



HEAD START  
& CHILDREN'S SERVICES

ANNUAL REPORT 2018

## **ACTION FOR BOSTON COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT LEADERSHIP**

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### **ABCD BOARD OF DIRECTORS - OFFICERS**

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*President/CEO*

**Sharon Scott-Chandler, Esq.**  
*Executive Vice President/COO*

**Yvette Rodriguez**  
*Vice President, Head Start  
& Children's Services*

## **WHO WE ARE**

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Head Start is one of the core programs of President Lyndon Johnson's Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 and remains an exemplary family development program that each year serves more than a million disadvantaged children nationwide. In 1965, Action for Boston Community Development (ABCD) was designated as one of the program's original demonstration projects.

Since then, ABCD Head Start & Children's Services has served tens of thousands of children and families in Boston, Malden and the Mystic Valley, offering comprehensive education, health, dental, nutrition and related services for children from birth to age five, as well as for pregnant mothers. In addition, we provide intensive parent engagement and supports, and we strive to meet each child's needs while reflecting the community's ethnic and cultural values.

Throughout the years, we have continued to innovate and expand through partnerships. For instance, last year we completed a five year study conducted with Boston Medical Center that helped prevent maternal depression. Providing state of the art facilities and a superior learning environment is also a priority. In 2017, we relocated our center serving families in Boston's South End and opened a beautiful new facility in Malden.

At ABCD Head Start, we stand on a record of children's and families' success, and we look to the future with focus, determination and optimism.



## OUR MISSION

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ABCD Head Start & Children's Services, a family development program, is committed to providing opportunities and services to the diverse low-income children and families of Boston and the Malden/ Everett area, to support them with school readiness, self-sufficiency and success in life.

## LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE IN HEAD START

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Parents are part of Head Start & Early Head Start program planning by participating in meetings and providing feedback on the services we provide. Many parents serve alongside senior Head Start management as members of the Parent Policy Council, which is responsible for program direction.



*ABCD Head Start & Children's Services Vice President Yvette Rodriguez introduces a video message from Dr. Deborah Bergeron, director of the Office of Head Start at a Policy Council meeting. Dr. Bergeron emphasized the importance of parent leadership and Policy Council governance and invited them to lead the way to better outreach, enrollment, and support for children and families.*

## ABCD HEAD START POLICY COUNCIL

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Parents can be part of Head Start & Early Head Start program planning by participating in meetings and providing feedback on the services we provide. Many parents serve as members of the Parent Policy Council, which is responsible for program direction.

## ABCD HEAD START POLICY COUNCIL MEMBERS

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**CHAIRPERSON**  
Shirley Porcena

**VICE CHAIRPERSON**  
Tonet Rodriguez

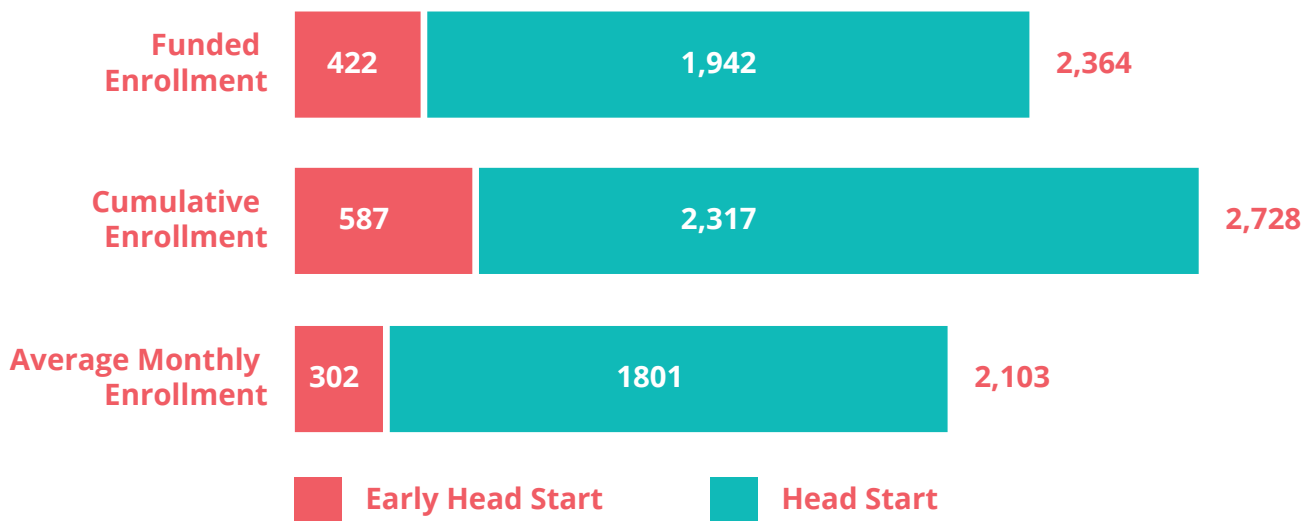
**ABCD BOARD OF DIRECTORS REPRESENTATIVE**  
Claudia Arrecis

**SECRETARY**  
Wedlyne Theodore

**TREASURER**  
Joane De-Tiverny

**MASSACHUSETTS HEAD START ASSOCIATION REPRESENTATIVE**  
Naika Williams  
*Harrison Avenue Head Start*

# CHILDREN AND FAMILIES WE SERVE



## Our Children and Educators' Languages

Language Group	Children		Educators	
	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage
English	1,336	47%	152	42%
Spanish	871	29%	124	34%
Native Central American, South American and Mexican Languages	25	1%	2	1%
Caribbean Languages	168	6%	21	5%
Middle Eastern and South Asian Languages	104	4%	11	2%
East Asian Languages	199	7%	39	11%
European and Slavic Languages	25	1%	9	2%
African Languages	144	5%	12	3%



# 31

*Sites*



# 167

*Classrooms*

### *Our Children and Educators' Race and Ethnicity*

<i>Race/Ethnicity</i>	<i>Children</i>		<i>Educators</i>	
<b>American Indian or Alaska Native</b>	6	0.2%	1	0.3%
<b>Asian</b>	221	6.7%	50	15.2%
<b>Black or African American</b>	1,140	34.4%	159	48.5%
<b>White</b>	203	6.1%	90	27.4%
<b>Bi-racial/multi-racial</b>	226	6.8%	16	4.9%
<b>Hispanic/Latino</b>	1,256	37.9%	182	55.5%
<b>Other</b>	252	7.6%	150	45.7%

### **NEIGHBORHOODS SERVED**

- Boston
- Malden
- Everett
- Medford
- Stoneham
- Melrose
- Reading
- Wakefield
- North Reading
- Winchester

### **DELEGATES AND PARTNERS**

#### ***Delegate***

John F. Kennedy

Family Service Center

#### ***Partners***

Boston Chinatown

Neighborhood Center

Horizons for Homeless Children

Infants and Other People

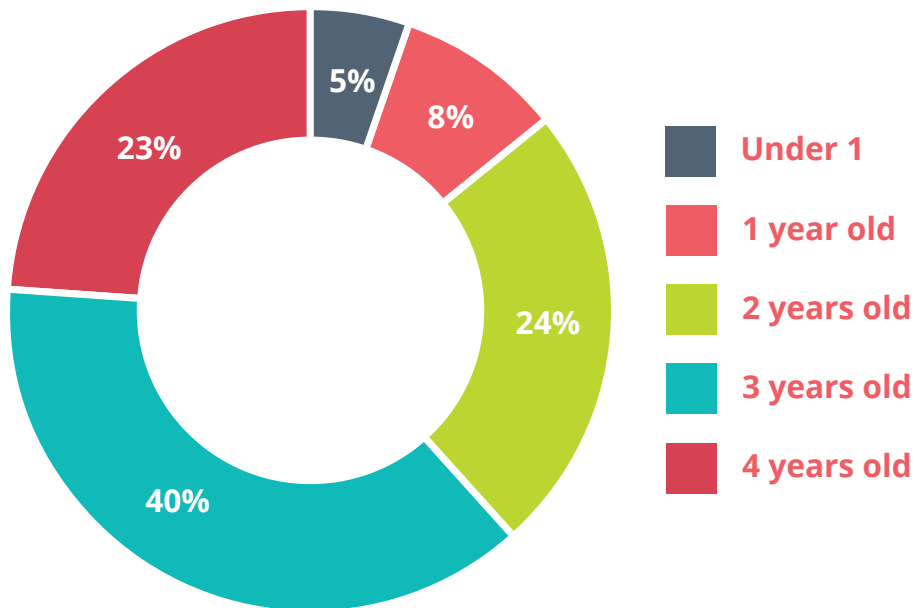
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# CHILDREN AND FAMILIES WE SERVE

## DEMOGRAPHICS

**2,728** TOTAL NUMBER OF FAMILIES

*Children by Age*



**11**

*Pregnant Moms*



**396**

Families Experiencing Homelessness

**29**  
Foster Children

**420**

Families Receiving Public Assistance

**273**  
Children with Disabilities

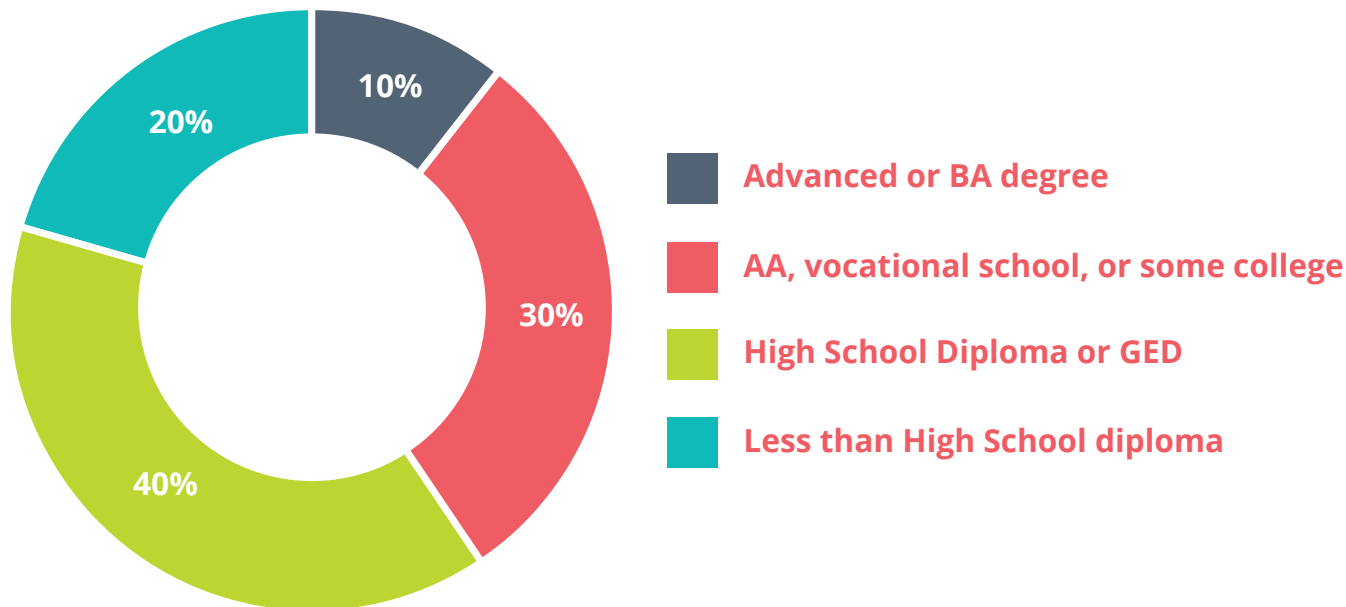
**1,953**

Families Receiving WIC

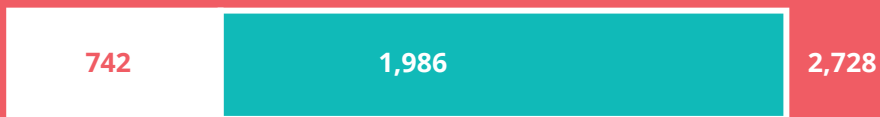
**1,742**

Families Receiving SNAP

### Parent/Guardian Education Level



Family Composition



Two Parents      One Parent

# COMPREHENSIVE SERVICES PROVIDED FOR CHILDREN



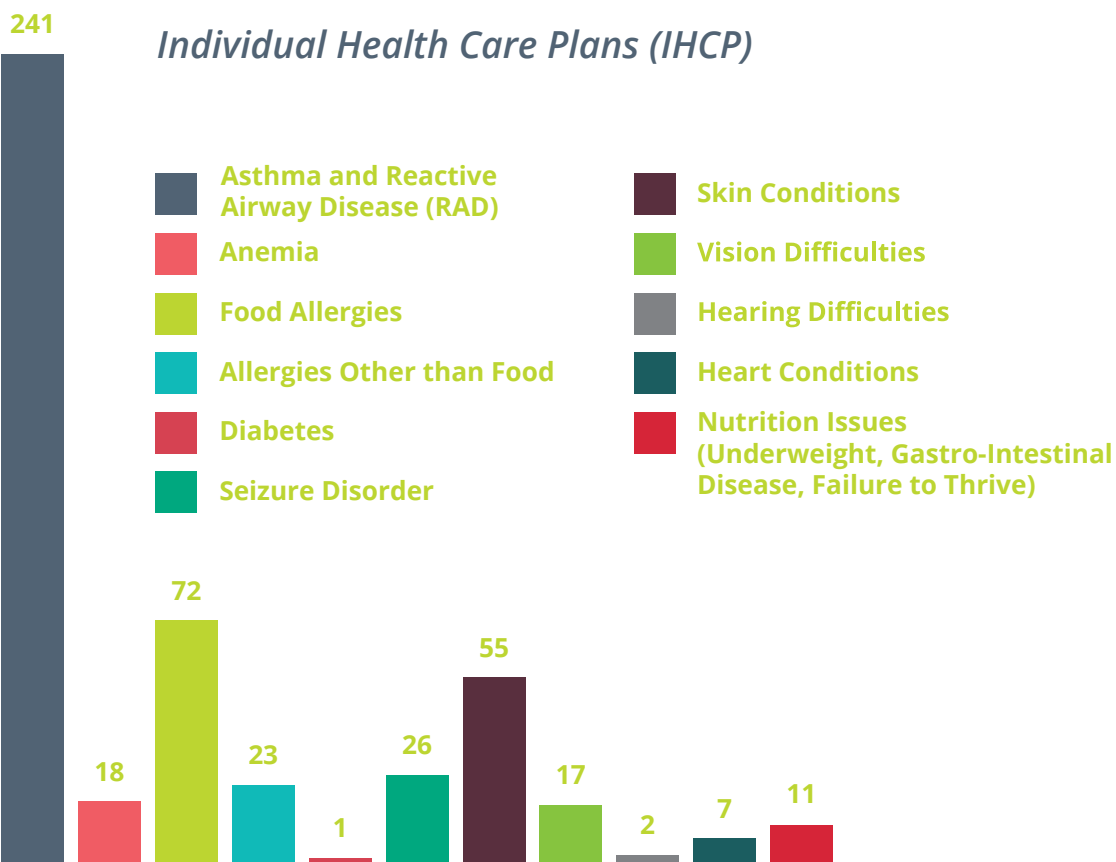
**81**

*Children Receiving  
Mental Health Therapy*



**2,398**

*Children Receiving  
Ongoing Dental Care*



**472** INDIVIDUAL HEALTH CARE PLANS

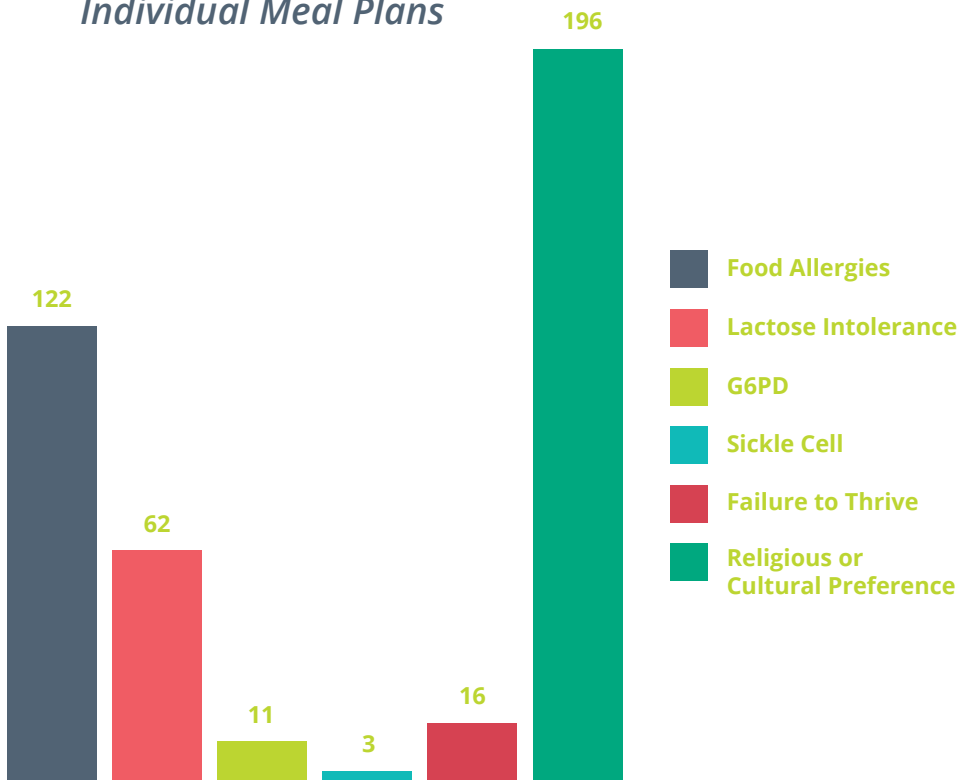




# 2,851

## Children Receiving Ongoing Health Care

### Individual Meal Plans



**IN ADDITION, EVERY EARLY HEAD START CHILD — 430 CHILDREN RECEIVED AN INDIVIDUAL MEAL PLAN**

### HEALTH SERVICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Health Services Advisory Committee (HSAC) is an advisory group that meets twice a year to bring together staff, parents, health care providers and other partners in the community to discuss the planning, operations, and evaluation of the health services in Head Start. The mission of this committee is to support the health and wellness of each Head Start and Early Head Start child and family. All families, and staff are welcomed and encouraged to be part of this committee.

### HEALTH SERVICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Bruce Moore, OD  
*New England College of Optometry, & New England Eye Institute*

Kathy M. Lituri, RDH, MPH  
*Boston University Henry M. Goldman School of Dental Medicine*

Mark Doherty, DDS  
*Commonwealth Mobile Oral Health Services*

Katherine Majzoub, RN, MBA  
*Prevent Blindness America*

Susan Sommer, FNP  
*Boston Children's Hospital*



ABCD Early Head Start mother Melinda Webb and two-year-old daughter Ayriah meet with family advocate Julie Delgado, Intervention Support Specialist Elizabeth Miller, and teacher Ana Martinez. They're part of the professional team that provides a comprehensive circle of support that enables Ayriah and her family to grow and succeed.

## ***Melinda and Ayriah Thrive Thanks to Head Start's Holistic Approach***

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When she was two months pregnant, Melinda Webb learned the baby she was carrying would be born with Down syndrome — and had a heart defect that would require open heart surgery. It was staggering news. Melinda, who works with the elderly and typically logged 60 hours a week, wondered how she would care for a child with such serious health issues and special needs.

The challenges intensified. Three months after her beautiful daughter Ayriah was born and just two days before her heart surgery was to take place, Ayriah died — *for three minutes*. Miraculously, the medical team resuscitated her, and the surgery took place as scheduled on February 13, 2017. Ayriah had a “new” heart on Valentine’s Day.

Melinda’s three other children, Nakeo, 22, Andrelle, 18, and Sandrelle, 16, showered their baby sister with love. That has been a great comfort and source of joy. Still, Melinda knew that Ayriah needed not only education and care but also social and emotional supports.

She found it at ABCD’s Early Head Start program.

“At first I was over-protective. I wanted Ayriah to feel safe and happy, and I had to get to that place -- to trust,” Melinda said. In just a few weeks, “it was smooth sailing.” Melinda knows Ayriah feels at home because when she arrives each morning and sees her friends and teachers, she says, “Bye, mom!”

Along with being part of the ABCD Head Start family as a dedicated parent, Melinda also volunteers with us, including as a parent member of the Hiring Committee.

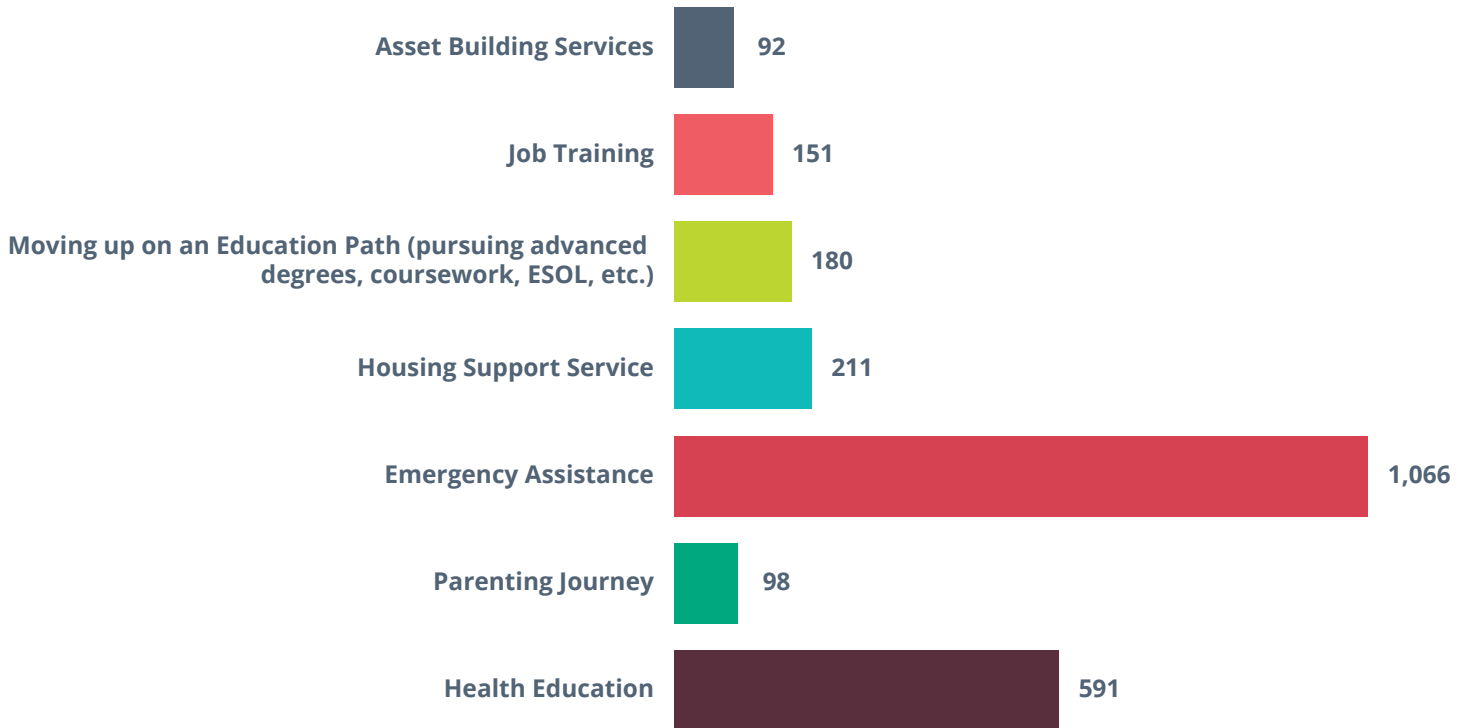
Ayriah is two years old now. Along with her teacher and teacher assistants, she, Melinda, and their family are surrounded by a circle of professionals including a family advocate, a nutritionist, and an intervention support specialist.

*“I’ve become very close to our family advocate. I feel like I can talk to her about Ayriah — about anything,”* Melinda said, adding *“Without ABCD, I don’t think she would have grown this much.”*

# COMPREHENSIVE SERVICES FOR FAMILIES

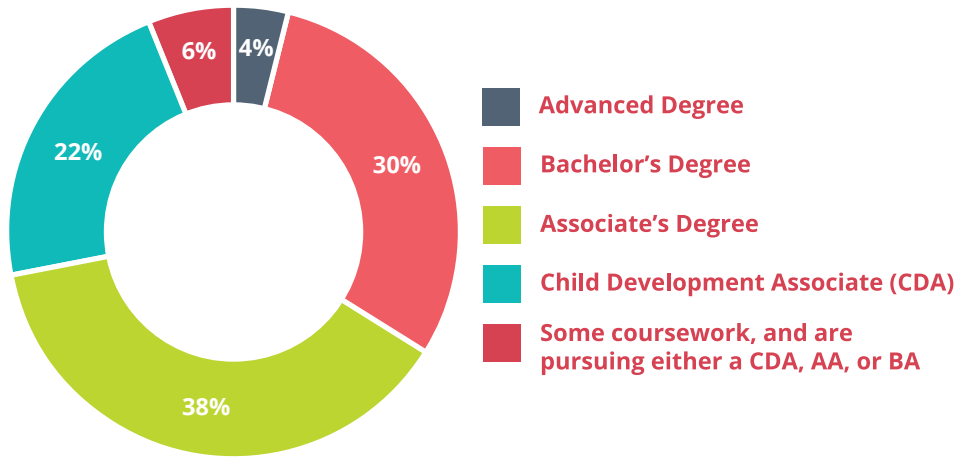
ABCD Head Start offers a broad range of services to families including Early Literacy, School Readiness, Activities to Do at Home, Curriculum, Know Your Rights Immigration Workshops, Community Resource Presentations, Managing Challenging Behaviors, Positive Discipline, and Child Development.

## 1,250 FAMILIES RECEIVED PARENTING TRAINING



# OUR STAFF

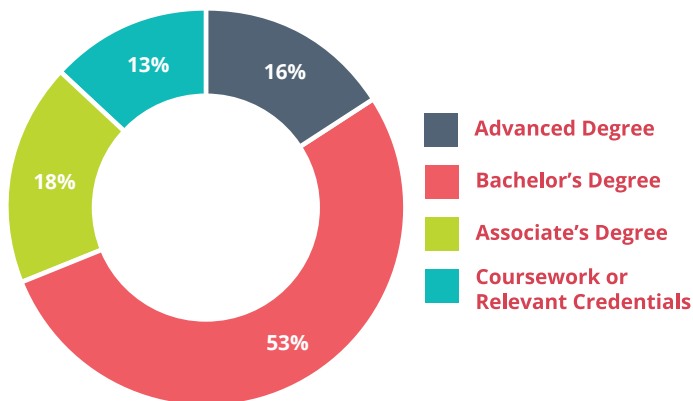
## Teachers and Teacher's Assistants' Credentials



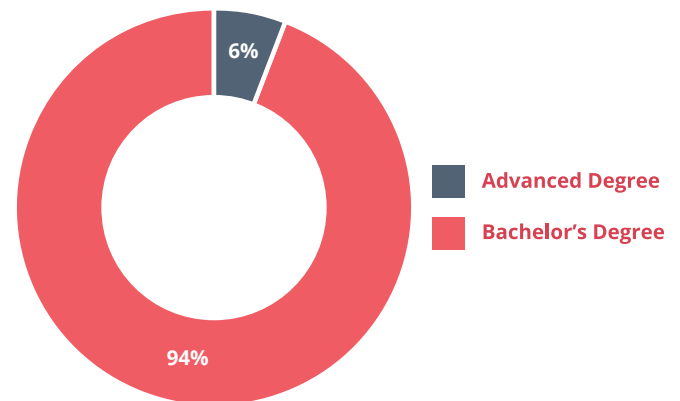
**28%**

*of staff are former Head Start parents!*

## Family & Community Engagement Staff



## Program Management Staff



# PREPARING CHILDREN TO SUCCEED IN SCHOOL AND LIFE

As our mission states, ABCD Head Start & Children's Services is committed to supporting children and families with school readiness, self-sufficiency and success in life. This commitment begins with a family's first visit to one of our programs and is embedded throughout our Head Start program structure, including health, family services, nutrition, mental health, and parent engagement.

## SCREENING, ASSESSMENT & CHILD OUTCOMES

Before a child enters one of our programs, a Teacher and Family Advocate conduct an initial home visit where they administer the Ages and Stages Developmental and Social Emotional Screening tool to collect information about the child's overall and social-emotional development. This also allows program staff to build upon the relationship and partnership established with the family throughout the enrollment process.



The Ages and Stages questionnaire is an evidence-based tool, chosen for its developmental and cultural appropriateness. Since the tool is completed as a parent interview, it can be translated and/or interpreted by program staff or other adult who speaks the language of the parent, making the screening process both culturally and linguistically appropriate for enrolled children. If the ASQ score indicates a potential issue or delay, the Teachers and Intervention Support Specialist will monitor the child in the classroom, individualizing activities as needed, and assess if further evaluation is needed through a referral to Early Intervention or the public school system.

Children also receive annual vision, hearing, and height/weight screenings since untreated problems in these areas can negatively affect learning. Children whose screening tests indicate a need for further testing and possible treatment are referred to the appropriate health care providers as needed. Teachers use the information gathered through the screening process to individualize activities for each child so as to support effective learning and development.

<i>Age Group</i>	<i>Children Monitored Based on Screening Results</i>	<i>Children Referred for Evaluation with Early Intervention/Public School</i>	<i>Children Who Received an IFSP/IEP while Enrolled</i>
<b>Infants (0-14 months)</b>	15	12	19
<b>Toddlers (15-32 months)</b>	31	29	35
<b>Preschoolers</b>	188	142	172

ABCD Head Start & Children’s Services uses My Teaching Strategies as our assessment system, which supports the goals and objectives of our chosen curriculum framework, The Creative Curriculum. Teaching Strategies objectives support the five essential school readiness domains for all children age birth through five and are aligned with the Early Learning Outcomes Frameworks and the Massachusetts Early Learning Guidelines, which are based on the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks for PreK-Grades 1-4. Education staff enters data into and monitors My Teaching Strategies regularly to support real time analysis of children’s progress.

In order to provide individualized support for each child, Teachers complete assessments using the data from My Teaching Strategies, along with input from parents during each progress-reporting period. This allows teachers to continue building the partnership established during the home visit as staff and parents work together to develop goals and activities both for the classroom and at home to support children’s learning.

Ongoing teacher observations and assessments continue throughout the program year to support individualized activities, promote a child’s progress in all domains, and help to identify children needing additional interventions. The outcomes from each assessment period are then used to identify areas in need of improvement for individual children and/or classrooms. This process also informs the planning process on such key issues as staff training needs, instructional support, and appropriateness of program design, budget needs, and family outcomes.



# ABCD HEAD START & CHILDREN'S SERVICES COACHING MODEL

ABCD Head Start & Children's Services has successfully implemented a comprehensive approach to coaching since 2015. The model includes individual one-on-one coaching with teaching staff as well as group coaching through "Teachers Learning & Collaborating" (TLC) sessions.

Our coaching staff conducts classroom observations and provides feedback to teachers to assist in the improvement of teacher-child interactions and curriculum implementation that supports positive child outcomes towards school readiness.

## OVERALL STATISTICS

**4** COACHES

**12** TLC SUPPORT GROUPS FACILITATED BY COACHES

**25** PROGRAMS SERVED

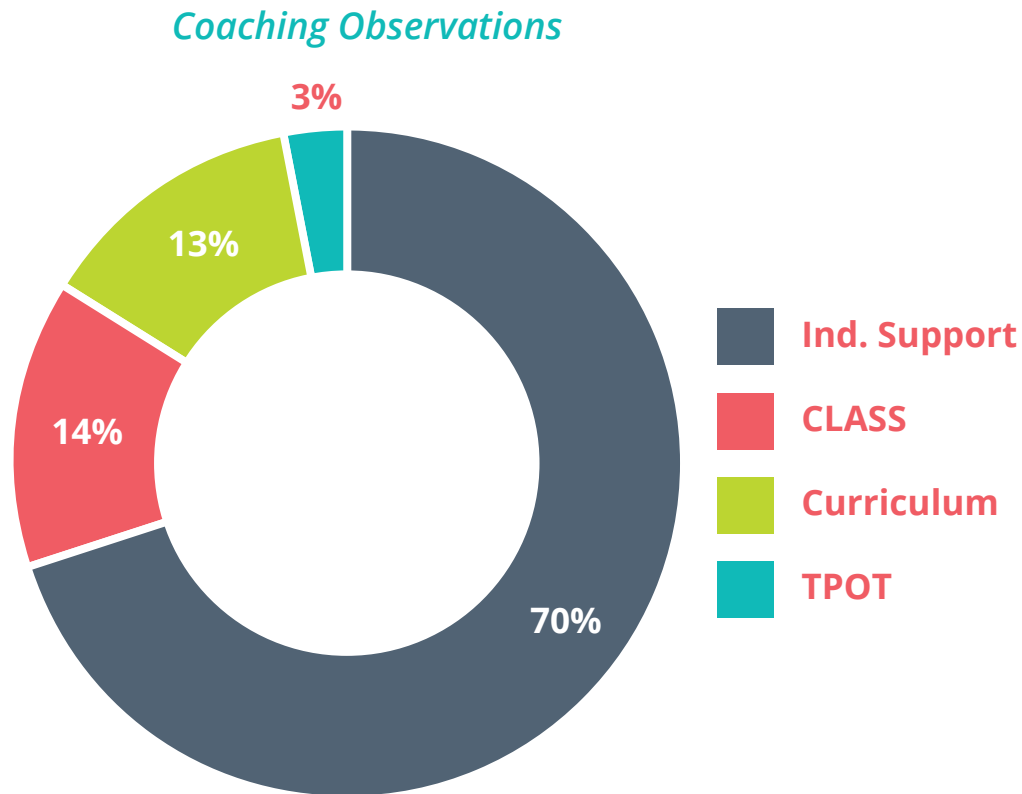
**61** HEAD START CLASSROOM TEACHERS WHO RECEIVED INDIVIDUAL COACHING

**716** CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS CONDUCTED BY COACHES



Through the use of child assessment data, evidenced-based tools such as CLASS, ITERS-R and ECERS-R, as well as recommendations from program leadership, individual teachers are identified and enter into coaching agreements with a member of the coaching staff.

Our coaching staff receives training in Teaching Pyramid Observation Tool (TPOT), an evidenced-based tool based upon the Pyramid Model for Promoting Social Emotional Competence in Infants and Young Children.





ABCD Head Start Coach Heidi Chait (left) leads a “Rolling and Sliding” activity with teacher Rita Wu and children at our Malden, MA early childhood education center. It’s part of a larger unit that teaches the science behind inclined planes and how the shape and texture of objects affect whether they slide or roll — or not.

## ***Coach Heidi Chait helps ABCD Head Start teachers be their best***

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A self-described optimist, Heidi Chait is in her 25th year as an early childhood educator and her fourth as an ABCD Head Start coach. She loves the impact she has on teachers and seeing the impact they have on the children.

“Coaching for me has been a way to support, encourage, and validate the teachers’ work in the classroom. It’s exciting to see people love their jobs – believe in these children and give them love and support as well as the social and emotional stability they need,” she said.

During her career, Heidi has been a teacher, lead teacher, assistant director, and director of early childhood programs. She joined ABCD as a Head Start teacher in East Boston fifteen years ago. More recently, she was one of the first co-constructors with the Tufts University RISE program (Readiness Through Integrative Science and Technology). This innovative collaboration focuses on developing ecologically valid, culturally relevant integrative preschool curriculum components and home-school collaboration to support young dual language learners’ (DLL) school success. She had a coach while part of that project, and the experience inspired her to apply to become an ABCD Head Start coach. “I liked the idea of helping someone grow and reach their potential,” she said.

“I’ve had many opportunities at ABCD Head Start to further my education and increase my knowledge throughout the years. By doing so, it has provided me the opportunity to share with teachers and encourage them to dig deep and extend their knowledge to bring back to their classrooms.”

Perhaps a coach’s success is best assessed by one of her mentees. Rita Wu, an ABCD Head Start teacher in Malden, says she has benefited greatly from Heidi’s coaching. *“You can ask her anything! She has helped me develop activities and interact with the children in ways that help them move forward,”* she said.

# TRANSITION

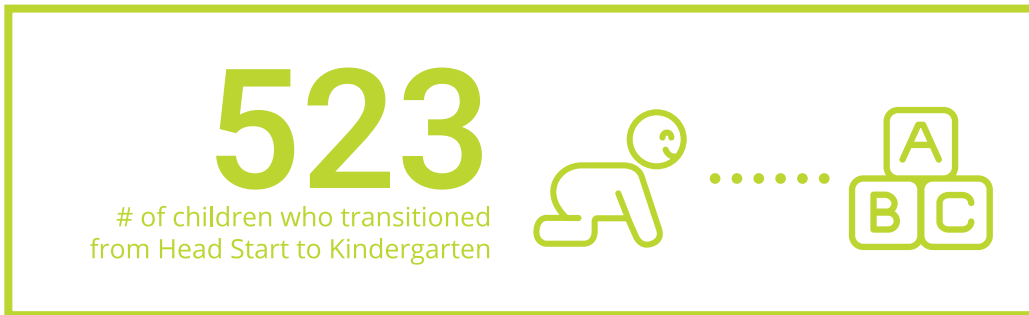
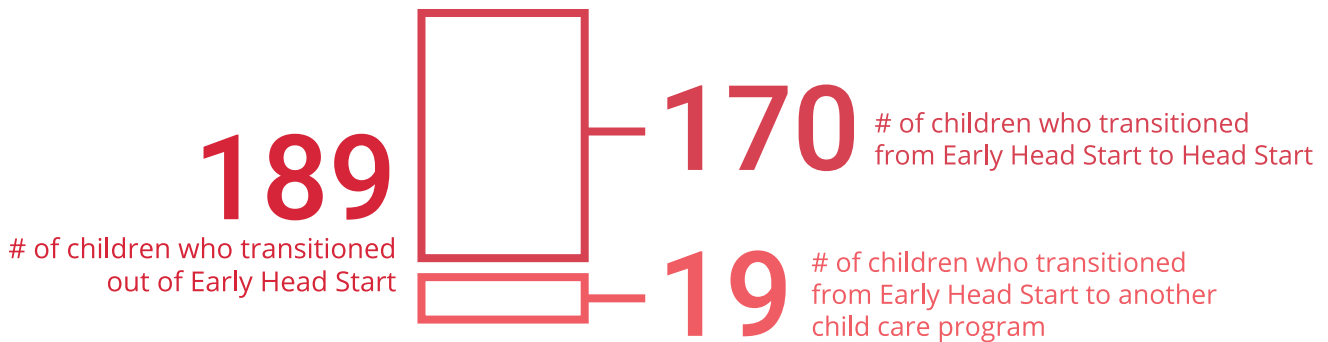


For more than 10 years, ABCD Head Start & Children's Services has had a Memorandum of Agreement with its LEA partners, recognizing the importance and facilitating the process of transitioning to school. The formal process of transitioning from Head Start into Kindergarten begins during the child's home visit at the beginning of the school year in which the child will age out of the program. Teachers complete the Transition to Kindergarten section of the Home Visit Questionnaire with parent, obtaining information about the parent's plans for their child and what support the program may need to give to help facilitate this transition. A transition plan is created beginning in the Fall to identify activities needed for a smooth transition as the Head Start year comes to a close. The plan is discussed regularly with the family to ensure timely Kindergarten registration. The programs also host family workshops on topics ranging from the kindergarten registration process to activities to do at home to support the transition.

For children who transition into the public schools before the end of the school year due to an IEP placement, both the Teachers and Intervention Support Specialists (ISS) work with the family to ensure a smooth transition. ISS attend IEP meeting with families and accompany them on school visits to ensure an appropriate placement is selected. Teachers engage in activities in the classrooms with the child to support the upcoming transition.

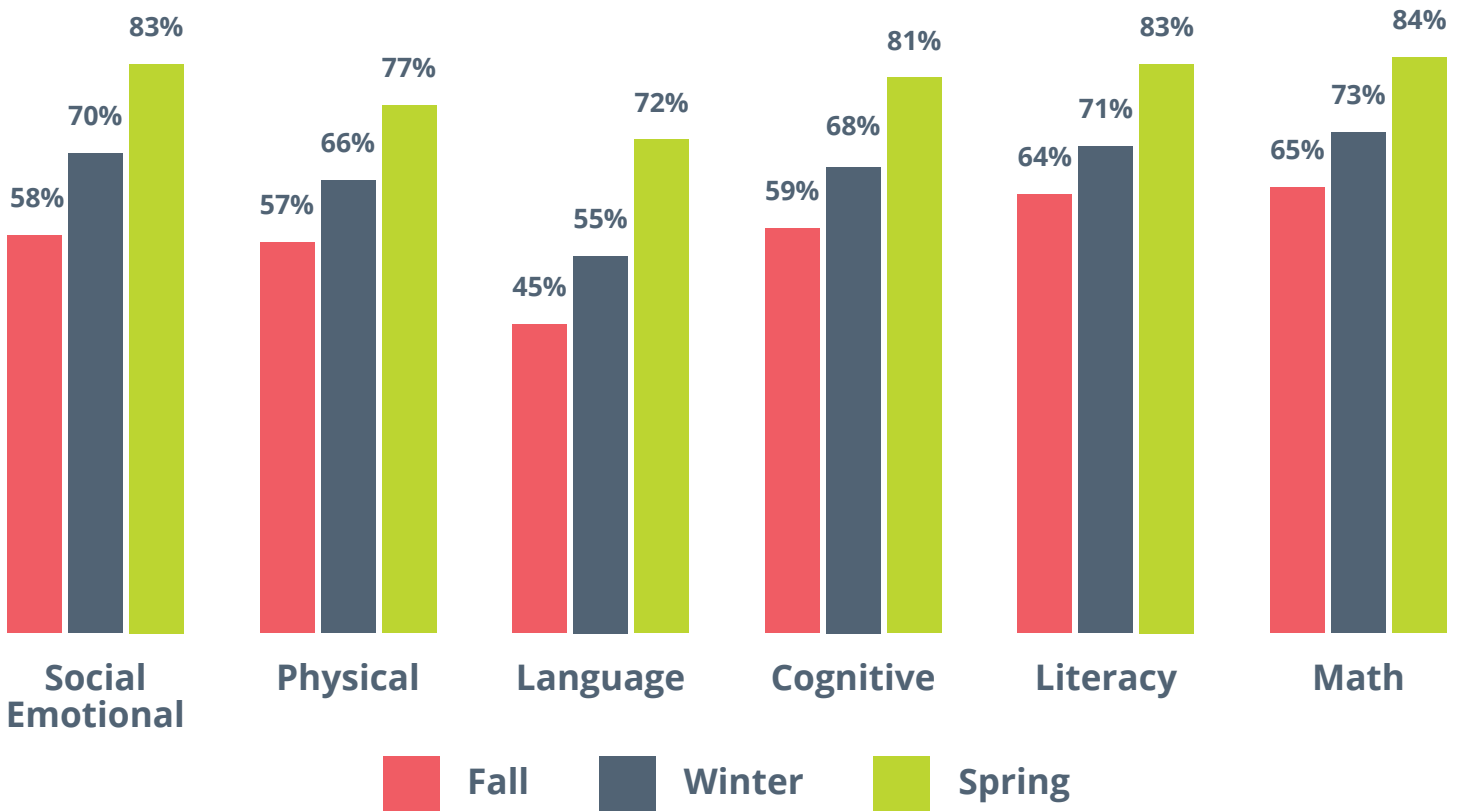
Building and maintaining partnerships in the community with institutions and agencies such as The Boston Children's Museum, Early Intervention and the public school systems are a major part of our transition plan. We are an active member and partner of Countdown to Kindergarten, which provides ongoing education and support to ensure families register and understand school readiness skills. We arrange for the public schools to visit our programs each year to hold information sessions for parents.

We have a system in place to help children that are transitioning from one program type to the next (i.e., Early Head Start to Head Start, and Head Start to public school). This transition system requires each child who is transitioning has a specific and detailed plan that is put in place six months prior to the child's actual transition in order to prepare the child, the family, and the new program.



# COMPARATIVE CHILD OUTCOME SCORES FOR PRESCHOOL CHILDREN

THIS CHART SHOWS PERCENTAGES OF PRESCHOOL CHILDREN MEETING OR EXCEEDING DEVELOPMENTAL EXPECTATIONS FOR THE FALL, SPRING AND WINTER.



# FOCUS ON QUALITY



The Quality Rating Improvement System (QRIS) is a systemic approach to assess, improve, and communicate the level of quality in early and school-age care and education programs. Similar to rating systems for restaurants and hotels, QRIS awards quality ratings to early and school-age care and education programs that meet a set of defined program standards. By participating in their State's QRIS, early and school-age care providers like ABCD Head Start & Children's Services embark on a path of continuous quality improvement.

In the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the Department of Early Education and Care has granted a total of 203 Level 3 and 29 Level 4 ratings. The following ABCD Head Start and Early Head Start locations have been certified at levels 3 and 4:

### **Level 3:**

Brighton  
East Boston @ Bennington  
Jamaica Plain  
Roxbury  
South Boston @ West Broadway  
Roslindale  
Walnut Grove

### **Level 4**

South Boston @ Mercer St.  
South Boston @ Orton Marotta

# HIGHLIGHTS



## **Senator Elizabeth Warren visits ABCD Walnut Grove Head Start**

Long before she explored a campaign to become President of the United States and before she introduced the Universal Child Care and Early Learning Act, which would create a network of government-funded care centers based partly on the existing Head Start network, U.S. Sen. Elizabeth Warren was a mother and a grandmother. In January 2018, she stopped by ABCD's Walnut Grove Head Start in Dorchester and read to a group of captivated preschoolers. But that wasn't all. Sen. Warren left a lasting impression through a generous donation of books to the Walnut Grove library.

## **ABCD opens Early Head Start in Mattapan**

In response to considerable demand in Mattapan, a diverse and vibrant Boston neighborhood, ABCD expanded its Head Start services to include Early Head Start. This model program works with infants, toddlers and their families to ensure that very young children get the care and stimulation to aid brain development during this critical growth phase. On January 16, 2018, ABCD held a grand opening to welcome 16 children into its Early Head Start program. The celebration was well attended by parents and staff and featured remarks from Boston City Council President Andrea Campbell and City Councilor Timothy McCarthy.



# SPECIAL INITIATIVES

## **Readiness Through Integrative Science and Technology (RISE)**

In partnership with Tufts University, the RISE (**Readiness Through Integrative Science and Technology**) project focuses on developing ecologically valid, culturally relevant integrative preschool curriculum components and home-school collaboration to support young dual language learners' (DLL) school success. Through Science, technology and engineering (STE) early learning and Home-school collaboration (HSC), we are co-constructing an integrative STE curriculum with Head Start teachers and families.

## **Communities for Healthy Living (CHL)**

The Communities for Healthy Living (CHL) program, through Harvard University T. Chan School of Public Health, is a family-focused program intent on promoting healthy behaviors among Head Start families. The CHL program includes an 8 week parent developed and peer-led parent program (known as "PC Connect"), enhanced family nutrition counseling, and a social media campaign. The skills learned will support the establishment of healthy diet, physical activity, and sleep behaviors, which bring many health benefits for families.

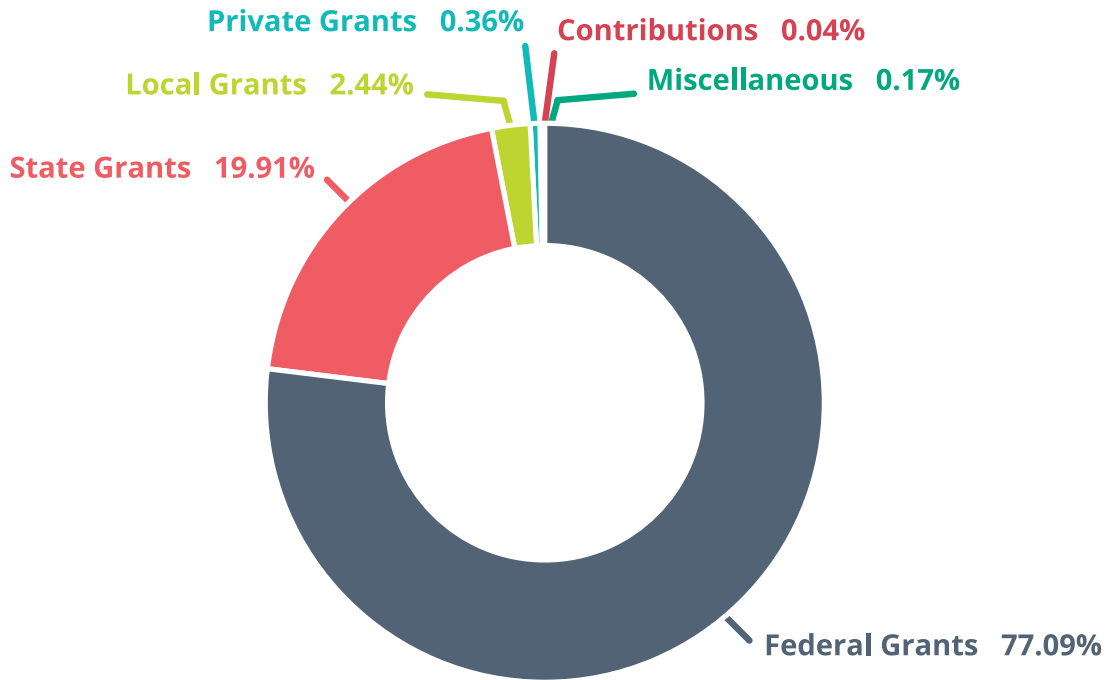
## **Preschool Expansion Grant (PEG)**

ABCD Head Start has been awarded funding for an initiative in which we work closely with the Department of Early Education and Care, Boston Public Schools, and several child care providers in Boston to provide full day, full year pre-Kindergarten programming and increased salaries for staff. As part of our collaboration with the Boston Public Schools (BPS) four of our Head Start classrooms began using the "Open to the World of Learning" (OWL) literacy curriculum and the "Building Blocks" math curriculum model. These models are used by our LEA in their public pre-kindergarten (K1) classrooms.

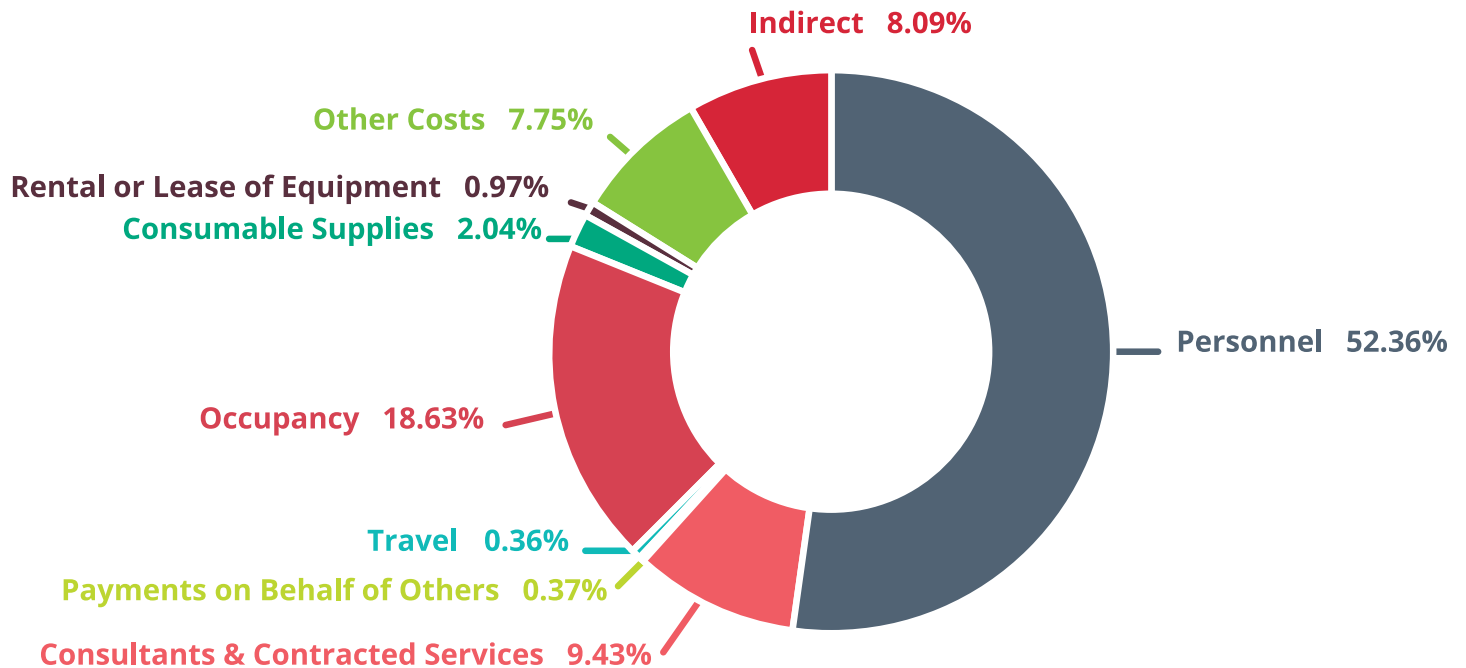


# BUDGET OVERVIEW — TOTAL BUDGET: \$41 MILLION

## FY18 REVENUE SOURCES



## FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES FY18



Action for Boston Community Development has successfully managed resources to maintain balanced budgets and complete the federal monitoring review of finances without findings. Moreover, ABCD has a long history of responsibly managing funds and has annual audits with unqualified opinions.



**HEAD START &  
CHILDREN'S SERVICES**

178 Tremont Street, Boston MA 02111 | [bostonheadstart.org](http://bostonheadstart.org)