

# Head Start

## 2019 Annual Report



**THE CHILD  
CENTER OF NY**

Strengthening Family. Building Community.



# Who We Are



Our 4-year-olds visited Prospect Park Zoo in Brooklyn for hands-on lessons about animals, life science, conservation, and scientific concepts. This exhibit of hatched “dinosaur eggs” was an effective tool in helping the children visualize growth and change as they prepare for the transition to kindergarten.



The Child Center of NY began in 1953 as a children’s counseling center in Queens. Today, we are a powerful community presence in the borough and throughout New York City, reaching 37,000 young people and their families each year. Our mission is to strengthen children and families with skills, opportunities, and emotional support to build healthy, successful lives. We also strengthen the communities they live in, realizing that children do not grow in isolation and need strong communities to reach their full potential.

Our Early Head Start and Head Start programs are an integral part of this mission. In the communities we serve, children are up against incredible challenges from birth. Parents often work long hours, do not speak or read English, and struggle with extreme poverty. Our dedicated and qualified staff — most of whom are from the same communities — understand these challenges. Drawing on their extensive training, experience, and firsthand knowledge, our educators ensure the children in our care are developmentally on track — academically, socially, and emotionally.

The Child Center operates three home-based Early Head Start programs for children 0-3 and three center-based Head Start programs for children 3-5. All programs emphasize hands-on, play-based learning that teaches children academic concepts in ways that make sense to them and get them excited about school; and all of them recognize parents and guardians as their child’s most important teacher.

# Early Head Start: Expanding to Meet Community Need

Quality early education, starting from birth, is crucial for children to start kindergarten on the right foot. This is especially true for children of immigrants and those living below the poverty line. Sadly, those are the very children who have the fewest opportunities to receive it. **We have seen a particular need for quality early childhood education in the Queens neighborhoods of Woodside and Astoria, both of which are home to a large immigrant population and high rates of children living below the poverty line.**

In FY 2019, The Child Center was awarded a federal grant to provide **two new home-based Early Head Start programs in Astoria and Woodside, serving 100 children** from birth to age 3 and pregnant women, 50 in each community.

As part of our mission to reach families who need us most, these programs are making a special commitment to enroll pregnant women and children of all backgrounds, **including children with disabilities and those who are homeless or in foster care.**

As part of our core principle of serving the whole family, the programs will **support parents in achieving their own goals**, such as enhancing parenting skills, learning English, or gaining employment.

And as part of our commitment to ensure children begin kindergarten at the level of their peers, we have created a **birth-to-5 program model** that includes the award-winning ParentChild+ Program (a school-readiness curriculum for children 16 months-3 years) and linkages to a neighborhood Head Start program when children turn 3.





# The Whole Child and Entire Family



Visits to local farmers markets are a core part of program efforts to instill healthy eating habits and get the whole family involved.



## Family Activities

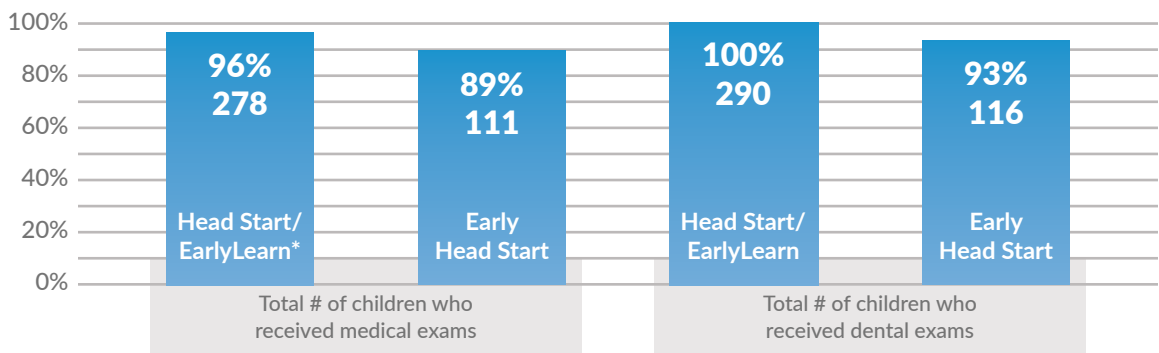
A child’s success depends on the total wellness of the family. We offer a variety of workshops, parenting groups, and other initiatives to support parents’ and other caregivers’ well-being and equip them to foster their children’s development now and in the future. We also offer fun family activities to strengthen the parent-child bond and establish parents as an integral part of their child’s learning. These activities also serve to create bonds between families, which provide the foundation for a long-lasting network of support.

**Parent Health and Development:** Computer classes; ESL classes through We Speak NYC, the mayor’s Office of Immigration Affairs’ English language learning program; sexual health and adult role model workshops through Planned Parenthood; financial literacy; yoga, capoeira, plant-based nutrition, and meditation through Bula Arts and Culture.

**Child and Family Health:** Nutrition workshop through Cornell University; workshops on influenza, urgent care vs. emergency room, and Public Charge through Northwell Health; vaccination information session with on-site nurse practitioner; fire safety with the FDNY.

**Parenting:** Disabilities, father support, and other specific parenting support groups; transition workshops; curriculum workshops and orientations; ParentCorps, a 14-week parenting program developed by New York University, available in families’ home languages.

**Family Fun:** Literacy events and library tours; pumpkin picking; zoo visits; potlucks and picnics; cultural celebrations; monthly student-parent class activities; trips to the American Museum of Natural History; Dads Walk Your Child to School Day and Playdate Night; Closet Day to share and exchange donations of clothing, baby items, and other household items; Read for the Record participation.



The Child Center of NY has long recognized that just as we need to ensure children begin school ready to learn, we also need to ensure they begin life ready to thrive. We help them achieve their full potential not only socially and academically, but emotionally and physically, too.

**Emotional Well-Being** • Our early childhood education staff are trained in **Emotionally Responsive Teaching**, an evidence-based teaching strategy pioneered by Bank Street College of Education, through which our staff evaluate the emotional state of children each day and create safe opportunities for them to express and process emotions that might otherwise interfere with learning. In addition, our **on-site licensed social workers** and social work interns serve as resources for teachers when they need help problem-solving children’s behavioral issues. And as an organization with more than 30 behavioral health and family support programs, we can provide **therapy by licensed mental health professionals** when needed. In FY 2019, our Head Start staff received specialized training in **Trauma Smart** (see page 8) to better serve children facing some of the toughest mental health challenges.

**Physical Health** • Given today’s childhood obesity rates, it is more vital than ever to instill healthy attitudes toward eating and exercise from the beginning. Our **Child and Family Nutrition Program** achieves this goal on a variety of fronts: guiding children in preparing and trying healthy foods in the classroom; a focus on movement activities, both generally and through specific programs like **I am Moving, I am Learning (IMIL)**; participation in food shares from upstate New York organic farms through an initiative called **Farm to Preschool**; and training parents to support healthy habits at home. Through **Health Case Management**, all families can work with a nurse practitioner who ensures children receive basic health care, monitors children’s development, and guides families in the treatment of ongoing medical conditions. In recent years, we have augmented this service through a partnership with Northwell Health (see sidebar).

## New This Year

### Educational Initiative on Impact of Change in Public Charge Rule

In 2018, the federal government proposed a change in the Public Charge rule to expand the list of benefits considered in determining who is likely to become a “public charge”: someone reliant on government assistance. The rule seeks to prevent some immigrants from obtaining legal permanent resident status or a visa. Many of our immigrant families responded in fear by decreasing their use of nutritional programs such as SNAP (“food stamps”) and other programs that ensure children’s health and well-being. **We rapidly began educating families on the change and are continuing efforts to ensure that this issue does not prevent families from seeking needed care.** Most important, we are continuing to be a trusted provider that families feel safe coming to for services.

## Collaboration with Northwell Health

Piloted in FY 2018, our alliance with Northwell Health expanded this year from one to two sites, and from one to four programs. Pediatric residents and pediatricians (residents with supervising attendings) visit our Corona and Woodside centers monthly to provide Head Start and Early Head Start families with **health education workshops, consultations, and physical examinations free of charge.** We also work with Northwell to administer the innovative **Health and Well-being Questionnaire (CC-HWQ)** to identify clients’ physical and/or behavioral health challenges and social determinants of health. We then connect them to appropriate providers — such as a government housing authority for a family the questionnaire reveals to be homeless. Out of **256** questionnaires, **159** families — **62%** of all those surveyed — demonstrated additional needs that we then could help them address. This is a key way we make good on our promise to care for the whole child and entire family.

\* EarlyLearn NYC is the program through which New York City’s Administration for Children’s Services (ACS) combines city, state, and federal funds to provide Head Start, Early Head Start, and other child care programs for free or at low cost for low-income New Yorkers.



# Commitment to Excellence

## Escalera Head Start

By spring:

100% ↑ 47%

of 4-year-olds met or exceeded widely held expectations for language development, up from 53% in the fall.

## Ficalora Family Foundation Head Start

By spring:

92% ↑ 70%

of 3-year-olds met or exceeded widely held expectations for literacy development, up from 22% in the fall.

The Child Center of NY's annual independent audited financial statements for the year ended June 30, 2019, were issued by PKF O'Connor Davies, LLP on November 26, 2019. The auditor's report reflected an unmodified opinion on the financial statements, and there were no instances of non-compliance or matters that were required to be reported under the auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America for the year ended June 30, 2019.



When Amy, a student at our Ficalora Family Foundation Head Start, became angry and aggressive in the classroom, Lead Teacher Debbie Delgado wondered if something had changed in Amy's life. Instead of focusing on Amy's negative behaviors, Delgado redirected her and spoke with Amy's mother, who shared that Amy's father had started a new family and wasn't seeing Amy anymore. Delgado recommended play therapy with the on-site social worker. Amy's teachers — trained in emotionally responsive teaching — supported Amy in the classroom. Amy is now making friends, smiling and laughing in class, and meeting expectations for social-emotional and cognitive development. Here she is enjoying artwork with Child Center supporter Amy Rappaport, who came to the center as a guest reader during the Week of the Young Child in April. Little Amy was excited to learn they shared the same name!



# Getting Ready for Kindergarten

- Programs use Teaching Strategies GOLD to assess children’s progress in all developmental domains and for planning appropriate learning activities. Teaching Strategies GOLD is aligned with the New York State Prekindergarten Learning Standards and New York State Early Learning Guidelines. Children were assessed three times during the year, and staff used the results to inform their planning for groups of children, as well as individual children.

One way our Head Start teachers prepare children for the transition to kindergarten is by introducing them to a classic story of metamorphosis: that of the caterpillar turning into a butterfly. The students follow the stages of the real-life creature, witnessing the entire journey and saying goodbye to the full-grown butterflies. The moment when they release the butterflies to start a new chapter of their lives is always a highlight.



Four-year-old Aisel's mom read to the class for its Read for the Record event. Events like this help instill a love of reading that will serve children well in kindergarten and beyond.

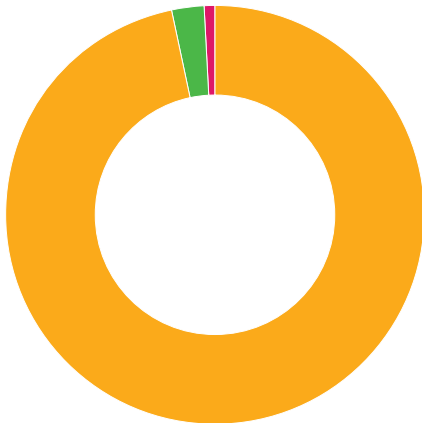
- Staff development topics included literacy, observations of children, and intentional planning.
- All centers have relationships with local elementary schools, and key staff from those schools spoke with parents about preparing for kindergarten.
- Various activities in the spring supported children and their families in the transition from pre-K to kindergarten. Activities included visiting area schools, having Head Start graduates talk to the preschoolers about kindergarten, studying the transformation from caterpillars to butterflies, and experiencing planting activities as metaphors for this transition.

## New This Year Trauma Smart Training

Staff received specialized training in Trauma Smart, a community- and evidence-based program developed by Crittenton Children’s Center. Trauma Smart involves training caregivers in effectively helping children address the negative impact of violence and trauma and develop effective coping strategies. It is part of our overall mission to ensure that when children leave our care, they have the tools to succeed both academically and emotionally.

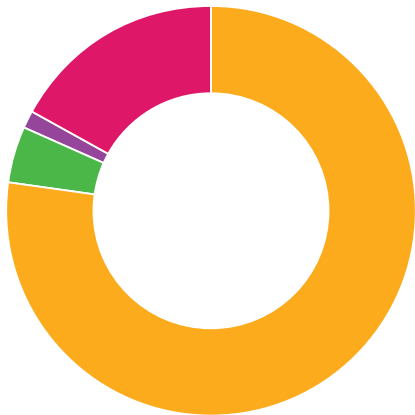
## Who We Serve

Early Head Start  
Total Enrollment:



Income below 100% federal poverty line: 224/77.24%  
Public assistance such as TANF, SSI: 13/4.48%  
Foster child status: 0  
Homeless status: 4/1.38%  
Over income: 49/16.89%

Head Start/EarlyLearn and Child Care\*  
Total Enrollment:



Income below 100% federal poverty line: 121/96.8%  
Public assistance such as TANF, SSI: 3/2.4%  
Foster child status: 0  
Homeless status: 0  
Over income: 1/0.8%

## Percentage of children with disabilities

Early Head Start  
17 children  
13.6%



Head Start/EarlyLearn  
63 children  
21.72%

## Homeless Status as defined by the McKinney-Vento Act\*\*

Early Head Start  
116 children  
92.8%



Head Start/EarlyLearn  
139 children  
47.93%

\* Chart includes 31 non-Head Start child care students.

\*\* While only a small number of enrolled families identify as being homeless, there are many more who do not realize that they are considered homeless under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, which defines homelessness as lacking a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence due to economic hardship. We refer to these families as “doubled up,” with overcrowded living spaces and shared or limited access to the necessities of kitchen and bathroom usage.

# Financials

## FY 2019 Budget and Expenditures

For the years ended June 30, 2019 and June 30, 2020

	Head Start			Early Head Start		
	FY 2019 Budget	FY 2019 Expenses	FY 2020 Budget	FY 2019 Budget	FY 2019 Expenses*	FY 2020 Budget
Personnel	1,460,940	1,488,633	1,488,147	730,795	524,116	1,138,616
Fringe Benefits	467,761	473,063	491,937	232,497	143,120	382,975
Facilities	261,626	262,491	179,951	157,285	23,254	240,505
Travel	1,566	1,581	1,596	7,105	8,697	11,307
Supplies	16,723	16,916	22,574	40,511	22,714	45,079
Other	35,441	35,502	71,192	121,178	119,287	252,832
Health and Safety	126,352	123,699	-	-	-	-
Total Direct Costs	2,370,409	2,401,885	2,255,397	1,289,371	841,188	2,071,314
Administrative Expenses	269,287	273,382	270,648	132,673	100,943	236,031
In-Kind Expenses	601,200	635,785	526,089	355,511	235,533	576,837
Food Program	193,700	193,700	230,173	3,000	3,010	33,549
Head Start UPK (Non-Federal)	559,426	564,652	531,310	-	-	-
Head Start UPK Enhancement	274,473	234,212	274,473	-	-	-
Total Expenditures	4,268,495	4,303,616	4,088,090	1,780,555	1,180,674	2,917,731

## FY 2019 Public vs. Private Funding

	Head Start	Early Head Start
Total Federal Funding	2,868,967	945,141
Public Non-Federal Expenses	798,864	52,094
Private Non-Federal Expenses	635,785	183,439
Total Non-Federal Expenses	1,434,649	235,533
Total Financial Support	4,303,616	1,180,674

\* The EHS direct funded contract was expanded in March 2019. The contract was underspent during this time period due to the program's being in a startup period during which employees were not yet hired.



“Molecules”: Using dishwashing detergent, food coloring, and cotton swabs, Corona Head Start teacher Mr. Evros introduced students to the fun of investigating the basics of chemistry and properties of matter using everyday materials.

## Summary of Community Needs Assessments

Community Needs Assessments were conducted in March 2019 for our community districts: CD1, CD3, and CD2 in Queens and CD7 in Manhattan. The needs of children and families remain unchanged from the prior year. Our programs continue to serve low-income families who struggle with poverty, unemployment, immigration, community violence, overcrowded housing, and inadequate access to social services. Affordable, adequate housing is the primary need for families in all districts, with an increase of children living in shelters. All districts have seen an increase in available child care services for UPK (universal pre-kindergarten) with the expansion of NYC Pre-K for All. The landscape of Head Start services throughout NYC is anticipated to experience significant changes, as NYC redesigns its model for birth-to-five early childhood programming.

## Where You Can Find Us

### Early Head Start, Astoria

37-34 29th Street  
Astoria, NY 11101

### Corona Early Childhood

Head Start Center and Early Head Start Home-Based Services  
34-10 108 Street  
Corona, NY 11368

### Escalera Head Start

169 West 87th Street  
New York, NY 10024  
212-799-2440

### The Ficalora Family Foundation Head Start Center and Early Head Start

60-02 Roosevelt Avenue  
Woodside, NY 11377  
718-943-2800

### Traci Donnelly

Chief Executive Officer

### Linda Rodriguez

Senior Vice President, Behavioral Health and Early Childhood

### Tanya Krien

Vice President, Early Childhood Education, Administration and Operations

### Marie Mason

Vice President, Early Childhood Education, Programs and Curriculum





## **The Child Center of NY offers a holistic, family-centric approach to lifting up under-served youth and communities.**

Our mission is to strengthen children and families with skills, opportunities, and emotional support to build healthy, successful lives. We hold ourselves accountable for our results, using methods that are proven to make a difference.

Our programs are located in the communities we serve, with staff who collectively speak two dozen languages and understand the challenges our clients face. Recognizing that children do not grow in isolation, we provide services to whole families and the larger community. We know that with the right opportunities and support, children of any background can reach their full potential.