



HEAD START & CHILDREN'S SERVICES

2019

ANNUAL REPORT



WHO WE ARE

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, ABCD (Action for Boston Community Development) 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 strive to meet each child's needs while reflecting the community's ethnic and cultural values.

Head Start parents are active participants in the program where they have access to special programs and receive education and training opportunities that enable families to move into the economic mainstream.

What's more, Early Head Start is unique among early learning programs in applying cutting-edge research on brain development in infants and toddlers to the needs of low-income families. Very young children receive care and stimulation proven to aid brain development and staff work with parents and pregnant mothers to promote understanding of those needs.

At ABCD Head Start, we continue to innovate, and we stand on a record of children's and families' lasting success.

OUR MISSION

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.

ACTION FOR BOSTON COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT LEADERSHIP

ABCD BOARD OF DIRECTORS OFFICERS

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ABCD SENIOR STAFF

John J. Drew

President/CEO

Sharon Scott-Chandler, Esq.

Executive Vice President/COO

Yvette Rodriguez

Vice President, Head Start & Children's Services



LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE: ABCD HEAD START POLICY COUNCIL

Parents can be part of program planning by participating in meetings and providing feedback on the services we provide. Many parents serve as members of the Parent Policy Council. Policy councils are responsible for the direction of the agency's Head Start and Early Head Start programs.

ABCD HEAD START POLICY COUNCIL MEMBERS

CHAIRPERSON

Anthony Nunziato, *South Boston*

VICE CHAIRPERSON

Tracey O'Neal, *Dorchester*

SECRETARY

Kimberly Cook, *Horizons for Homeless Children*

TREASURER

Dominique Haywood, *Infants & Other People*

ABCD BOARD OF DIRECTORS REPRESENTATIVE

Daphne Walker, *Bradshaw*

MASSACHUSETTS HEAD START ASSOCIATION REPRESENTATIVE

Naika Williams, *Harrison Avenue*



PARENTS AS ADVOCATES AND LEADERS

KIMBERLY FINDS HER VOICE WITH HEAD START'S SUPPORT AND ENCOURAGEMENT

Kimberly Cook is the personification of “where you start is not where you finish.” She has testified at the United Nations about the impacts of poverty, she is currently on the ABCD Board of Directors as the Head Start Policy Council Parent Representative, a student at Urban College of Boston, and a stay at home mom. But six years ago she was newly pregnant, recently laid off from her job, and homeless.

At what should've been one of the happiest times of her life, Kimberly found herself having to move across country from Washington state to Boston to be with her family so that she would have emotional support during a difficult time. Things seemed to turn around for her when she was placed in a transitional site shelter and received a childcare voucher for her kids to attend the ABCD Early Head Start program. She started school and joined the parents council for Horizons for Homeless Children, one of our partner programs. She was getting her footing and finding her voice through her volunteer work.

That changed in late October 2019 when Kimberly's 20 month old son Lucas was diagnosed with meningococcal disease, a condition which involves bloodstream infections. He spent six weeks in the hospital and for three of those weeks young Lucas was in a medically induced coma. Lucas' fight was not over. Once he woke up, he had to spend two weeks in intensive physical therapy. It was truly a trying time for Kimberly and her family.

In the midst of the chaos Kimberly was able to find solace in the ABCD Early Head Start staff who showed up for her not just as a program but as a community. She was assured that Lucas' spot in the program was secure. Her family advocate reassured her that they would do anything necessary to make sure Lucas' transition back to the center went smoothly. They even offered specialized care if he needed it.

Today Lucas is healthy and active. He gives fist bumps to staff and is full of joy. Kimberly is using her experience to help others and effect change. She is focused on getting her certification in education and associate's degree in human services so that she can help families like hers.



“Head Start is more than a daycare; it is truly a family. Everyone reached out to me when Lucas was sick I had people ask me, ‘what do you need?’ Head Start is a family who takes care of their own. Everyone from the youngest parent up to the CEO, we all band together.”

CHILDREN AND FAMILIES WE SERVE

Funded Enrollment

Early Head Start

422

Head Start

1942



31

Sites

Cumulative Enrollment

Early Head Start

651

Head Start

2316



175

Classrooms

NEIGHBORHOODS SERVED

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

DELEGATE

John F. Kennedy Family Service Center

PARTNERS

- Boston Chinatown Neighborhood Center
- Horizons for Homeless Children
- Infants and Other People
- Nurtury





TOTAL FAMILY COMPOSITION

2776

Two-Parent Families: 26%

Single-Parent Families: 74%



10

Pregnant Moms Served
8 Funded

2061 Families Receiving WIC 74%

411 Families Experiencing Homelessness 15%

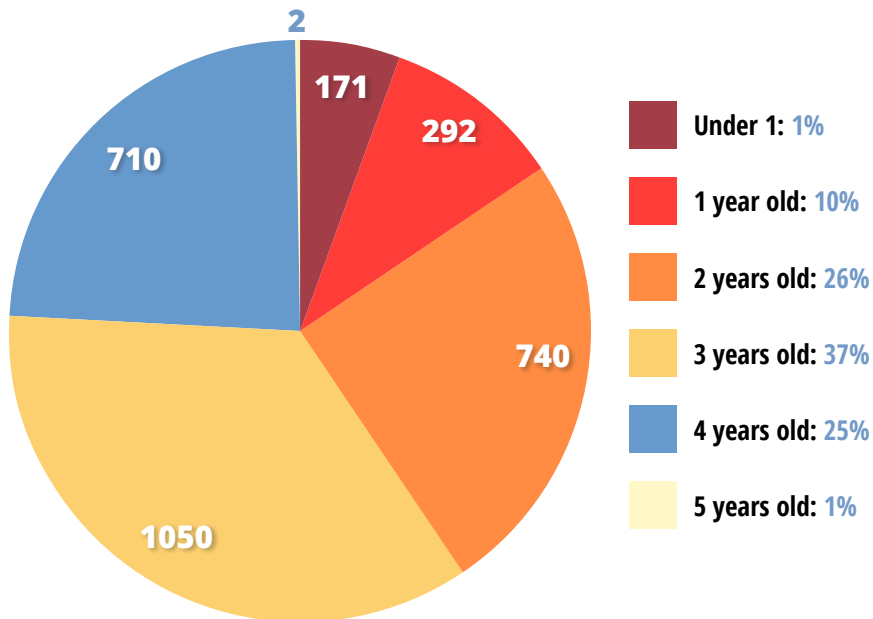
1860 Families Receiving SNAP 67%

298 Children with Disabilities 11%

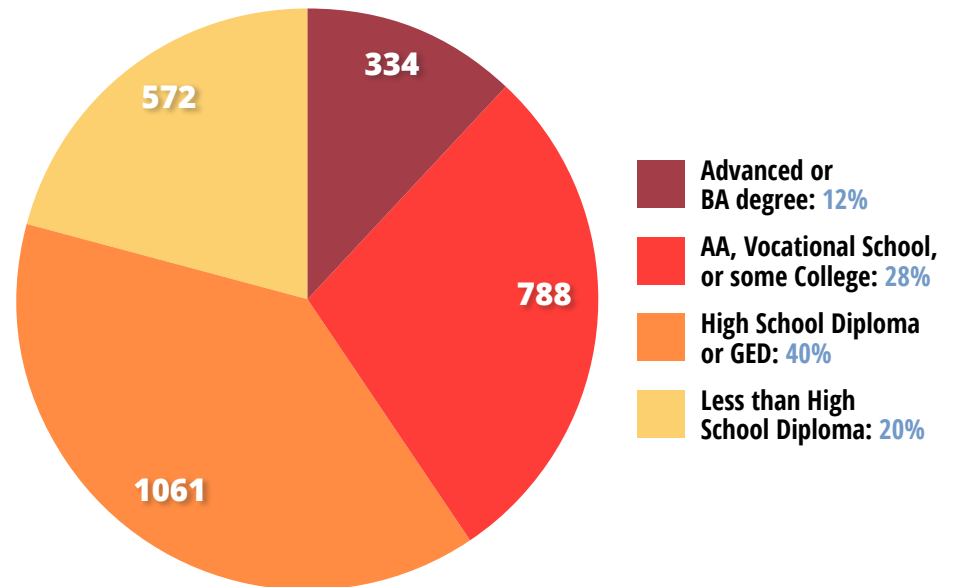
475 Families Receiving Public Assistance 17%

54 Foster Children 2%

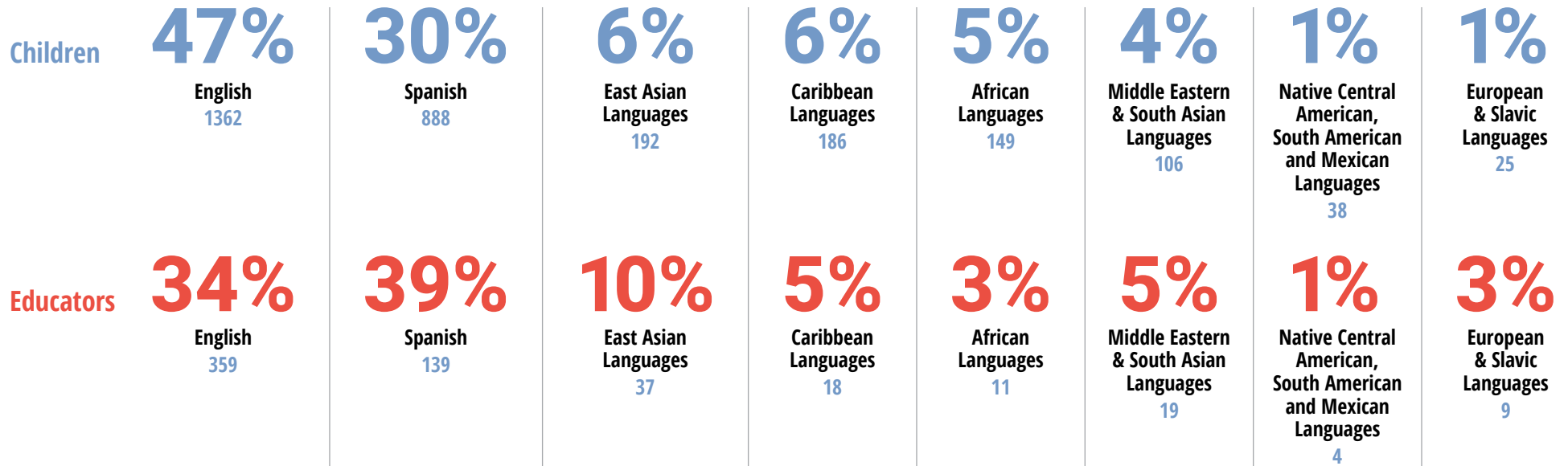
Children by Age



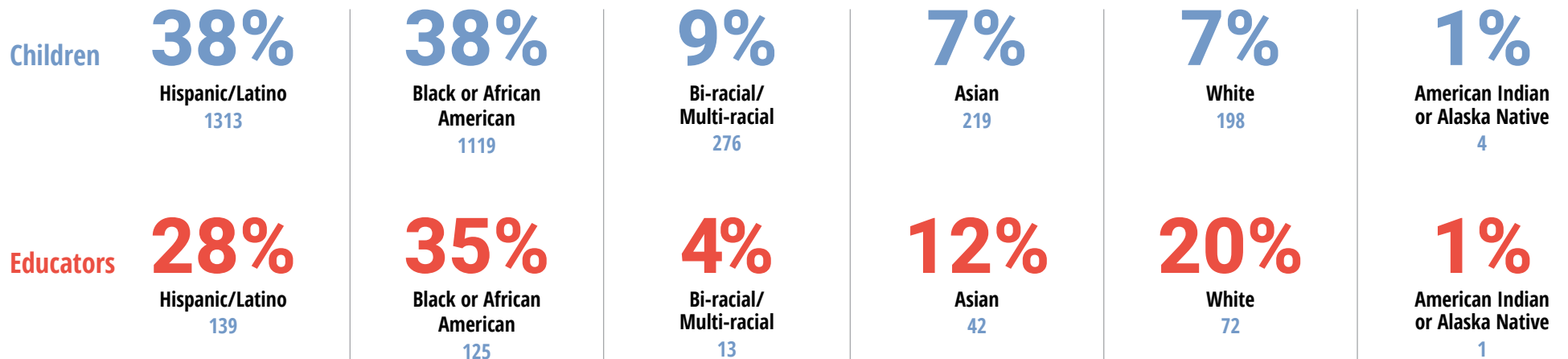
Parent/Guardian Education Level



PRIMARY LANGUAGES



RACE/ETHNICITY



COMPREHENSIVE SERVICES FOR CHILDREN

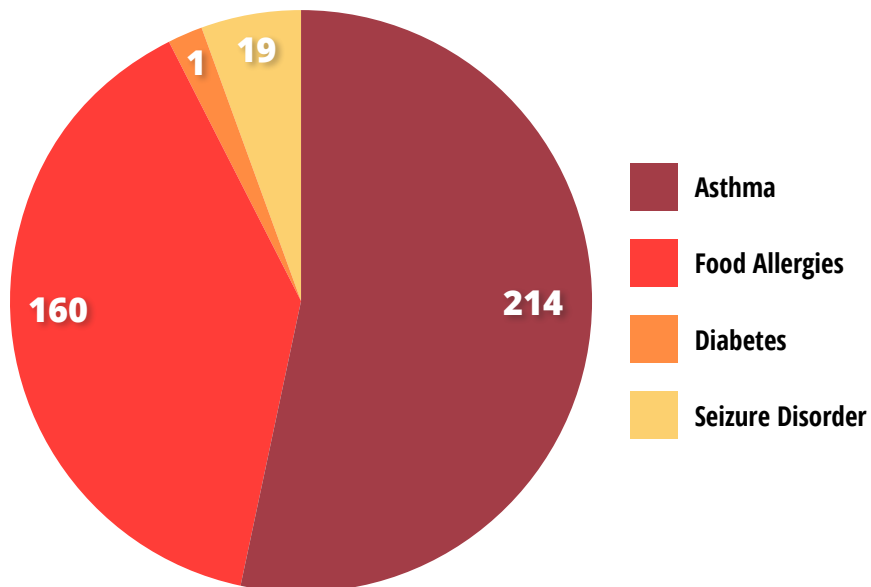
50 Children Receiving Mental Health Therapy **2%**

2344 Children Receiving Ongoing Dental Care **79%**

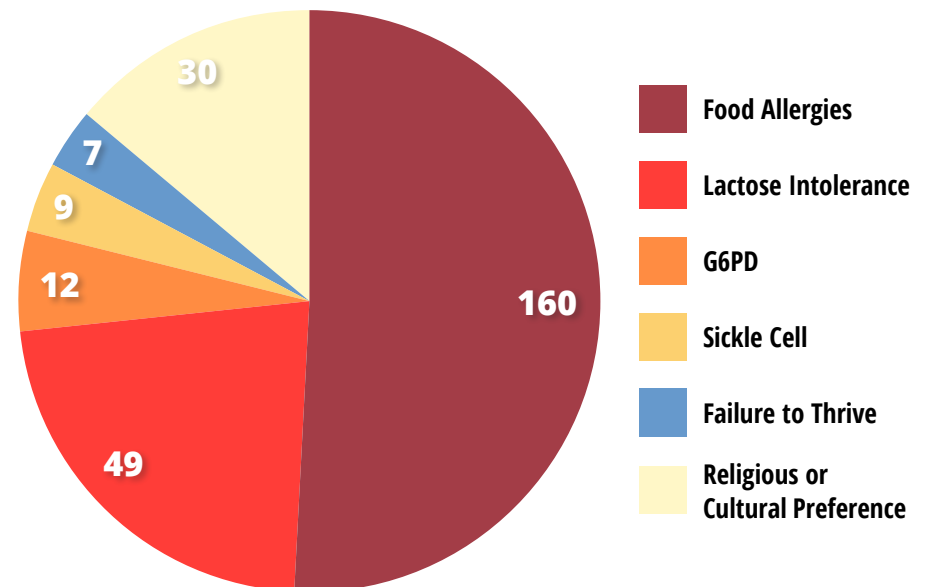
2919 Children Receiving Ongoing Health Care **98%**



394 Individual Health Care Plans



267 Individual Meal Plans



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.



968

FAMILIES RECEIVED PARENTING TRAINING

1112 Emergency Assistance

879 Health Education

157 Housing Support Service

120 Parenting Journey

109 Moving up on an Education Path
(pursuing advanced degrees, coursework, ESOL, etc.)

80 Job Training

71 Asset Building Services



OUR STAFF



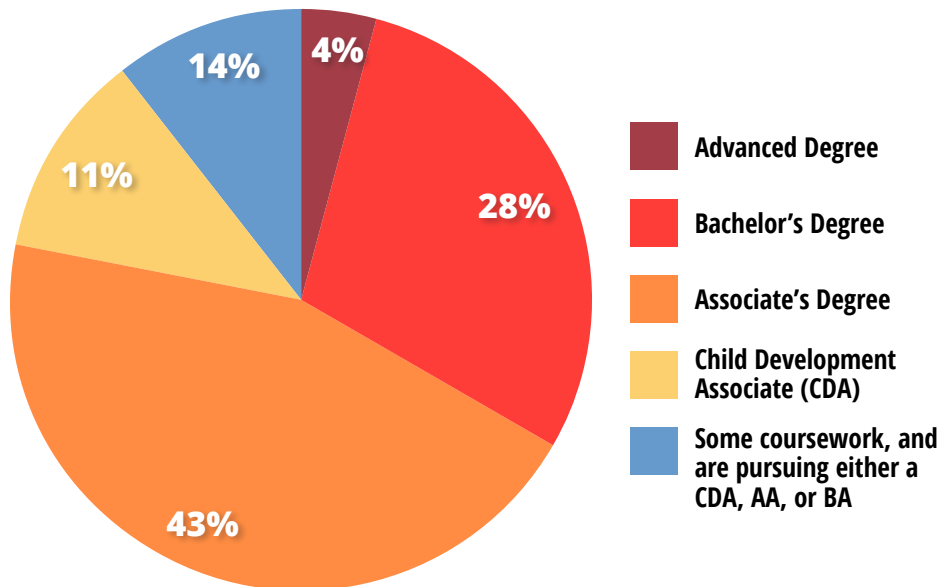
24%

OF STAFF ARE FORMER HEAD START PARENTS

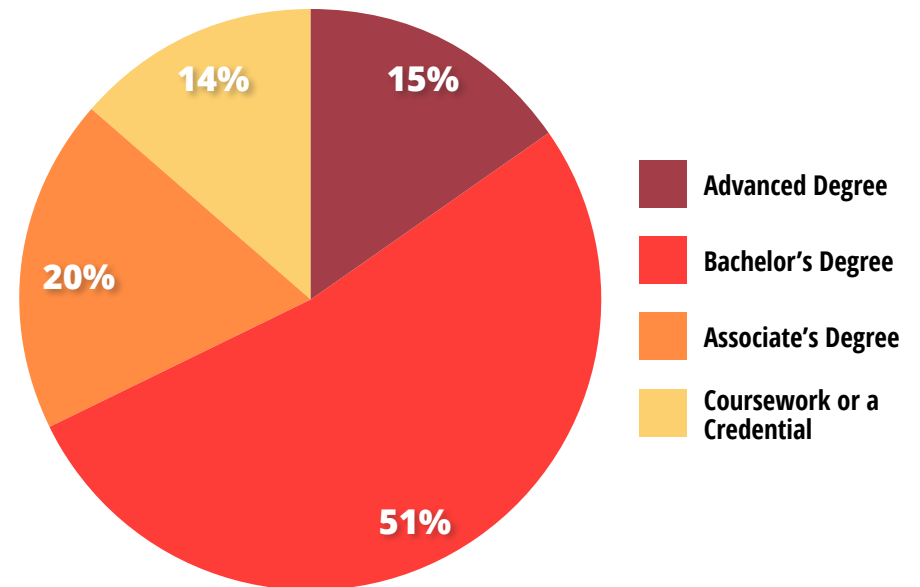
Program Management Staff



Teachers and Teacher's Assistants' Credentials



Family & Community Engagement Staff



HEALTH SERVICES IN FOCUS

During the 2018-2019 school year, the Health Services Advisory Committee addressed the issue of childhood obesity, developing new tools and communication strategies to collect and disseminate data and resources back to our families.

PARTNERSHIPS WITH LOCAL UNIVERSITIES

The Health & Nutrition component has developed partnerships with multiple area Bachelor and Master's level nursing schools, which provide valuable pediatric learning opportunities for students, and enhance our Head Start programs with capable volunteers who provide education and resources to staff and families.

HEALTH & NUTRITION COMPONENT RESTRUCTURING

The restructuring of the Health & Nutrition components into a single component in 2018 lowered the caseload for Health/Nutrition staff members by increasing the number of Health & Nutrition Services Managers for the Boston and Malden area, therefore enabling them to spend more time in their assigned programs and develop stronger and more meaningful connections with the families and staff.

With a lower caseload and less travel, staff is able to provide a more comprehensive health and nutrition services and case management of individual children and their families and devote more time to continuous monitoring of data and the services needed. The restructuring also included the addition of a Nutrition/Dietician Administrator, who oversees specialized food services, including staff and parent training, menu planning, meal planning, and dietary counseling.

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

Suzanne Sommer, NP
Boston Children's Hospital

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 from 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 a home visit where they administer the Ages and Stages Developmental and Social Emotional Screening 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.



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 (TS Gold)*, 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.

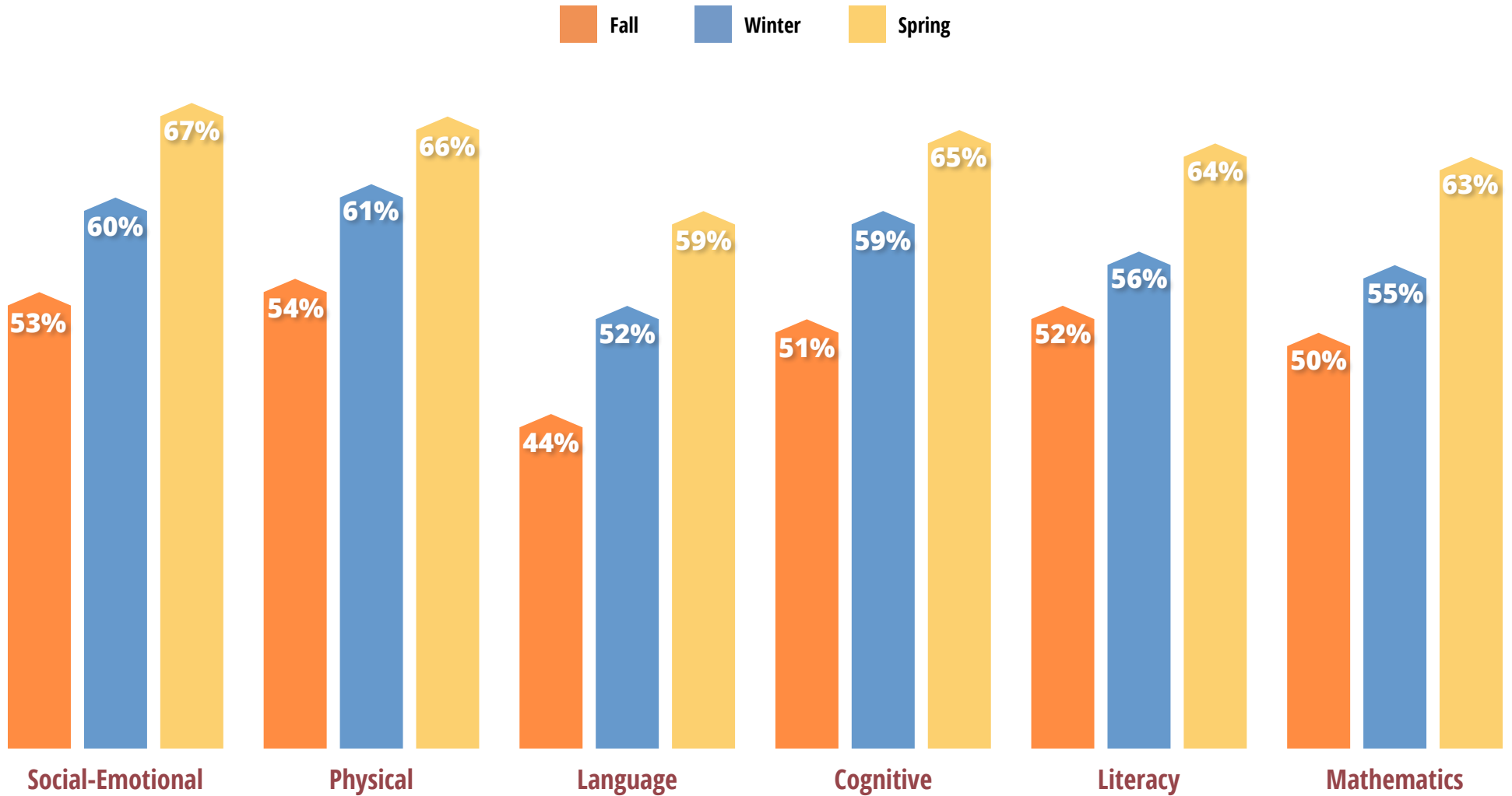
Ongoing teacher observations and assessments continue throughout the program year to support individualized activities, promote a child’s progress in all domains, and help to identify children needing additional interventions. The outcomes from each assessment period are then used to identify areas in 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.



	Number of Children Monitored Based on Screening Results	Number of Children Referred for Evaluation with Early Intervention/ Public School	Number of Children Who Received an IFSP/ IEP while Enrolled
Infants (0-14 months)	14	14	14
Toddlers (15-32 months)	38	38	36
Preschoolers	150	87	85

COMPARATIVE CHILD OUTCOMES: TS GOLD

Percentage of children in Early Head Start and Head Start who were meeting or exceeding developmental expectations for the fall, winter, and spring assessment periods.

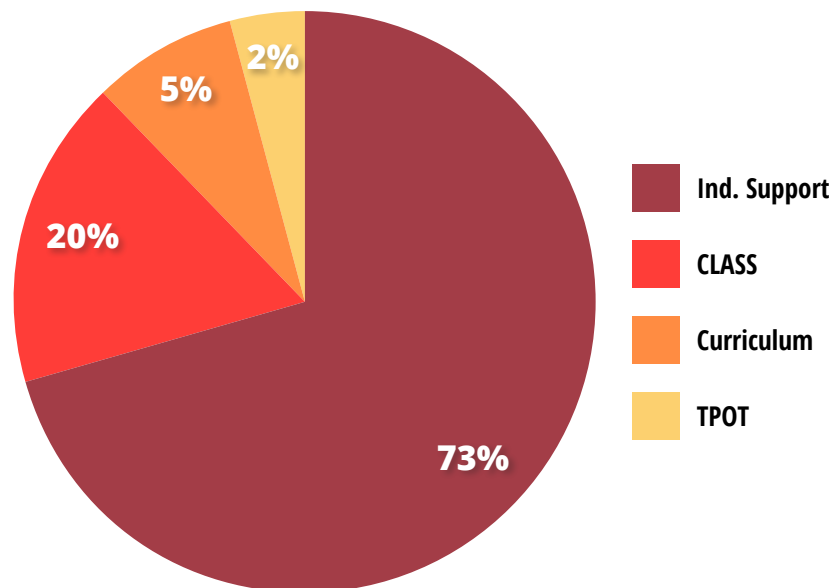


COACHING

ABCD Head Start & Children's Services has successfully implemented a comprehensive approach to coaching since 2015 and increased our coaching staff by 100% by the end of the school year. All coaches adopted a birth-five focus that will allow them to provide individualized one-on-one coaching to even more 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. Through the use of child assessment data, evidenced-based tools such as the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) and Environmental Rating Scales (ERS), and recommendations from program leadership, individual teachers are identified and enter into coaching agreements with a member of the coaching staff.

Through our coaching efforts, Head Start classrooms that received coaching received higher CLASS scores in all domains, with a nearly 10% difference in the area of Instructional Support, which includes concept development, quality of feedback, and language modelling.

274 Coaching Observations Sept - April



3 Coaches

9 Programs Served

52 Head Start Classroom Teachers Who Received Individual Coaching

47% Of Coaches Achieved at Least 1 Goal During the School Year

TRANSITION

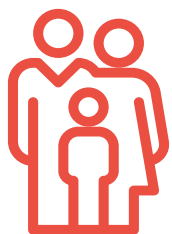
For more than 10 years, ABCD Head Start & Children's Services has had a Memorandum of Agreement with its LEA (Local Education Agency) partners, recognizing the importance and facilitating the process of transitioning to school. The formal process of transitioning from Head Start into Kindergarten begins 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.



Additionally, we have a system in place to help children who 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.



463

**FAMILIES
PARTICIPATED
IN TRANSITION
ACTIVITIES**

155

CHILDREN TRANSITIONED OUT OF EARLY HEAD START

142

**CHILDREN TRANSITIONED FROM
EARLY HEAD START TO HEAD START**

13

**CHILDREN TRANSITIONED
FROM EARLY HEAD START
TO TO ANOTHER CHILD
CARE PROGRAM**



544

**CHILDREN TRANSITIONED
TO KINDERGARTEN**

SCHOOL READINESS TASK FORCE

During the 2018-2019 School Year, Central leadership, program leadership, frontline staff, and parents have worked together to create a set of comprehensive school readiness goals (*see below*). These goals not only demonstrate a seamless birth-five approach to education, but align with the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework (ELOF), Massachusetts guidelines for learning experiences, and the state's kindergarten expectations.

1

APPROACHES TO LEARNING

Children will manage feelings, emotions, actions and behaviors with support to increase independence.

2

SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Children will develop a sense of belonging through positive relationships and interactions with other children and adults.

3

LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Children will be able to communicate, speak, build their vocabulary, and understand language as they develop knowledge in comprehending literacy skills.

4

COGNITION

Children will use their sense to actively observe, engage, and explore people and objects in the world around them.

5

COGNITION

Children will demonstrate an increasing understanding of numeracy, number sense, quantities, shapes and patterns while increasing their use of math-related vocabulary.

6

PERCEPTUAL, MOTOR AND PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Children will demonstrate increasing control and coordination of large and small muscles to explore, play, and engage in their daily routine.

7

PERCEPTUAL, MOTOR AND PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Children will demonstrate healthy behaviors, self-care skills and engage in healthy eating habits.

HIGHLIGHTS

BOSTON MAYOR ANNOUNCES UNIVERSAL PRE-K PARTNERSHIP

PROGRAM ENGAGES BOSTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

Boston Mayor Martin J. Walsh announced the City will invest \$15 million to establish the “Quality Pre-K Fund,” which will guarantee equitable access to free, high-quality pre-kindergarten (pre-K) for all 4-year-olds living in Boston within five years. Mayor Walsh made the announcement on April 2, 2019 alongside parents, teachers, students, working families, partner organizations, elected officials and education advocates at ABCD Head Start at Walnut Grove in Dorchester.

ABCD Head Start & Children’s Services is a key partner and, through this grant, will provide its gold standard “whole child, whole family” early education programs to 80 children.

“We need to make sure that this access to pre-kindergarten is a guarantee for every single family in Boston regardless of your income or you background. This is a game-changer for the young people of our city,” Mayor Walsh said.

ABCD President/CEO John J. Drew said, “Having operated the highly successful Head Start and Early Head Start program for more than 50 years, ABCD continues to prepare underserved children from birth to age 5 for success in elementary school and beyond. We applaud Mayor Walsh, and we are excited to be a partner to the City of Boston and the Boston Public Schools in this breakthrough community-based initiative.”



ABCD HEAD START AT SAVIN STREET OPENS IN ROXBURY

In January 2019, ABCD opened Head Start @ Savin Street, a state-of-the-art learning center serving Boston’s Roxbury neighborhood. The center, which has the capacity to serve 68 children ages 0 to 5 and their families.

ABCD was able to renovate the building due to the generous support of the George Robert White Fund and its trustees, including Boston Mayor Martin J. Walsh, an Early Education Out of School Time Capital Grant from the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care, in partnership with CEDAC and the Children’s Investment Fund, which administers the fund, as well as the Office of Head Start. The center features a children’s outdoor play space funded by the Franklin Square House Foundation and a computer lab that was made possible by a donation from the Timothy Smith Network.



THE MALE ENGAGEMENT ADMINISTRATOR CREATES EMPOWERMENT FOR ABCD HEAD START FATHERS AND FATHER FIGURES

Recognizing the need to represent the diverse backgrounds of all of the families they serve, ABCD Head Start focuses on actively hiring staff that reflects the program's parents. Specifically, fathers and father figures who have historically been less visible in early childhood education. In 2019, acknowledging the need for male representation in childhood education, ABCD Head Start created its Male Engagement Administrator position.

When deciding who to hire for the position, they took into consideration someone who could relate to the fathers and father figures based on his own experience; a person who themselves understood the program and how it impacts families daily. The person they identified was Tesean Toole.

Tesean Toole, a former Head Start parent has worked in various positions at ABCD Head Start since 2005. He knows what it is like to be a father who wants to provide for his family but is faced with roadblocks such as: unemployment, communication barriers and instability.

"I want them to be supported. I want them to be able to reach their goals. I want them to create some goals. I want to be able to connect them to resources that align with their goals. I want them to receive the empowerment that some fathers need in order to empower their family," said Tesean.

During his time at Head Start Tesean has worked as kitchen staff, as a family advocate and now as the Male Engagement Administrator. He recognizes that this position is more than just a job. It is a safe space for ABCD Head Start fathers and father figures to go and feel heard and seen.



Darius Foster, a young dad whose 2 year old son is in the ABCD Early Head Start Program, says he looks to Tesean for guidance as an older male who can understand where he comes from and how he thinks. It's this comfort that built a bond between the two that has led to Darius applying to the Year Up program so that he can have stable employment and assist his family.

"Because I am like the youngest dad wherever I go, for the most part, especially here, I feel uncomfortable all the time," said Darius. "Tesean's the only one I've been able to come to with any of my issues. Just talking with him about even little things. Like, I have desires to do certain things for my children and he's like I'm going to look into that."

Tesean continues to travel to all of the ABCD Head Start programs to speak with staff and parents to gain a deeper understanding of how fathers, father-figures and other male-identifying persons engage in the programs and with their children. He has partnered with local organizations like Fathers Uplift, Codman Square NDC and Nurturing Fathers Program to further the efforts to create a community for fathers. He will continue to offer staff professional development, build inclusive male engagement programming, and ensure that fathers and father figures feel welcome in our programs and are engaged in their child's development and learning.

SPECIAL INITIATIVES

THE PARENT TO TEACHER PIPELINE: A FULFILLING CAREER AND ECONOMIC MOBILITY

In 2017 ABCD Head Start surveyed parents and inquired about their goals and barriers. Overwhelmingly, parents mentioned unemployment as a barrier to reaching their goals for their families. After analyzing the results of the survey and matching it with our employee statistics, it showed that 32% of staff started as a Head Start parent. It was clear from the data that there is a need and opportunity to help parents gain economic mobility by addressing their lack of employment with the need for Head Start teachers.

To integrate the national need for more Head Start teachers, to align with the national mission of creating economic mobility for Head Start and Early Head and to meet the needs of parents, ABCD Head Start created the parent cohort to create a professional pipeline for parents to become Head Start staff. Part of the cohort is preparing participants for careers in childhood education by helping them obtain their certification. We developed different ways to meet the educators' individual needs to obtain their Infant/Toddler CDA. For example, the Classroom Support Trainee (CST) cohort was formed and they were able to attend courses needed for CDA during their working hours.

In addition to recruiting parents, we are focused on outreach to new early childhood education graduates. The aim of ABCD Head Start is to grow the next generation of early educators through supporting Head Start parents and guardians' employment and education goals, while also trying to interest young people in the field.





UNITED WAY DRIVE

Launched by United Way with the support of its Private Equity/Venture Capital Leadership Council in 2014, DRIVE is a groundbreaking initiative for achieving universal child development screening for young children. ABCD is partnering with DRIVE to enhance its use of the Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ). By joining other Boston agencies as DRIVE partners, ABCD will have access to ASQ and ASQ: SE online and reporting tools and will participate in learning collaborative meetings.

NORTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY BOUVE COLLEGE OF HEALTH SCIENCES

A partnership with the Nurse Practitioner program at Northeastern University allows experienced Registered Nurses who are working towards becoming Nurse Practitioners to assist with daily activities in the classrooms, while gaining first hand knowledge of early childhood development, and provide valuable health education to the staff and families.

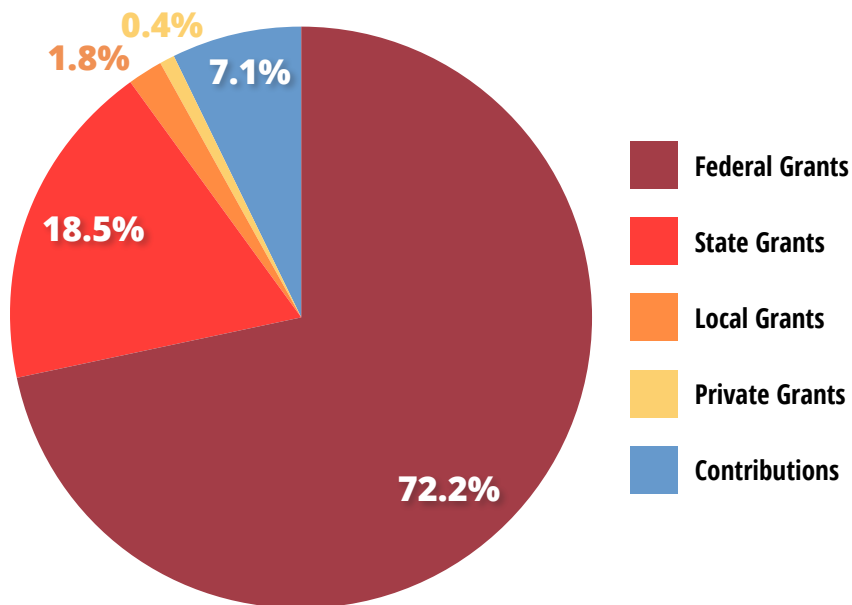
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ABCD Head Start has been awarded funding for an initiative in which we work closely with the Department of Early Education and Care, Boston Public Schools, and several child care providers in Boston to provide full day, full year pre-Kindergarten programming 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 Local Education Agency (LEA) in their public pre-kindergarten (K1) classrooms. This initiative was completed at the end of August 2019.

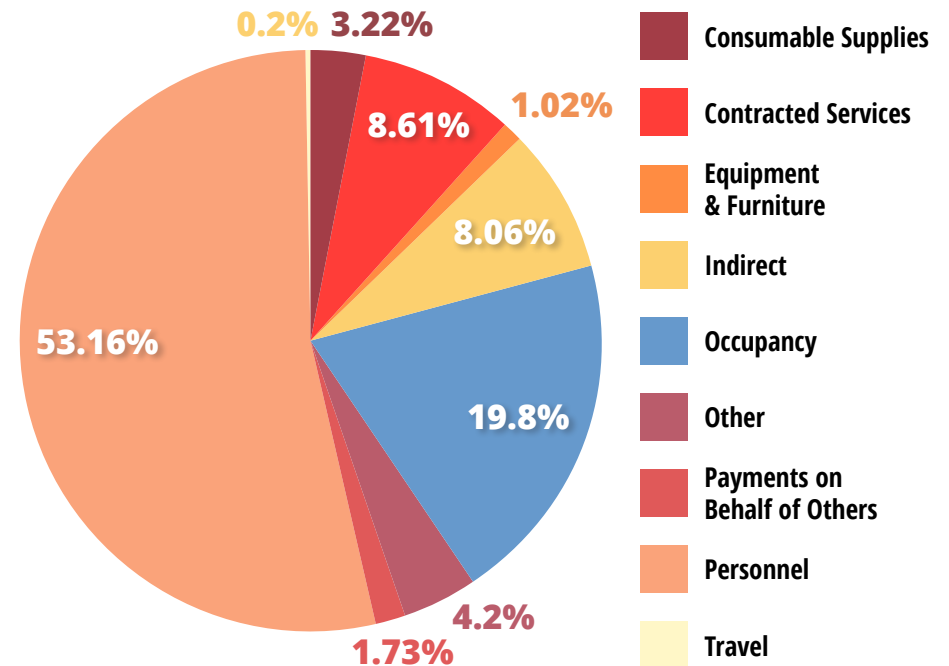
BUDGET OVERVIEW

TOTAL BUDGET: \$44 MILLION

FY2019 Revenue Sources



FY2019 Functional Expenses



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 unmodified opinions.

NOTES



HEAD START & CHILDREN'S SERVICES

178 Tremont Street, Boston MA 02111 | bostonheadstart.org

