

Head Start

2021 Annual Report



**THE CHILD
CENTER OF NY**

Strengthening Family. Building Community.

Who We Are



The Child Center of NY is a multiservice organization that strengthens children and families with skills, opportunities, and emotional support to build healthy, successful lives. We serve more than **43,000 New Yorkers annually**.

We provide services to whole families and the larger community and meet unique needs across diverse populations. **Our staff collectively speaks two dozen**

languages and are mostly hired from within the communities they serve. The Child Center accomplishes its mission through **seven program areas**, 100 programs, 50 school and community locations, virtual programming, and in-home visits—in all five NYC boroughs and Long Island.



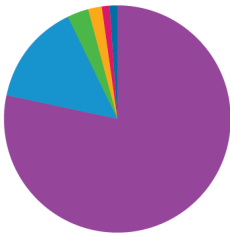
Our Early Head Start and Head Start programs are an integral part of our efforts. In the communities we serve, children are up against incredible challenges from birth. Parents often work long hours, do not speak or read English, and struggle with extreme poverty. Our

dedicated and qualified team 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 Prioritizes Culturally Responsive Care

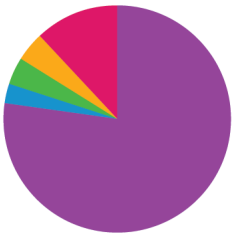
CLIENTS BY ETHNICITY:

- 78.7% Hispanic or Latino
- 14.6% Asian
- 3.1% White
- 2.8% Black or African American
- 0.2% Did Not disclose
- 0.2% Pacific Islander
- 0.0% Two or more races



TEAM MEMBERS BY ETHNICITY:

- 77.63% Hispanic or Latino
- 2.63% Asian
- 3.95% White
- 3.95% Black or African American
- 11.84% Did not disclose
- 0.0% Pacific Islander
- 0.0% Two or more races



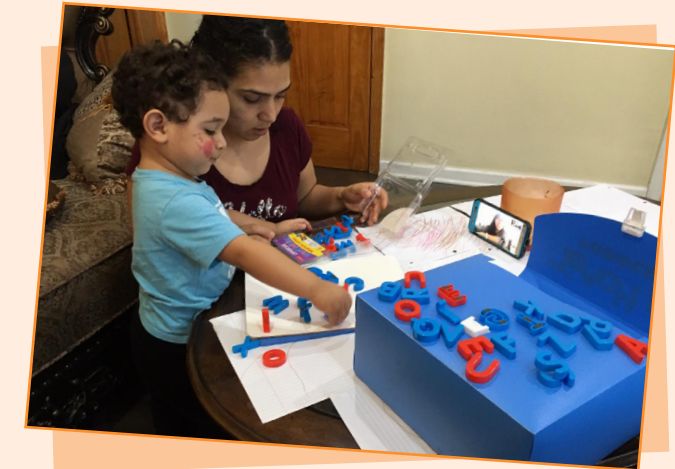
2020-21 Program Overview

A Note about the COVID-19 Pandemic

The Child Center operated **three home-based Early Head Start programs** in Astoria, Corona, and Woodside, Queens, and **three center-based Head Start programs**, one in Manhattan and two in Queens (Corona and Woodside). We provided **562 children** with high-quality, emotionally responsive early education and support services.

Support services were particularly crucial in the face of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Families still struggled to pay bills, feed their children, and ensure their children's development continued to advance. As a multiservice organization, The Child Center was uniquely positioned to help. Here are ways we stepped up to serve:

Remote learning: Our home-based programs remained remote throughout the school year. Teachers and home visitors maintained consistent virtual contact and offered flexible hours to accommodate parents' work schedules



and meet the needs of young children and school-age children. Team members delivered books and supplies such as paper, scissors, and crayons to avoid hardship for families already struggling.



Hybrid learning: Head Start centers began giving parents the option for their children to attend in-person, remain remote, or go hybrid starting in August 2020. We organized town hall discussions with team members, exploring what they needed to feel safe transitioning back into the classroom, thereby being able to project confidence to families. Their feedback, along with the incoming safety regulations, guided policy. Class size was reduced, extra cleaning supplies were obtained, temperature scans were purchased, and professional cleaning equipment was acquired.

Benefits Access: Organization-wide, we connected **3,000 families** to SNAP (food stamps), health insurance, and other essential services, representing a 50% increase over pre-pandemic levels.

Emergency Response Funds (ERF): This cash assistance program, established in April 2020, has distributed **\$799,500** to **1,515 families** to date. ERF planted the seed for a new peer-driven initiative called Cash+Community Works, which we look forward to sharing more about in our 2022 report.

Essential Needs: Centers distributed:

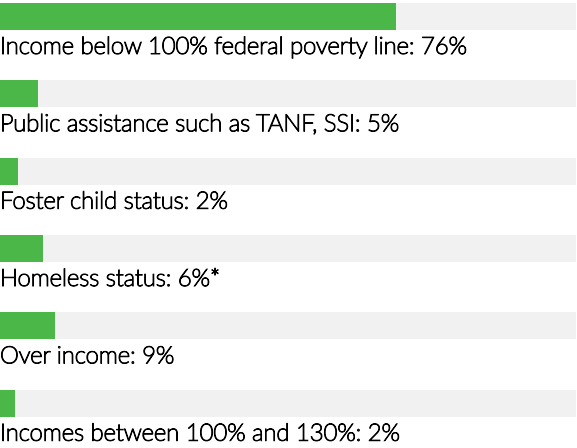


Who We Serve

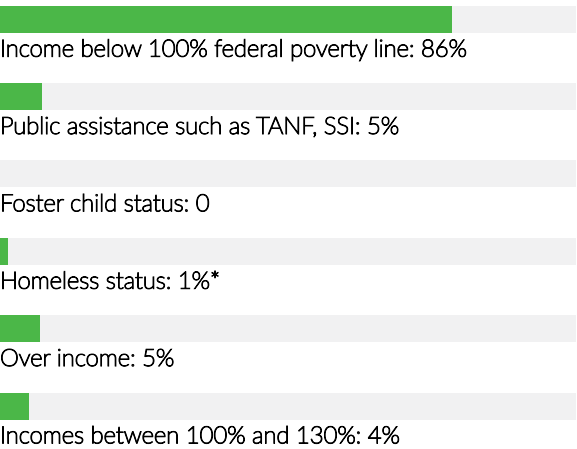
Our early childhood education programs serve children ages 0-5 who are from low-income families and face other barriers to school success.

A. ENROLLMENT

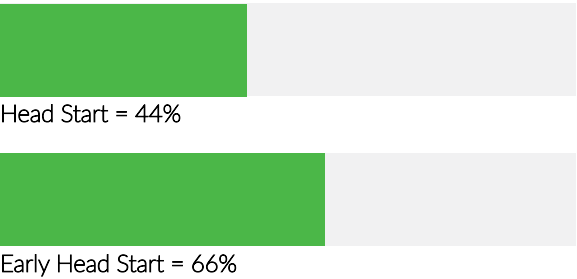
i. Head Start Total Enrollment= 226



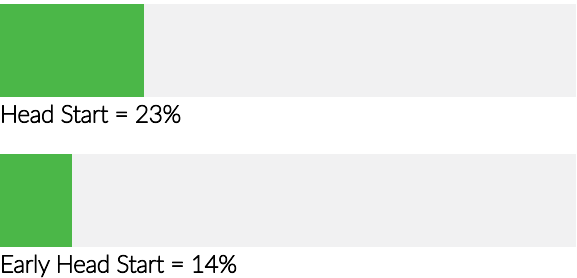
ii. Early Head Start Total Enrollment= 222 children and 18 pregnant people



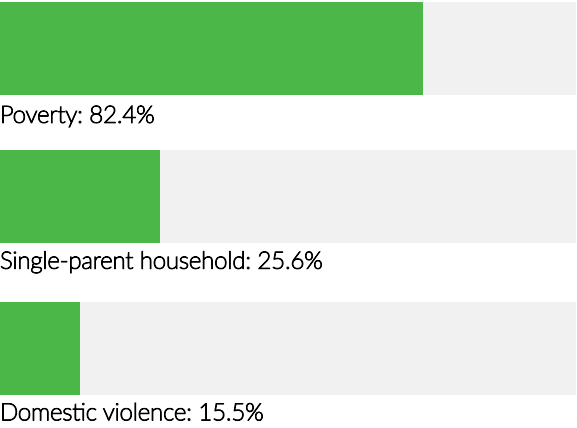
B. FAMILIES EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS*



C. CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES



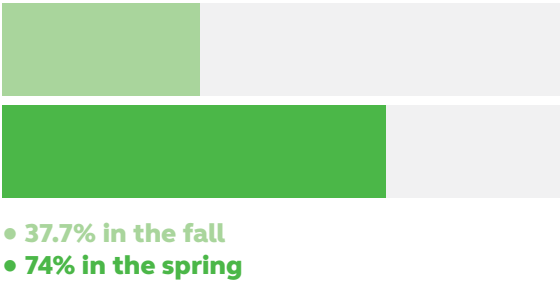
D. FAMILY CHARACTERISTICS



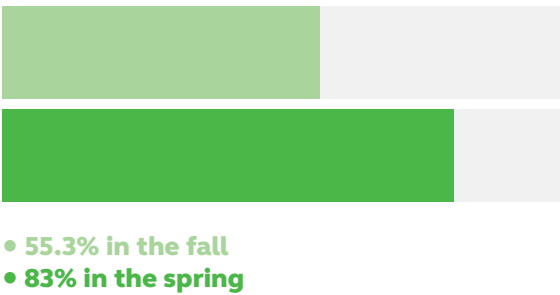
Commitment to Excellence

Children in our Head Start and Early Head Start programs improve an average of more than 50% in all developmental areas nearly every year. In 2020-21, children made impressive gains despite the obstacles and upheaval brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic.

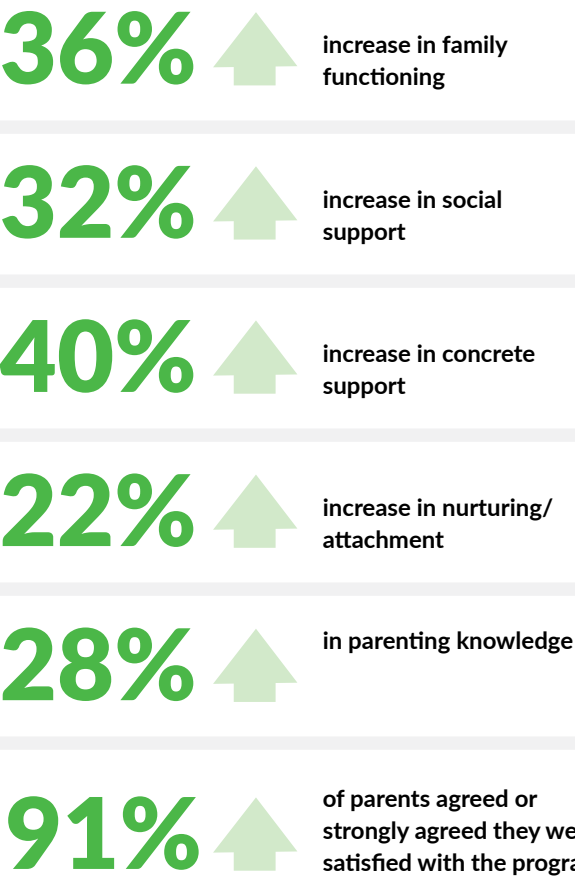
Academic Excellence
Head Start Students Who Met or Exceeded Widely Held Expectations for Cognitive Development**



Excellence in Social-Emotional Learning
Head Start Students Who Met or Exceeded Widely Held Expectations for Social-Emotional Development**



Protective Factors Survey (PFS)



Operational Excellence

The Child Center of NY’s annual independent audited financial statements for the year ended June 30, 2021 were issued by PKF O’Connor Davies, LLP on November 29, 2021. 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, 2021.

*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.

** Measured using Teaching Strategies GOLD. See additional outcomes on page 11.

The Whole Child and Entire Family

When children first enroll in our programs, many are significantly behind developmentally. Others suffer from problems such as family violence, malnutrition, and trauma. Our early childhood education programs played a pivotal role in promoting growth across all developmental domains (physical, social, emotional, and cognitive) while helping parents support their children's development now and in the future. We accomplish this through stimulating learning environments grounded in the research-based [Creative Curriculum](#) for our center-based programs and in [Growing Great Kids](#) and [ParentChild+](#) for our home-based programs. All programs use the evidence-based [Emotionally Responsive Practice](#) with the following enhancements:



Silvia, pictured here with her daughter, dropped out of college when she became pregnant. Her daughter was developmentally behind. Read Silvia's story, in her own words, about how our Early Head Start Astoria program helped both mother and daughter get on track: <https://childcenterny.org/silvias-story/>.



Literacy:

Literacy is central to routines and activities. Programs build book awareness throughout the year. Our children develop a love of reading from day one.

- Objects in our centers are labeled in English and students' native languages.
- Team members are trained in teaching dual language learners.
- Learning centers where children engage in self-directed play are outfitted with topical books, such as architecture books in the building center.
- Teachers, home visitors, parents, and other guest readers read aloud books, over Zoom and in person, aligned with learning themes. Home visitors also model for parents how to read and talk about books to enhance literacy. Centers include daily readings by teachers.
- On-site lending libraries are stocked with books for children and families to check out and read together.

- Cool Culture cards provide free access to over 90 cultural institutions like museums and zoos.
- Literacy events throughout the year included the national [Read for the Record marathon sponsored by Jump Start](#), during which parents visit our classrooms, read to their children in the language in which they feel most comfortable, and participate in a related art activity—together with children and families around the country.

Mental Health and Well-being:

The Child Center began as a children's counseling center, and a commitment to mental health is at the heart of everything we do. Our educators are trained in emotionally responsive teaching, and families have access to an array of mental health services through The Child Center.

Child Center Health and Well-being Questionnaire (CC-HWQ):

Our internally developed CC-HWQ determines needs for additional services, including those for mental health.

Out of 273 questionnaires, 185 families — 67.8% of all those surveyed — demonstrated additional needs. We provided follow-up, referrals, and/or case management.

- Of children screened, 129 were referred for counseling services and 65 received them (virtually) through a Child Center wellness center.
- Of parents screened, 130 were referred for counseling services and 64 received them (virtually) through a Child Center wellness center.
- Through a grant from Child Welfare Fund, we provided 25 additional parent-child dyads with intensive Child-Parent Psychotherapy targeting children ages 0-3 who had experienced trauma.
- Mental health kits with items to relieve stress, such as bubbles, pinwheels, and books about expressing feelings, were distributed to all home-based families.



- Teachers read books on social-emotional health, such as *When Sophie Gets Angry—Really, Really Angry*, by Molly Bang, with follow-up discussion on age-appropriate coping and self-advocacy strategies.
- Early childhood education centers are staffed with on-site social workers, as well as family workers who are trained to recognize needs for services. Family workers often share lived experiences with clients, which makes clients more likely to confide in them and trust their guidance.
- 0-5 Early Childhood Mental Health initiative: The Child Center is the sole Queens provider in the Mayor's Office of Community Mental Health's Early Childhood Mental Health Network. Services are available at our three wellness centers, via tele-therapy, and at Head Start centers, which means families can access mental health services right where their children go to school.

The Whole Child and Entire Family

CONTINUED

- **The Domestic and Other Violence Emergencies (DOVE) Program.** Thanks to Council Member Tiffany Cabán, The Child Center offers vital support to Early Head Start and Astoria early childhood families living with domestic violence. We offer case management, education, advocacy, and links to resources so that families can be safe and feel secure. Our family workers and other team members establish strong relationships in the community. This makes parents and other caregivers more likely to confide in us—even about challenges that often are not talked about—and trust our guidance.

Health and Nutrition:

Physical health management is a cornerstone of our early childhood education programs. Our nurse practitioner oversees the review of children’s health files for red flags such as unmanaged chronic conditions, a child being over- or underweight, or missed check-ups. She provided 102 families with individual consultations.

The Child Center also served as a community partner of NYC Health + Hospitals’ Test & Trace (T2) Corps to share information about COVID-19 and connect New Yorkers to free testing, vaccinations, and PPE. We worked in communities that were hardest hit by the pandemic and with individuals least likely to be vaccinated. From May-June 2021, we provided 30,412 people with vaccination information. We made 2,088 referrals to vaccination sites, distributed 1.2 million pieces of PPE, and held numerous virtual town halls about COVID-19 safety. To learn more about our T2 efforts, which continued through 2022, see the full [Child Center annual report](#).



Additional health and nutrition initiatives included:

- Partnership with [Northwell Health](#) to offer virtual health workshops. Each workshop typically had 30-40 attendees.
- Partnership with [Strong Children Wellness](#), a primary health care practice, to offer free tele-health visits with Board-certified pediatricians.
- “Vax vans” provided by our T2 partners were stationed at early childhood sites. This made it easy for working families to receive their COVID-19 vaccinations right in their own neighborhood, facilitated by The Child Center, a provider they trust.
- Comprehensive education in nutrition and exercise with the Cornell Cooperative Extension Eat Well, Play Hard program, farm-to-table activities, and events such as farmers markets where families are given “Health Bucks” to buy fruits and vegetables of their choice.

Children who received medical exams



Children who received dental exams



Parent Education:

To support parents and caregivers in creating healthy and financially stable homes, we offered 129 unique virtual educational classes and workshops, which were attended by 844 parents and caregivers. Our most popular offerings included:

- ParentCorps, Bright Beginnings, and Personal Best parenting education sessions, and Parenting Journey, a group counseling program.
- Financial literacy workshop series, presented in both English and Spanish, by Child Center partner [City National Bank](#), through a partnership developed by Child Center Board Member Garrett D'Alessandro.
- Fun family events, including our annual Cultural Celebration, Pajama Project (reading in PJs), and Moving On Ceremony (i.e. graduation), which strengthen families’ involvement in their children’s education and foster connections among families that often last through the school years and serve as an important support.

Parent engagement actually *increased* when we switched to virtual programming. Many parents, especially those with hectic work schedules and/or multiple children, found it easier to participate when they didn’t have to commute to the center. With the success of these virtual offerings, we intend to keep workshops hybrid.



A student’s father reads to the class remotely.

New This Year

- **Georgetown Infant/Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation.** The most significant change was the adoption of the Georgetown Infant/Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation (I/ECMHC) model. The purpose is twofold. This model helps adults improve their mental wellness so they can in turn support their children’s social-emotional health. And it empowers teachers to better manage challenging behaviors in their classrooms, which decreases their job-related stress.
- **Operational news.** The NYC Department of Education is now the super grantee of our center-based Head Start programs. We look forward to maximizing DOE resources and are especially grateful that DOE assigns additional support staff such as social workers and instructional coordinators. DOE also provides opportunities for professional learning.

New Across The Child Center

When children enroll in our early childhood programs, a great benefit is that the whole family can obtain additional services through The Child Center, an organization they have come to know and trust. Programs and news that affect families with young children in particular included:

- **Macari Perinatal Intensive Outpatient Program.** Funded by the New York State Office of Mental Health, the Macari Perinatal IOP provides intensive mental health services and supports to people who are pregnant or recently gave birth and were diagnosed with Perinatal Mood and Anxiety Disorders, more commonly known as Postpartum Depression.



- **CARF accreditation.** Our behavioral health programs earned a three-year term of accreditation by CARF International, which is widely recognized as the industry standard and represents a public seal of trust
- **Research, Development, Innovation, and Training (RDIT) Initiative.** With a focus on disrupting the trajectory of generational poverty, this new initiative measures the impact and outcomes of our services in the community. This will in turn enable all Child Center divisions, including early childhood education, to serve more families more effectively.
- **Organizational Culture and Talent Development (OCTD).** Our newly developed OCTD department supports our 1,000+ team members—the majority of whom come from the communities they serve. We created the Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Belonging (EDIB) Council and rolled out new professional development programs that tap into each employee’s talent and potential. We know that when our staff is strong and supported, the communities we serve are, too.



Getting Ready for Kindergarten

We measure the impact of our programs that prepare children for kindergarten using **Teaching Strategies GOLD pre- and post-assessment**. This evidence-based metric shows if children are meeting standards for their age across six domains. Our children made substantial gains in all domains that indicate kindergarten readiness, as well as healthy development overall:

| DOMAIN | Pre-Test (Fall) | Post-Test (Spring) | Change |
|------------------|-----------------|--------------------|--------|
| Social-Emotional | 55.4% | 82.8% | 27.5%▲ |
| Physical | 53.4% | 84.8% | 31.4%▲ |
| Language | 51.5% | 75.5% | 24%▲ |
| Cognitive | 37.7% | 74% | 36.3%▲ |
| Literacy | 33.3% | 76% | 42.6%▲ |
| Math | 28.4% | 74% | 45.6%▲ |

Creative Curriculum is the underpinning of our Head Start academic programs. We introduce children to the wonders of academic inquiry, offer a robust curriculum, and nurture a life-long passion for learning.

We get children ready for kindergarten throughout the year in all developmental domains through a focus on literacy, mental health support, and caring for the whole

child and entire family. Additional explicit kindergarten readiness efforts included:

- **Transition workshop:** Head Start programs participated in a virtual Transition to Kindergarten workshop that focused on self-help skills, becoming independent, and language development.
- **Informational parent/caregiver workshop on understanding the transition to public school.**
- **Activities to support the transition to kindergarten for our pre-K students:** We read relevant books such as *The King of Kindergarten* by Derrick Barnes and encouraged parents to talk to their kids about the transition. We discussed the importance of validating children’s feelings and avoiding blanket statements such as “Your new teacher is going to be great!” that undermine trust.
- **To prepare for in-person classes,** we arranged for children to visit in August to see their friends and experience learning in person. Our moving up ceremonies were held in the classrooms.

Financials

| | Head Start | | | Early Head Start | | |
|----------------------------|----------------|------------------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|----------------|
| | FY 2021 Budget | FY 2021 Expenses | FY 2022 Budget* | FY 2021 Budget | FY 2021 Expenses | FY 2022 Budget |
| Personnel | 1,560,024 | 1,384,855 | 1,946,399 | 1,277,919 | 1,176,975 | 1,370,904 |
| Fringe Benefits | 519,476 | 428,982 | 602,069 | 434,492 | 364,087 | 466,107 |
| Facilities | 209,858 | 293,622 | 64,814 | 185,905 | 130,393 | 182,435 |
| Travel | 1,892 | 11 | - | 16,891 | 2,525 | 3,500 |
| Supplies | 29,038 | 38,551 | 76,820 | 36,712 | 64,407 | 61,146 |
| COVID-19 Spending | 178,500 | 167,129 | 194,296 | 173,125 | 150,492 | 295,002 |
| Other | 54,882 | 12,670 | 188,703 | 300,537 | 290,610 | 127,173 |
| Total Direct Costs | 2,553,670 | 2,325,820 | 3,073,101 | 2,425,581 | 2,179,489 | 2,506,267 |
| Indirect Costs | 296,896 | 269,837 | 391,517 | 248,670 | 250,531 | 277,364 |
| In-Kind Expenses | 668,017 | 571,822 | 866,155 | 557,580 | 569,972 | 653,765 |
| Food Program | 273,133 | 120,576 | 209,727 | 13,503 | - | 11,820 |
| Head Start UPK | 577,837 | 356,885 | - | - | - | - |
| Head Start UPK Enhancement | 162,241 | 103,761 | - | - | - | - |
| Total Expenditures | 4,531,794 | 3,748,701 | 4,540,500 | 3,245,334 | 2,999,992 | 3,449,216 |

FY 2021 Public vs. Private Funding

| | Head Start | Early Head Start |
|------------------------------|------------|------------------|
| Total Federal Funding | 2,716,233 | 2,430,020 |
| Public Non-Federal Expenses | 460,646 | 209,030 |
| Private Non-Federal Expenses | 571,822 | 360,942 |
| Total Non-Federal Expenses | 1,032,468 | 569,972 |
| Total Financial Support | 3,748,701 | 2,999,992 |



U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Xavier Becerra (left), NYC Department of Education Chancellor Meisha Ross Porter (center), and NYC First Lady Chirlane McCray (right) visited our Early Childhood Corona center in May 2021.

Summary of Community Needs Assessments

We completed a Community Needs Assessment in Spring 2022 to obtain new census data and address the impact of the pandemic. 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 in children living in shelters.

The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated these issues and created new ones: sickness without accessible health care, food insecurity, and children with illness being suddenly left without access to the services they need.

All districts will continue to see an increase in available child care services with the expansion of NYC 3K and Pre-K for All. The landscape of Head Start services throughout New York City has changed with more direct funded programs. Early Childhood Corona is the largest Head Start delegate funded by New York City Department of Education in the borough of Queens.

Where You Can Find Us

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

Early Head Start, Astoria
Home-Based Services
37-34 29th Street
Astoria, NY 11101

Early Head Start, Woodside*
Home-Based Services
43-08 52nd Street
Woodside, NY 11377

Escalera Head Start and Early Head Start Center
169 West 87th Street
New York, NY 10024

Traci Donnelly
Chief Executive Officer

Linda Rodriguez
Senior Vice President, Behavioral Health and Early Childhood

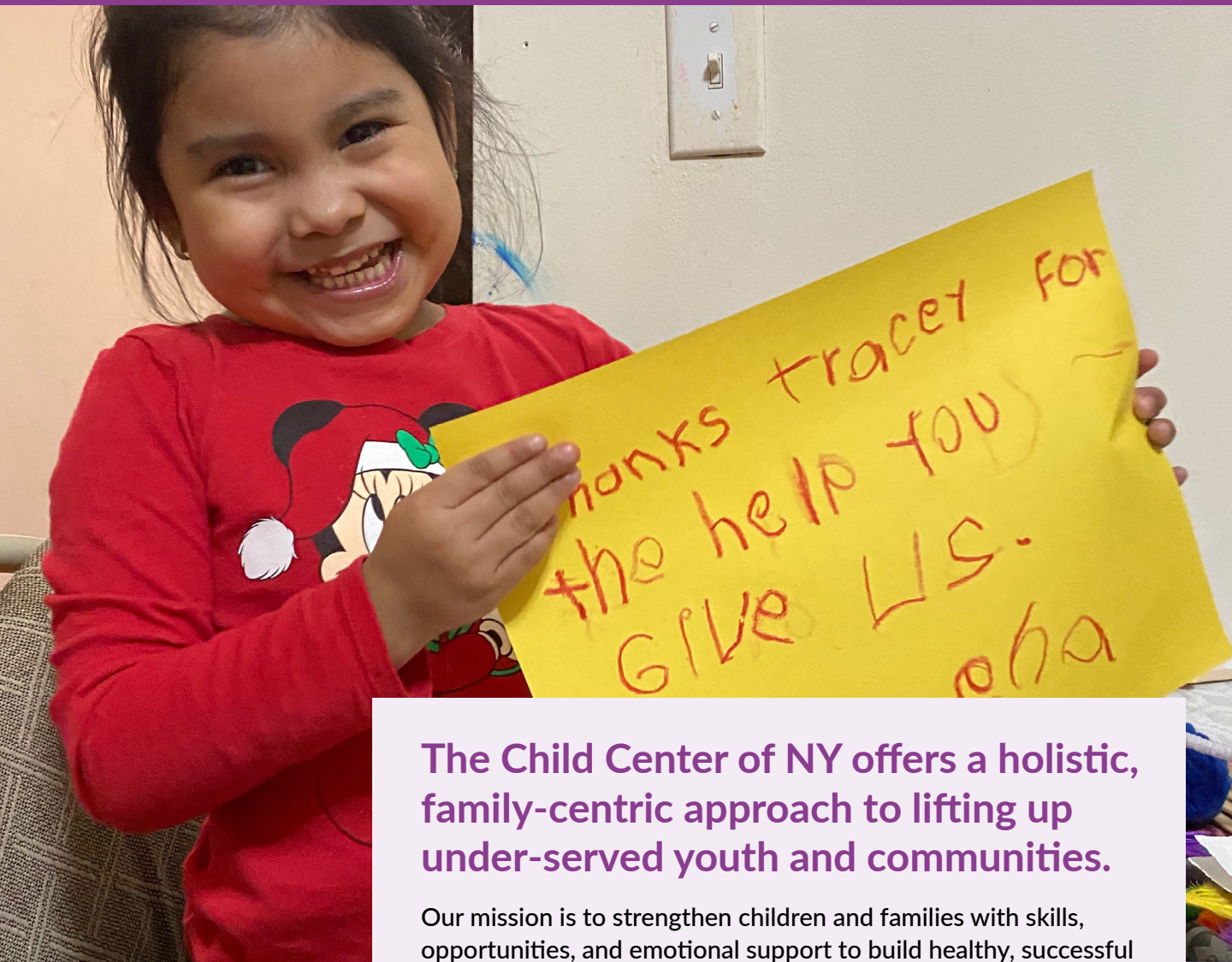
Tanya Krien
Vice President, Early Childhood Education, Administration and Operations

Marie Mason
Vice President, Early Childhood Education, Programs and Curriculum

Margaret Mustalish
Parent Policy Council Chairperson

*FY 2022 represents a budget for two sites versus three sites in FY 2021. However, FY 2021 included non-Head Start child care slots—which cost less per child—at our Corona program. The program design changed in FY 2022 to Head Start slots only, which are a higher cost per slot. Thus, the budget remained approximately the same level.

*This is Early Head Start Woodside’s current address. In 2021, Early Head Start Woodside was located at 60-02 Roosevelt Avenue in Woodside. Also located at that address was a Head Start program that closed in June 2021.



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.



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