

CEN-TEX FAMILY SERVICES, INC.

ANNUAL

REPORT

INTRODUCTION

MISSION

The mission of Cen-Tex Family Services, Inc. is to enrich the lives of families, encourage educational experiences, partner with local resources, and create lasting relationships in the communities we serve.

VISION

To educate and support children and families through program excellence.

HEAD START

Head Start and Early Head Start are federally funded programs that promote the school readiness of young children from low-income families. The programs support the mental, social, and emotional development of children from birth to age 5.

In addition, the program provides children and their families with health, nutrition, social, and other services.

Programs build goal-oriented relationships with families that support positive parent-child relationships, family well-being, and connections to peers and community.

SERVICE AREA

The program service area includes the four counties of Bastrop, Lee, Fayette, and Colorado. There are centers in 7 different communities: Bastrop, Stoney Point, Elgin, Giddings, Smithville, La Grange, and Eagle Lake. Home based services are available in Fayette and Colorado counties.

The agency also partners with 6 different school districts: Bastrop ISD, Elgin ISD, Smithville ISD, Giddings ISD, La Grange ISD, and Rice Consolidated ISD.

PROGRAM OPTIONS

HEAD START PRESCHOOL AND EARLY HEAD START CENTER BASED PROGRAMS

Teachers provide a learning environment that supports children's growth and prepares them for school success later in life. They write lesson plans and goals for each child and share assessment reports with parents at Home Visits. Comprehensive services are provided that support the whole child and family with an emphasis on child health and family well-being.

EARLY HEAD START HOME BASED PROGRAM

A Family Educator works with families in their homes, nurtures parent-child relationships, and offers families information, support, and connections to community resources. Twice a month, families are invited to group experiences. Families are provided with comprehensive services that support the whole child and family with an emphasis on child health and family well-being.

PREGNANT WOMEN

The program supports pregnant women in preparing for birth and becoming a parent. A parenting curriculum is offered that supports healthy pregnancies and deliveries as well as post-natal services. Mothers and families are supported as they transition to child development programs.

COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT

A Community Wide Strategic Planning and Needs Assessment is conducted at least every 5 years. The last assessment was completed in Spring 2023. It is reviewed annually and updated as needed until the next full Community Assessment is completed.

This assessment highlights strengths, challenges, and barriers to self-sufficiency of families with young children that are at-risk and/or living in poverty. The Assessment guides planning and programming to meet community needs, builds on strengths and resources of local communities, and aids in reducing identified barriers to self-sufficiency for families in poverty. Leadership uses data from the Community Assessment to enrich services and to inform decisions.

Key Findings

Quality Care for Children There is a critical need for infant/toddler child care and Early Head Start, particularly care for full working-day families.

Economic Well-Being With inflation after the pandemic, working families need enhanced support as they navigate through this period.

Food Insecurity Despite the massive response to hunger during the pandemic, food insecurity only improved for some sub-populations. There was a deepening divide across racial and ethnic lines. Focus groups also highlighted the struggles of families with food insecurity.

Poverty and Inequities Cen-Tex can continue to ensure its systems and services advance racial and ethnic equity for children and families in poverty, particularly in areas noted through the Community Assessment.

Foster Care Increased collaboration to enroll more foster children should be explored.

THE NUMBERS

84

% of Enrolled Children with a Dental Exam

87

% of Enrolled Children with a Medical Exam

16

% of Children with a Disability

CHILDREN SERVED 23-24

	Head Start	Early Head Start	Total
Enrollment Slots	136	210	346
# of Children Served	153	246 children 3 pregnant women	402
Income or Categorically Eligible	90%	95%	93%

INCOME STATUS OF ENROLLED PARTICIPANTS

	Head Start	Early Head Start
Below 100%	61	108
Over Income	8	2
100-130%	7	10
Homeless	11	29
Public Assistance	65	96
Foster Child	1	4

AVERAGE MONTHLY ENROLLMENT

August 23	62%	February 24	99%
September 23	74%	March 24	99%
October 23	75%	April 24	99%
November 23	74%	May 24	99%
December 23	96%	June 24	61%
January 24	98%	July 24	62%

SCHOOL READINESS

CURRICULUM

A research-based curriculum model, Frog Street, is used in Early Head Start and Head Start classrooms to prepare children for kindergarten. The curriculum is based on objectives for development and learning, which are fully aligned with the School Readiness Goals for Infants and Toddlers and with the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework.

CONSCIOUS DISCIPLINE

Conscious Discipline is an evidence based whole-school solution for social-emotional learning, discipline, and self-regulation.

At the core is the School Family. This concept helps build connections between families and schools, teachers and students, and also teacher to teacher and student to student to ensure the optimal development of all.

The School Family is created through routines, rituals and structures. These connections provide the three essential ingredients for school success: a willingness to learn, impulse control, and attention.

DUAL LANGUAGE LEARNERS

Hearts of Texas supports the home language and culture of children and families. Receptive and expressive language skills are developed in children's home language, as well as their second language, through the support of bilingual staff. Effective instructional practices are embedded within the context of age appropriate classroom routines, hands-on activities, and lessons.

CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

Hearts of Texas serves children with disabilities in a least-restrictive educational environment. Inclusion is promoted throughout the program. Hearts of Texas sees each child as an individual capable of learning and developing with the support of caring, loving, and qualified staff. During the 2023-2024 school year, 16% of children served had a diagnosed disability.

Hearts of Texas works closely with families of enrolled, atypically developing children. The agency also works with community partners in the medical professions and other service providers pursuant to Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act to provide responsive care. Early Head Start and Head Start staff maintain close communication with ECI and ISD personnel to identify children with disabilities and provide services for them.

The Family Map Inventories: A Family Needs Assessment

The Family Map Inventories are researched-based and aligned with the Head Start Parent, Family, and Community Engagement Framework. The Family Map is a face-to-face interview between the Family Advocate or Family Educator and families. The interviews provide a format to discuss critical areas and identify strengths, protective factors, and risks at home in a respectful way. Specific interventions can be designed that help reduce the impact of risk factors while supporting and enhancing protective factors associated with a child's healthy development.

The Family Map covers the following areas: self-support, routines, early learning/ school readiness, monitoring, environmental safety, family outcomes, discipline, health, basic needs, home and car safety, social integration, and parent-child warmth.

CHILDREN'S ASSESSMENTS

Teaching Strategies GOLD Assessment 2023-2024 Percentage of Children Meeting or Above Growth Range

	On Target	Above Growth Range
Approaches to Learning-Self-Regulation	51%	49%
Social and Emotional	47%	53%
Language and Literacy	41%	59%
Cognition, Including Math and Science	40%	60%
Physical Development-Health	41%	59%
English Language Learners	63%	37%

Children are regularly observed and assessed over the year. All children are assessed using the strengths based Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP) Assessment, an observational assessment that clearly links to the curriculum and lesson planning. The assessment is research based, valid, and reliable. Children are assessed three times during the program year. These assessment results are shared with parents and used in program planning.

TEACHING PRACTICES

Hearts of Texas assesses teaching practices by using the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS). This system measures Emotional Support, Classroom Organization and Instructional Support. In Spring 2024, Hearts of Texas' CLASS scores were higher in all three domains than the re-competition levels and the Quality Thresholds. Falling below the re-competition threshold would require the agency re-compete for the Head Start grant.

CLASSROOM ASSESSMENT SCORING SYSTEM (CLASS)

Spring 2024 CLASS Data			
	Cen-Tex Average	Re-competition Level	Quality Thresholds
Emotional Support	6.5	5	6
Classroom Organization	6.13	5	6
Instructional Support	3.84	2.3	3

PARENT INVOLVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Parent Committee

Each center has a Parent Committee that includes all parents or guardians of enrolled children. Members elect officers, conduct parent meeting, and plan activities..

These committees:

- Advise staff in developing and implementing local program policies, activities, and services to ensure they meet the needs of children and families;
- Communicate with the policy council;
- Participate in the recruitment and screening of Early Head Start and Head Start employees.

Policy Council

Policy Council members are parents and community members elected by parents of currently enrolled children to represent them and the community in program decision-making and planning. Policy Council members are important leaders that lend their voice and perspective to many decisions, including those related to parent involvement, funding applications, program personnel policies, and program recruitment, selection, and enrollment.

Parenting Curriculum

Hearts of Texas is currently implementing the research-based parenting curriculum ReadyRosie. Teachers send modeled moment videos to parents on a weekly basis and parents also have the opportunity to participate in Family Workshops throughout the year.

At Home Activities

Every week, teaching staff provides families with learning activities that parents can do at home with their child. These activities relate to the curriculum and enhance parent-child relationships. Teachers can use the modeled moments videos from ReadyRosie and other classroom resources to engage parents in their child's learning and development.

Volunteering

Not only are parents always welcomed in Head Start classrooms to observe their child, but they are also welcomed as volunteers. Volunteer opportunities range from assisting in the classroom and preparing for special events to playground maintenance and clerical support.

Family Support Services

Each family has the opportunity to work with a Family Advocate. The Family Advocate guides them through the enrollment process and assists with transitions between preschool programs. Another important piece is the Family Partnership Agreement. Staff build trusting relationships with families and encourage and support families to turn their dreams into reality through a goal-setting process that relies on family strengths.

FINANCIAL REPORTS AND AUDIT

February 1, 2023-January 31, 2024
Head Start and Early Head Start Grant

Funding	
Head Start Program Operations	\$3,569,518
Head Start Training and Technical Assistance	\$27,140
Early Head Start Program Operations	\$5,725,305
Early Head Start Training and Technical Assistance	\$82,023
Total	\$9,403,986

The Proposed Budget				
Categories	Head Start	Early Head Start	Total	Percentage
Payroll and Fringe	\$1,752,130	\$2,769,947	\$4,522,077	48%
Supplies	\$1,553,292	\$1,894,833	\$3,448,125	37%
Contractual	\$82,503	\$885,001	\$967,504	11%
Other	\$181,593	\$175,524	\$357,117	4%

Training and Technical Assistance Budget				
Categories	Head Start	Early Head Start	Total	% of Funding
Payroll and Fringe	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0%
Supplies	\$540	\$5,000	\$5,540	5%
Contractual	\$6,000	\$17,000	\$23,000	25%
Other	\$20,600	\$44,540	\$61,140	70%

The Expenditures

Categories	Head Start	Early Head Start	Total	% of Funding
Payroll and Fringe	\$1,638,690	\$2,624,147	\$4,262,837	46%
Supplies	\$1,433,281	\$1,630,588	\$3,063,869	33%
Contractual	\$68,526	\$805,638	\$874,164	9%
Other	\$253,194	\$241,165	\$494,359	5%

Training and Technical Assistance Expenditures

Categories	Head Start	Early Head Start	Total	% of Funding
Payroll and Fringe	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0%
Supplies	\$3,280	\$3,471	\$6,751	7%
Contractual	\$10,315	\$15,668	\$25,983	28%
Other	\$8,604	\$22,949	\$31,553	34%

CACFP Budget, Expenditures, and Reimbursement October 1, 2023-September 31, 2024

Categories	Budget	Expenditures	Reimbursement
Payroll and Fringe	\$103,728.01	\$112,755.43	
Supplies	\$21,580.00	\$24,750.79	
Other-Food	\$207,250.00	\$21,846.41	
Total	\$332,558.01	\$350,352.63	
Total Reimbursement			\$307,308.29

The Financial Audit was conducted the week of June 5-9, 2024 by Montemayor Britton Bender, Certified Public Accountants. There were no findings.