



SKAGIT/ISLAND
HEAD START
Serving Skagit & Island Counties

Skagit Island Head Start Annual Report

Program Year 2024/2025





INTRODUCTION

Skagit Valley College's program provides high-quality, happy early-learning environments for children aged birth to five, offering culturally responsive services and working closely with families to support the best possible outcomes.

This report highlights key activities from the 2024/2025 program year. During this time, we maintained strong teaching quality while continuing to invest in our staff through program adjustments, added professional development, a focus on well-being, and improvements to our hiring process with Human Resources. These changes helped us rebuild our team and ensure consistent, high-quality experiences for children and families.

Our updated 2024/2025 Community Assessment showed similar patterns to previous years but highlighted a few important trends. Transitional Pre-K and ECEAP programs are influencing the number of 3- and 4-year-olds seeking Head Start services, which may affect future waitlists. It also confirmed that although inflation has slowed slightly, costs—especially housing—remain high. Food and housing insecurity continue to be major concerns, and child and family mental health remains an ongoing need.

We are incredibly thankful for our dedicated staff, whose flexibility and commitment have supported our children and families through these challenges. Their hard work is deeply appreciated.

Mary Ellen Lykins

Mary Ellen Lykins
Director

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- Mary Ellen Lykins

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COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT SUMMARY

Each year we assess our community data and the needs and circumstances of families in our program, to determine if our program structure and decision-making address those unique conditions. We use this data to help shape our future programming. The pandemic has had long-term impacts on the community that aren't necessarily obvious. Looking at the available data, as with the year prior, we see that childcare availability and stability, food insecurity, housing, employment, and mental health and behavioral impacts seem to be the main stressors on children and families. Many of the observations we included in our prior community assessment can be seen in this current year.

Key Observations/insights

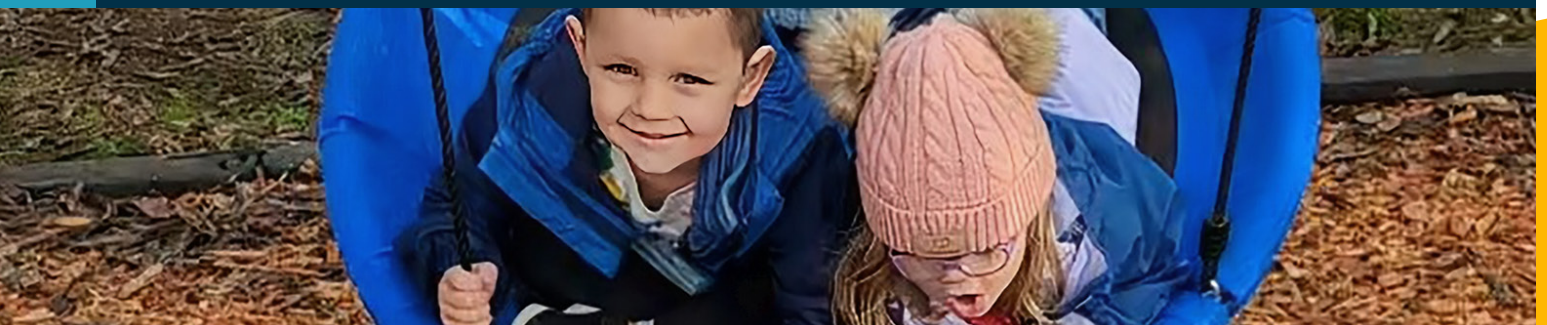
In summary:



- Staffing is a huge challenge - unemployment numbers are low, but businesses cannot fill positions which is making it hard to resume normal operations.
- Childcare availability has been unreliable - with staffing challenges and regular closures due to exposure, families have had to scramble to find alternative coverage - both locally and nationally.
- Childcare availability has decreased - our service areas lost childcare slots during the pandemic and many of these slots have not been replaced.



- Childcare for younger children seems to be of the most need.
- Food and economic stability remain a challenge.
- Inflation vs income continues to be a problem - goods are far more expensive and it seems this will continue.
- Housing stability has not improved - rent has continued to increase steeply and families are cost-burdened.
- Professionals have seen impacts on mental health for both children and families, and programs have seen this affect children's behaviors and also their well-being. The mental health of both adults and children has seen concerning changes towards more anxiety and depression.
- Opioid overdoses are alarmingly high.



OUR PROGRAM

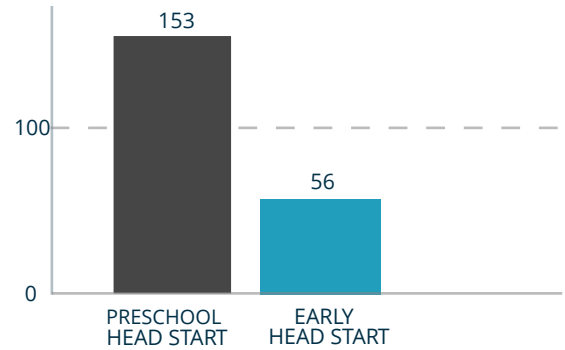
ENROLLMENT



The program requested and received permission to reduce enrollment for program year 2024/2025 due to ongoing recruitment challenges.

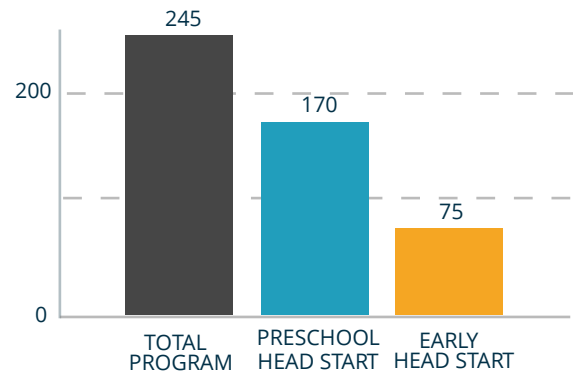
TOTAL FUNDED ENROLLMENT **209**

In a regular program year our funding enables us to enroll 209 children at one time - 56 in Early and 153 in Preschool Head Start.

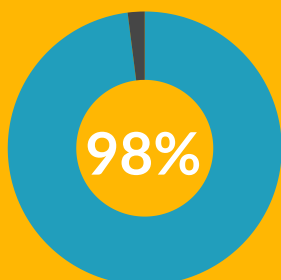


TOTAL CUMULATIVE ENROLLMENT **245**

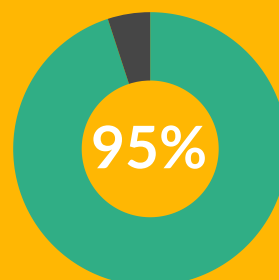
We enrolled 245 children cumulatively over the program year.



AVERAGE MONTHLY ENROLLMENT



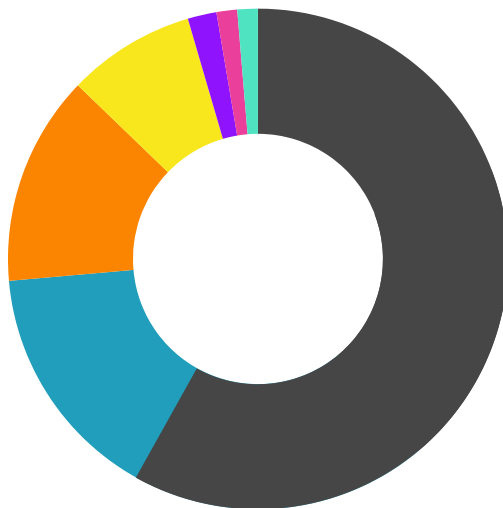
AVERAGE MONTHLY ENROLLMENT
PRESCHOOL HEAD START



AVERAGE MONTHLY ENROLLMENT
EARLY HEAD

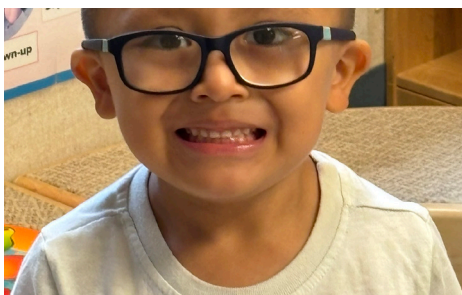
ELIGIBILITY

Families are eligible for services if they are receiving ongoing public assistance (Basic Food, TANF, or SSI) or their income is at or below the federal poverty guidelines. Families experiencing homelessness and children in foster care are automatically eligible. We also serve a limited number of families with special needs who do not otherwise qualify for the program.

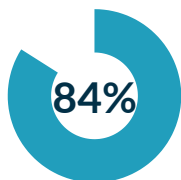


- Public Assistance - 146 (59.9%)
- Income =< 100% poverty line - 51 (20.8%)
- Homeless - 31 (12.6%)
- Incomes 100% to 130% - 7 (2.9%)
- Foster care - 5 (2.04%)
- Other type of need - 5 (2.04%)

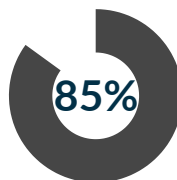
ATTENDANCE



In the 2024/25 program year, consistent child attendance saw improvement from the prior year. The program continues to work towards meeting benchmarks in this area. We based attendance calculations on actual rather than funded enrollment.



EARLY
HEAD START



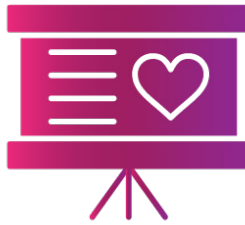
PRESCHOOL
HEAD START



CENTER & STAFF HIGHLIGHTS



10 CENTERS
& 10 CENTER
MANAGERS



19 TEACHERS



16 ASSISTANT
TEACHERS



10 PROGRAM
MANAGERS



10 FAMILY
ADVOCATES



19 BI-LINGUAL
STAFF
VOLUNTEERS



14 STAFF ARE
FORMER
HEAD START
PARENTS



84
VOLUNTEERS



OUR EDUCATION PROGRAM

Our education philosophy is rooted in the belief that parents are their child's first and most important teacher. We work closely with parents to create a nurturing environment where children feel welcome, thrive and learn. This year, we've made significant progress in hiring additional staff while our existing team has shown exceptional resilience and flexibility in meeting their roles and engaging families. We are also expanding opportunities for family involvement through volunteering and resumed conferences and home visits, offering flexible meeting options to strengthen teacher-family connections.

KINDERGARTEN READINESS

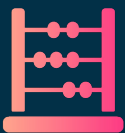
Kindergarten Preparation

In preparing children for kindergarten, our staff collaborates with parents and community members to set school readiness goals aligned with the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework (HSELOF), state guidelines, and our curriculum. We consider program data, and the unique needs of our diverse population, including dual language learners and children with disabilities. This comprehensive approach ensures children are well-prepared for kindergarten and future success. We use an ongoing assessment published by Teaching Strategies to track progress toward individual readiness goals, and their curriculum, The Creative Curriculum, to foster learning through both structured and unstructured play.

SIHS Birth - 5 Programming



1. Language & Literacy



2. Mathematics & Science



3. Physical Development



4. Social & Emotional Development



5. Creative Arts & Approaches to Learning

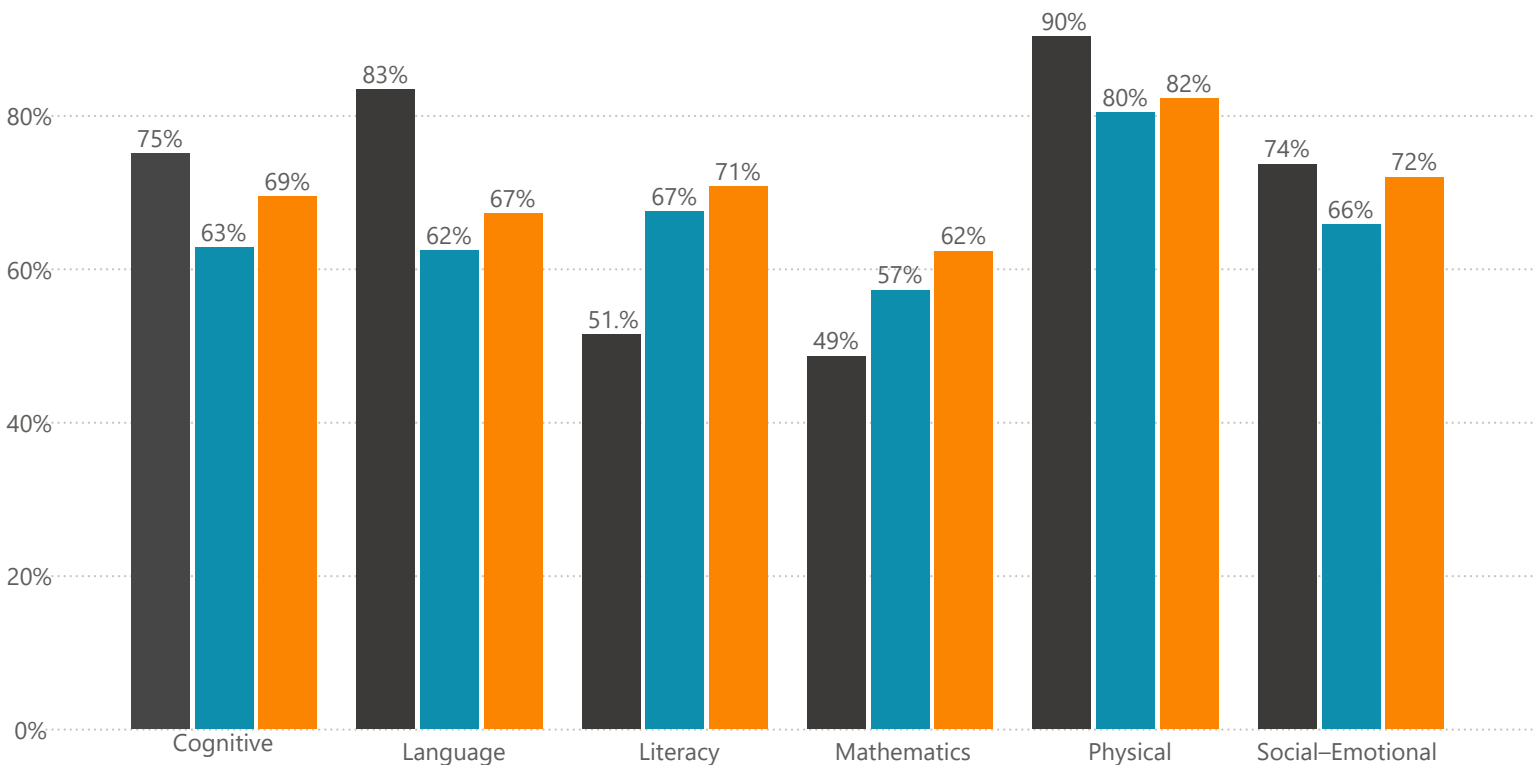
KINDERGARTEN READINESS

SIHS usually evaluates how our outcomes compare to children in our service area entering kindergarten, by looking at Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) data collected via WaKIDS. This is the first year we have been able to do this since the pandemic. The following bar chart compares:

- SIHS outcome data for four-year-olds in the spring of 2025, (exiting Head Start 24-25),
- OSPI WAKid outcome data averaged for the seven school districts with whom we collaborate for children entering kindergarten in the fall of 2025, and
- OSPI WAKid statewide outcome data for children entering kindergarten in the fall of 2025.

This chart uses OSPI data for low-income children and those eligible for free or reduced lunch to more closely align to Head Start income eligibility, which is 100% of federal poverty (actually much lower than the free and reduced eligibility guidelines.) The percentage represents the average number of children that demonstrated the skills typical for a child ready to enter kindergarten in each domain.

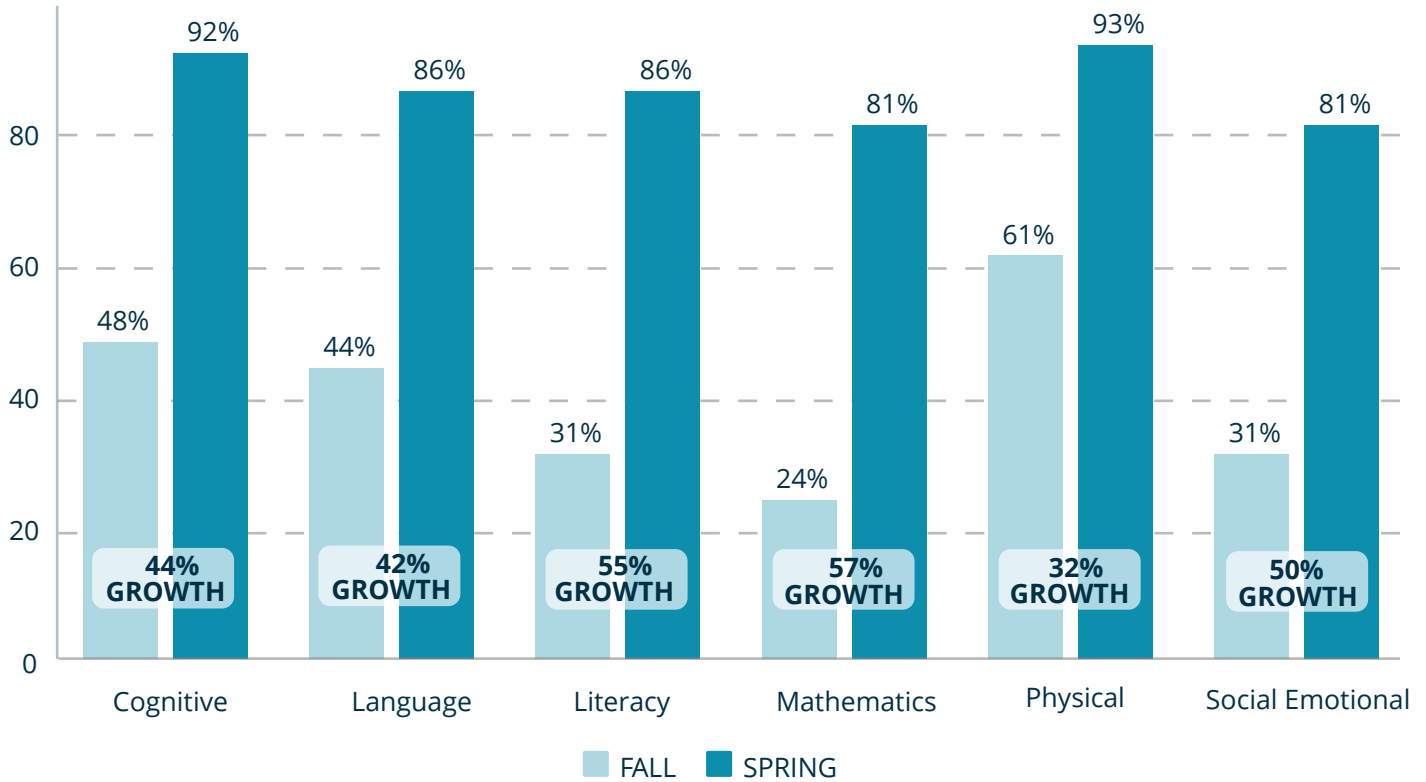
- % SIHS Pre K-4 Children Met or Exceeded Threshold (leaving SIHS 24/25)
- % Average of Comparable School Districts Met or Exceeded Threshold (entering kindergarten 25/26)
- % Average School Districts Statewide Met or Exceeded Threshold (entering kindergarten 25/26)



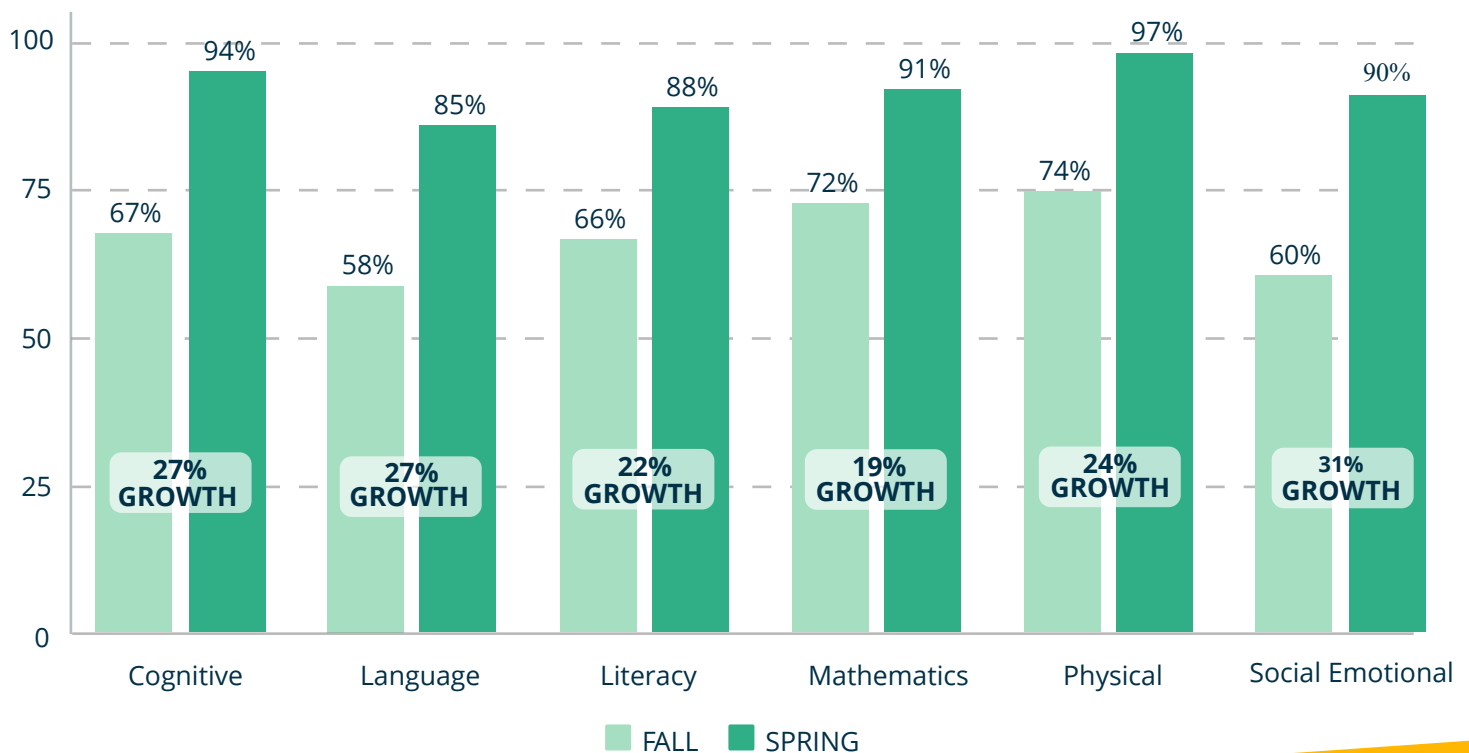
CHILD GROWTH

These charts represent the average total domain scores (e.g. Language, Cognitive) for children in the fall and the spring. It also notes average child growth - shown as a percentage - between the fall and spring.

PRE-K 4 YEAR



PRESCHOOL 3 YEAR OLDS



OUR FAMILIES



Our children and families are the center of our program. We have a unique, diverse and vibrant family community. **238** families participated in our program this year.

FAMILY TRAINING/EDUCATION/EMPLOYMENT

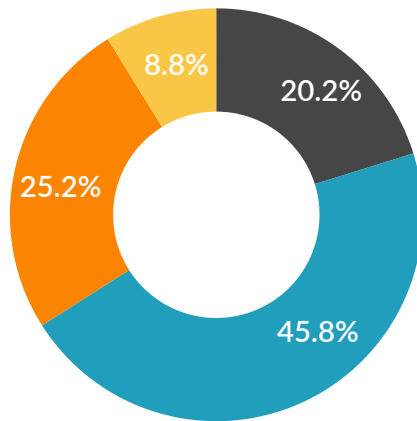


Parents employed full/part time or in job training/school:

Start of enrollment: **73%**

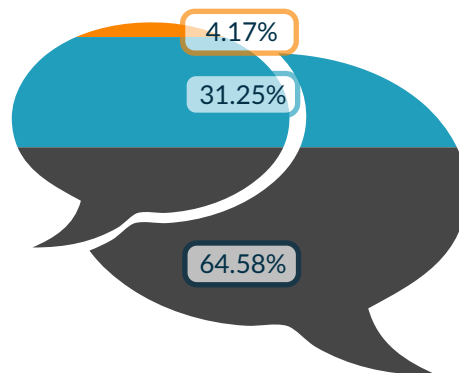
End of enrollment: **78%**

PARENT EDUCATION



- Less than High School Diploma - 48 (20.2%)
- High School Diploma/GED - 109 (45.8%)
- Associate Degree - 60 (25.2%)
- Bachelor's Degree or Higher - 21 (8.8%)

PRIMARY LANGUAGE SPOKEN



130 Dual language learners

- English - 155 (64.58%)
- Spanish - 75 (31.25%)
- Native Central American / East Asian - 10 (4.17%)
- Pacific Island/European/Slavic Languages

OUR FAMILIES

FAMILY COMPOSITION

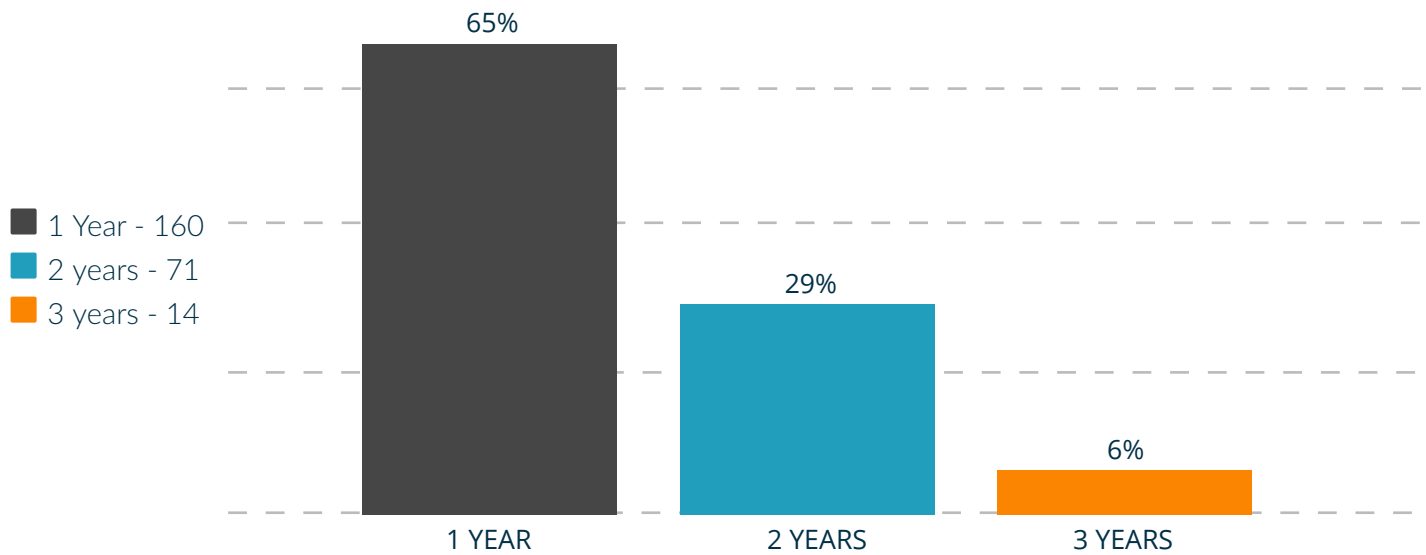


- Two Parents - 149 (62.61%)
- One Parent - 89 (37.39%)






4% of families had a primary caregiver other than a biological parent.



LENGTH OF TIME ENROLLED

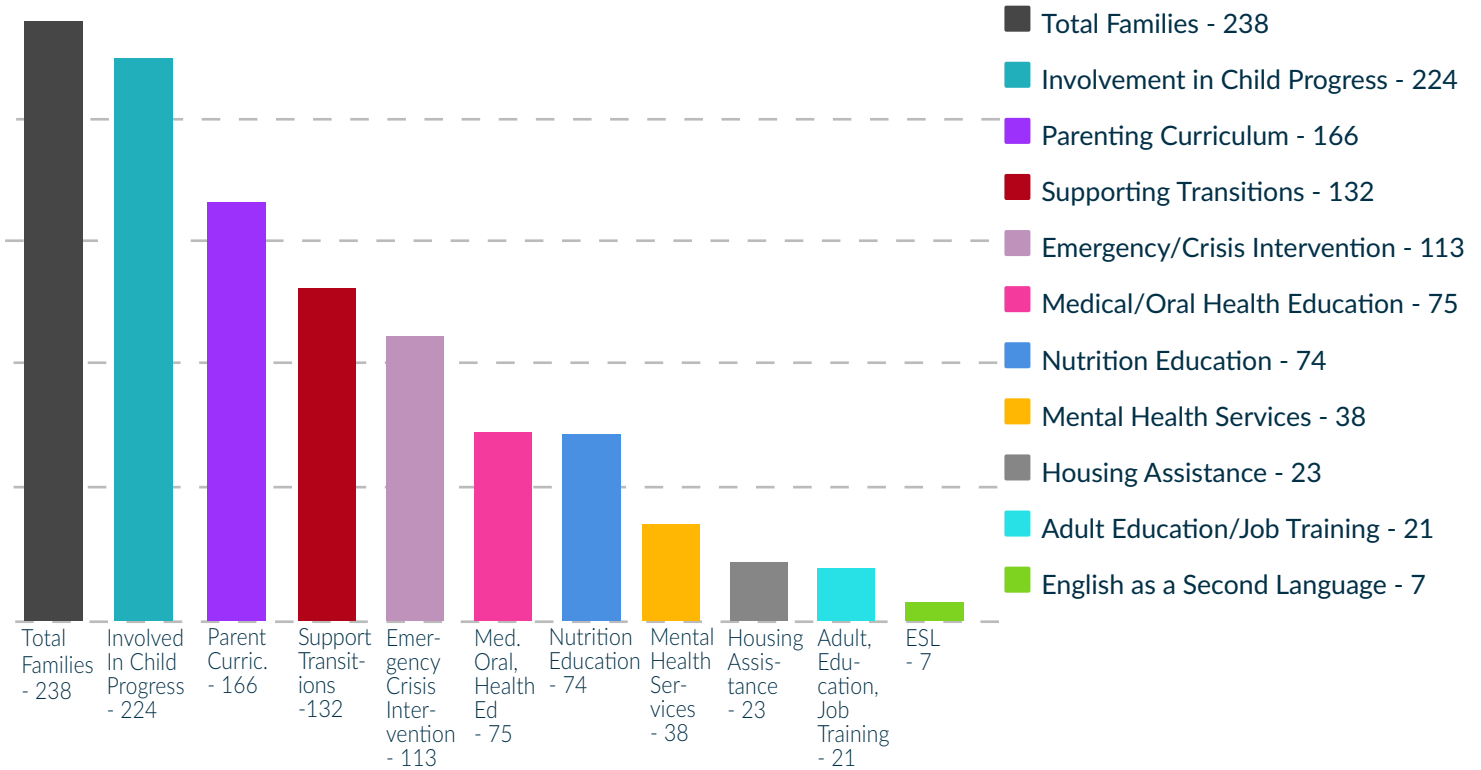


OUR CHILDREN'S AGES

				
>1 YEAR OLD: 0 (0%)	1 Yr OLD: 25 (10%)	2 YRS OLD: 72 (29%)	3 YRS OLD: 79 (32%)	4 YRS OLD: 79 (32%)

FAMILY SERVICES & ACTIVITIES

We provide or link whole families to services. Families can request this assistance at any point during the program term.



PARENT CURRICULUM



We use ParentPowered as our parent curriculum. It is a research-based text messaging program for families that sends fun facts and tips for activities to boost their child's learning.

Spring 2025 family survey highlights from respondents:

- 100% of families read and found the text messages easy to read and understand
- 100% of families said it has improved their relationship with their children
- 80,000 messages over 6 curriculum units were sent in program year 2024/2025!

"I've received assurance through things I have already been doing or I am given new information from these texts I was unaware of"

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT



To assess our effectiveness in meeting parent needs, we conduct a fall strengths, needs, and interests survey to gather information about families and children when they enter the program. In the spring, we follow up with a family outcome survey to evaluate how well families feel their needs have been addressed. This year our response rate was 59% of enrolled families, up from 53% in the prior year but still below response rates prior to COVID. The data we collected remains valuable for our program, revealing that:

96% of families found the program very helpful to their child

94% of families found the program very helpful to their family

88% found the program helpful with learning to value their child's strengths

81% found the program very helpful with learning about their child's needs/learning delays

79% found the program very helpful with learning about the skills their child needs in Kindergarten

COMPREHENSIVE HEALTH SERVICES

Many families are now catching up on missed medical, dental, and vision appointments that were postponed during the pandemic. However, challenges such as limited provider availability continue to affect access to care. Finding specialists, particularly for vision follow-ups and dental care, continues to be difficult in certain areas. Families have become more engaged in keeping their children's immunizations up to date. Staff work closely with families to explain the new requirements, ensuring that children receive the necessary vaccinations before enrollment or classroom participation. Head Start programs are placing a stronger emphasis on supporting families through better communication. Staff are working to ensure parents are aware of health screening deadlines, immunization requirements, and any gaps in care, while also assisting families in overcoming barriers such as transportation or finding healthcare providers.

By the end of the program year:



99%
of children had
HEALTH INSURANCE and

73%
of children were
up-to-date with MEDICAL
EXAMS and age appropriate
PREVENTATIVE and
PRIMARY HEALTH CARE (increased
29% from enrollment)



98%
of children had
a MEDICAL HOME (provider)



98%
of children had a
DENTAL HOME (provider)

50
children needed dental treatment,
of the children,
44 received treatment



76%
of children were
up-to date with DENTAL
EXAMS



COMPREHENSIVE HEALTH SERVICES

We conducted:



240

98% of children had **HEARING SCREENINGS**
0 diagnosed with a chronic hearing problem



239

97.5% of children had **VISION SCREENINGS**
26 diagnosed with a chronic vision problem



92%

of children were up-to-date with **IMMUNIZATIONS**
(16 were exempt)

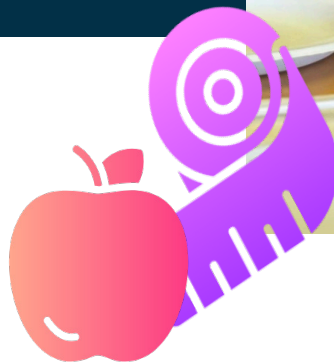
NUTRITION

Staff screen all children for nutritional risk within 90 days of enrollment, Staff offer nutrition referrals to the family for individualized support for children who are in the bottom or top percentiles (at risk for obesity or underweight).

245

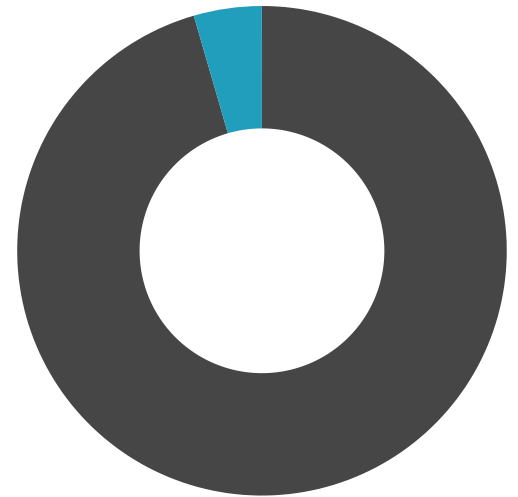
CHILDREN received growth assessments

69 children had a BMI over the 85th percentile



FISCAL INFORMATION

Explanation of Expenditures for 2024/2025 fiscal Year:	Amount
ACF - Head Start/Early Head Start Grant	\$9,223,001
Total ACF Grants	\$9,229,963
Federal Share of Expenditures	\$8,815,099.32
Unobligated	\$484,863,68
Non-Federal Share (waived)	\$0
USDA Reimbursement	\$165,134
Total Expenditures for 2024/2025:	\$8,815,099.32



Fed Share of Expenses (95.5%)
 Unobligated (4.5%)

Proposed budget for 2025/2026 fiscal year:	Amount
ACF - Head Start/Early Head Start Grant	\$9,223,001
T&TA	\$76,962
Total ACF Grants	\$9,299,963
Non-Federal Share	\$2,324,991
USDA Reimbursement	\$209,000
Total Proposed Budget for 2025/2026:	\$11,415,955



Non-Federal Share - 20%
 Head Start/Early Head Start Grant - 80%

AUDIT REVIEW

In 2020 a Focus Area 1 monitoring review was conducted with no areas of non-compliance identified.

In 2023 the Administration for Children and Families (ACF), Office of Head Start (OHS) conducted a Focus Area 2 monitoring review for all areas of the program. SIHS received an excellent review with only one small area of non-compliance identified during the visit. A solution was drafted and implemented immediately. There were no fiscal findings or concerns.



In 2023 SIHS was selected to conduct a pilot project for a new Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) review system. The pilot project was completed successfully and SIHS passed all areas with excellent scores.

Emotional Support scores showed SIHS has a high-quality program which indicates rich and supportive environments with caring and sensitive teachers. Classroom Organization scores were also in the “high quality” range, which is the positive result of training and coaching intentionally implemented over the last 4 years to provide children with predictable and safe environments.

Our Instructional Support scores are rising as teaching staff become more and more grounded in providing children with interactions that scaffold more complex thinking.

The Washington State Auditor’s Office fiscal audit of Skagit Valley College conducted in September of 2022 reported no areas of noncompliance.





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HEAD START**

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