had a diagnosed disability
- 🌐 31% primary language for family at home was a language other than English

Ethnic/Racial Diversity of Enrollment



SERVICES

SERVICES THAT CHILDREN AND FAMILIES RECEIVE IN ALL KCI PROGRAMS INCLUDE:

- Hot lunch, snack and/or breakfast
- Health screenings twice a year – height, weight, hearing and vision
- Quarterly developmental observations by trained classroom staff that support each child's unique learning needs
- An individualized learning plan for every child
- Annual developmental screenings for all children
- Classroom observations by a child psychologist
- Speech/Language therapy (for children who qualify)
- Dental examinations & screenings
- Bus transportation (for approximately 40 children)
- Field trips
- Classroom instruction and home visits by certified early childhood educators
- Comprehensive developmental assessment in collaboration with Anchorage School District for children with suspected but undiagnosed disabilities. Eligible children receive ASD Care Team support.

SERVICES FOR PARENTS INCLUDE:

- Community resource and referral information
- An opportunity to consult with our mental health consultant at no cost
- Opportunity to join the Head Start Policy Council
- Opportunities to set and meet personal and family goals
- Monthly opportunities to participate in adult learning activities on a variety of subjects
- Regular parent/teacher conferences

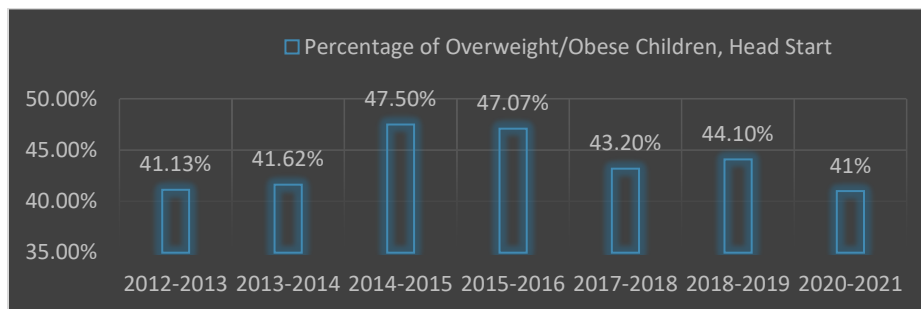
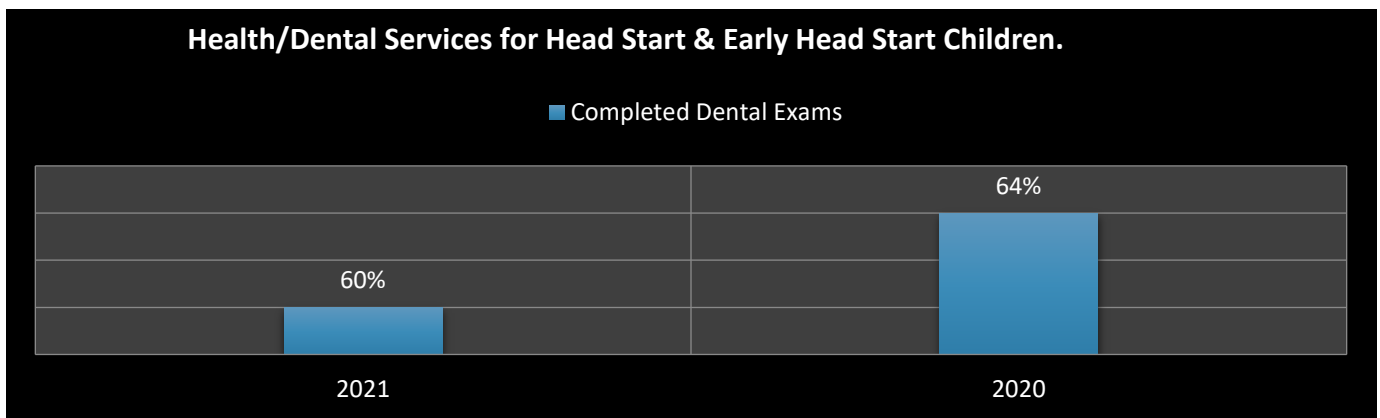
HEALTH SERVICES

Hundreds of children receive hearing, vision, height/weight and dental screenings at Kids' Corps each year. KCI plays a vital role in helping many families to find medical and dental providers for their children. At the beginning of the program year:

- 101 children were up-to-date on the state' EPSDT schedule of preventive and primary care.

At the end of the program year:

- 125 children were up to date on the EPSDT schedule



NUTRITION SERVICES

Following is a typical weeklong menu at KCI

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Breakfast				
Banana Tortilla Roll-up Yogurt	Raisin Bran Strawberries	Bagel Cream Cheese Apple Sauce	Waffles Triple Berry Blend	English Muffins Fruit Preserves Apple Slices
Lunch				
Meatballs with Sweet & Sour Rice Snap Peas Peaches	Turkey & Cheese Sandwich On wheat bread Romaine Salad w/ranch Bananas	Ground beef and macaroni Orange slices Zucchini Squash	Arroz con queso Corn and pepper blend Tropical fruit	Roasted diced chicken Wheat rolls carrots, broccoli, cauliflower Mandarin Oranges
Snack				
Soft Pretzel Cheddar Cheese Sauce Pears	Graham Crackers Cream Cheese Pineapple	Ritz Crackers Cottage Cheese Carrots	Cheerios Triple Berry Blend	Turkey & Cheese Rollups Orange Slices

Milk is served with every meal – all meals served meet CACFP daily meal requirements and are low in fat, sugar, and salt content. A total of 16,882 meals were served during the 2020/2021 program year.

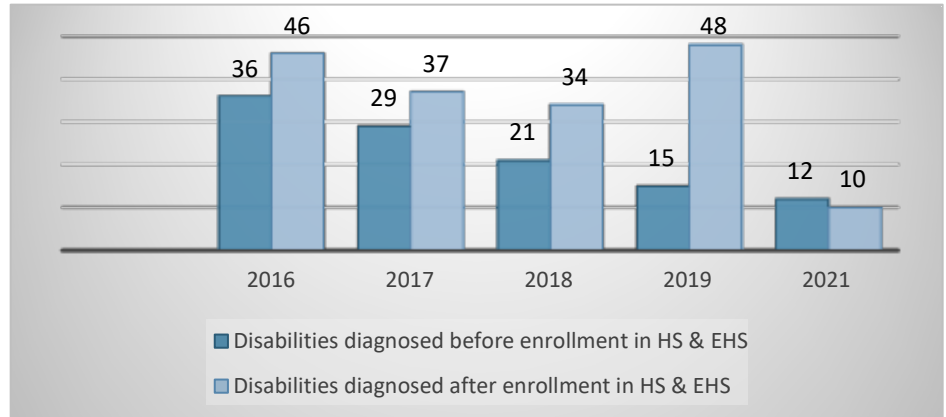
RESULTS

BENEFITS OF KIDS' CORPS, INC.

EARLY INTERVENTION

Kids' Corps, Inc. has effective systems for identifying children with disabilities and connecting them with special education services. As the table shows, the Covid 19 pandemic had a major impact on early detection and intervention services.

As the chart at right illustrates, it is likely that many of these children would have entered kindergarten with undiagnosed disabilities if they had not attended Head Start.



FEDERAL REVIEW RESULTS

From 4/01/2019 to 4/05/2019 the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) conducted an on-site monitoring review of the Kids' Corps, Inc. Early Head Start and Head Start programs. Based on the information gathered, the review team determined that the Head Start and Early Head Start programs are in compliance with all applicable Head Start Standards, laws, regulations and policy requirements.

Based on an agency self report to the Office of Head Start on December 20, 2018, ACF found KCI noncompliant on March 31, 2019 with standard 1302.90(c)(1)(ii), which states that "a program must ensure all staff, consultants, contractors, and volunteers abide by the program's standards of conduct ...(ii) Ensure staff, consultants, contractors, and volunteers do not maltreat or endanger the health or safety of children, including, at a minimum, that staff must not:(A) Use corporal punishment." The noncompliance finding states that "the grantee did not ensure all staff abided by the program's standards of conduct that staff did not maltreat or endanger the health and safety of children, including, at a minimum, that staff must not use corporal punishment; therefore, it was out of compliance with the regulation."

Corrective actions taken since January 2019 included retraining staff, revising the staff code of conduct to clarify behaviors and responses that meet the standards and strengthening classroom communication procedures. ACF will determine whether the noncompliance is corrected in July 2019.

SCHOOL READINESS EFFORTS

One of the primary purposes of Head Start is to prepare children for future educational success. Our school readiness goals and accomplishments are summarized below.

We recognize that educational success is linked to quality teaching. Therefore, we have implemented a mentor-coach process to assure that each staff member who has direct contact with children and families receives regular, individualized assistance that strengthens their instructional and relationship-building skills.

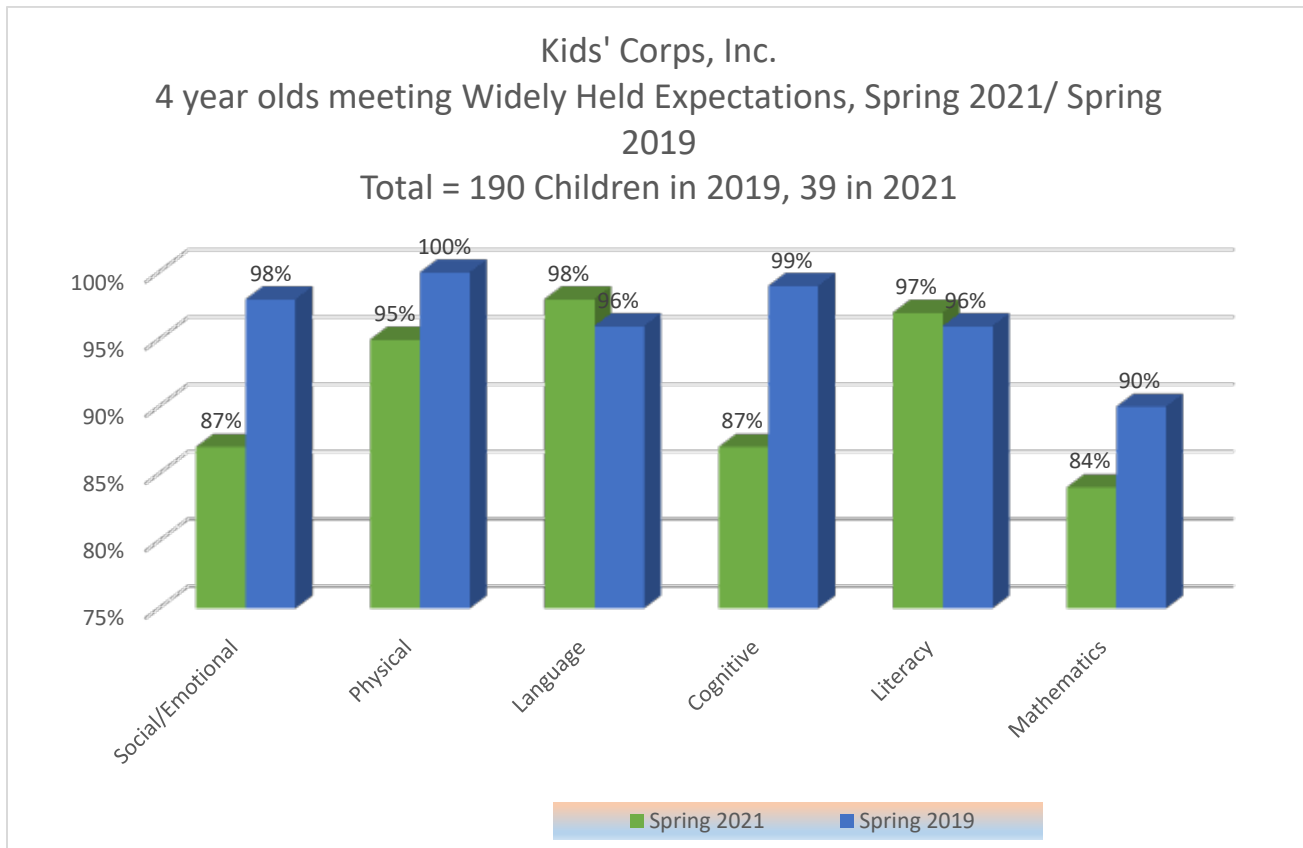
Teachers use Coaching to Fidelity results, CLASS (Classroom Assessment Scoring System) assessments, and My Teaching Strategies individual child assessment data to ensure developmental appropriateness of the environment, activities and schedules. Our overall goal is to understand each child's unique learning needs and make sure that every child gains the skills, knowledge and habits that will help them be successful in school and life.

To support families in making the transition from Head Start to kindergarten, we work with the Anchorage School District to host a kindergarten information fair. This event provides relevant information about the transition process

and links families with resources available within in the Anchorage School District. Through this event and through one on one home visiting (providing virtually this year due to the Covid 19 pandemic) e provide families with information on topics such as home schools, the registration process, documentation needed to enroll a child, summer transition activities families can do at home to prepare their child, and more.

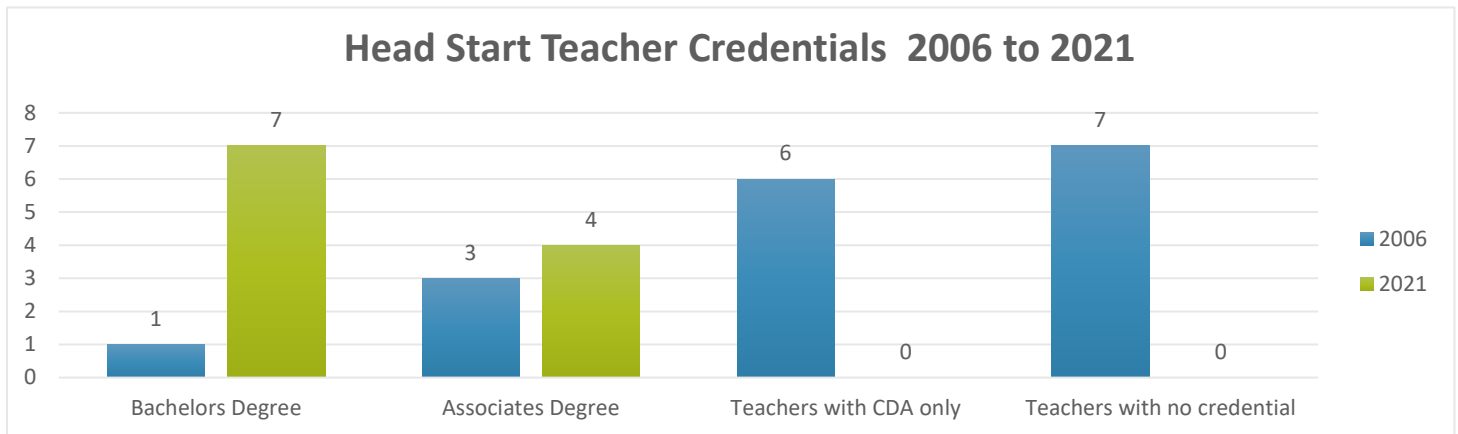
CHILD ASSESSMENT OUTCOMES

Due to the Covid 19 pandemic we enrolled about half the children we would normally serve. Attendance was also lower by 10% or more for every classroom this year compared to pre-pandemic levels. Additionally, we had a significant increase in enrollment in the winter of 2021 when conditions became safer in Anchorage. Because of all these factors we lack the typical number of children who were assessed in both the fall and the spring. Therefore, instead of comparing assessment results for children assessed during fall and spring of the same program year, the following table compares spring 2019 results with spring 2021 results. These are two different groups of children, with the 2019 results collected prior to the onset of the pandemic.



QUALITY EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION SERVICES

Research shows that well-trained preschool teachers are a key component of high quality child development programs. Teacher qualifications have significantly increased at KCI over the last decade.



EARLY HEAD START 2020-2021 SNAPSHOT

PROGRAM OPTIONS:

Home-based: 10 funded slots Center-based: 8 funded slots

ENROLLMENT:

25 children and 1 pregnant woman

CHILD DEVELOPMENT:

Staff work with all parents to complete the ASQ & ASQ SE for all children within 45 days of enrollment. This allows the program to identify potential concerns and provide follow-up learning activities and/or referrals to PIC in a timely manner.

The center-based program option uses the Creative Curriculum. The home-based program uses the Partners for Healthy Baby home visit curriculum. Both options use Teaching Strategies Gold as an ongoing assessment tool. A review of the end of the year data showed that enrolled children showed growth across all domains.

The EHS program will expand to 32 center based and 20 home based slots in 2021/2022.

PARENTS & FAMILIES

Family involvement is an important aspect of Head Start. Kids' Corps staff strive to build relationships with families that support family well-being, strong parent/child relationships and ongoing learning and development for both parents and children.

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE PROGRAM YEAR

- ❖ Meet & Greet visits held at each center
- ❖ Monthly Parent Volunteer Days held at each center
- ❖ Monthly Parent Committee Meetings/Family Nights held at each center
- ❖ Group Socializations for Early Head Start Home-based families.
- ❖ Circle of Security parenting classes
- ❖ Book Fairs held twice a year at each center
- ❖ Kindergarten Information and Orientation Fair (held in partnership with ASD)
- ❖ Teacher and Family Advocate Home Visits
- ❖ Parent/Teacher Conferences
- ❖ Advisory Committees and Policy Council

PARENT ENGAGEMENT

- ❖ Introduction to Curriculum
- ❖ Language Development Across Cultures
- ❖ Positive Parenting
- ❖ Housing Resources
- ❖ Family Literacy
- ❖ Financial Literacy trainings
- ❖ Cooking low-cost healthy meals
- ❖ Alternative Schools information fair
- ❖ Kindergarten Transition Information Fair
- ❖ Emergency Preparedness

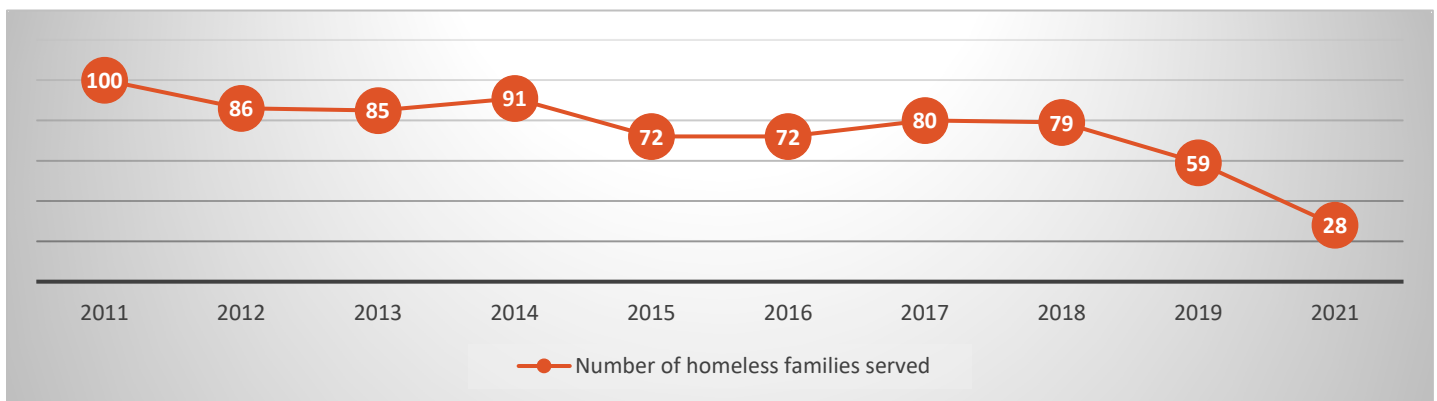
FAMILY SERVICES

Family advocates work in partnership with parents to provide training and assure resources in the community meet family needs. To limit exposure to the Covid 19 virus during the program year, all family engagement events were held virtually.

FAMILY PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENTS

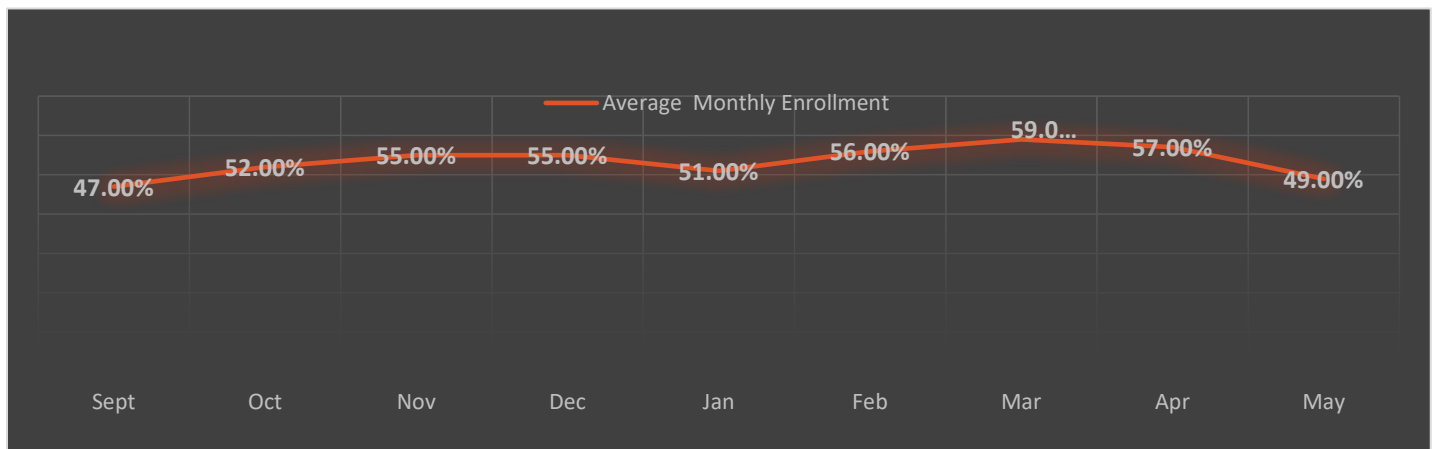
Family Services staff partner with families to establish family partnership agreements based on goals identified by each family. For most of the year staff provided virtual services before resuming optional in person home or center visits the last few months of the year. Goals are highly individualized and outline how the family and KCI will work together to achieve the identified goal.

- During the 2020/2021 program year, 59 families 39% of enrolled families participated in the family partnership agreement process through May 2021.
- Families established 66 Family Life Practice goals through May of 2021.



AVERAGE MONTHLY ENROLLMENT—FUNDED ENROLLMENT=223*

To promote a safe environment and limit the spread of Covid 19 we maintained enrollment of 50-60% for the year.



BOARD OF DIRECTORS, 2020/2021 PROGRAM YEAR

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President

Sonia Collier- Treasurer

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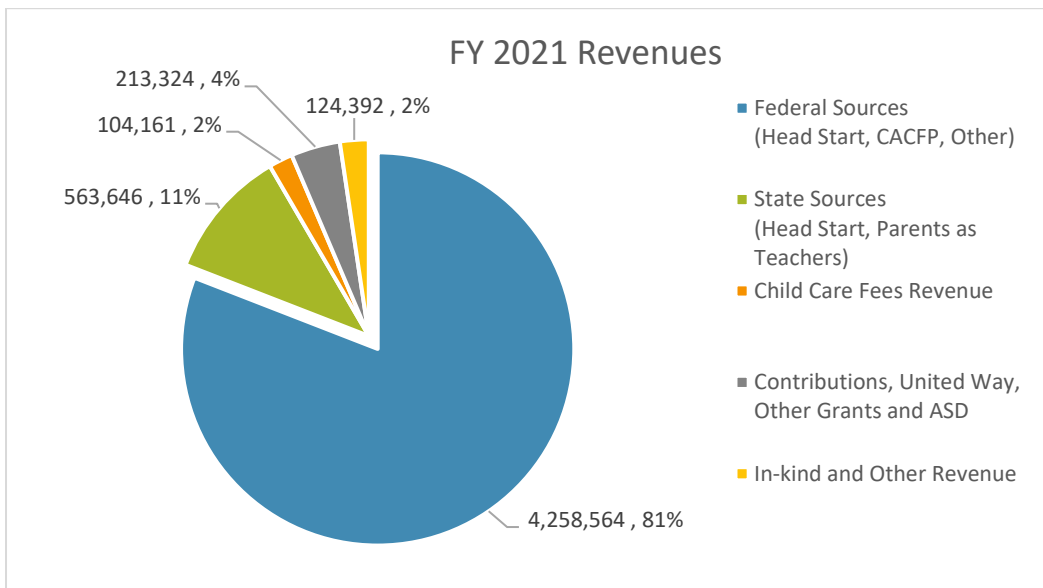
Tasi Sablan

Jessica Teague-Beach

Kaya Avila, Secretary

FINANCIAL REPORTS

Revenue by Source	FY 2021 Revenues	FY 2020 Revenues
Federal Sources (Head Start, CACFP, Other)	4,258,564	3,374,869
State Sources (Head Start, Parents as Teachers)	563,646	926,332
Child Care Fees Revenue	104,161	242,079
Contributions, United Way, Other Grants and ASD	213,324	171,685
In-kind and Other Revenue	124,392	127,334
Total Revenue	5,264,087	4,842,299



KCI is audited annually and received an unqualified opinion (no exceptions noted) on its most recent audit. The audited financial statements for the year ending June 30, 2021 are available at www.kcialaska.org.



ANNUAL REPORT 2021--SUMMARY OF THE COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT (2022)

Our 2020 community assessment shows there are approximately 20,000 children under the age of 5 in Anchorage. This age group's population has actually declined over the last 5 years, with a population of 21,961 children 0-4 years old in 2010 rising only to 22,297 in 2015, then dipping under 20,000 in 2020.. Using Census bureau data we estimate that about 20% of this number live below 100% of poverty as defined by the Office of Head Start federal income eligibility guidelines.¹ Using a 20% poverty rate, we estimate there are 1,600 three and four year olds income eligible for Head Start and 2,400 birth to three year olds eligible for EHS.

Our community assessment reveals that Anchorage is an exceptionally diverse community (ethnically and linguistically) with a relatively low family poverty rate (when compared nationally and with other Alaska communities), a high cost of living, a high rate of family homelessness, higher than average rates of domestic violence and a high rate of child maltreatment. Anchorage experienced negative population growth between 2015-2020 due to several factors, most notably a long state-wide recession precipitated by low oil prices.

In Anchorage and Alaska, the percent of the population living below the federal poverty level is well below the national average. This is deceiving though, because the cost of living is also significantly higher in Alaska than in other states. In Anchorage, it is estimated to be 30% higher than in other US cities.² Rental prices in Anchorage soared over the past year, increasing by 14.2% to a median rent of \$1,279 for a two bedroom apartment as of March, 2022.³ The lack of affordable housing has been a factor challenging family well-being for many years. For instance, the ASD Child in Transition (CIT) program identified 700 children under five who experienced homelessness during the 2017/18 school year.

Child abuse and neglect has been a persistent problem in Anchorage. There were 2,269 reports of harm made to the Office of Children's Services in 2020 that were credible enough to be "screened in" for further investigation and follow up. Exposure to domestic or intimate partner violence, which is a form of child abuse, is also an issue affecting children in Anchorage. Over 42% of Anchorage women surveyed by the UAA Justice Center in 2010 reported experiencing intimate partner violence in their lifetime, compared to 33% nationally.⁴

The Covid 19 pandemic has had far reaching, ongoing impact in Anchorage. Although unemployment surged during the early months of the pandemic, the unemployment rate in Anchorage as of May 2022 is 4%. Hiring is a serious challenge for many businesses, including KCI. Inflation is also maintaining levels not seen since the early 1980s, which creates additional stress on the household budgets of Head Start families. With world events driving the price of oil above the \$100/barrel benchmark for the first time in many years, the state of Alaska has experienced an unexpected surge in revenue. One result was the passage of the Alaska Reading Act, which includes the creation of a voluntary state-wide pre-k program. Another result is that the increase in the annual Permanent Fund Dividend payout to residents will surpass \$3,000 per person, which will help families cope with inflation this year.

To read our full community assessment go to www.kcialaska.org

¹ American Community Survey, 2020, Population under 18 years, Anchorage, AK.

² Alaska Department of Labor & Workforce Development, Alaska Economic Trends, "The Cost of Living," July 2022.

³ *ibid*

⁴ "Key Results from the Alaska Victimization Study," UAA Justice Center,

http://justice.uaa.alaska.edu/research/2010/1103.01.avs_fy11/1103.011a.anchorage_summary.pdf