Kids' Corps, Inc.

2025

Kids' Corps, Inc. Annual Report

This report is available to the public via our website.
Documents & Reports | Kids' Corps (kcialaska.org)
Anyone can request to view a paper copy by calling 907-279-2021.

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

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

June 2026

As we reflect on the past year, we are reminded of the enduring vision that has guided Head Start since its founding in 1965. Created as part of the nation's commitment to expanding opportunity for children and families, Head Start was built on the belief that every child deserves the chance to succeed and that strong families are the foundation of strong communities. This vision has shaped our work since 1987 and continues to inspire and guide us today.

At the heart of Head Start is the understanding that children thrive when families, educators, and communities work together. The accomplishments highlighted in this report reflect that belief in action. Through the dedication of our staff, the involvement of our families, the guidance of our Policy Council and Board, and the support of our community partners, we continue to advance the Head Start mission. Together, we are helping children develop the skills, confidence, and resilience they need to succeed in school and in life while honoring the principles that have guided Head Start for generations.

This annual report highlights the impact of those collective efforts over the past year. Within these pages, you will find information about the children and families we served, program achievements, community partnerships, and the stewardship of resources entrusted to us. It is both a celebration of our accomplishments and an opportunity to reflect on how we can continue to strengthen services and meet the evolving needs of our communities.

As we look to the future, we remain committed to the belief that every child deserves the opportunity to learn, grow, and succeed; that every family deserves support in building a brighter future; and that every community benefits when children and families thrive.

Katrina Ahlfield
Executive Director

ABOUT KIDS' CORPS, INC.

WHO WE ARE

Kids' Corps, Inc. is a Head Start and Early Head Start grantee operating centers in 6 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 5 managers oversee the daily operations and administration of KCI.

HISTORY

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 School 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 the creation of new classrooms 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.

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.

2022 Early Head Start expansion allows us to open three additional Early Head Start classrooms enrolling 24 infants and toddlers in Mountain View.

2024 Kids' Corps, Inc. adjusts services in response to the conclusion of the Anchorage School District collaboration and Head Start's Full Enrollment Initiative. Head Start is reduced by 68 enrollment slots. Early Head Start transitions 8 enrollment slots from the home based program to a center based model to better meet existing community needs.

WHO WE SERVED DURING THE 2024-2025 PROGRAM YEAR

We provide Head Start or Early Head Start programs at six locations in Anchorage. More information is available on our website at www.kcialaska.org. During the 2024/2025 program year we were funded to serve 189 children in Head Start and 52 children in Early Head Start. A state Head Start grant provides about 80% of our required non-federal match. Donated classroom space from the Cook Inlet Housing Authority and the Anchorage School District and cash donations also provided a significant non-federal share match.

Full Day, Full Year Program: Children ages 3 to 5 attend Monday through Friday year-round while parents work or go to school. The 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. The 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 five hours a day, August –May (follows Anchorage School District schedule.)

- Baxter Elementary School— 2991 Baxter Road, Anchorage, AK 99504 Tel: 742-1750
- Tudor Elementary School—1666 Cache Drive, Anchorage, 99507 Tel: 742-1050

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 (classrooms 3 and 4)– 3710 E. 20th, Suite 2, Anchorage, AK 99508 Tel: 272-0133
- Mt. View Center – 3350 Commercial Drive, Anchorage, AK 99501 Tel:907-646-7884

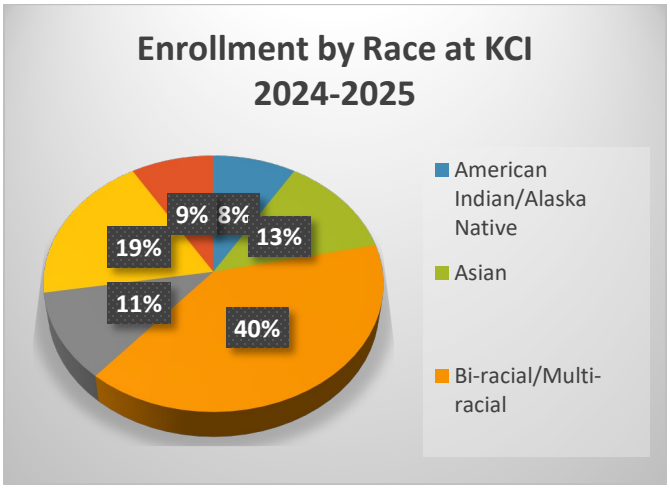
Early Head Start Home Based Program: Expectant families and families with children birth to 3 years of age receive weekly home visits with a trained parent educator. Home visits focus on child and family development and strengthening the parent-child bonds in families. The program operates year-round.

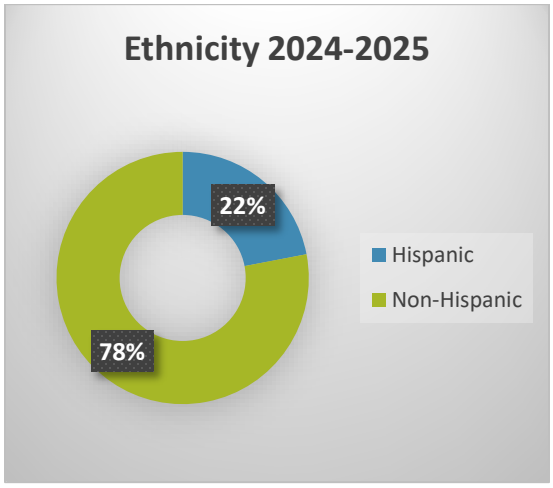
- Early Head Start Home Based – 101 Davis Street, Anchorage, AK. 99501 Tel: 279-2021

There were 165 *three to five-year olds* who participated in Kids' Corps Head Start programs during the 2024-2025 program year. Sixty-seven children and pregnant women participated in the Early Head Start program.

- *95%* met federal poverty guidelines or were categorically eligible (homeless, foster care etc.)
- 15*%* of enrolled children had a diagnosed disability
- 47*%* were dual language learners

Ethnic/ Racial Diversity of Enrollment





SERVICES

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

- Hot lunch, snack and/or breakfast that provides 1/2 to 2/3 of their daily nutritional needs
- Health screenings twice a year – height, weight, hearing and vision
- Quarterly developmental observations that support each child's unique learning needs
- An individualized learning plan for every child
- Annual developmental screenings for all children
- Classroom observations by an LCSW
- Speech/Language therapy (for children who qualify)
- Dental examinations & screenings
- Bus transportation (for approximately 20 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.

SERVICES FOR PARENTS INCLUDE:

- Community resources 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

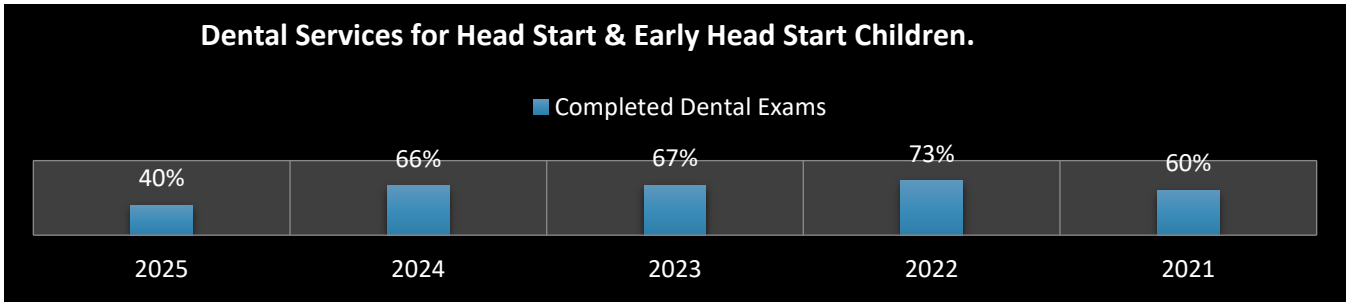
Hundreds of children receive hearing, vision, height/weight and dental screenings at Kids' Corps each year. KCI plays a vital role in helping many families to find medical and dental providers for their children.

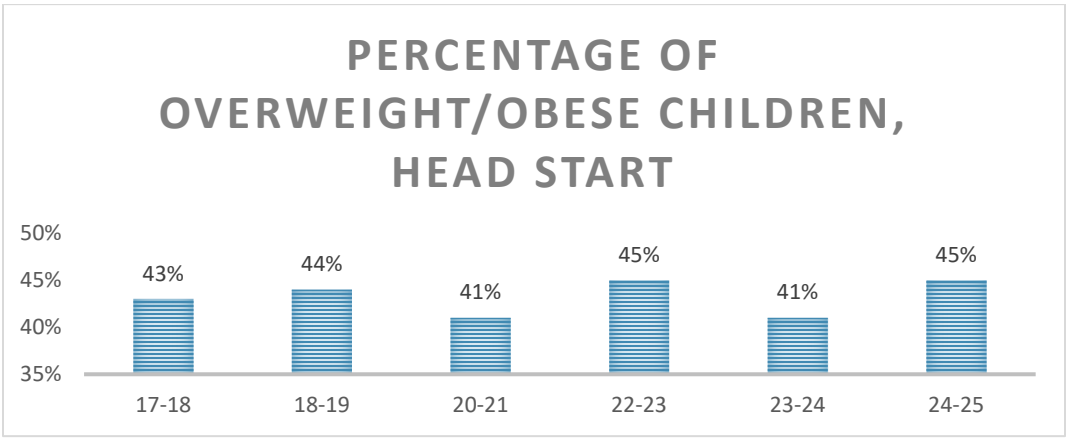
At the beginning of the program year:

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

At the end of the program year:

- 197 children were up to date on the EPSDT schedule





NUTRITION SERVICES

The following is a typical weeklong menu at KCI

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Breakfast				
Bananas WG Cereal Yogurt, Milk	Strawberries WG Bread Turkey Cheese Slice, Milk	Mango Bagel Cream Cheese Milk	Pears WG Cereal Milk	Apple Slices (HS) Applesauce (EHS) WG Sandwich Thins Cheese Slice, Milk
Lunch				
WG Chicken nuggets Mango Celery and carrot sticks (HS) Peas (EHS/MV), Milk	Ground Turkey and Beef Stroganoff Egg Noodles Cantaloupe Milk	Teriyaki Chicken WG Brown Rice Fruit cocktail Stir Fry Vegetables Milk	Ground Beef & Spanish Rice Applesauce Steamed Carrots Milk	Red Pozole WG Brown Rice Pears Milk
Snack				
Refried Beans and Salsa WG Tortilla Chips (HS) Tortilla (EHS) Milk	Hard Boiled Eggs Grapes Milk	String Cheese Celery and Carrots (HS) Green Beans (EHS) Goldfish Crackers Milk	Turkey Cheese Slice Blueberries WG Wheat Thins (HS) Ritz Crackers (EHS) Milk	Hummus Red Peppers Milk

Milk is served with every meal – all meals served meet CACFP daily meal requirements and are low in fat, sugar, and salt content.

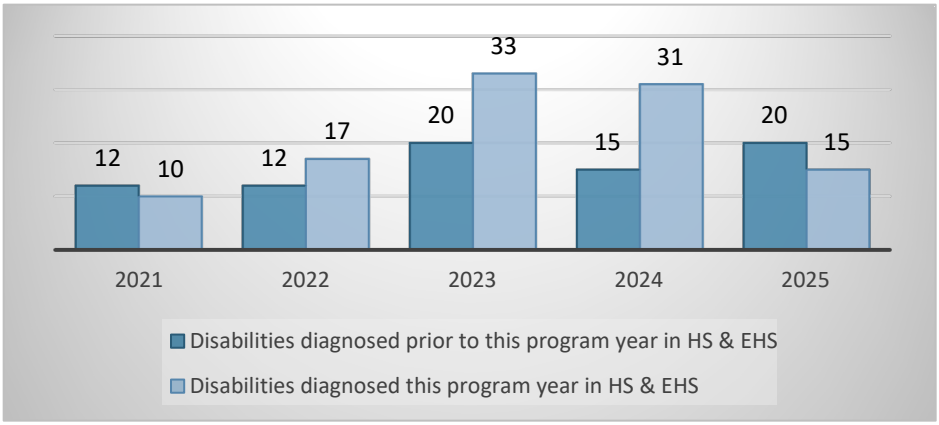
RESULTS

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.

It is likely that many of these children diagnosed after enrollment would have entered kindergarten with undiagnosed disabilities if they had not attended Head Start.



FEDERAL REVIEW RESULTS

From 11/25/2024 through 02/14/2026 the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) conducted a virtual CLASS Video review of the Kids' Corps, Inc. Early Head Start and Head Start programs. From 05/05/2025 through 05/09/2026 ACF conducted a Focus Area Two in person monitoring review. Based on the information gathered, the review team determined that the Head Start and Early Head Start programs are meeting the CLASS threshold requirements for quality teaching interactions and in compliance with all applicable Head Start Standards, laws, regulations and policy requirements.

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 Conscious Discipline structures, 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.

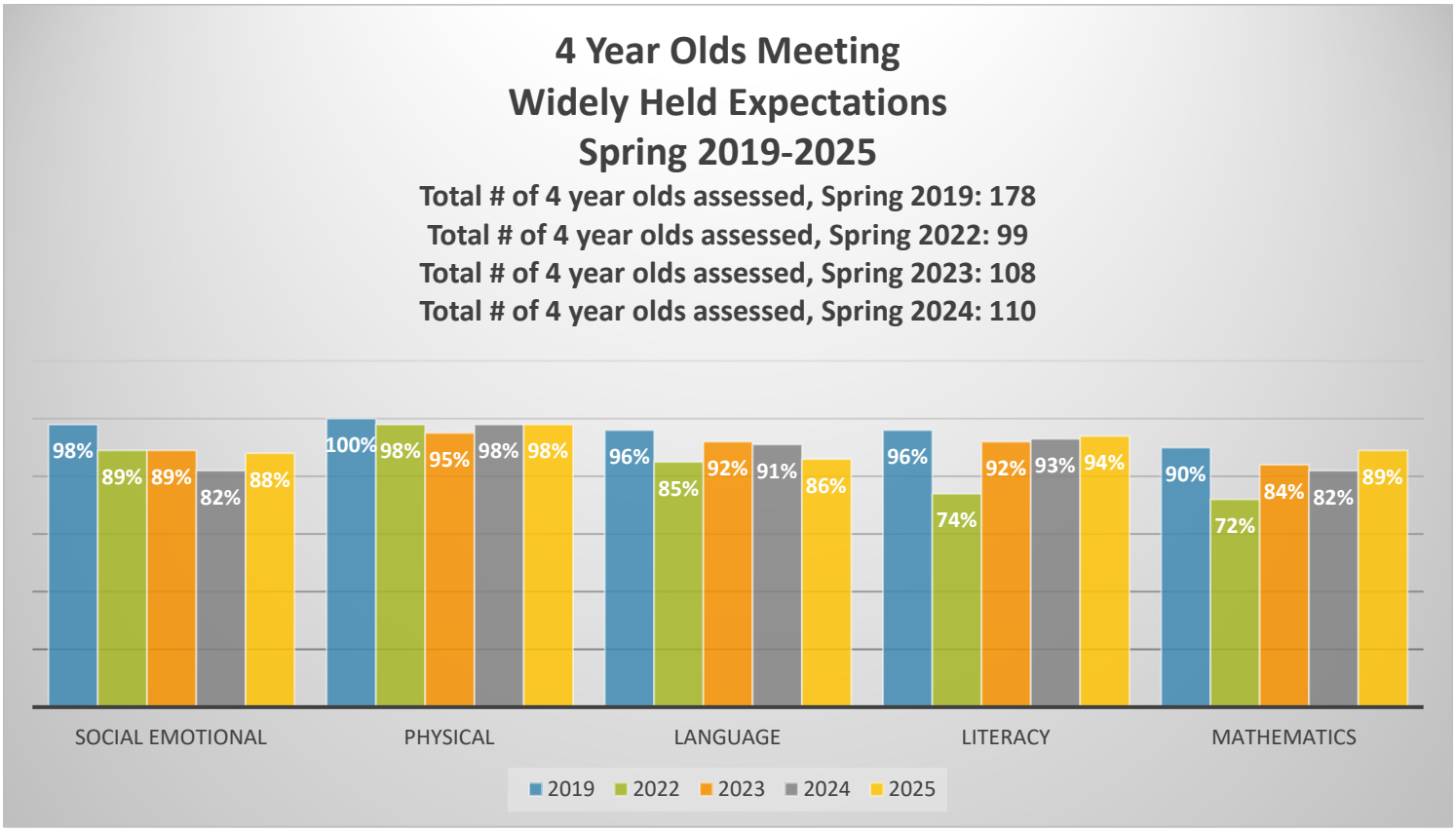
To support families in making the transition from Head Start to kindergarten, we work with the Anchorage School District to host a kindergarten information fair. This event provides relevant information about the transition process and links families with resources available within the Anchorage School District. Through this event and through one-on-one home visiting families are provided 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

The COVID-19 pandemic had a significant and lasting impact on young children and families affecting their mental health, educational progress, and overall well-being. National studies continue to show that children today are less likely to meet widely held developmental expectations across all learning domains compared to pre-pandemic levels.

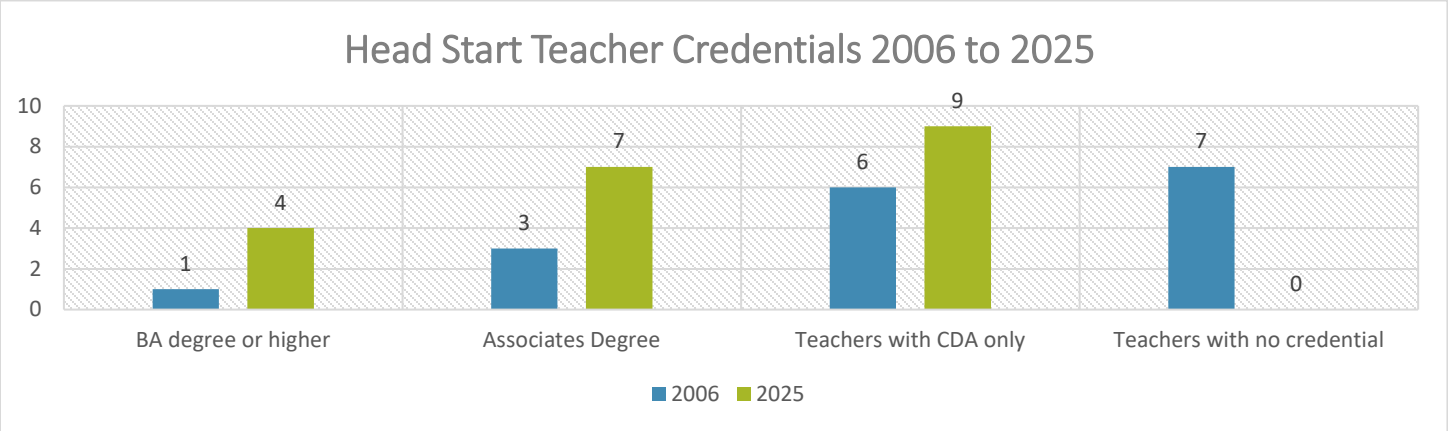
At KCI, we recognize that recovery from these disruptions may take years and requires a collective effort. That's why we are working closely with parents, healthcare providers, and community partners to ensure every child has the knowledge, skills, and support needed to thrive in school and beyond.

Our data shows steady progress across most developmental areas since the onset of the pandemic, but it also underscores the importance of sustained, targeted support.



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 2024-2025 SNAPSHOT

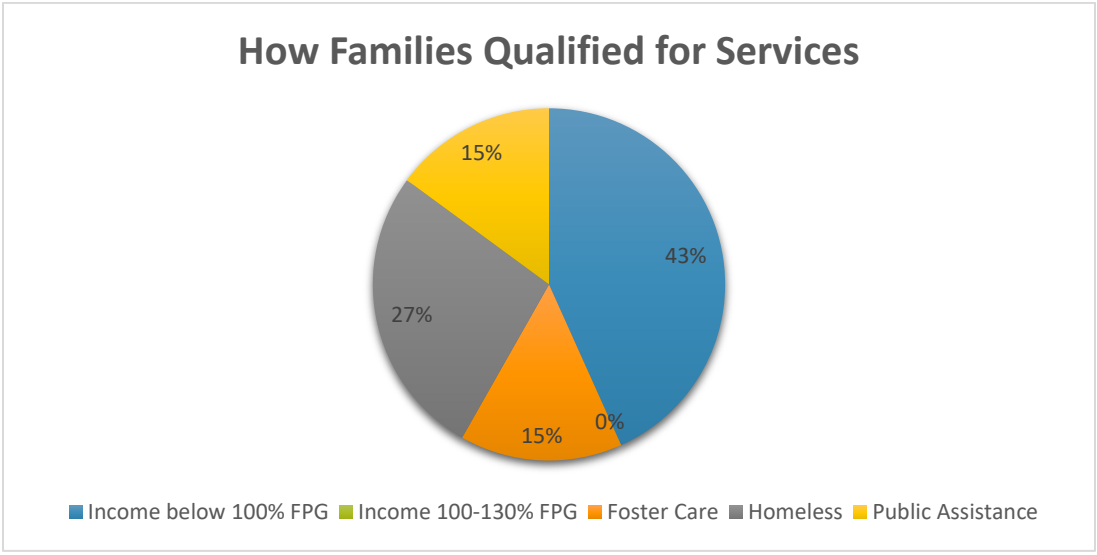
PROGRAM OPTIONS:

Home-based: 12 funded slots Center-based: 40 funded slots

CUMULATIVE ENROLLMENT:

66 children and 1 pregnant woman

PRIMARY TYPE OF ELIGIBILITY FOR EARLY HEAD START SERVICES:



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 for Infants, Toddlers and Twos. The home-based program uses the Parents as Teachers home visiting curriculum. Both program options use Teaching Strategies Gold as an ongoing developmental assessment tool. A review of the end of the year data demonstrates that enrolled children show growth across all learning domains with the most significant growth in social emotional development.

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.
- Conscious Discipline parenting classes
- Kindergarten Information and Orientation Fair
- Teacher and Family Advocate Home Visits
- Parent/Teacher Conferences
- Advisory Committees and Policy Counci

PARENT ENGAGEMENT

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

FAMILY SERVICES

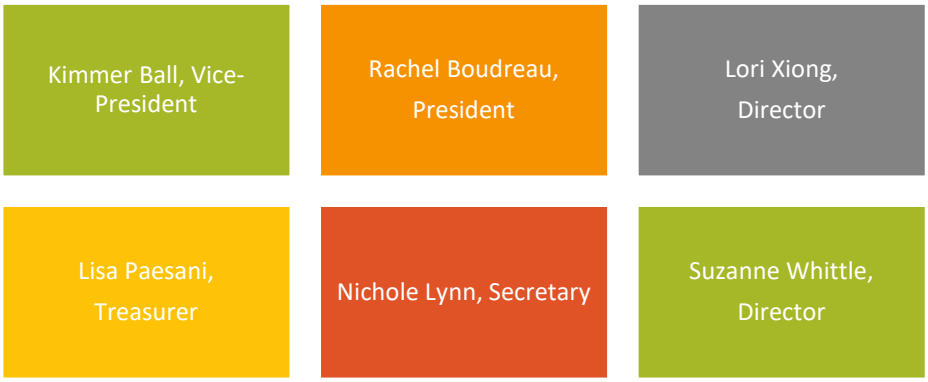
Family advocates work in partnership with parents to provide training and assure resources in the community meet family need. Families received services from resource referrals provided 68 times in 2024-2025.

FAMILY PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENTS

Family Services staff partner with families to establish family partnership agreements based on goals identified by each family. Goals are highly individualized and outline how the family and KCI will work together to achieve the identified goal.

- During the 2024-2025 program year, 80 families participated in the family partnership agreement process and 75 families established Family Life Practice goals related to either positive parenting or a language rich home environment.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS, 2024-2025 PROGRAM YEAR



POLICY COUNCIL, AUGUST 2025

JESSICA TEAGUE-BEECH **President**	AMANDA HEMINGWAY **Vice President**	FABRE FONTENOT **Secretary**	JENNIFER MCCLURE **Officer**
SHAWNA BAILEY **Officer**	MELISSA IMBODEN **Officer**	AMANDA HOLLAND **Officer**	IVO SUME **Officer**

FINANCIAL REPORTS

Revenue by Source	FY 2025 Revenues	FY 2024 Revenues	FY 2023 Revenues
Federal Sources (Head Start, CACFP, Other)	5,432,592	5,560,589	5,798,757
State Sources (Head Start, Parents as Teachers)	1,202,682	839,589	663,011
Child Care Fees Revenue	460,561	350,768	166,594
Contributions, United Way, Other Grants and ASD	220,552	156,255	168,514
In-kind and Other Revenue	124,300	283,480	158,393
Total Revenue	**7,440,687**	**7,190,681**	**6,955,269**

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, 2025 are available at www.kcialaska.org.

2025 SUMMARY OF THE COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT

Our 2025 community assessment highlights both opportunities and challenges facing young children and families in Anchorage. While Anchorage continues to fare better economically than many parts of Alaska, families are experiencing increasing financial pressure due to high housing costs, rising living expenses, and wages that have not kept pace with inflation. Economic uncertainty and continued outmigration have contributed to a declining population and growing concerns about family stability.

Access to high-quality early childhood education remains critical. Research continues to demonstrate that children who attend preschool beginning at age three are more likely to enter kindergarten ready to learn than those who participate for only one year. Despite this, significant numbers of income-eligible three-year-olds in Anchorage remain unserved, highlighting an ongoing need for expanded early learning opportunities.

The assessment also identifies a substantial shortage of childcare and early learning services for infants and toddlers. Limited availability of licensed childcare, particularly for children under age three, points to a growing need for Early Head Start and full-day care options. In response to community needs, KCI has begun expanding Early Head Start services and will continue evaluating opportunities to better serve families with young children.

Housing affordability and availability continue to present serious challenges for families. Rising housing costs and limited rental inventory increase the risk of housing instability and homelessness, placing additional stress on children and caregivers. These same challenges also affect the recruitment and retention of early childhood professionals.

Workforce shortages remain one of the most significant issues facing Head Start and early childhood education providers across Alaska. Competition for qualified staff, combined with increasing operational costs, has made it more difficult to fully staff classrooms and maintain enrollment levels. Sustaining a high-quality workforce will require continued investment in competitive wages, benefits, and professional development opportunities.

At the same time, new state and local investments in early childhood education provide reason for optimism. Recent increases in state Head Start funding and dedicated municipal funding for childcare and early learning create opportunities to strengthen services, expand access, and improve outcomes for Anchorage's youngest children and families.

To read the full community assessment, visit www.kcialaska.org.

LOOKING AHEAD

As we move into the coming program year, we remain focused on strengthening school readiness, expanding family engagement, and ensuring achildren have access to high-quality early learning opportunities. We will continue to work collaboratively with families, staff, community partners, and policymakers to address emerging needs and build on the successes outlined in this report. Together, we are creating brighter futures for Anchorage's children and families.

We extend our sincere appreciation to the children, families, staff, volunteers, Policy Council members, Board of Directors, community partners, and funders whose commitment makes this work possible. Your dedication, support, and belief in the Head Start mission continue to strengthen our program and the communities we serve.