



Community Action of Orleans & Genesee

Head Start (birth-5)

Annual Report

09/01/2023 – 08/30/2024

Pamela J. Wadhams, Director of Head Start

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~ Community Action of Orleans and Genesee Mission Statement ~

*To provide services, with dignity and respect,  
that help people become self-sufficient.*

Head Start is a comprehensive school-readiness program for children and families provided in a variety of options and locations. Program components include education and child development, health and nutrition, and family and community engagement. Dedicated staff support parents as their child's 1<sup>st</sup> and most important teacher. Enrollment is available to eligible children throughout the year.

*Program History:*

*Community Action began providing Head Start services in Orleans County in 1965. Services were added in Genesee County in the 1980s. Changes have been made through the years, including adding the Early Head Start Program in 2001. We now have a variety of options and classes located at 5 different sites to meet various needs and serve children birth-5)*

*This report covers the time period of 09/01/23 – 08/31/24,  
which aligns with the Program Year.  
Fiscal information will be added to the report after the audit is completed.*

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# COMMUNITY NEEDS

Poverty has increased with a higher concentration in Albion, Medina and the southwest side of Batavia, even though population has decreased in Orleans County.

Disability rates have increased.

Both counties have documented lead levels that are significantly higher than the average in NYS overall.

Families are more mobile and often found with no permanent address or a consistent phone number where they can be reached. A higher number of children are being raised by family other than parents.

Housing in both Orleans and Genesee Counties is overcrowded. Section 8 housing has a long waiting list and, unsafe and unsanitary homes are on the rise.

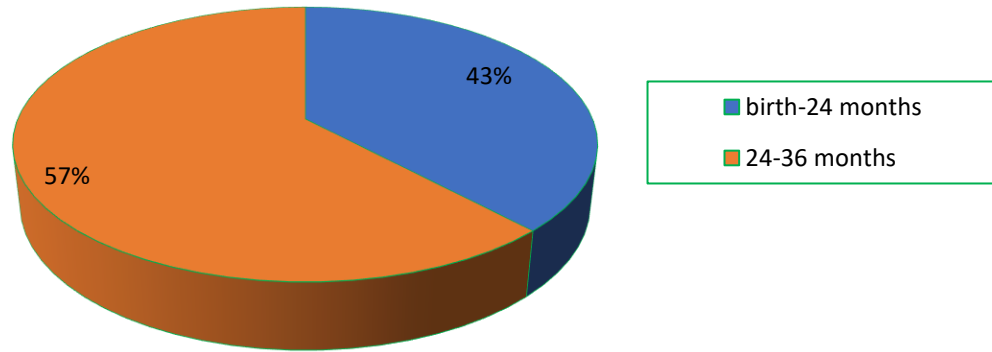
An increase in crime, transient housing, drug related concerns and violence have all impacted the children in the communities. Difficult behaviors in young children related to social-emotional development are an increasing concern.

Strides in addressing concerns related to limited broad band internet access by offering public hotspots. Subsidies to lower cost have also become available for low-income households. There continue to be availability barriers in out-lying rural areas to both residents and businesses.

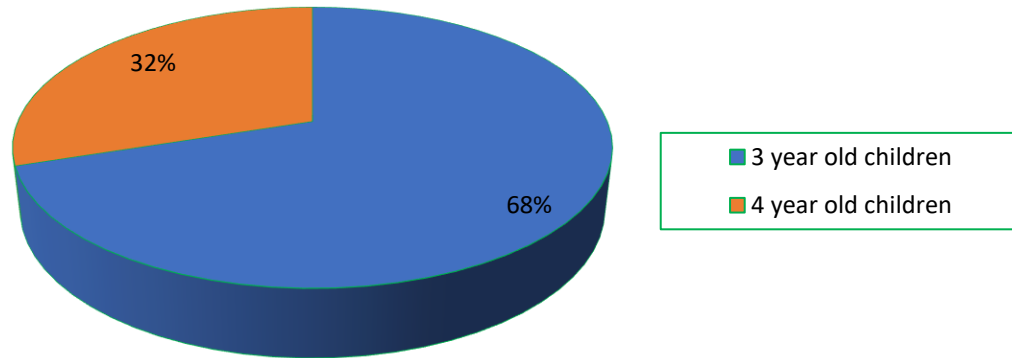
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**Enrollment Information**

**Children Served - Early Head Start - 64**



**Children Served - Head Start - 155**



**Total enrollment for year: 219**

**27% of the children enrolled for multiple years**

**49 Head Start children transitioning to kindergarten**

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### **Health Information**



At the end of the year:

99 % had health insurance

100% had a medical home

61% (Head Start) had a dental home

All children had immunizations required prior to entry; immunizations not required by NYS (i.e. flu, COVID, etc.) promoted to families

### **Disabilities Information**

Head Start – 33 (21%) children with IEP (15 at entry, 18 during year)

Early Head Start – 4 (6%) children with IFSP (4 at entry)

All 37 children enrolled received at least one of the services they were determined eligible for.

### **Body Mass Index / Weight Categories**

Head Start Only

68% healthy weight

1% underweight

15% overweight

16% obese

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## **Child Development**

*The Ages & Stages Questionnaire (ASQ) and the Ages & Stages Questionnaire – Social-Emotional (ASQ-SE) are developmental screening and monitoring tools designed to help determine if children’s development is age appropriate. The initial screenings are completed within 45 days of entry into the program. Continued screenings are completed at milestone ages as determined by the researchers.*

### **Head Start**

- 116 new students to be screened within 45 days
- 116 screened
- 23 referred for follow-up screening or services

### **Early Head Start**

- 43 new students to be screened within 45 days
- 43 screened
- 1 referred for follow-up assessment or services

**CREATIVE CURRICULUM** is used across the program; staff is trained in implementation annually to carry out the school readiness goals, which are aligned with the New York State Early Learning Guidelines and Prekindergarten Learning Standards as well as the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework.

**TEACHING STRATEGIES GOLD** assessments are conducted at least three times during the year throughout the program: Fall, Winter, Spring for Head Start and Fall, Winter, Spring and Summer for Early Head Start.

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## **Assessment Results**

### **EARLY HEAD START**

#### **1 to 2 years**

- All children were observed to be meeting or exceeding “Widely Held Expectations” at the end of Spring assessment cycle for the Social-Emotional, Cognitive, and Literacy domains.

#### **2 to 3 years**

- Children exceeded widely held expectations most in the Social-Emotional and Physical domains.

#### **OVERALL**

- The greatest amount of growth was observed in the Social-Emotional, Language and Mathematics domains.
- The least amount of growth was observed in the Cognitive and Literacy domains

### **HEAD START**

#### **Preschool 3**

- At least 90% of children were observed to be meeting or exceeding “Widely Held Expectations” by the Spring Assessment Cycle for the Social-Emotional, Physical, and Cognitive domains.
- The most significant amount of overall growth was observed in the Physical and Mathematic domains.

#### **Pre-K 4**

- At least 80% of children were observed to be meeting or exceeding “Widely Held Expectations” by the Spring Assessment Cycle for the Physical and Language domains.
- The least significant amount of overall growth was observed in the Physical and Mathematics domains.

#### **OVERALL**

- The greatest amount of growth was observed in the Physical and Mathematics domains.
- The least amount of growth was observed in the Language and Cognitive domains.

**Family Engagement**

146 Families Served



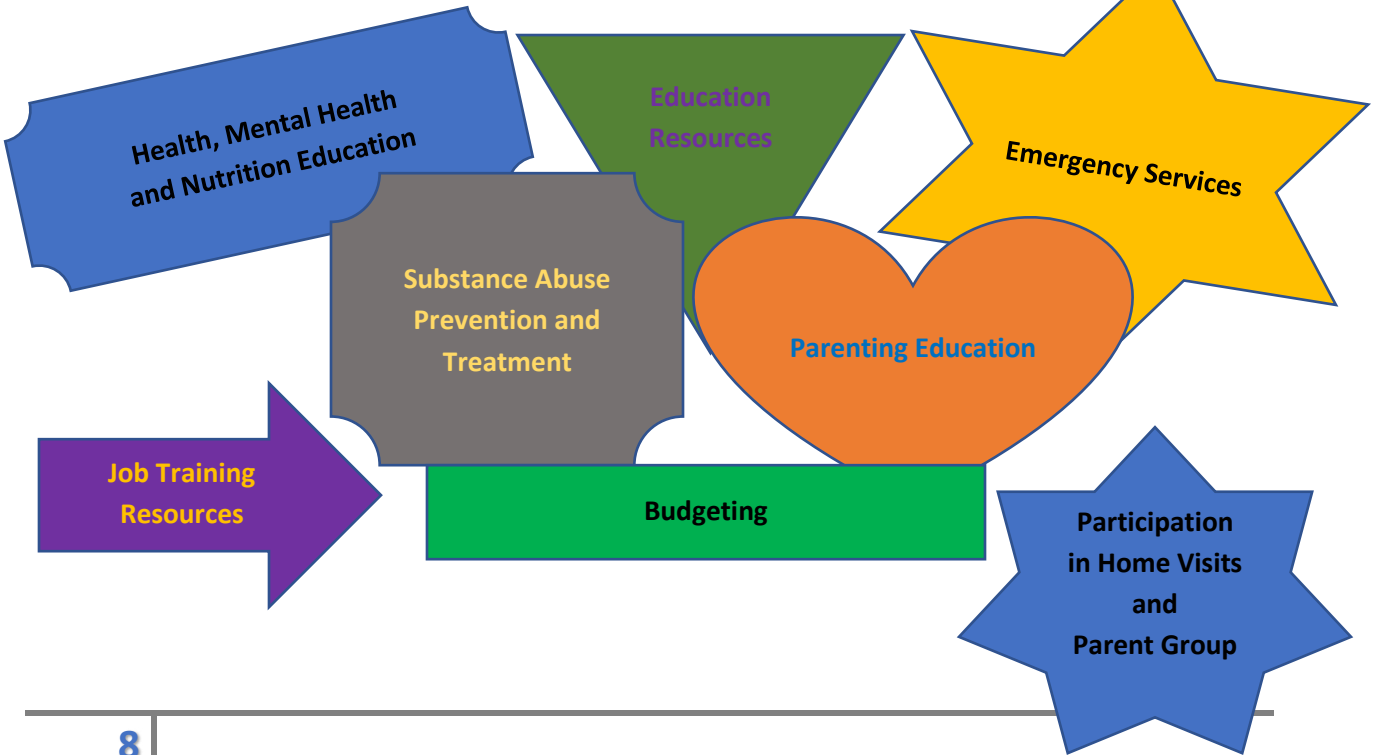
60 Two parent households

86 Single parent households

54 – Both parents  
6 – Both grandparents

71 – Single mothers  
9 – Single fathers  
4 – Grandparent  
1 – Single foster parent  
1 – Other relative

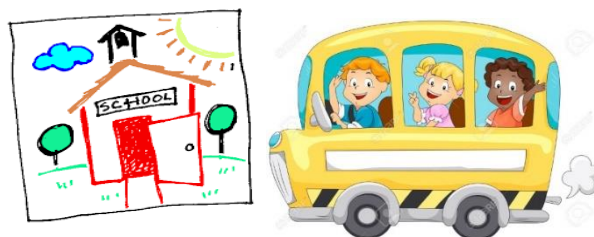
Family Services Provided





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## **Facilities and Transportation**



### **Facilities**

Batavia Center- 5 Head Start, 1 Early Head Start classrooms

Medina Center- 2 Head Start, 2 Early Head Start classrooms

Albion- 1 Head Start classroom

Albion Elementary School- 1 UPK partner classroom

Kendall Elementary School- 1 UPK partner classroom

- ✓ All sites are licensed and regulated by NYS Office of Children and Family Services as Day Care Centers
- ✓ All sites meet all health and safety requirements
- ✓ All sites have accessible playgrounds
- ✓ Meals served in all locations- full day - 3 per day; part day - 2 per day

### **Transportation**

Despite ongoing efforts to recruit drivers, the program was only able to offer limited bus transportation:

Albion & Kendall UPKs: pick up & take home

Batavia: 3.5 hour classes – pick up & take home  
full day- take home for two of three classes

- ✓ Drivers all have CDL and Head Start training
- ✓ Bus Monitor on each route
- ✓ Small school buses owned by program

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## **Other Information**

### **Volunteers \***

- ✓ 230 volunteers in program year
- ✓ 123 volunteers were current or previous Head Start parents
- ✓ 18 people volunteered on Community Action Board of Directors
- ✓ 11 people volunteered as Policy Council Representatives; 7 current parents

### **Program Successes**

- ✓ Sites are clean and in good repair. New items were purchased to help create environments that are updated, welcoming and promote staff self-care.
- ✓ Staff and child safety measures have increased (ex. Cameras, instituting panic alarm system, etc.)
- ✓ Support staff assigned to classrooms helped manage program and child needs and well-being.
- ✓ All program staff worked together to assure each content area was supported while meeting challenges caused by illness (child and staff), low-enrollment and staff vacancies.
- ✓ Instituting localized Education / Site Managers (3) in program structure continues to provide more hands-on, daily support for staff (and therefore children and families). Very successful in initial year.
- ✓ Investments made in staff helped support their value and retain them. Examples-provided incentives, COLA increase and some additional COLA funds
- ✓ Staff and families developed flexible plans for individual children as needed for success.
- ✓ Direct care staff received performance evaluations by 08/2024 which included individualized goal setting and professional development plan for 2024-2025.
- ✓ Books purchased through Grandma Esther's Reading Program to send home for/with monthly each child and extend learning at home.
- ✓ Request to convert 16 HS slots in Batavia to 8 EHS slots was approved.

### **Program Challenges**

- ✓ Enrollments - program remains under-enrolled.
- ✓ Hiring qualified staff at competitive rates- Continues to be a concern re: Lead Teachers, Toddler Teachers and Bus Drivers.
- ✓ Lack of time (especially at Leadership level) for personal development, project improvement, needed resources, support of staff. Leadership continuing to have to fill-in in classrooms at times.
- ✓ Lack of available Drivers to hire – impacts enrollment as well as center function.
- ✓ Need to remember to meet parents where they are- ongoing training and coaching.

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**Budget, Expense Report 02/01/23– 01/31/24**

Page reserved for fiscal report details after completion of audit. Anticipated completion 12/2024.

Development of Fiscal Department and new systems- Extensive change has occurred in the past year within the agency Fiscal Department. New staff have been hired and new systems have been instituted. Both of these have positioned the agency to assure ongoing quality fiscal practices. Changes in staffing and additional grants related to recovery and stabilization have delayed the audit results until late 2024.