

WESTERN DAIRYLAND HEAD START ANNUAL REPORT

2024-2025

This annual report was made available to the public through our website and was shared electronically to the governing body, policy council, local school districts, and community organizations that we collaborate with.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Western Dairyland receives Federal funds from the Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families' Office of Head Start to provide services to **60** Early Head Start children and **382** Head Start children in Buffalo, Eau Claire, Jackson, and Trempealeau counties. Of the **382** Head Start children, **254** are served directly by Western Dairyland and **128** are served through a Delegate Contractual Agreement with the Eau Claire Area School District. Of the **60** Early Head Start children, **44** are served in a home visiting model and **16** are served in an Early Head Start center-based model within our Independence Center.

HEAD START

Western Dairyland Head Start serves children ages three to five in nine full-day centers. Children enrolled in the full-day program are in class four days per week for a total of 1,020 annual hours of classroom instruction. All Head Start centers are licensed through the Wisconsin Department of Children and Families.

The average Head Start monthly enrollment between September 2024 through May 2025 is 99% of the funded enrollment.

HEAD START CENTERS	# of Classrooms	PROGRAM OPTION	TOTAL CHILDREN SERVED
BUFFALO COUNTY			
Naples Head Start Center	1	Full day	17 children
EAU CLAIRE COUNTY			
Altoona Early Education Center	2	Full day	39 children
Eau Claire Head Start Center	4	Full day	66 children
Truax Head Start Center	1	Full day	18 children
JACKSON COUNTY			
Black River Falls Head Start Center	2	Full day	39 children
TREMPEALEAU COUNTY			
Arcadia Early Learning Center	2	Full day	36 children
Blair Head Start Center	1	Full day	18 children
Galesville-Eltrick-Trempealeau Center	2	Full day	22 children
Independence Head Start Center	1	Full day	17 children
TOTAL # OF CHILDREN SERVED			272 children

EARLY HEAD START

Our Early Head Start program serves infants and toddlers under the age of three, and pregnant women in a [home visiting](#) model. Families receive weekly home visits that promote the parents' ability to support their child's development. Twice a month, families are offered opportunities to attend socializations. During this time, participating children are engaged in age-appropriate activities while their parents are able to get to know one another and share parenting successes and challenges.

EARLY HEAD START HOME VISITING	TOTAL CHILDREN SERVED	TOTAL PREGNANT WOMEN SERVED
Buffalo County	9 children	1
Eau Claire County	17 children	1
Jackson County	31 children	7
TOTAL	57 children	9 pregnant women

Newly opened in April 2024, our Early Head Start center is located in Independence. We serve 16 children aged 6 weeks to 3 years old in 1 infant classroom and 1 toddler classroom. The Early Head Start center offers care Monday through Friday for a total of 1,380 hours per year.

EARLY HEAD START CENTER BASED	TOTAL CHILDREN SERVED
Caterpillar Room (6 weeks+)	13 children
Butterfly Room (18 mo+)	13 children
TOTAL	26 children

The average Early Head Start monthly enrollment between September 2024 through August 2025 is 98% of the funded enrollment.

OUR MISSION

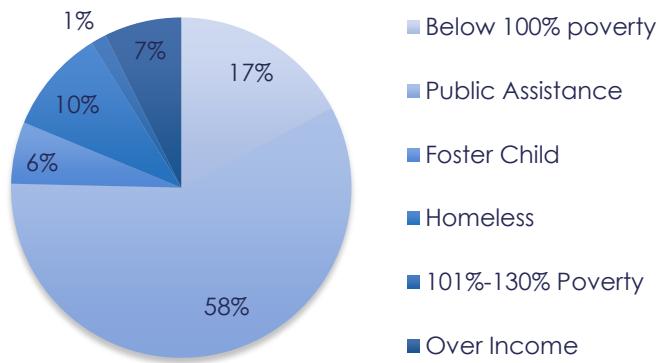
To educate and empower low-income children (pre-natal – 5 years) and families to reach their highest potential.

OUR CORE VALUES

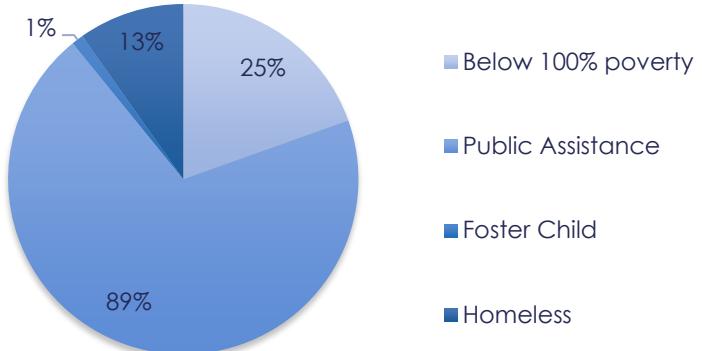
- We strive for **excellence** through **continuous improvement** and **best practices**.
- We treat everyone with **respect, compassion**, and **empathy**.
- We create **safe** and **nurturing high-quality** environments for children and staff.

ENROLLMENT STATISTICS

HEAD START ENROLLMENT BY ELIGIBILITY



EARLY HEAD START ENROLLMENT BY ELIGIBILITY



FUNDING SOURCES

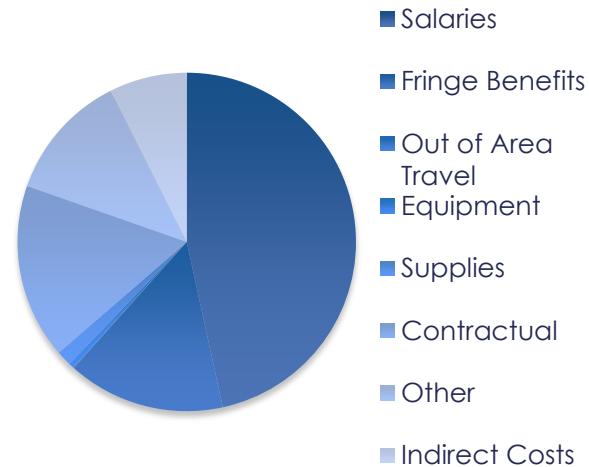
PROGRAM REVENUES

Funding Sources	Amount
Federal Head Start	\$6,205,069.00
Federal Head Start COLA and Quality Improvement	\$172,512.00
Federal Early Head Start	\$1,200,055.00
Federal Head Start Supplemental Funding	\$198,200.00
Wisconsin Head Start Supplemental – Department of Public Instruction	\$160,677.00
USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program	\$227,669.00
Community Services Block Grant	\$30,000.00
Eau Claire Area School District - 4K Reimbursement	\$120,461.00
Mondovi School District – 4K Reimbursement	\$19,000.00
Black River Falls School District – 4K Reimbursement	\$13,320.00
In-Kind Contributions (Non-Federal Share)	\$1,000,244.00
TOTAL	\$9,347,207

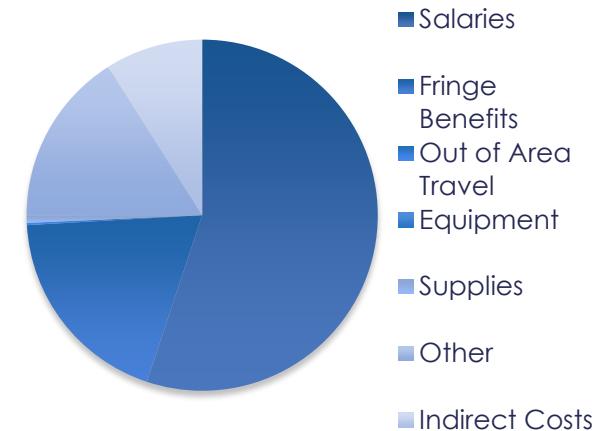
PROGRAM EXPENDITURES

FEDERAL HEAD START

Budget Line Item	Budgeted	Expenditures
Salaries	\$3,227,496	\$ 3,049,980
Fringe Benefits	\$923,199	\$985,458
Out of Area Travel	\$20,156	\$5,571
Equipment	\$30,000	\$32,362
Supplies	\$93,033	\$94,004
Contractual	\$1,068,041	\$ 1,095,092
Other	\$ 697,247	\$ 800,557
Indirect Costs	\$ 488,789	\$ 484,936
TOTAL	\$ 6,547,961	\$ 6,547,961



FEDERAL EARLY HEAD START



Budget Line Item	Budgeted	Expenditures
Salaries	\$732,768	\$676,600
Fringe Benefits	\$232,883	\$233,188
Out of Area Travel	\$8,595	\$2,508
Equipment	\$0	\$0
Supplies	\$9,207	\$8,353
Other	\$137,993	\$196,576
Indirect Costs	\$106,429	\$110,649
TOTAL	\$1,227,875	\$1,227,875

AGENCY'S EFFORT TO PREPARE CHILDREN FOR KINDERGARTEN

HEAD START APPROACH TO SCHOOL READINESS

The Head Start Approach to School Readiness means that **children are ready for school, families are ready to support their children's learning, and schools are ready for children**. At Western Dairyland Head Start, our approach to prepare children for kindergarten includes providing high-quality early learning environments, ensuring children are healthy and ready to learn, and engaging parents to actively involve in their child's education.

Western Dairyland **Head Start** utilizes the research-based **Creative Curriculum for Pre-school** which fully aligns with the Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards and the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework. Creative Curriculum is designed to be able to meet the learning needs and interests of all children through an organized, developmental scope and sequence based on developmental progression and how children learn.

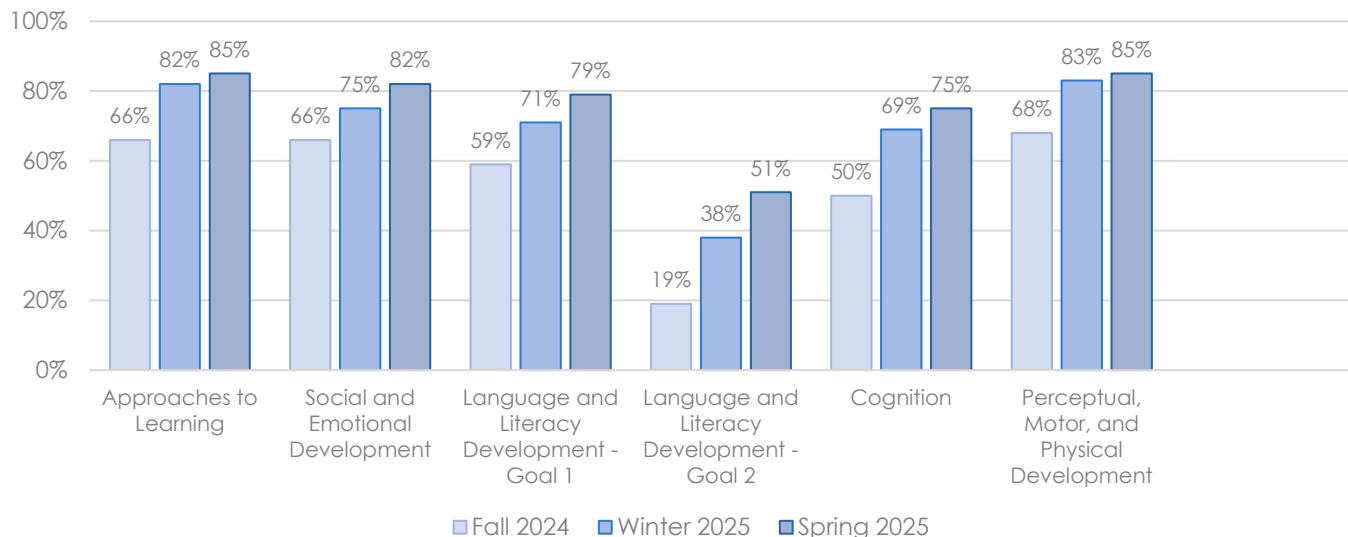
The **Early Head Start** program implements research-based **Partners for a Healthy Baby** for our home-based program, which has been nationally recognized to improve birth outcomes, reduce rates of child abuse, increase intervals between pregnancies, strengthen families, enhance child health and developmental outcomes, and support family stability and economic self-sufficiency. The Early Head Start center-based program uses the **Creative Curriculum for Infants, Toddlers, and Twos**.

SCHOOL READINESS OUTCOMES

For center-based programming, Western Dairyland Head Start uses Teaching Strategies Gold, a standardized structured assessment that provides ongoing information to evaluate each child's developmental level and progress. For home-based programming, we use the Desired Results Developmental Profile as the formative assessment instrument for young children and their families. A child's progress is formally assessed three times per year for Head Start and four times a year for Early Head Start. This information is shared with families and used for goal setting.

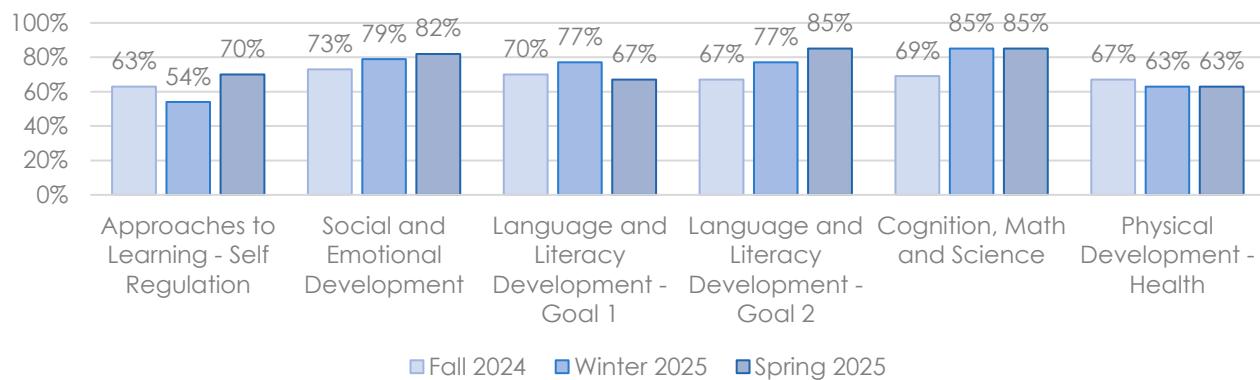
In **Head Start**, children made gains in all areas of development. The largest gains were made in Cognition (25% increase) and Language and Literacy Development Goal 2 (32% increase).

% of Head Start children meeting expectations



In **Early Head Start** many factors impact child outcomes including a wide range of skills from birth to age three and that many skills fall in the Not Yet range on the continuum and are considered meeting widely held expectations. If a skill is not observed during the assessment, it is considered “met”. Children continued to make gains in most areas of development with the largest gains in Language and Literacy – Goal 2 (Children will show awareness that spoken language is composed of similar ending sounds) (18%) and Cognition, Match and Science (16%).

% of Early Head Start children meeting expectations



FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

A strong parent-child relationship is essential to a child's healthy development, school readiness, and well-being. When families face challenges that cause stress, including poverty and homelessness, their health and wellness can be negatively impacted. Our family services staff and home visitors work closely with parents to connect them to resources and services in the communities they live in.

Policy Council members are Head Start parents who are elected by the parents of children who are currently enrolled in the program. The Policy Council is a unique aspect of Head Start program governance; it supports active parent engagement in the operation and design of the program such as:

- Review and approve funding applications
- Review and approve annual operating budgets
- Criteria for recruitment, selection, and enrollment

FATHER ENGAGEMENT

Head Start has a strong history of prioritizing the engagement of fathers and male family members. Research shows that fathers tend to:

- Encourage more exploration and independent behavior in young children
- Use language that stretches and challenges children's language competency
- Use complementary discipline and parenting strategies

134 fathers/father figures participated in father engagement activities in 2024-2025

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT



126 families received *crisis intervention* services, including food, clothing, or shelter



249 families received *parenting education* and *health education*

- Gathering and using information families share
- Assessing children and families
- Engaging in open and ongoing communication

As we build relationships and form strong partnerships with families, we can help families set goals and work together to achieve their goals and dreams for their children and their family.



HEALTH SERVICES

Health and school readiness are closely linked. Children need to be healthy and safe to learn. Western Dairyland Head Start emphasizes the importance of early identification of health problems. We believe in promoting children's health and wellness as they support children's physical, mental, and social well-being. Our staff work closely with families to help establish or maintain access to ongoing, continuous health care for their children and promote healthy, safe behaviors in our centers and at home.



PHYSICAL HEALTH

93% of Head Start children have an up-to-date **medical exam**



98% of Early Head Start children have an up-to-date **medical exam**



ORAL HEALTH



96% of Head Start children have an up-to-date **dental exam**



50% of Early Head Start children have an up-to-date **dental exam**



VISION & HEARING SCREENINGS

99% of children received **vision screening** using the Welch Allyn Spot Screener

99% of children received **hearing screening** using the Maico Ero Scan OAE Screener



IMMUNIZATION

97% of Head Start children have up-to-date **immunizations**

99% of Early Head Start children have up-to-date **immunizations**



MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Early childhood mental health is the same as social and emotional well-being. Western Dairyland contracts with two licensed therapists for mental health consultation services in our programs. In 2024-2025, the mental health consultants provided a total of **1003.5 hours** of services including training, observations, and individual consultations to our children, families, and staff.

FEDERAL REVIEWS AND FINANCIAL AUDIT

The Administration for Children and Families Office of Head Start (OHS) assesses grantee compliance through a monitoring system that is aligned with a comprehensive five-year continuous oversight plan. The Aligned Monitoring System ensures that all Head Start programs provide high-quality services to children and families by facilitating compliance with Head Start Program Performance Standards.



FEDERAL REVIEWS

Fiscal Year	Review Area	Monitoring Dates
2024	Focus Area One Monitoring Review	April 22-24, 2024 No finding
2024	Risk Assessment Notification (RAN) Review for the supervision incident in Arcadia on May 14, 2024 and the inappropriate child guidance incident by a district staff to a Head Start child in Arcadia on May 15, 2024, both were self-reported to the Office of Head Start.	The Office of Head Start conducted a RAN review of the two incidents following the reports in May 2024. We received the monitoring report in July 2024, which resulted in a non-compliance finding for the supervision incident and a deficiency finding for the inappropriate conduct. Western Dairyland Head Start has 120 days to correct the findings. The Office of Head Start conducted a follow-up review of the RAN review findings on Tuesday, November 19, 2024. We received the monitoring report on Friday, December 6, 2024, stating that the two findings have been corrected.

FINANCIAL AUDIT

The financial audit was conducted in May 2025 by an independent auditor, Wipfli LLP. No findings were issued.