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# Lutheran Social Services of the Virgin Islands

## *Early Head Start*

### Annual Report 2023-2024



## Program Overview

Lutheran Social Services of the Virgin Islands (LSSVI) is a multi-service non-profit organization that began as the Queen Louise Home for Children (QLH), which has been in continuous operation since 1904. On the QLH campus there are three programs that serve as a safe haven for children. The programs include Cottages A/B for children who have been abandoned, abused or neglected, to now include a safe place for teenage girls, Sister Emma Cottage for children and adults with special needs and the Early Head Start program. In September 2003, LSSVI opened the only Early Head Start (EHS-Concordia West) in the Virgin Islands. At the end of 2009, LSSVI/EHS was awarded an expansion grant (Concordia East) which began services in July of 2010.

The LSSVI/EHS programs serve a total of 120 children, families and pregnant women. There are 72 children enrolled in the Center-Based Program, 24 children enrolled in the Home-Based Program and 24 individuals in the Pregnant Women Program. The EHS program is funded for a total enrollment of 120 and services the entire island of St. Croix.

#### **Mission:**

To partner with parents to promote the development of the total child providing for their approaches to learning, social and emotional, cognitive, language, and physical needs while assisting parents to learn the skills needed to support their child's growth and development with special emphasis on school readiness. Early Head Start aims to accomplish this by adhering to the following guiding principles:

- Each child is unique and can succeed in the context of supportive relationships and environments.
- Families are the children’s first and most important caregivers, teachers, and advocates and are empowered within EHS and the community.
- Nurturing, responsive, and consistent care helps create safe environments where children feel secure and valued.
- Areas of development, including approaches to learning, social and emotional, cognitive, language, and physical, are important and are integrated recognizing that children learn many concepts and skills at the same time.
- Teaching must be intentional and focused on how children learn and grow by providing developmentally appropriate opportunities for exploration and meaningful play.
- Every child and family have diverse strengths rooted in culture, background, language, and beliefs.
- Fostering relationships with the larger community ensures that families and staff are respected and served by a network of community agencies in partnership with one another.
- Developing a continuum of care, education, and services allows for stable, uninterrupted support to families and children during and after their EHS experience.

During the 2023 - 2024 school year, all services continued to operate as usual in accordance with the Lutheran Social Services of the Virgin Islands Early Head Start grant. All center-based slots were filled by September, with the center-based program option remaining the most requested. Many families whose children were enrolled in the home-based program expressed a preference for center-based services. When and if vacant slots became available, these families were given priority, unless there were families on the waiting list with a higher criteria score. Recruitment of pregnant women for the pregnant women program was completed in September 2023, one month after the opening of the school year.

The program continued its partnership with the Frederiksted Health Center, to offer in-house, and in-office dental screenings for all enrolled children at Early Head Start. Most vision and hearing screenings, over 70%, were completed due to the purchase and use of evidence-based screening instruments.

Our students continued to receive instruction through the Highscope Curriculum. Developmental screenings used are the Ages and Stages Questionnaire-Social Emotional, (ASQ-SE) screening, Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ), COR (Child Observation Record). Overall, students met their development milestones, and our subgroups of children with disabilities and English language learners showed improvement throughout the year (See COR report).

### **FORWARD PROGRESS**

The new Early Head Start building was completed, and a grand opening took place on July 11, 2024. Since the grand opening took place, several improvement projects are ongoing to add another level of safety for students, families and staff. These include installing half doors in the children's restrooms, upgrading to a larger generator, refencing to cover the property perimeter, adding a concrete wall to raise the playground fence height, fencing around the retention pond, installing new cabinets in all classrooms, and installation of additional emergency lighting in hallways and classrooms. The program expects within the following year to move into the new facility, designed to increase the quality of service to the children and families served.

# Program Enrollment

**Monthly Enrollment: 2023-2024 School Year** from August 2023 through July 2024, EHS was fully enrolled 83% of the school year.

- August 2023: Center Base program was filled, Pregnant Women program had 2 vacancies and Home Base program had 2 vacant slots.
- September 2023: The Home Base and Pregnant Woman Program was filled
- October 2023: All program options were filled.
- July 2024: Children withdrew due to parents relocating from island.

The average monthly enrollment for the EHS programs was as follows:

Month/Year	Enrolled	Percentage of Funded Enrollment	Eligible Children Served	Eligible Children Served % of Funded Enrollment
Aug-23	116	96%	94	97.8%
Sep-23	120	100%	96	100%
Oct-23	120	100%	96	100%
Nov-23	120	100%	96	100%
Dec-23	120	100%	96	100%
Jan-24	120	100%	96	100%
Feb-24	120	100%	96	100%
Mar-24	120	100%	96	100%
Apr-24	120	100%	96	100%
May-24	120	100%	96	100%
Jun-24	120	100%	96	100%
Jul-24	116	96%	92	95.8%

**The cumulative enrollment for the 2023-2024 school year was 126.**

# Services to Pregnant Women



EHS (Early Head Start) provides services to at least 24 pregnant women and their babies annually. This includes:

- Prenatal Education
- Nutritional Counseling
- Oral Health Care
- Mental Health Support
- Substance Abuse Prevention
- Socialization Opportunities
- Connection to Community Partners
- Transportation to Medical Visits, and More!

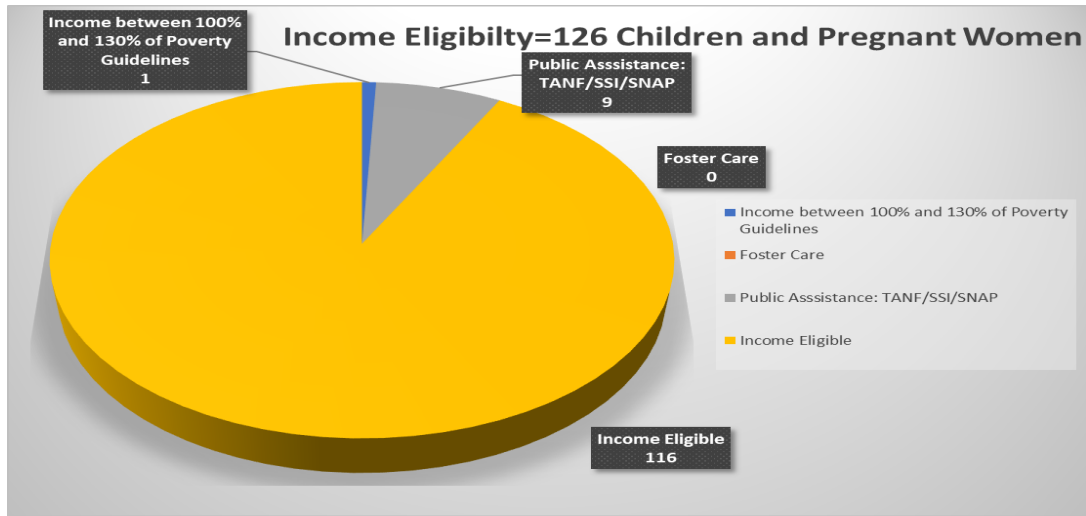


At EHS, we recognize that a child's development begins in the womb. We support this process by providing guidance and education to the pregnant woman, with the intent of supporting a healthy pregnancy and delivery.



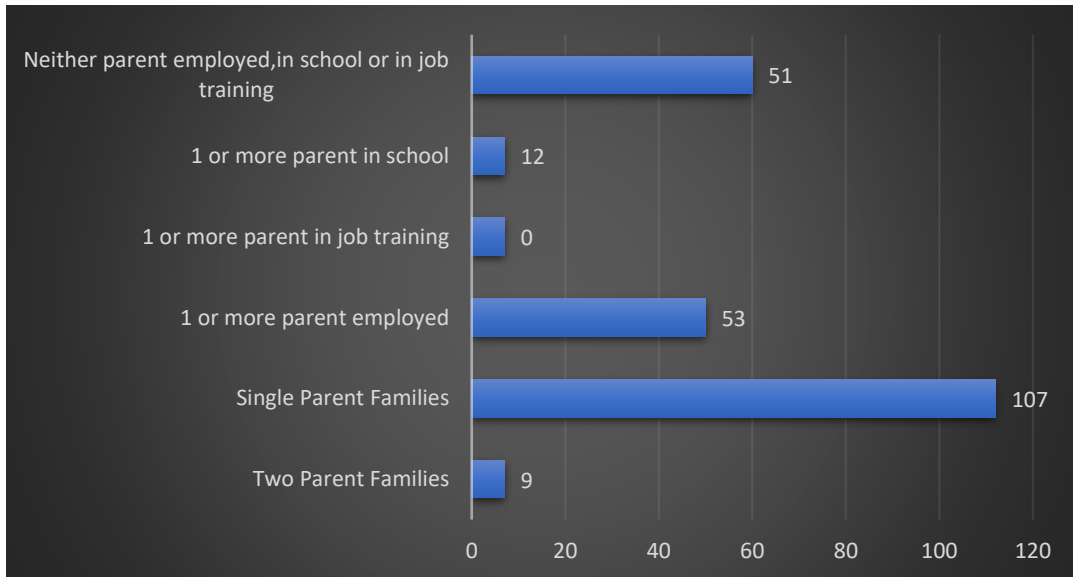
# Eligibility

**Figure 1-Type of Eligibility Number of Children= 100  
and Pregnant Women=26**



\*The above chart reflects the eligibility documents that families used when applying for services\*

**Figure 2-----Type of Household Number of Families=126**  
 Two-Parent Families: N=9    Single Parent Families N=107  
 Note: Some families have multiple enrollees





# 5-Year Grant Cycle

## 5<sup>th</sup> Year Grant Performance and Progress Spotlight

The Early Head Start Program annually, assesses the community it serves, and gathers economic and demographic data to determine how the program can refocus its recruitment and target areas, to authenticate, that it serves the community in the areas most relevant, while ensuring that the neediest families have equitable opportunities to access program services.

In the program’s most recent **Community Assessment**, the following was highlighted:

- At least 30% of children are living in poverty and in the housing communities.
- 361 babies were born on St. Croix in 2023.
- 4,468 (5.1%) of the population are under 5 years of age.
- Child/Family Care Centers: 5 Head Start Programs, 6 Granny Pre-k, 24 other programs classified as child/family care centers.
- Increase in minors needing services related to domestic violence and child abuse.

Our program seeks to provide safe, nurturing, learning spaces for our children, and educate and support families to better outcomes.

The program offered opportunities to the Policy Council, and Parent Committee to submit ideas for program goals and focus areas. The following goals are a collaborative effort of; program leadership, governance and the Parent Committee.

### A: PROGRAM GOALS

#### **Program Goals**

<b>Goals 1:</b> To improve the COR benchmark score for each of the COR categories.
<b>Goal 2:</b> To assist parents in completing all screening requirements in house and with healthcare providers.
<b>Goal 3:</b> To deliver appropriate learning experiences in preparation for Head Start and beyond.
<b>Goal 4:</b> Maintain an effective Governance and Management structure and an educated and effective work force.
<b>Goal 5:</b> To do more aggressive recruiting in the Housing Development Communities
<b>Goal 6:</b> Deliver appropriate trauma response training and referrals for families and staff in need.
<b>Goal 7:</b> Provide a quality program to serve the needs and school readiness of children ages birth to 3 years old and services to pregnant women.
<b>Goal 8:</b> To create a successful family partnership process with all parents on the relationship-based approach that values different perspectives and honors all types o

of family progress.

Program Goals	Measurable Objectives	Progress/Outcome	Challenges
<p><b>Goal 1</b> Goals 1: To improve the COR benchmark score for each of the COR categories.</p>	<p>Improve each category in the COR Assessment by 10% to include all subgroups</p> <p>Increase staff professional development in each of the COR areas.</p> <p>Children score 2 or higher on the COR Assessment before transitioning out of the program.</p>	<p>Improvement in each of the COR Assessment Periods.</p> <p>To ensure understanding and implementation of training from COR professional development.</p> <p>Monitoring understanding and implementations of trainings in the COR areas.</p>	<p>Implementation of strategies.</p> <p>Staff turnovers.</p> <p>Ensuring that all classroom personnel receive training.</p>
Program Goals	Measurable Objectives	Progress/Outcome	Challenges
<p><b>Goal 2:</b> To assist parents in completing all screening requirements in house and with healthcare providers</p>	<p>We expect to maintain a 95% compliance rate with all screenings.</p> <p>Utilize the program’s hearing and vision screening equipment’s to ensure these screenings are completed within the 45 days requirement.</p> <p>Complete appropriate referrals for children and continue to educate parents on the importance for their children and maintain up to date physicals,</p>	<p>Complete Physical Health, Vision, Dental, Hearing, and Developmental screenings for all students within prescribed time frames.</p>	<p>Parents commitment to adhere to appointments and accompany their children to Providers.</p>



	screenings and immunization records.		
<b>Program Goals</b>	<b>Measurable Objectives</b>	<b>Progress/Outcome</b>	<b>Challenges</b>
<b>Goal 3 To deliver appropriate learning experiences in preparation for Head Start and beyond</b>	<p>We expect that our 2 to 3-year-old population who transition to Head Start and other pre-schools will leave the program exceeding the COR benchmark of 2.5.</p> <p>Continue to adhere to the Head Start Compliance Standards, School Readiness Goals, and deliver research-based instruction to our students.</p> <p>Continue building a working relationship with the Head Start Program to provide a smooth and effective transition with children enrolling into the Head Start Program from EHS.</p>	<p>Continue to provide all classroom staff with High Scope: COR and Pyramid Model training.</p> <p>We will provide a second assessment to ensure data is accurate. This assessment will provide families with information they can use to extend teaching and learning at home.</p> <p>Continue to provide staff opportunities for improvement through professional development and activities to include coaching and training.</p>	<p>Staff turnover and recruiting new staff.</p> <p>Continue training new staff on the COR Advantage to complete with fidelity.</p>
<b>Program Goals</b>	<b>Measurable Objectives</b>	<b>Progress/Outcome</b>	<b>Challenges</b>
<b>Goal 4 Maintain an effective Governance and Management structure and an educated and effective work force.</b>	Educate staff to become more aware of program guidelines and job responsibilities and to apply that knowledge in the delivery of their duties.	<p>Continue to conduct new hire orientation.</p> <p>Continue and Improve Annual Training and Technical Assistance Plan.</p>	<p>Lack of incentive opportunities for staff who achieve higher qualifications.</p> <p>Uncompetitive pay scale.</p>

	<p>Work towards a greater number of teachers meeting higher qualifications and demonstrate the use of effective teaching practices in the classroom.</p> <p>Conduct annual Policy Council orientation and training.</p> <p>Annual training of LSSVI Board of Directors to include ERSEA.</p> <p>Enhance transportation services and facility maintenance.</p>	<p>Continue Professional Development plans for staff.</p> <p>Meet or exceed yearly required professional development training for staff in accordance with the Training and Technical Assistance Plan (TTA).</p> <p>Complete annual training for Board Members and Policy Council.</p> <p>Review organization chart annually.</p> <p>Bus staff received training and certification.</p>	
<b>Program Goals</b>	<b>Measurable Objectives</b>	<b>Progress/Outcome</b>	<b>Challenges</b>
<b>Goal 5:</b> To do more aggressive recruiting in the Housing Development Communities	<p>To increase program presence at Housing Communities events/distributions.</p> <p>To continue working with Housing Communities to do more presentations and recruiting.</p>	Recruiting families with the greatest need.	<p>Staff safety in Housing Communities.</p> <p>Available recruiting time.</p> <p>Lack of attendance at recruiting events.</p> <p>Support from Housing Manager.</p>

<b>Program Goals</b>	<b>Measurable Objectives</b>	<b>Progress/Outcome</b>	<b>Challenges</b>
<p><b>Goal 6</b> Deliver appropriate trauma response training and referrals for families and staff in need.</p>	<p>Partner with providers to train and assist students, families and staff who are having or has experienced trauma.</p> <p>Newly enrolled families and staff will be trained to identify signs and symptoms of trauma.</p>	<p>The program partners with a provider to help students, parents and staff who are experiencing trauma.</p> <p>Families and staff who experience trauma will be offered treatment by the provider.</p> <p>Staff will continue to receive training to identify and report trauma.</p>	<p>Stigma towards receiving services.</p>
<b>Program Goals</b>	<b>Measurable Objectives</b>	<b>Progress/Outcome</b>	<b>Challenges</b>
<p><b>Goal 7:</b> Provide a quality program to serve the needs and school readiness of children ages birth to 3 years old and services to pregnant women</p>	<p>Keep full enrollment 95% of the school year.</p> <p>Maintain an attendance rate of 85% among students.</p> <p>Children score 2 or higher on the COR Assessment before transitioning out of the program.</p>	<p>Implement and follow up child goals as outlined in the IFSPs.</p> <p>Follow up with teachers to ensure Individualized lesson plans focuses on meeting goals.</p> <p>Continue to partner with service providers to ensure that IFSPs are updated as needed.</p> <p>Continue to expand recruitment activities to reach a diverse population.</p> <p>Review Selection Criteria form yearly to remain relevant during the selection process.</p>	<p>Meet the needs of families whose home language is other than English.</p> <p>Lack of specialized training for teachers for children with disabilities</p> <p>Conduct intensive training for teachers to better serve child(ren) with IFSPs.</p>

<b>Program Goals</b>	<b>Measurable Objectives</b>	<b>Progress/Outcome</b>	<b>Challenges</b>
<p><b>Goal 8:</b> To create a successful family partnership with all families on the relationship-based approach that values different perspective and honors all types of family progress.</p>	<p>Begin the family goal process with 85% of parents within six months of the school year.</p> <p>Complete Family Needs Assessment with all parents during the first month of enrollment.</p>	<p>Ongoing communication and follow up with families.</p> <p>Creating goals with families</p> <p>To update goals quarterly by logging progress in family's files.</p>	<p>Lack of motivation to follow through with goals due to personal challenges.</p>

### **Measurables and Progress Spotlight**

**Goal 1: To improve the COR benchmark score for each of the COR categories.**

- Improve each category in the COR Assessment by 20% to include all subgroups.
- Increase staff professional development in each of the COR areas.
- Children score 2 or higher on the COR Assessment before transitioning out of the program.

**Progress Spotlight:**

Staff received 3 days of intense COR and HighScope (curriculum) training. During the sessions, staff participated by sharing what typically happens daily in the classrooms, or challenges that they needed guidance on. Analysis of the COR data indicated that 81% of students transitioning to Head Start and other preschools reached and surpassed the COR benchmark of 2.5. Review of the COR findings, indicate that while some subgroup areas scores increased by 20%, other areas showed a decline. This presents opportunities for the program to regroup, rethink, and retrain, and focus on moving forward. This is the focus for upcoming professional development and coaching in the spring of 2025 and onward.

**Goal 2: To assist parents in completing all screening requirements in house and with healthcare providers.**

- We expect to maintain a 95% compliance rate with all screenings
- Utilize the program's hearing and vision screening equipment to ensure these screenings are completed within the 45 days requirement.

- Complete appropriate referrals for children and continue to educate parents on the importance of maintaining up to date physicals, immunizations and screenings.

**Progress Spotlight:**

The program navigated numerous challenges throughout the school year, starting with a Health Service Coordinator vacancy which began in November 2023 and continued for the remainder of the school year. Charged with reviewing and overseeing health services and screenings for enrolled children, FCPCs (Family Workers) found that children’s files did not show record of some required screenings. FCPCs worked tirelessly with families and community partners to ensure screenings were completed and documented in the files. With the assistance of the EDM (Education Disability Manager), hearing and vision screenings were completed throughout the remainder of the school year, and for newly enrolled students, with the program’s evidence-based screening instruments. The program has since restructured how it communicates with families on screenings and screening compliance, and is looking forward to 100% screening compliance in the year ahead!

**Goal 3: To deliver appropriate learning experiences in preparation for Head Start and beyond**

- We expect that our 2 to 3-year-old population who transition to Head Start and other pre-schools will leave the program exceeding the COR benchmark of 2.5.
- Continue to adhere to the Head Start Performance Standards, School Readiness Goals, and deliver research-based instruction to our students.
- Continue building a working relationship with the Head Start Program to provide a smooth and effective transition with children enrolling into the Head Start Program from EHS.

**Progress Spotlight:**

Eighty-one percent of transitioning children scored 2.5 and over before leaving our program! This is huge for a program that provided services to more than 30 children with on-file (Individualized Family Development Plan) IFSPs! Children who missed the 2.5 COR score threshold fell into one of two categories, IFSP on file or low attendance patterns.

The program ensured staff were trained on the curriculum, COR, classroom environment, challenging behaviors, and the delivery of educational services. Multiple training opportunities and trainers were scheduled throughout the program year. The program also engaged an independent early childhood specialist to observe the classroom and educational team to identify any areas of challenge or areas for improvement. The program continued to partner with the local Head Start program. The program acted as a bridge that connected families with the Head Start program. Early in the following calendar year, the program invited Head Start coordinators to meet with EHS families of moving on children. Families were able to ask questions and get feedback on next steps. During this period, with the family’s permission, the program forwarded their child’s name and the family’s contact information to Head Start. The program organized field trips to Head Start centers to which families were invited. Families were introduced to their potential Head Start teacher and saw firsthand what their child’s classroom environment would be like.

**Goal 4: Maintain an effective Governance and Management structure and an educated and effective work force.**

- Educate staff to become more aware of program guidelines and job responsibilities and to apply that knowledge in the delivery of their duties.
- Work towards a greater number of teachers meeting higher qualifications and demonstrate the use of effective teaching practices in the classroom.
- Conduct annual Policy Council orientation and training.
- Annual training of LSSVI Board of Directors to include ERSEA.
- Enhance transportation services and facility maintenance.

**Progress Spotlight:**

The program utilized a combination of virtual and in person professional development to ensure a variety of training was offered. Leadership continued to disseminate information to staff regularly regarding expectations and updates, to enhance the learning environment for clients served. Staff were informed and reminded of their role and responsibilities through; orientation, trainings, email reminders, staff meetings, staff memorandums, individual meetings, compliance notifications, and attendance at national and regional conferences.

Staff credentials were tracked by the EDM, who followed through with staff to ensure recertification, (if required) was obtained in a time sensitive manner.

Policy Council Members were trained on; program expectations, how to conduct a policy council meeting, the expectations for council members, and how to utilize shared program information to make informed decisions for the program. Council members were invited to join ERSEA training during the annual professional development.

LSSVI Board Members were trained on their roles and responsibilities, and how to utilize shared program information, to make informed decisions for the benefit of the program, and families served. Board Members received a comprehensive overview of the Early Head Start program, to include ERSEA review, which resulted in changes to the program application criteria score.

The program continued to offer transportation to families without a reliable means to transport their child to and from the centers. The program also extended transportation services to families who had access to reliable transportation, but exhibited other needs, to which, by offering transportation, their child was able to attend school regularly and on time. The program also offered temporary transportation services to families who experienced temporary loss of transportation.

**Goal 5: To do more aggressive recruiting in the Housing Development Communities.**

- To increase program presence at housing communities at events/distribution.
- To continue working with housing communities to do more presentations and recruiting.

**Progress Spotlight:**

The program has ensured that all housing communities offices had brochures, flyers and EHS applications. At least once monthly, the program actively recruits in at least one housing community. During active recruitment months, the program recruited in at least three housing communities monthly. The program identified the families living in housing communities, and collaborated with those families, in recruiting new families. The program has found the most productive way to recruit is to meet residents in the communities, and continued to ensure this occurred on a regular basis. The program is currently in the preliminary stages of partnering with a wellness and empowerment initiative driven by the Virgin Islands Housing Authority; in hopes that, with this partnership, the program can grow within this demographic, and spread the reach of the program to those who can best benefit from the services provided.

**Goal 6: Deliver appropriate trauma response training and referrals for families and staff in need.**

- Partner with providers to train and assist students, families and staff who are having or has experienced trauma.
- Newly enrolled families and staff will be trained to identify signs and symptoms of trauma.

**Progress Spotlight:**

The program partners with two mental health consultants to provide services to children, families and staff. Throughout the year trauma, and mental health trainings to staff and families occurred, across a wide scope of topics. Staff and families had multiple opportunities for training and conversation about their experience(s), and or mental health needs as a group or individually. If it was identified that additional

services were needed, guidance was provided to the families for accessing other community mental health services. This will remain in place as a standing item for the program.

**Goal 7:** Provide a quality program to serve the needs and school readiness of children ages birth to 3 years old and services to pregnant women.

- Keep full enrollment 95% of the school year
- Maintain an attendance rate of 85% or higher among students
- Children score 2 or higher on the COR Assessment before transitioning out of the program.

**Progress Spotlight:**

The program was fully enrolled for 10 out of 12 months during the school year. The vacancies that occurred in the home based and pregnant women option was filled in September 2023, otherwise, 4 students left the program in the last weeks of school to relocate with their families.

While the program focused on daily attendance for every student, the minimum 85% attendance rate remained just out of reach. Sickness (particularly, cold, runny nose and cough) played key factors in absences, and affected attendance greatly. Attendance remains as a standing item at every parent meeting. Parents are encouraged to bring their children daily and on time, to best benefit from the program. This remains an area of focus for the program.

Most children exceeded the COR score of 2 when transitioning out of the program. The program applauds the diligence and dedication of its teachers, it's hard work! (See COR report attached)

**Goal 8:** To create a successful family partnership process with all parents on the relationship-based approach that values different perspectives and honors all types of family progress.

- Begin the family goal process with 85% of parents within six months of the school year.
- Complete Family Needs Assessment with all parents during the first month of enrollment.

**Progress Spotlight:**

At enrollment, the family goal process was initiated with a commitment from families to work on their goals. The program offered support to families as it related to guidance for seeking employment, furthering education, budgeting and managing money, and securing living spaces. The Needs Assessment began at enrollment as well, with a second is completed midpoint during the program year. The program works to connect families with community partners to align their needs with the services offered.

## Annual Self-Assessment

The program completes an annual **Self-Assessment** in the fall of the calendar year. In the Self-Assessment preparation process, the program takes an in-depth review of its processes, procedures, and outcomes, and compares it to the Head Start Performance Standards guide for participating programs. Our Self-Assessment includes program highlights, areas for opportunity and growth, and headlights the way for forward program performance and improvement. The last Self-Assessment review was completed in the fall of 2024. The final Self-Assessment is made available annually to enrolled families, program governing boards, other entities of interest, and the Office of Head Start in February of every calendar year.

# Financial Information — Program Operations

**Funding:**

US Department of Health and Human Services Administration for Children and Families .....	\$2,156,429
USVI Department of Education – Special Nutrition Program .....	77,949
Non-Federal .....	497,010
<b>TOTAL .....</b>	<b><u>\$2,731,388</u></b>

**Expenditures:**

Salaries (47%) .....	\$1,288,996
Benefits (14%) .....	381,051
Supplies (5%) .....	140,774
Other (4%) .....	100,772
Property Maintenance (4%) .....	94,125
Training (2%) .....	53,129
Property & Liability Insurance (6%) .....	168,594
Non-Federal (Include \$399,176 of Property & Liability Insurance (18%) .....	495,363
<b><u>TOTAL .....</u></b>	<b><u>\$2,722,804</u></b>

## Financial Information: Disaster Assistance

**Federal Expenditures (10/1/2023—/30/2024 .....** **\$3,594,074**



# Health Services

The Early Head Start (EHS) Program prioritizes the health and well-being of its students by meeting health screening requirements. The program actively educates families on the importance of completing screenings and establishing a medical home. Families enrolled in the Medical Assistance Program (MAP) gain access to free health services from local clinics and private doctors, enabling them to establish a consistent medical home at no cost. Currently, the program offers in-house hearing and vision screenings. The program assists families without medical insurance to obtain MAP coverage and establish a medical home.

## Challenges Impacting Health Screening Compliance

- **Missed Appointments:** Many families miss scheduled appointments and fail to reschedule, even when the program offered support such as scheduling assistance and transportation services.
- **Funding and Recertification Delays:** Families face challenges completing screenings due to unpaid providers under MAP, funding issues, and delays in MAP recertification.
- **Staffing Gaps:** The Health Service Coordinator (HSC) position remained vacant, impacting screening efficiency.

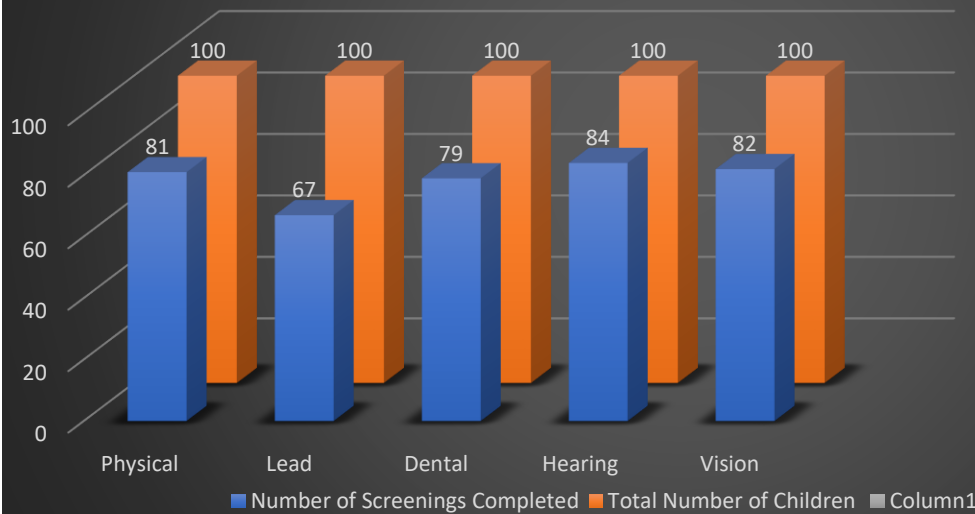
## Steps to Improve Health Screening Compliance

The program has identified several strategies to enhance health screenings moving forward:

- **Strengthened Collaboration:** EHS will continue engaging with health service providers to ensure families complete all necessary screenings.
- **Parent Engagement:** Increased cooperation from parents to ensure children attend scheduled screenings.
- **In-House Screenings:** Vision and hearing screenings will be conducted in-house by the program's Health Service Coordinator and designated staff.
- **Expanded Resources:** The availability of more health providers and insurance options for low-income families on the island will improve access to screenings.

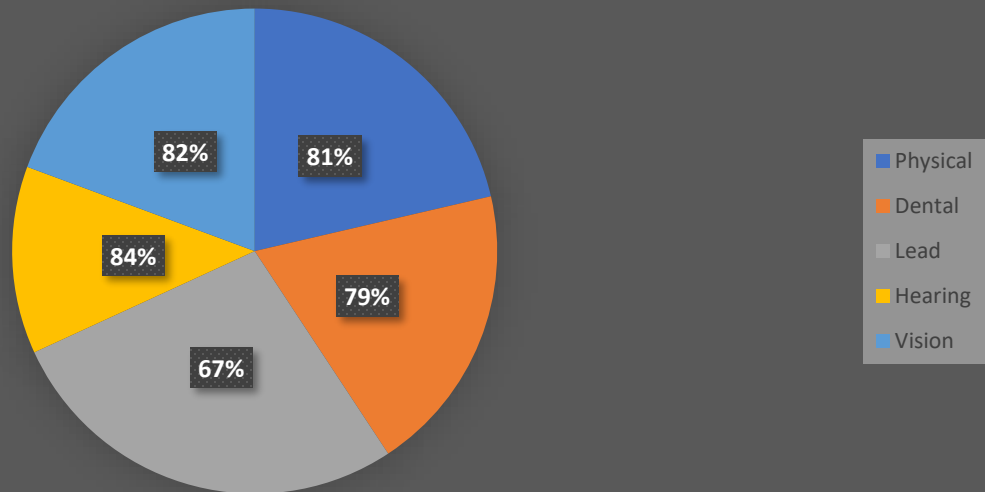


# HEALTH SCREENINGS



Infants under the age of 12 months are not typically not eligible to receive lead screenings.

## Number of Screenings Completed Out of 100 Students





# Parent Engagement

EHS (Early Head Start) recognizes the vital role parents play in the developmental success of their children's lives as their child's first teacher. To foster a collaboration between parents and teachers, the program actively promotes family involvement through activities, events, and workshops. These activities promote a strong partnership between parents and teachers, establishing a supportive network that enhances children's growth and learning both at home and at school. Below are key activities, events, and workshops designed to engage parents:

## □ **Classroom Activities:**

Parents are encouraged to participate in their child's classroom by:

- Reading with children.
- Assisting in arts and crafts.
- Helping with special events.

This hands-on involvement provides parents with meaningful opportunities to engage in their child's education and foster stronger connections between families, teachers, and the classroom community.

## □ **Parent Orientation:**

To introduce families to EHS policies and the services, two orientations were held, in addition to a separate orientation for Spanish speaking families. This ensured maximum attendance and helped parents familiarize themselves with the program's offerings and expectations.

## □ **Parent/Teacher Conference:**

These one-on-one meetings provides parents with an opportunity to:

- Review their child's progress using COR (Child Observation Record) data.
- Discuss specific needs or challenges.
- Collaborate with teachers to set development goals.

These conferences provided a focused setting where parents could gain detailed insights into their child's learning journey, discuss specific needs or challenges, and collaborate with teachers to set goals for continued progress.

## □ **Policy Council Volunteer:**

Parents are encouraged to join and become a part of the program's governing body, as a Policy Council member. As active participants in decision-making and program oversight, parents contributed to:

- Shaping policies.
- Setting program goals.
- Ensuring the program met the needs of children and families.

#### □ **Parent Committee Meetings:**

A Parent Committee is established annually, to engage parents in planning and executing of center activities. Through leadership roles, parents:

- Organized events.
- Directed the program's activities.
- Liaison with the Policy Council.

To accommodate parents' schedules, these meetings are held virtually, providing a flexible platform for participation.

#### □ **Parent Meetings:**

Parents are encouraged to attend meetings to stay informed about:

- Program updates.
- Upcoming events.
- Announcements.

These meetings provide a valuable opportunity for parents to engage directly with the EHS staff, ask questions, and participate in discussions about their child's development and the program's activities.

#### □ **Home Visits:**

Home visits between the teacher and parent, play a crucial role in building a mutual partnership between parents and the EHS program. During these visits:

- Teachers and staff engage with families in a personal and supportive way.
- Trust and communication are strengthened.
- Goals tailored to the child's unique developmental needs are set collaboratively.

#### □ **Socializations:**

Parents are encouraged to participate in informational sessions, educational activities, and fun events where they could socialize with other EHS families. These gatherings allow parents to:

- Gain valuable knowledge.
- Build connections with other parents.
- Actively support their child's growth and development.



## **FATHERHOOD INITIATIVES**

The program engages in intentional strategies designed to actively engage fathers and male caregivers to:

- Feel supported in their role as caregiver.
- Participate in their child's learning experience and life.
- Provide a safe space where fathers can learn and share in the experience of other fathers/male caregivers.

EHS fathers/male caregivers participated in four events designed especially for them:

**Mental Health Impact in a Stressful Community:**

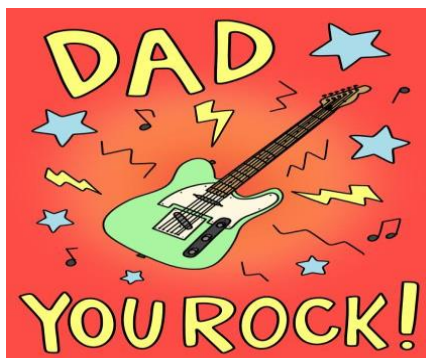
Fathers and male caregivers learned about various challenges in the community including:

- Impact of layoffs.
- Coping strategies for stress.
- Current crime rates and their impact on families.

**Dad's Bring Your Child to School Day:**

During this annual and national event:

- Fathers and male caregivers brought their children to school.
- Participated in picture taking to commemorate the experience.
- (Some) Met their child's teacher and/or visited the center for the first time!



□ **Painting with Dad:**

Fathers and male caregivers:

- Painted in the classroom with their child.
- Got involved in their child's learning.
- Most importantly, had fun!

□ **Father Work Day:**

Fathers and male caregivers engaged in three weekend workdays on our newly constructed building. They assisted with:

- Unpacking.
- Building classroom equipment.
- Trash removal.

Sharing skills and tools, to get the work completed, with the help of EHS fathers and male caregivers, our building was ready for the grand opening on July 11, 2024!





## Workshops and Parent Engagement Activities

### Workshops

- ❖ Nutrition
- ❖ Tips for Saving
- ❖ Alcohol Abuse Prevention
- ❖ Literacy
- ❖ Continuing Education
- ❖ Distractive Driving
- ❖ Disaster Preparedness
- ❖ Lead Poison and Prevention
- ❖ Building Healthy Relationships
- ❖ Dental Health
- ❖ Handling Challenging Behavior
- ❖ Prenatal and Emotional Health
- ❖ Preventing Childhood Illnesses
- ❖ Preventing Child Abuse and Neglect
- ❖ Stress Management
- ❖ Transition to Head Start
- ❖ How to deal with Trauma
- ❖ CSEFEL Parenting Curriculum Class (6 sessions)

### Socializations

- ❖ Making Homemade Playdough
- ❖ Fire Trucks Presentation
- ❖ Sip and Paint
- ❖ Making Musical Instrument
- ❖ Water Play
- ❖ Arts and Crafts
- ❖ Bookmobile
- ❖ Visit at the Frederiksted Park
- ❖ Meet and Greet
- ❖ It's Thanksgiving!
- ❖ Making Playdough
- ❖ Eating with Mom
- ❖ Spring Arts and Craft
- ❖ Let's Make Slime
- ❖ Literacy
- ❖ Starting a Garden
- ❖ Spring Egg and Toy Hunt
- ❖ Farewell

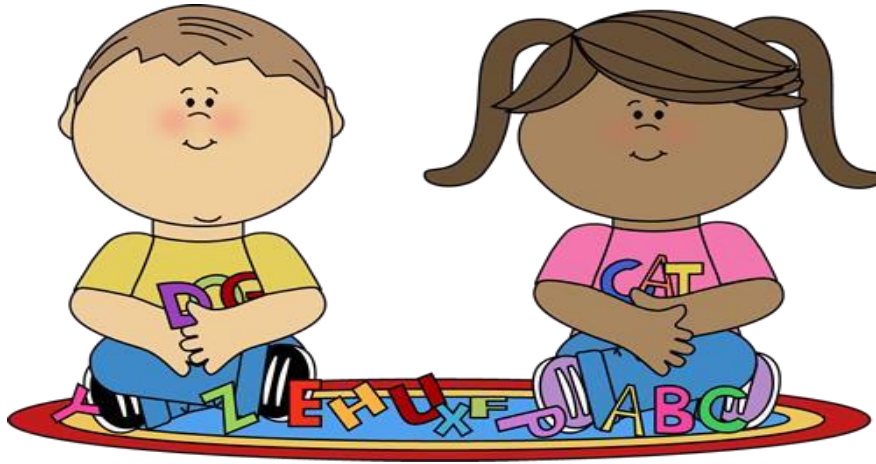
# Parent Committee Initiated Activities

- ❖ Start a Garden
- ❖ Mom and I Make Flowers
- ❖ Sprint Hunt
- ❖ Lunch with Mom
- ❖ Make a Hat, Let's Have a Parade
- ❖ Painting with Dad
- ❖ Career Day Parade
- ❖ Blow Bubbles with Me





# School Readiness



Early Head Start (EHS) continues to ensure that School Readiness is a top priority. The program is committed to setting School Readiness goals that will prepare students eventually for Kindergarten. The following is a summary of steps made within the past year to support school readiness:

## **School Readiness Mission:**

To prepare infants and toddlers developmentally - including in the domains of approaches to learning, social and emotional, cognitive, language, and physical development – for preschool and/or Head Start, working with parents to observe and plan developmentally-appropriate activities to ensure that children successfully meet the EHS School Readiness Goals.

## **Early Head Start School Readiness Goals**

The Head Start Act requires that programs analyze progress of children toward meeting the School Readiness Goals as outlined by the program. The following chart delineates the School Readiness Goals and the assessment criteria that the program uses to measure the progress toward achieving these. As the reader of this report reviews the analysis of the COR Advantage data, it is important to keep these in mind. While aggregated results indicate that progress has been made in all domains, there is much work to be done to further ensure that children reach the benchmarks expected for their ages and that professional development supports teachers in their acquisition of the knowledge, skills, and expertise needed to assist children in achieving optimal development in all these areas.

To support the implementation of curriculum, and equip teachers to deliver instruction and caregiving with fidelity, the program engages in Practice-Based Coaching annually. Practice-based coaching, is an evidence based coaching framework designed to support teachers in demonstrating effective practices in the classroom. This inherently supports the program's school readiness efforts.

Domain/Sub-Domain	School Readiness Goal	COR Assessment Alignment
<b>Approaches to Learning:</b>	Children will demonstrate increasing ability to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• manage feelings, emotions, actions, and behavior with the support of familiar adults</li> <li>• focus, maintain attention, and engage and persist in activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emotions</li> <li>• Building relationships with adults</li> <li>• Conflict resolution</li> <li>• Initiative and planning</li> <li>• Problem solving with materials</li> </ul>
<b>Social and Emotional Development:</b>	Children will demonstrate increasing ability to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• interact, play, and engage in positive interactions with other children, as they express, manage, and interpret emotions and express care and concern for others</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Building relationships with other children</li> <li>• Conflict Resolution</li> <li>• Emotions</li> </ul>
<b>Language, Communication, and Literacy:</b>	Children will demonstrate increasing ability to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• communicate their needs and engage in interactions and conversations with others, as they understand and use a greater variety of words.</li> <li>• repeat, retell, relate to, and talk about songs, books, stories, and rhymes and gain meaning from them</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Speaking</li> <li>• Listening and comprehension</li> <li>• Building relationships with adults</li> <li>• Building relationships with other children</li> </ul>
<b>Cognition:</b>	Children will demonstrate increasing ability to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• actively explore people and objects to understand and communicate about their characteristics, how they work, about cause and effect, and about their similarities and differences.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Problem solving with materials</li> <li>• Experimenting, predicting, and drawing conclusions</li> <li>• Observing and classifying</li> <li>• Natural and physical world</li> <li>• Tools and Technology</li> <li>• Initiative and planning</li> </ul>
<b>Cognition:</b>	Children will demonstrate increasing ability to:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number and counting</li> <li>• Measurement</li> </ul>

Domain/Sub-Domain	School Readiness Goal	COR Assessment Alignment
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>develop a sense and understanding of number and quantity, identify shapes, understand spatial relationships, categorize objects, and recognize simple patterns.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Geometry: Shapes and spatial awareness</li> <li>Problem solving with materials</li> <li>Data analysis</li> <li>Patterns</li> <li>Observing and classifying</li> </ul>
<b>Perceptual Motor and Physical Development:</b>	Children will demonstrate increasing ability to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>use sensory and perceptual information to understand and act on objects, experiences, and interactions within the environment.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Experimenting, predicting, and drawing conclusions</li> <li>Geography</li> </ul>

# COR Summary Results 2023-2024 School Year

**Overview:**

This report is based on the aggregation of data collected by classroom teachers and home visitors using the HighScope Child Observation Record (COR) Advantage, an assessment tool designed for children ages birth to six (6) years and aligned with the HighScope curriculum. The COR Advantage assesses children’s development in the following nine (9) domains:

- Approaches to Learning (AL)
- Social and Emotional Development (SED)
- Physical Development and Health (PHD)
- Language, Literacy, and Communication (LLC)
- Mathematics (MATH)
- Creative Arts (CA)
- Science and Technology (ST)
- Social Studies (SS)
- English Language Learning (ELL) (for Dual Language Learners)

Within each domain are several subdomains. Scores range from 0-7 and are inclusive of children ages birth through kindergarten. Please note that a score of zero (0) does not mean a lack of skill, but instead represents skills and behaviors for the youngest infants. Scores are not equated

with ages, but indicate developmental progressions within each domain. Generally, expectations for children’s achievement/scores are anticipated to be within the following guidelines. Note, that there is an overlap of scores from age to age, recognizing that there is normal variability in children’s development.

- Infants and toddlers: 0-3
- Preschool: 2-5
- Kindergarten: 4-7

Teachers collect information through observations of children’s behavior and activities throughout the child’s enrollment in Early Head Start. Through the online system, the COR assists teachers in the analysis of this information as it relates to children’s growth and development. They use this information to plan for individual children and the group as they facilitate children’s achievement of developmental milestones and EHS School Readiness Goals.

**Collection and Analysis of Assessment Information:**

The following information depicts the completion rates of individual classrooms and home visiting for each period. Please note, children in the Pregnant Women’s Program are not assessed using the COR until the following year, when they are either enrolled in the home visiting or class-based programs.

When reviewing the data, one would need to consider attendance records, as well as when children entered the program to obtain a full view of the issues related to gathering data.

<b>Classroom</b>	<b>1<sup>st</sup> period</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> period</b>	<b>3<sup>rd</sup> period</b>
Concordia West			
Classroom 1	87%	100%	100%
Classroom 2	100%	100%	100%
Classroom 3	100%	100%	100%
Home Visiting	48%	1%	0%
Concordia East			
East 1	100%	100%	100%
East 2	100%	100%	100%
East 3	100%	20%	96%
West 1	99%	51%	98%
West 2	100%	100%	100%
West 3	100%	100%	100%
Home Visiting	29%	26%	51%

Classroom completion rates improved significantly in the 2023-24 school year with six of the nine classrooms achieving 100% completion for all three collection periods. There are still concerns regarding the completion for children enrolled in the home visiting program.

It is recommended that the program consider training focused on strategies to improve the gathering of data during home visits to increase the completion rate, perhaps including how to set up and stimulate responses in natural play situations. Home visits west – completion rate significantly decreased from last year to this year

When data is not completed on an individual child at both the beginning and the end of the year, growth cannot be determined. It is critical for teachers and home visitors to obtain baseline data on each child’s level of development in order to plan appropriate activities and interactions that facilitate and scaffold developmental growth for each child. This is particularly concerning for the home visiting program as there is little data for tracking children’s progress and for planning appropriately to meet each child’s developmental needs.

The Head Start Act requires that programs analyze progress of children toward meeting the School Readiness Goals as outlined by the program. The following chart delineates the School Readiness Goals and the assessment criteria that the program uses to measure the progress toward achieving these. As the reader of this report reviews the analysis of the COR Advantage data, it is important to keep the school readiness goals in mind. While aggregated results indicate that progress has been made in all domains, there is much work to be done to further ensure that children reach the benchmarks expected for their ages and that professional development supports teachers in their acquisition of the knowledge, skills, and expertise needed to assist children in achieving optimal development in all these areas.

<b>Domain/Sub-Domain</b>	<b>School Readiness Goal</b>	<b>COR Assessment</b>
<b>Approaches to Learning:</b>	Children will demonstrate increasing ability to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• manage feelings, emotions, actions, and behavior with the support of familiar adults</li> <li>• focus, maintain attention, and engage and persist in activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emotions</li> <li>• Building relationships with adults</li> <li>• Conflict resolution</li> <li>• Initiative and planning</li> <li>• Problem solving with materials</li> </ul>
<b>Social and Emotional Development:</b>	Children will demonstrate increasing ability to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• interact, play, and engage in positive interactions with other children, as they express, manage, and interpret emotions and express care and concern for others</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Building relationships with other children</li> <li>• Conflict Resolution</li> <li>• Emotions</li> </ul>

<b>Language, Communication, and Literacy:</b>	Children will demonstrate increasing ability to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• communicate their needs and engage in interactions and conversations with others, as they understand and use a greater variety of words.</li> <li>• repeat, retell, relate to, and talk about songs, books, stories, and rhymes and gain meaning from them</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Speaking</li> <li>• Listening and comprehension</li> <li>• Building relationships with adults</li> <li>• Building relationships with other children</li> </ul>
<b>Cognition:</b>	Children will demonstrate increasing ability to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• actively explore people and objects to understand and communicate about their characteristics, how they work, about cause and effect, and about their similarities and differences.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Problem solving with materials</li> <li>• Experimenting, predicting, and drawing conclusions</li> <li>• Observing and classifying</li> <li>• Natural and physical world</li> <li>• Tools and Technology</li> <li>• Initiative and planning</li> </ul>
<b>Cognition:</b>	Children will demonstrate increasing ability to:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number and counting</li> <li>• Measurement</li> </ul>
<b>Domain/Sub-Domain</b>	<b>School Readiness Goal</b>	<b>COR Assessment</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• develop a sense and understanding of number and quantity, identify shapes, understand spatial relationships, categorize objects, and recognize simple patterns.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Geometry: Shapes and spatial awareness</li> <li>• Problem solving with materials</li> <li>• Data analysis</li> <li>• Patterns</li> <li>• Observing and classifying</li> </ul>
<b>Perceptual Motor and Physical Development:</b>	Children will demonstrate increasing ability to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• use sensory and perceptual information to understand and act on objects, experiences, and interactions within the environment.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Experimenting, predicting, and drawing conclusions</li> <li>• Geography</li> </ul>

### **Strengths and Opportunities for the Total Program:**

All children for which there are scores are included in the aggregation of scores for the purpose of determining strengths and opportunities. Please note, there will always be some subdomains with the highest scores and some subdomains with the lowest scores. Delineating these is not intended to be punitive or a reflection of teachers' capabilities, but instructive in helping the program to determine professional development needs and in helping teachers plan additional meaningful experiences and improve their intentional teaching practices, particularly in the curriculum areas designated as "opportunities." Remember, there will always be subdomains in the "opportunities" area.

The COR is divided into eight (8) domains and 34 subdomains (with exclusion of the English Language Learning domain which will be analyzed individually later in the report). Even though there was growth in all domains and subdomains, children scored on average higher in some subdomains than others.

The chart below represents the five (5) highest scoring subdomains for the third collection period (highest to lowest).

<b>Domain</b>	<b>Subdomain</b>
Physical Development and Health	Gross Motor Skills
Physical Development and Health	Personal Care and Healthy Behavior
Creative Arts	Movement
Social and Emotional Development	Building Relationships with Other Children
Social and Emotional Development	Community

Comparing the strengths of the 2023-2024 to the four previous school years (2019-2020, 2020-2021, 2021-2022, and 2022-2023), the following domains subdomains were at the top of the list of strengths all four years:

- Personal Care and Healthy Behavior
- Gross Motor Skills

Comparing just 2023-2024 to the prior year (2021-2022), the following subdomains were consistently at the top of the list for strengths:

- Personal Care and Healthy Behavior
- Gross Motor Skills
- Building Relationships with Children
- Movement

The chart below represents the five (5) lowest scoring subdomains for the third and final collection period (lowest to highest) and are thus considered "opportunities":

Domain	Subdomain
Language, Literacy, and Communication	Alphabetic Knowledge
Language, Literacy, and Communication	Reading
Mathematics	Number and Counting
Social and Emotional	Emotions
Science and Technology	Experimenting, Predicting, & Drawing Conclusions
Mathematics	Patterns
Mathematics	Measurement

Comparing the opportunities, or lower scores, of the 2023-2024 school year to the previous four school years (2019-2020, 2020-2021, 2021-2022, and 2022-2023), two of the subdomains were the same. These include:

- Emotions
- Reading

Results indicate the potential need for professional development, as the same areas are persistently among the lower scores. Remember, there will always be lower scores as there has to be some subdomains at the bottom; however, the goal is for all subdomains to rise to the highest level possible with all areas hovering at the top level. The range of scores from highest to lowest is 2.83 to 1.41.

The greatest gains in scores from the first to the last period, and therefore indicating the greatest growth, were in the following subdomains:

- Development and Health: Gross Motor
- Social and Emotional Development: Community
- Approaches to Learning: Problem Solving with Materials
- Social and Emotional Development: Building Relationships with Other Children The least amount of gain in scores from the first to the last period indicating the least amount of growth, were in the following subdomains:
- Language, Literacy, and Communication: Alphabetic Knowledge
- Science and Technology: Experimenting, Predicting, and Drawing Conclusions

As professional development is planned, it is recommended that consideration be made to emphasize training in strategies to promote and facilitate development of the following areas: Emotions, and Reading – as children have been scoring consistently lower in these areas over the past four (4) years. It is also recommended that growth patterns be shared with teachers throughout the year – after each data collection period – so that they can ensure that attention is paid to all subdomains of development in their planning.

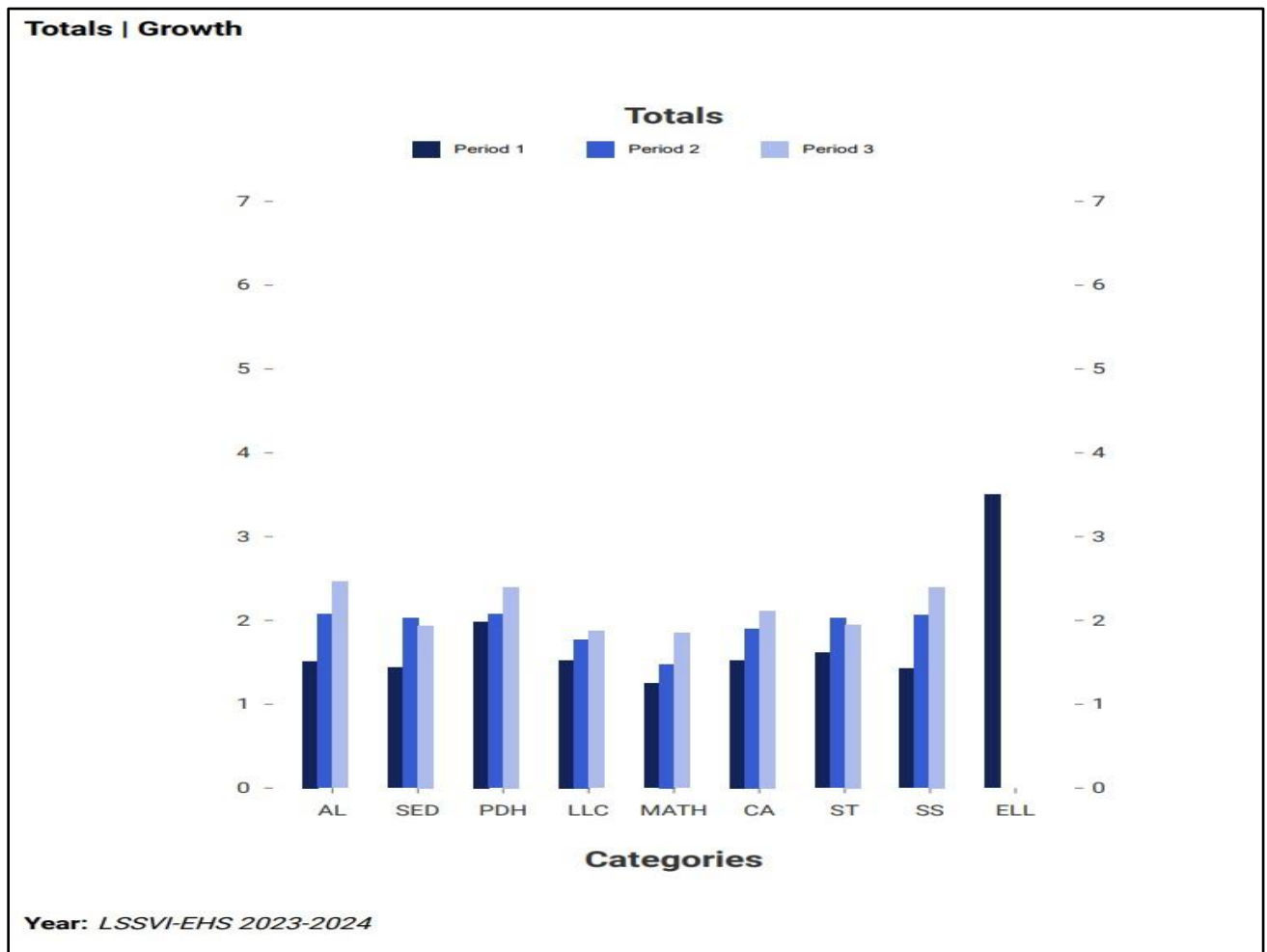
### **Analyzing Data and Growth:**



There are some cautions to consider in reviewing and analyzing the data. For example, there may be a 5-month-old and a 12-month-old in the same classroom, which means that expectations will be very different, and scores will reflect these differences. Therefore, analysis must be based on realistic expectations depending on the child's age. There may be varied expectations for children with disabilities or developmental delays or children who are dual language learners. Our goal is for each child to demonstrate progress in all domains.

In most cases, when reviewing the scores for children within classrooms, those who have the lowest scores tend to be the youngest or those identified with disabilities and/or developmental delays – which is to be expected. Scores of younger children and children with disabilities and/or developmental delays may impact classroom average scores. Therefore, aggregated analysis by classroom is not evaluated here. Caution should also be taken when comparing classrooms, even those of the same age group, because the ages often vary within each and among classrooms. One class may have a greater number of younger children and another more older children, yet within the same age group; and some may have more children with developmental delays or dual language learners. Therefore, average scores for classrooms are not considered or compared.

Instead, what is important is that each child experiences progress in all domains and subdomains. The following graph shows the growth of all children within the program across the three collection periods. Only children for whom scores were obtained for both the first and last period are included in the analysis. As illustrated in the graph, the average growth for all children for whom scores were obtained indicates that there was growth in all domains with the exception of Social and Emotional Development and Science and Technology. It is recommended that the program



The following chart indicates the number of children whose scores decreased from the first or second period to the final period.

	>or = to 5 domains	4 domains	3 domains	2 domains	1 domain
# Children	4	3	7	13	19

When individual children do not experience growth, more often it is due to poor attendance as a result of chronic illnesses. It is recommended that the program provide additional support to families regarding how to support their child's learning at home when there are absences to ensure that children are making good developmental progress. For other children who may be experiencing absenteeism not due to illness, it is important to communicate to families the importance of attendance to their child's growth and development.

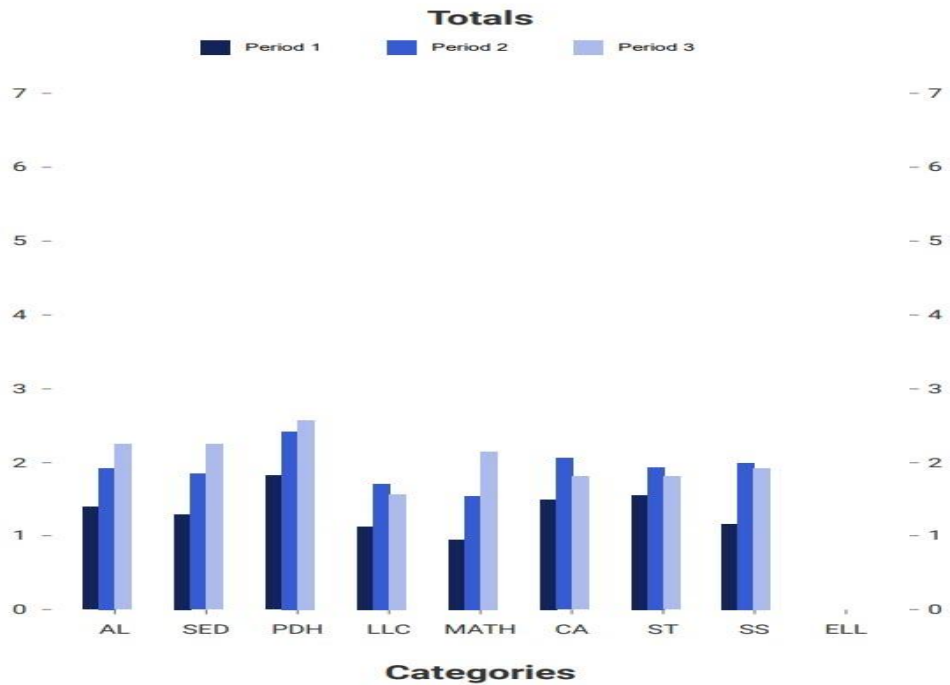
It is recommended that further training in the areas of Social and Emotional Development and Science and Technology be considered. Additionally, it is recommended that after each

recording period teaching staff meet with their supervisor to review class results and develop strategies to use the results to inform planning and intentional teaching strategies.

Thirty-one (31) children with disabilities and/or developmental delays were enrolled in the EHS class-based and/or the home visiting program for the 2022-2023 school year – representing 32.3% of children enrolled. Children with disabilities and/or developmental delays are those with an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) and receive services from the Department of Health Infants and Toddlers Program until their third birthday or with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) and receive services from the Department of Education Preschool Services program once they have turned three years.

The following chart illustrates the growth and progress for children with disabilities and/or developmental delays. It should be noted that of the 31 children who were identified as having a disability and/or developmental delay, 25 were identified as such on the COR: therefore, the graph below represents the progress of only the 25 in the COR. The difference in numbers may be because children have been identified as having a disability and/or developmental delay during the school year and the changes had not been made to the COR data to reflect their status. As indicated in the graph, the aggregated scores for those children with an IFSP or an IEP showed growth in five of the eight developmental domains, with Language Literacy and Communication; Creativity and the Arts; and Science and Technology indicating lack of developmental growth.

**Totals | Growth**



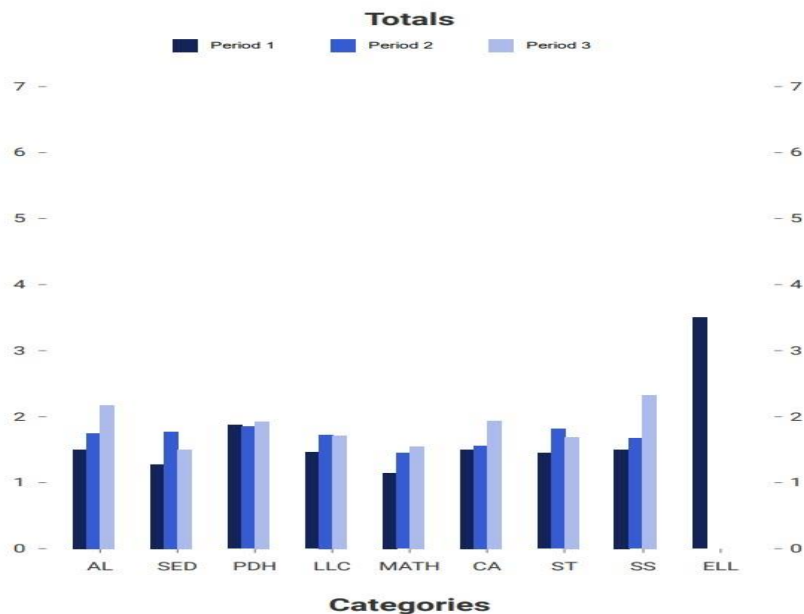
Year: LSSVI-EHS 2023-2024 IEP/IFSP: Yes

It may be helpful to know how many children who had IFSPs while enrolled in Early Head Start are not in need of continued special education services as they transition out, indicating that they no longer have a developmental delay.

Eighteen (18) children, representing 18.7% of those enrolled in the EHS class-based and/or the home visiting program in the 2022-2023 school year were DLL as reported by families on their enrollment forms and gathered by the Family Community Partnerships Coordinators. Of those identified on enrollment forms, only ten (10) were indicated as DLL within the COR. Only those indicated on the COR are reflected in the chart below. It is recommended that the program consider Head Start’s definition of Dual Language Learner to ensure that children are identified appropriately in the COR; and when demographic information is entered into the COR, that all DLL children be identified as such.

The following chart illustrates the growth and progress for children who are dual language learners. There are few scores reported in the “English Learning” domain of the COR for English Language Learners and those that are reported are inconsistent so that it is difficult to determine growth in that area. This domain is specifically designed to document the progress of children who have a home language other than or in addition to English and their acquisition of English – both in listening and understanding English and speaking English. Children experience growth in five of the other areas, with Language, Literacy, and Communication remaining stagnant and Social and emotional Development and Science and Technology indicating lack of developmental growth.

**Totals | Growth**



**Year: LSSVI-EHS 2023-2024 Home Language: Arabic, Creole, French, Patois, Spanish**

The chart below indicates aggregated results of the COR Advantage assessment for children who transitioned out of EHS at the end of the 2023-2024 school year due to age – those children with 2021 birthdays. Children transition between 2.8 and 3.7 years in synchronization with the Virgin Islands Head Start Program and Department of Education Kindergarten entry requirements, which have cut-off dates of December 31<sup>st</sup>. Results include all children, including class-based, home-based, those with disabilities and/or developmental delays, and those who are dual language learners who are transitioning out of Early Head Start.

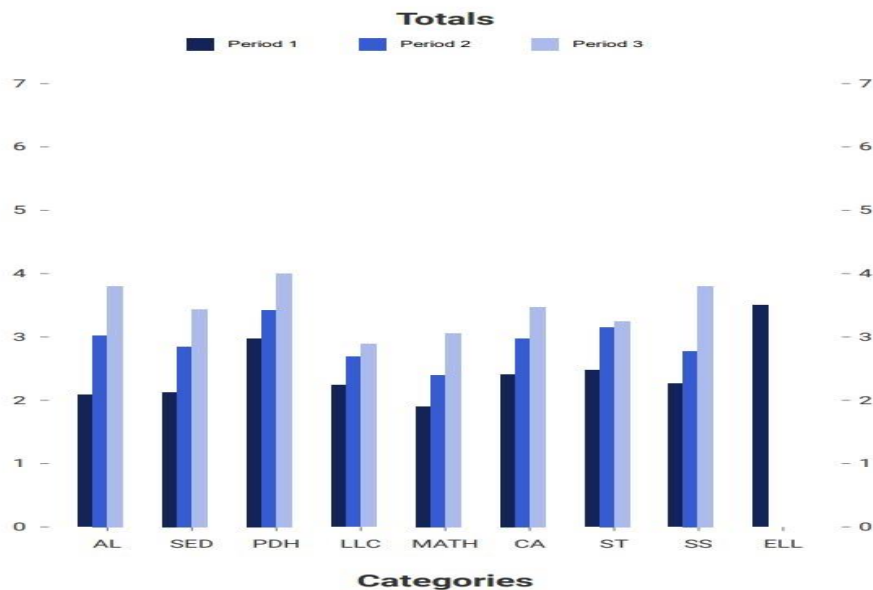
As stated above, scores are not equated with ages but represent developmental levels within each domain and subdomain. Generally, expectations for children’s achievement/scores are expected within the following guidelines. Note, that there is an overlap of scores from age to age, recognizing that there is normal variability in children’s development.

- Infants and toddlers: 0-3
- Preschool: 2-5
- Kindergarten: 4-7

With this in mind, it is the hope and intention of EHS that children who are transitioning from the program achieve a score at or above 2 in all domains and subdomains.

The following graph illustrates the aggregated domain scores for children who scored at each level who transitioned from the EHS program due to their date of birth, between January 1, 2021 and December 31, 2021.

**Totals | Growth**



**Birthdate:** 01-01-2021 - 12-31-2021 **Year:** LSSVI-EHS 2023-2024

In analysis of the graph above, the focus is on the third and last collection period which indicates that according to aggregated results of all children transitioning from the Early Head Start program, scores are above level 2 in all domains.

The chart below provides aggregated scores for individual subdomains. As illustrated, all aggregated subdomain scores were above level 2 indicating that children leaving Early Head Start meet developmental expectations.

<b>Subdomain</b>	<b>Aggregated Score for 3<sup>rd</sup> Period</b>
<b>Approaches to Learning</b>	
Initiative and planning	2.82
Problem solving with materials	2.97
Reflection	2.73
<b>Social and Emotional Development</b>	
Emotions	2.53
Relationships with adults	2.82
Relationships with other children	3.31
Community	3.37
Conflict resolution	2.79
<b>Physical Development and Health</b>	
Gross Motor	3.80
Fine Motor	3.14
Personal care and healthy behavior	3.82
<b>Language, literacy &amp; communication</b>	
Speaking	2.69
Listening and comprehension	2.60
Phonological awareness	2.40
Alphabetic knowledge	2.29
Reading	2.24
Book enjoyment and knowledge	2.74
Writing	2.29
<b>Mathematics</b>	
Number and counting	2.41
Geometry, shapes, spatial awareness	2.82
Measurement	2.68

Patterns	2.61
Data analysis	2.58
<b>Creative Arts</b>	
Art	2.85
Music	2.64
Movement	2.97
Pretend play	3.15
<b>Science and technology</b>	
Observing and classifying	2.70
Experimenting, predicting, drawing conclusions	2.30
Natural and physical world	2.71
Tools and technology	2.94
<b>Social Studies</b>	
<b>Subdomain</b>	<b>Aggregated Score for 3<sup>rd</sup> Period</b>
Knowledge of self and others	2.25
Geography	3.26
History	2.83

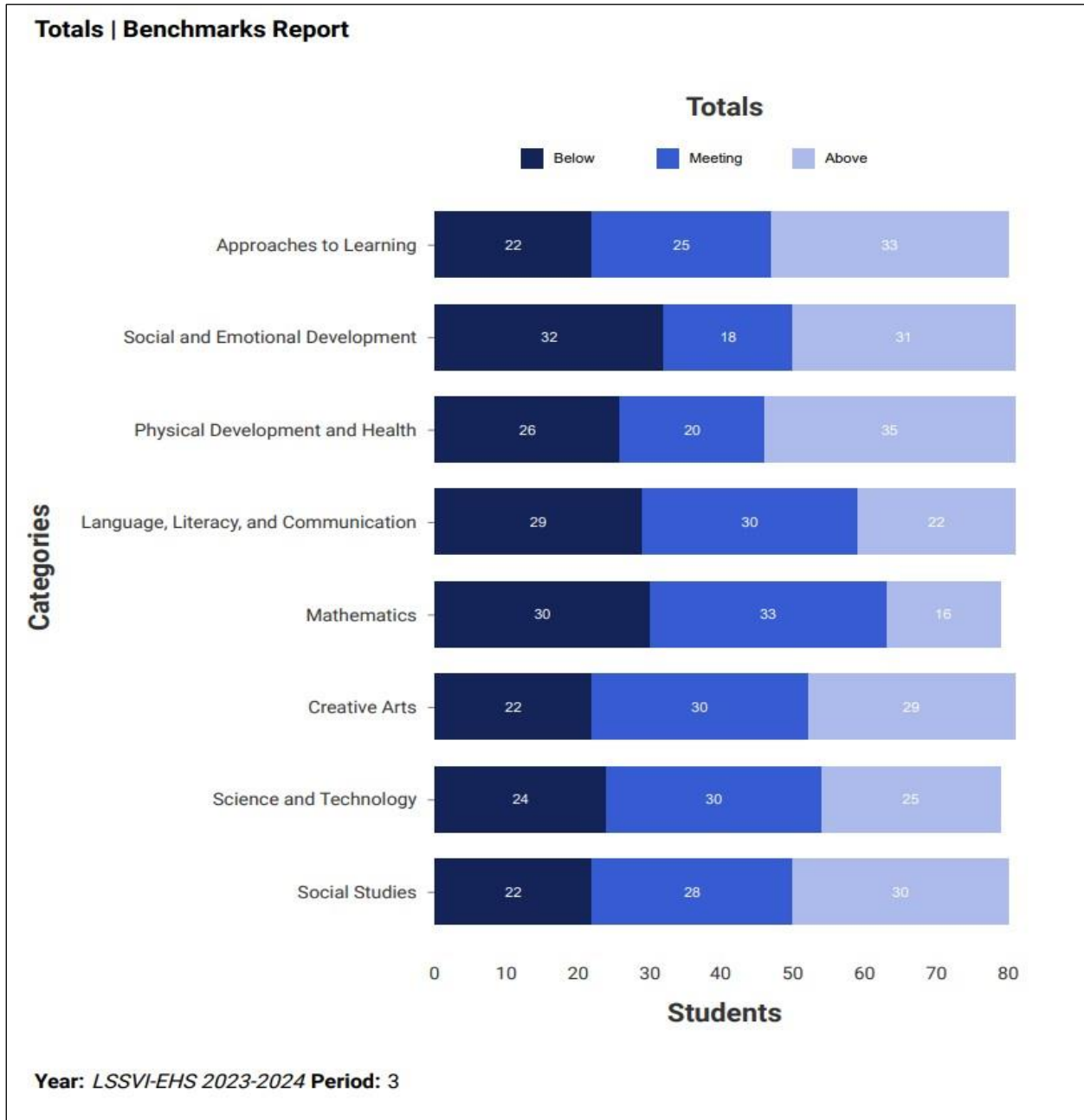
The Benchmarks Report is designed to identify how students’ performance compares to national averages for each of the COR Advantage categories. The Benchmark Report reflects student performance compared to peers within the same 3-month age window. The report is grouped into Above, Meeting, and Below, which reflect the following groups relative to the national averages:

- Above = performing above age-level norms (top 25%)
- Meeting = performing consistent with age-level norms (middle 50%)
- Below = performing below age-level norms (bottom 25%)

This is the third year that data analysis has looked at Benchmarks. It can be very instructive moving forward. The graph below depicts the number of children enrolled in EHS and how they compared to the national average of children evaluated using the COR who are the same age at the end of the school year, the third collection period. The aggregated scores are inclusive of all children including dual language learners and children with disabilities and/or developmental delays.

While this benchmark graph is an aggregation of the total program, teachers should look at the benchmarks achieved in each subdomain at each period for each child to provide guidance for individualization. The goal should always be focused on working towards every child reaching optimal development in all areas.

The results can also be instructive in guiding professional development to enable teachers to acquire the knowledge and skills to facilitate children’s learning in each domain, as well as guiding plans for parent education. Even though not all children in the comparative study are within the same demographic as the LSS Early Head Start children, it is recommended that a goal of the program should be to improve the benchmark scores.





The COR Advantage family portal provides opportunities for staff and families to communicate about the progress of children and other issues and events of EHS. During the 2023-2024 school year, the only documented usage was regarding Family Announcements of events and activities posted by the Families and Community Services Managers. There were a total of 116 announcements, showing an increase of 68 over the previous school year. The portal calculates the number of families who open the communication. On average, 38 families opened announcements. Announcements which had zero families opening communications were not included as those were reminders of previous announcements. There were no daily notes or daily sheets sent through the portal to families by teaching staff. Additionally, there were no comments sent by families.

The data indicates that both staff and families are not using the family portal to the fullest. The family portal may be an excellent tool for communicating with families in this digital world. It is recommended that families be surveyed to determine the best way they prefer to receive communications. At the same time, it is recommended that the program explore what may be the barriers for using the portal by both staff and families. Perhaps training is needed for both staff and families regarding how to use the portal and the benefits.

Individual children's results and aggregated results by classroom are shared with teachers. This information assists teachers in taking note of individual children's progress and needs and provides information for planning for individual children and the group. At the same time, this information assists teachers in noting their own strengths in implementing curricula focused on the different subdomains and in identifying individualized professional development needs. Informed by the analysis of COR results, it is the goal of the program to support teachers in their professional development through reflective and on-going supervision, consultations, workshops, and training materials designed to help each teacher to improve their abilities to meet the needs of the children in their care.

**The major take-away from the analysis of the COR results for the 2023-2024 school year is that the majority of children enrolled in the LSS Early Head Start make developmental progress and that children leaving Early Head Start due to aging out meet expectations collectively. This is evident in children's scores, as well as, in the fact that children who experience many absences do not make the same kind of developmental progress as those who attend on a regular basis.**

While overall the data highlights the positive benefits of the Early Head Start Program – and there are many – there are recommendations for the program to consider as it engages in its self-assessment and continuous improvement processes. There are opportunities for growth and professional development highlighted in this report that are summarized below:

- It is acknowledged that it is often more difficult for Home Visitors to collect COR data due to the limited time spent with children. However, it is important for data collection

to be complete so that children's progress can be monitored in all subdomains and individual needs can be addressed. Therefore, it is recommended that the program consider training focused on strategies to improve the gathering of data during home visits to increase the completion rate, perhaps including how to set up and stimulate responses in natural play situations and observations of home visits to assist home visitors in recognizing opportune moments that children express performances aligned with the COR.

- Results for the first collection period indicated that only 6 classrooms achieved 100%. Therefore, it is recommended that the program explore the potential barriers/situations that lead to the lack of completion in the first period and what support staff may need.
- As professional development is planned, it is recommended that consideration be made to emphasize training in strategies to promote and facilitate development of the following areas: Emotions, and Reading – as children have been scoring consistently lower in these areas over the past four (5) years.
- The number of children who did not experience growth in all areas needs to be a focus as part of the continuous improvement process. It is important for teaching staff to have on-going access to and training in how to analyze reports that are available online on the COR portal so that they can monitor progress and use information for individual planning.
- In recognition of the fact that children who experience many absences, it is recommended that the program provide additional support to families regarding how they can support their child's learning at home to ensure that children are making good developmental progress. Additionally, for those who are chronically absent and not due to illness, it is recommended that the program communicate to families the importance of attendance and the impact on their development.
- It was noted that of the 31 (twenty-six) children who were identified as having a disability and/or developmental delay, only 25 (twenty) were identified as such on the COR. It is, therefore, important to be diligent in updating and documenting information within the COR throughout the school year to obtain an accurate picture of progress for all children with a developmental delay and/or disability.
- It may be helpful to know how many children who had IFSPs while enrolled in Early Head Start are not in need of continued special education services as they transition out, indicating that they no longer have a developmental delay.
- It was noted that of the 24 (twenty-four) children identified as dual language learners on enrollment forms, only ten (10) were indicated as DLL within the COR. There may be some confusion about the Head Start definition of DLL, which may account for the discrepancy. Therefore, it is recommended that the program work with their TTA Consultant to have a clear understanding of the Head Start definition of DLL to ensure that children are identified appropriately in the COR; and when demographic information is entered into the COR, that all DLL children be identified as such.
- There were no scores reported in the "English Learning" domain of the COR for children who were identified as DLL. It is recommended that staff be aware of those children

identified as DLL on enrollment forms so that they can support the child's home language, facilitate their learning of English, and score appropriately on the COR.

- Looking at the Benchmark data, remember that this represents aggregated data for all children, including those who are DLL and those with developmental delays and/or disabilities. It is recommended that teachers and home visitors look at the benchmarks achieved in each subdomain at each period for each child to provide guidance for individualization. The goal should always be focused on working towards every child reaching optimal development in all areas.
- The results of the Benchmark data can also be instructive in guiding professional development to enable teachers to acquire the knowledge and skills to facilitate children's learning in each domain, as well as guiding plans for parent education.
- The family portal may be an excellent tool for communicating with families in this digital world. It is recommended that families be surveyed to determine the best way they would prefer to receive communications. Would families rather get information via text or email or written? At the same time, it is recommended that the program explore what may be the barriers for using the portal by both staff and families. Do families lack access to technology, for example? Perhaps training is needed for both staff and families for how to use the portal and the benefits.



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