



KOOTASCA Community Action, Inc.

Head Start

Building Community to End Poverty



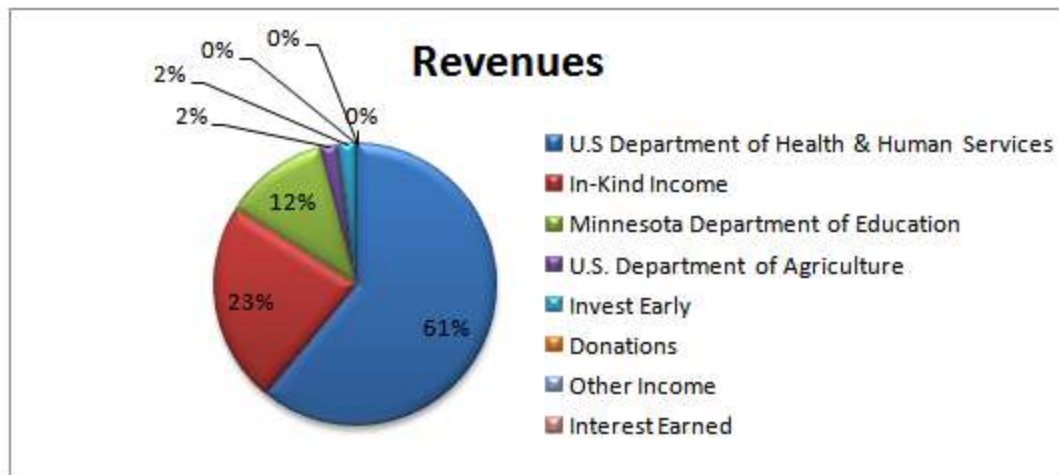
Head Start Annual Report to the Public

March 1, 2008 – February 28, 2009

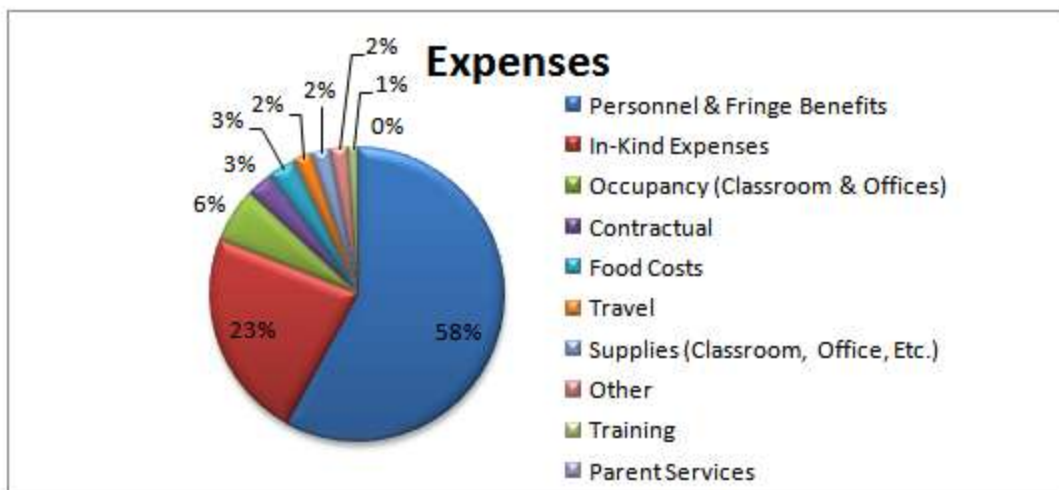
KOOTASCA Head Start Financial Report

March 1, 2008 - February 28, 2009

Revenues	
U.S Department of Health & Human Services	\$ 1,807,816
In-Kind Income	670,183
Minnesota Department of Education	344,166
U.S. Department of Agriculture	71,062
Invest Early	54,750
Donations	2,657
Other Income	1,188
Interest Earned	28
Total Revenues	<u>\$ 2,951,850</u>



Expenses	
Personnel & Fringe Benefits	\$ 1,748,931
In-Kind Expenses	670,183
Occupancy (Classroom & Offices)	173,594
Contractual	94,873
Food Costs	82,047
Travel	55,970
Supplies (Classroom, Office, Etc.)	46,990
Other	46,823
Training	28,580
Parent Services	3,681
Total Expenses	<u>\$ 2,951,672</u>



Enrollment

	Federal 3& 4 Year Olds	State Infant & Toddlers	Total
Funded Enrollment	217	41	258

Average Monthly Enrollment: 100%

According to the 2007 KIDSCOUNT data, there are approximately 3,000 children between the ages of 0 – 4 living in Itasca and Koochiching counties. Approximately 468 would be income eligible children. KOOTASCA serves 258 children through Head Start and Early Head Start or approximately 55% of the eligible children in the two counties.

Monitoring Review

KOOTASCA Community Action Head Start program underwent their last triennial review in March of 2008 and follow up review in November 2008. After the follow up review the program was determined to be in full compliance with all Head Start Performance Standards, laws, regulations and policy requirements.

Audits

The agency audit was completed by Kern Dewenter Vere (KDV) of Minneapolis and St. Cloud, Minnesota. The audit was conducted in accordance with U.S. generally accepted auditing standards and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in Government Auditing Standards, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States. In their opinion the financial statements referred to in the audit present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of KOOTASCA Community Action, Inc., as of December 31, 2008, the changes in its net assets and its cash flows for the year then ended in conformity with U.S. generally accepted accounting principles. The full audit report can be obtained by contacting Christine Partlow, Education Fiscal Director at 218.327.5536.

Medical and Dental Exams

- 97.85% of enrolled children received dental exams
- 100% of enrolled children received medical exams

Parent Involvement Activities

Parent Involvement is one of the cornerstones of the Head Start Program. Here at KOOTASCA Head Start we provide many opportunities for parents to participate in the Head Start program including:

Parent Involvement Opportunities	Number of parents who participated
Policy Council Representatives	16
Policy Council Alternate to the Policy Council	11
Past Head Start Parents who were community representatives on the Policy Council	5
Parents who participated in the goal setting process resulting in a family partnership agreement	84.07%
Volunteering within the program by helping in the classroom, attending planning and committee meetings, attending HS events, etc.	220
Helped with the program self assessment	6

Family First Events have been a huge success over the last year with hundreds of family members attending the events throughout Itasca and Koochiching Counties. Shown below are a few of the great activities offered to families last year.



***Learning About The Farm
Deer River, Minnesota***



***Giant Candy Land Game
Grand Rapids, Minnesota***

KOOTASCA Head Start along with our Invest Early and Project Read partners made a special effort to get fathers involved in the program. A total of 139 Head Start fathers attended at least one event during the program year.

Fathers Reading Every Day (FRED) Events were also held throughout Itasca and Koochiching Counties. The goal of FRED is to institute a new habit for fathers or male caregivers of reading and sharing stories with children on a daily basis.

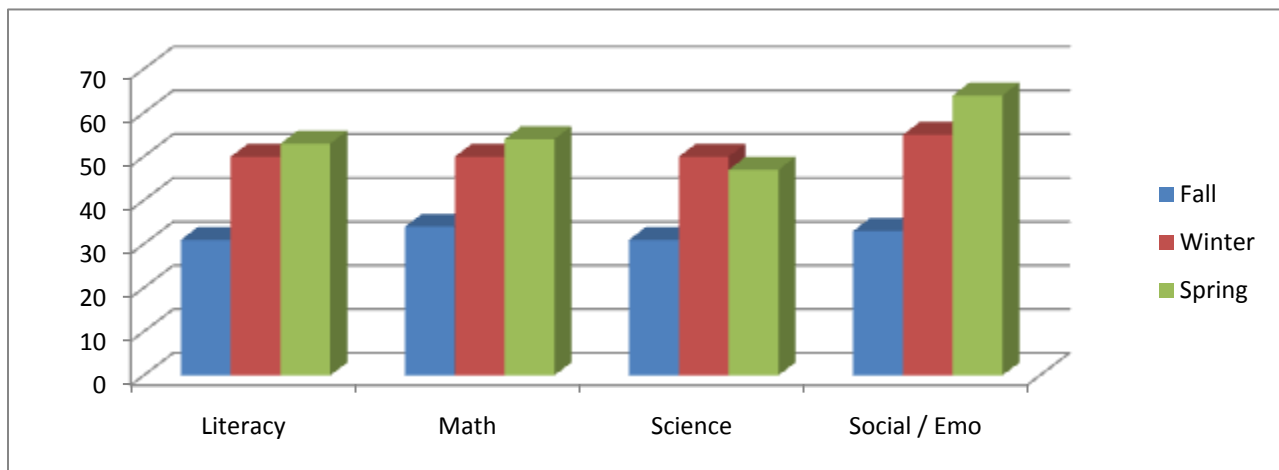


Agency efforts to prepare children for school

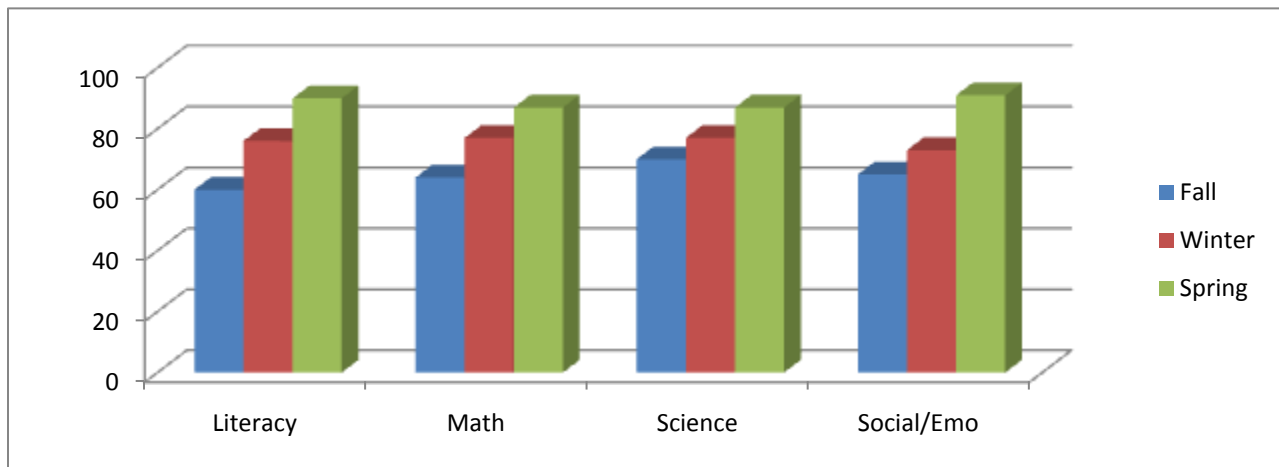
KOOTASCA Head Start utilizes Creative Curriculum to track each child's progress. Within Creative Curriculum all aspects of the child's day is an opportunity to learn and grow. Classroom staff members plan fun hands on learning experiences for children in all areas of development. In addition, they also individualize activities in areas where specific children may need additional practice to become proficient. Classroom staff members monitor children's progress throughout the year by observing the children within the classroom or home environment. Information is shared with the parents during conferences, home visits or at the parents' request. Parents with internet access can also monitor their child's progress through Creative Curriculum on-line.

The following charts show children's progress in the areas of Literacy, Mathematics, Science and Social/Emotional as measured in the fall, winter and spring.

Three Year Old Children



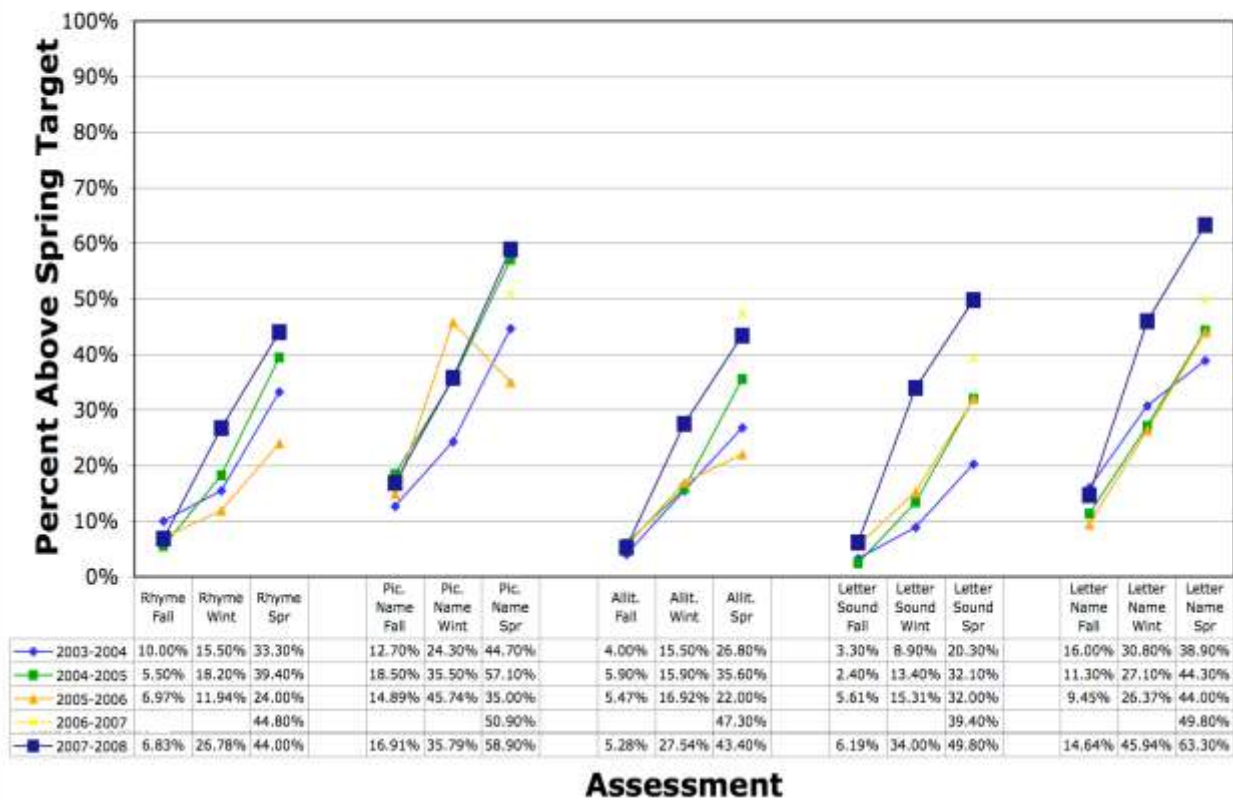
Four Year Old Children



Literacy Focus – AmeriCorps

In 2006 KOOTASCA Head Start applied for and was chosen to be a sponsor site of the AmeriCorps Minnesota Reading Corps (MRC). This program places members in early childhood centers across Minnesota to help children improve their emerging literacy skills and prepare for Kindergarten. KOOTASCA Head Start continues to be involved in this project and during the 2007/08 school year 21 volunteers donated more than 17,000 hours of time within our classrooms. These volunteers work side by side with our teaching staff to promote literacy throughout the classroom day. If you calculate the value of their time at \$10.20 per hour (an entry level wage at KOOTASCA) the value is \$174,300 of direct service we do not have to pay for with Federal Head Start funds.

Cross Cohort IGD I Performance



I am *moving* A Proactive Approach for Addressing Childhood Obesity in Head Start Children



I am *learning*

How do we go from here

to here.....



In 2007 KOOTASCA Head Start was one of 20 programs selected to attend the “I Am Moving I Am Learning” training in Chicago. This initiative promotes more physical activity within the early childhood classrooms in an effort to reduce childhood obesity which is a national epidemic. The training gave staff strategies on how to use movement throughout the day and how to incorporate math, literacy and even science into the movement activities. The program sent three classroom teachers, our Health, Safety and Nutrition Manager, as well as the Education Manager to the training. Staff who attended the training came back extremely energized and wanting to share what they had learned with all of the classroom staff.

In September 2008 KOOTASCA Head Start staff along with Kelly Dale from the TA Network provided a one half day presentation to all of the Head Start and Invest Early staff—a total of more than 100 people. The half day training was well received with 85% of the responses from the training evaluation ranking the training either really good or fantastic. In addition to the training, a challenge was presented for staff to have two hours of physical activity each day by the end of January.

Early Head Start

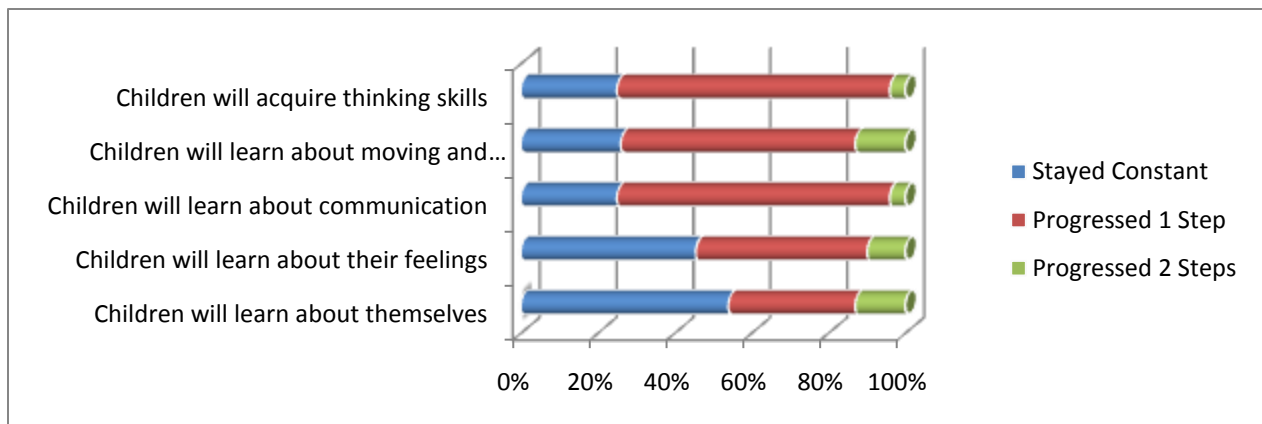
In addition to our pre-school programming KOOTASCA Head Start also provided service to 41 infants and toddlers in Itasca and Koochiching counties through two program models. 25 are enrolled in a home base model and 16 as pregnant and parenting teen mothers.

Home Base Head Start

The EHS Home Base program provides comprehensive services to families reaching them much sooner than we can with our three and four year old program. By reaching families sooner we can help stabilize the family and improve outcomes for the children and the family as a whole. The Home Base program provides more one-on-one contact with parents and provides them with much needed assistance during the most critical time in a child's development as well as provides a better chance of making long term positive results for the family.

Gains From Fall to Spring: Home Based

KOOTASCA identified five areas of outcomes to measure over the last school year. In four areas the majority of the children progressed at least one step, sometimes two. No cases were identified in which children regressed or progressed more than two steps comparing fall measures with spring.



Outcomes for children	Stayed Constant	Progressed 1 Step	Progressed 2 Steps
Children will acquire thinking skills	25%	71%	4%
Children will learn about moving and doing	26%	61%	13%
Children will learn about communication	25%	71%	4%
Children will learn about their feelings	46%	45%	10%
Children will learn about themselves	54%	33%	13%

Early Head Start Teen Parent Program

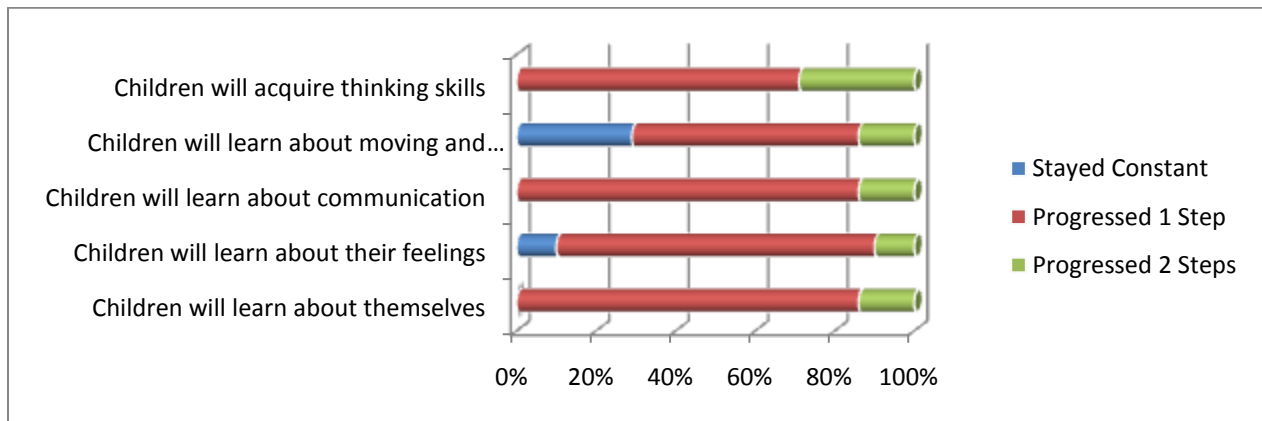
The EHS TAPP program is an Early Head Start combination program where children attend two days a week and have two home visits per month. This program targets pregnant and parenting teen mothers and this approach allows teen mothers to earn a high school diploma while attending the Alternative Learning Center (ALC) one day per week and attending classes provided by community partners such as Public Health, Work Force Center, Itasca County YMCA, ECFE and Advocates for Family Peace one day a week at the Itasca Resource Center. Students attending Early Head Start /TAPP can receive their diploma much faster than if attending the ALC alone. Semi-monthly home visits help to provide education on child development and nurturance, as well as helping the students build a sense of structure and consistency at home. This additional family support helps the young mothers not only graduate from school but plan for a successful future.

5 teen parents received their high school diploma this program year:

- Deer River High School – 1 Student
- Greenway High School – 1 Student
- Grand Rapids High School – 3 Students

In addition students earned 1,292 credit hours towards their high school diploma by attending TAPP. One of the graduating students has also received her Certified Nursing Assistant certificate and two obtained full time employment.

Gains From Fall to Spring: Teen Parent Program



Outcomes for children	Stayed Constant	Progressed 1 Step	Progressed 2 Steps
Children will acquire thinking skills	0%	71%	29%
Children will learn about moving and doing	29%	57%	14%
Children will learn about communication	0%	86%	14%
Children will learn about their feelings	10%	80%	10%
Children will learn about themselves	0%	86%	14%



KOOTASCA Head Start is a “Founding Partner” in the Invest Early project in Itasca County. The Invest Early initiative is collaboration between four local school districts, KOOTASCA Head Start, Itasca County Human Services/Public Health, Itasca Community College, and Bemidji State University and is funded by the Blandin Foundation. Although this project is in a small rural community, it is generating lots of attention across the state and also across the nation and was recently a subject of a Harvard Business School Case Study that will be used in their classrooms starting in the fall of 2009.

The Invest Early project is significant not only in how services are provided but also because it is the first time that a rural program will be part of a 30 year longitudinal study conducted by the Wilder Foundation. This project provides over 150 additional early childhood slots for children 6 weeks to kindergarten age in Itasca County. The preschool programming is unique in several ways. In this model both children and staff from different funding streams, Head Start, School Readiness and slots funded from the Blandin Foundation (Invest Early) are blended together to provide a comprehensive preschool experience for children as well as support for families. The project has a common application for all early childhood programs and a team meets to rank applications based on income and additional risk factors. After the applications are ranked children are slotted into the funding stream that best meets their needs. In this process all Head Start income eligible slots are filled first then the Blandin funded (Invest Early) slots and finally School Readiness. If a family drops from Head Start during the year any income eligible child being served through one of the other funded streams is put into the Head Start slot and the next most eligible child from the waiting list is given the slot ensuring the neediest families receive the service. Families enrolled in this blended programming have access to wrap-around childcare from 6:00 am to 6:00 pm and all day Fridays when Head Start classrooms are not in session. In some cases, year-round programming is available through this partnership.

The pre-school programming is unique in several ways. In this model both children and staff from different funding streams, Head Start, School Readiness and slots funded from the Blandin Foundation (Invest Early) are blended together to provide a comprehensive pre-school experience for children as well as support for families. Currently 82 Head Start children are enrolled in a blended classroom with Invest Early.

More than 40 of the 150 slots with Invest Early have been dedicated to infants and toddlers in Itasca County where little programming has been available. Services to infants and toddlers are also available 6:00 am to 6:00 pm Monday through Friday and year round. Families choose the amount of time needed to meet their needs. Since the project began four years ago, at any one time, approximately 98% of the infants and toddlers served through Invest Early have been Head Start income eligible.