

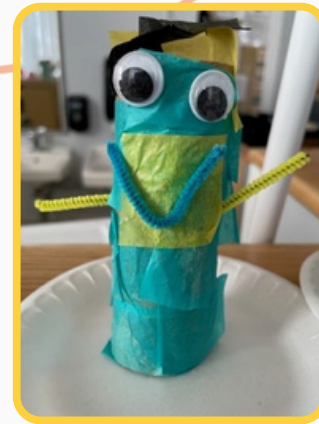


Early Childhood **ANNUAL** **REPORT**



2023-2024





WELCOME

Dear families, friends & partners,

Three words come to the top of mind when reflecting on TEAM's early childhood 2023-2024 program year and accomplishments – **leadership, innovation & collaboration**. These admirable attributes have been woven amongst the many successes we have accomplished as a team; a team made up of the children, families and staff that make TEAM Inc. one of the leading early childhood programs in the field!

We have witnessed countless instances of “*everyday leadership*” throughout the year; from educators and Family Support staff leading one another within their roles in the program, to parents advocating at a local and state level and being a voice for all families.

TEAM continues to *innovate* and is fearless in trying new things in support of staff, children and families. We are stronger because of our willingness to move with change and embrace new ideas. As you'll read in this report, we have had tremendous outcomes piloting projects that have not yet been rolled out in the state or region. We applaud the staff and families that make new things possible!

It's impossible to be successful without the *collaboration* of our families, community partners and each other. TEAM is very fortunate to offer and embrace opportunities for ongoing collaboration that have strengthened our service delivery and most importantly, our relationships.

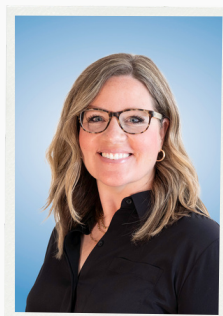
These are just a few of the many words that describe the immense success and pride we've achieved throughout the past 12 months. As you reflect on our outcomes and programming over this past year via the Early Childhood Annual Report, please join me in celebrating the work of early childhood and Head Start!

With excitement & pride,

Jamie Peterson

Jamie Peterson

Lead Director of Early Childhood



WHO WE SERVE

571
children served

89
children with individual health care plans

1,246
improved their nutrition via healthy meals & snacks
**includes CACFP homes*

497
of those children were enrolled in Head Start or Early Head Start

571
children received medical exams

543
children whose families received diapers via TEAM's Diaper Bank
156 of those children were enrolled in Head Start or Early Head Start

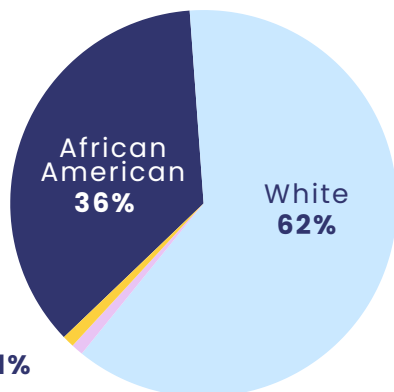
86
children served had diagnosed special needs
*47 preschool children with an IEP;
39 infants/toddlers with an IFSP*

478
children had access to comprehensive dental care

571
children had an on-going source of accessible health care

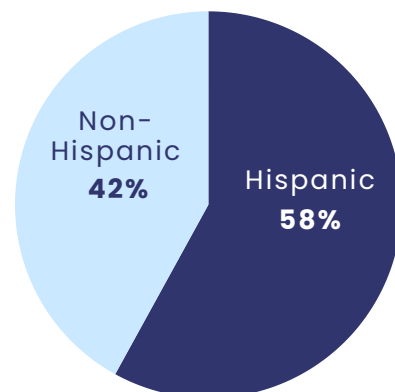
141
child referrals as a result of preventative health screenings

Race



Asian **1%**
Pacific Islander **1%**

Ethnicity



SCHOOL READINESS



Birth to Five School Readiness Goals

Approaches to Learning

1. Children will develop emotional, behavioral, and cognitive self-regulation.
2. Children will show an interest in varied topics and activities, an eagerness to learn, creativity and independence within the classroom.

Social Emotional Development

3. Children will be able to express, recognize, and respond to emotions.
4. Children will develop secure attachments with their caregivers and positive peer relationships.
5. Children will exhibit prosocial and cooperative behavior.

Language and Literacy

6. Children will develop expressive language with increasing complexity. Dual language learners will initially develop in their home language, then in English.
7. Children will develop receptive language with increasing complexity. Dual language learners will initially develop in their home language, then in English.
8. Children will begin to understand and eventually use print as a meaningful and organized symbolic system of communication. Dual language learners will initially understand and use print in their home language, then in English.

Cognition

9. Children will begin to use math concepts during daily routines and experiences.
10. Children use all of their senses to investigate their environment and discover what objects do, how living things behave, and how things work.
11. Children will increase their critical thinking skills, be able to apply past knowledge, and become aware of their own thinking.

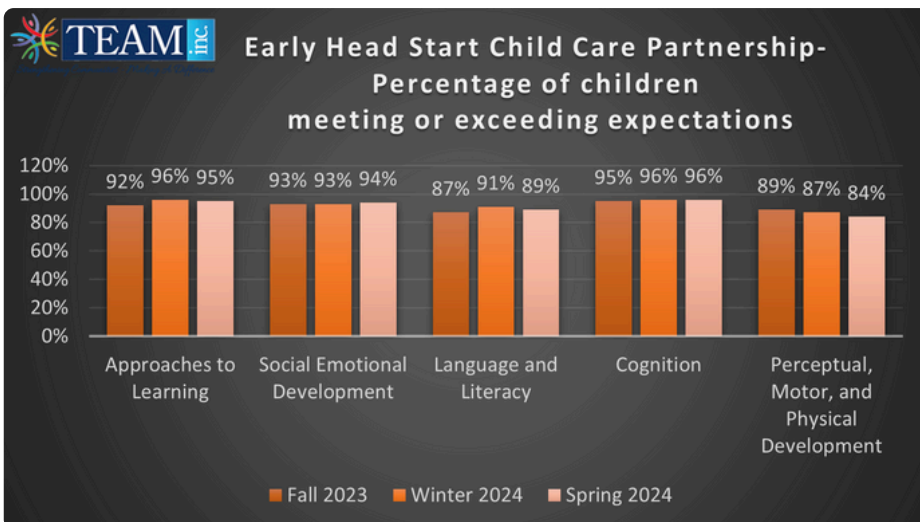
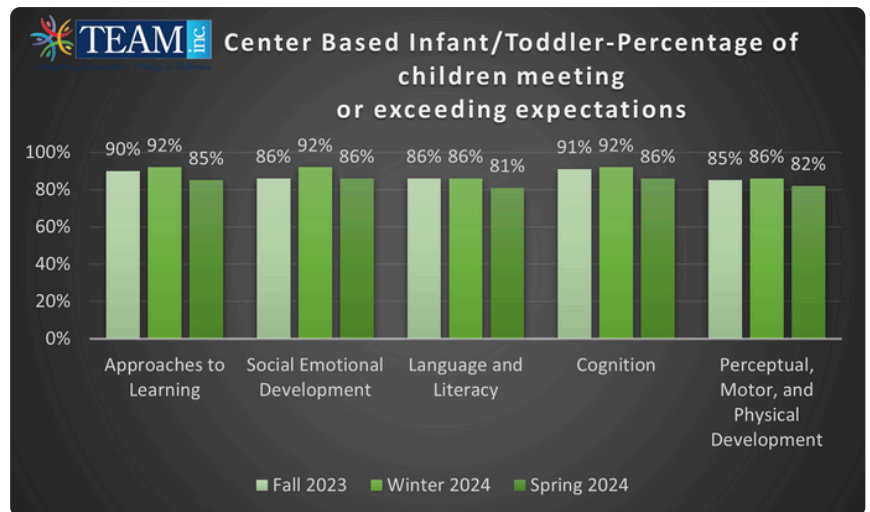
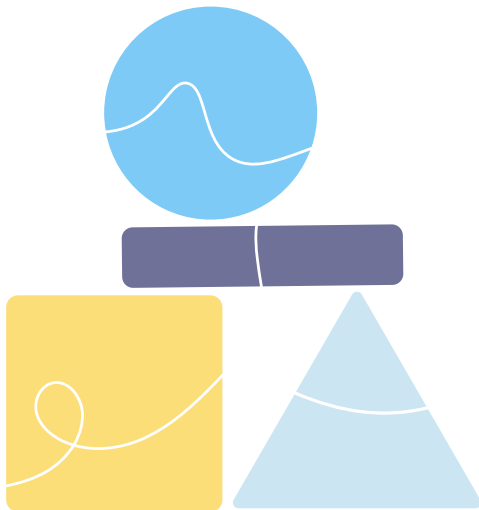
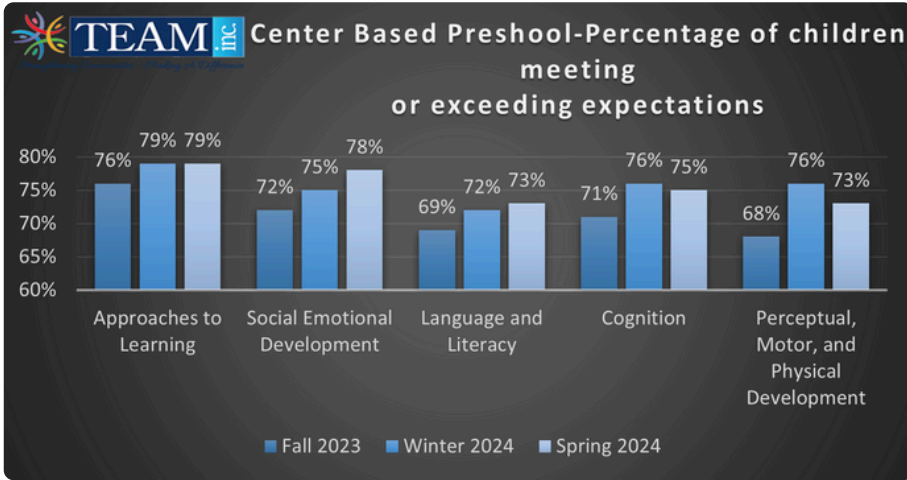
Perceptual, Motor, and Physical Development

12. Children will engage in self-care routines and exhibit healthy, safe, and nutritious habits.
13. Children will develop large gross motor and overall coordination skills.
14. Children will develop fine motor skills and overall hand eye coordination.

Developed from the five essential domains in the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework (HSELOF) and the Connecticut Early Learning & Development Standards (CT ELDS), TEAM's School Readiness Goals focus on a growth trajectory in support of children ages birth to five. TEAM's early childhood program provides a flexible, developmentally appropriate curriculum that allows teachers to plan learning opportunities based on the individual strengths, needs, interests and social-emotional competencies of each child. Ongoing observations and assessments provide child specific data that is used to set individualized goals for each child as well as provide the program with an overall understanding of child progress, needed classroom supports and staff professional development.

SCHOOL READINESS

TEAM Early Childhood School Readiness Goal Data 2023-2024 Program Year



FAMILY ENGAGEMENT



Family engagement in early childhood settings create significant opportunities for positive impacts on a child's development. TEAM is proud of the strong home to school connections that are formed when parents feel welcome to join in family engagement opportunities including volunteering in our classrooms, participating in program governance, and/or advocating within their communities.

Families' active engagement in their child's learning provides a strong foundation for the many building blocks of school readiness and overall well-being.

We look forward to welcoming all enrolled families into our program as each one plays a vital role in their child and our program's success!



TEAM's Head Start parents showcasing & celebrating their cultures with our school community!



FAMILY CHILDCARE PARTNERSHIP

TEAM is honored to be one of three Early Head Start–Child Care Partnership grantees in Connecticut; supporting 19 family child care providers within the city of Waterbury. TEAM is also connected to over 200 family childcare providers within the North West region of CT via the Staffed Family Child Care Network with the universal goal of supporting FCC’s to be successful businesses and increase high-quality childcare options for CT’s families.



Proud is an understatement when we reflect on the accomplishments of the FCC’s we work with! This year, the National Association for Family Child Care Conference brought together family child care providers in St. Louis, Missouri for their annual conference. The conference provided a platform for providers to connect, learn, and discuss various important topics that can benefit their businesses, education, and entrepreneurship endeavors. A highlight of this year’s event was the presence of three of TEAM’s very own Early Head Start Child Care newly accredited partners who led discussions on accreditation processes, sharing their valuable insights and experiences with fellow providers seeking new knowledge and guidance!

TEAM is proud to congratulate and celebrate two EHS–CCP providers who have recently achieved NAFCC Accreditation!

Kiobenit Grullon, an EHS–CCP provider with TEAM since 2016, began her journey toward accreditation after being inspired at the NAFCC conference. Kio has been an advocate for family child care, often speaking in partnership with TEAM to funders and local representatives. She has actively contributed to initiatives such as piloting CT’s Quality Improvement System through ELEVATE and the NAFCC provider accreditation portal. Kio has been certified as a NAFCC Quality Ambassador, enabling her to assist other providers in their accreditation journeys. Providers dedicated to excellence, like Kio, will elevate the quality of childcare services on a larger scale, benefiting our state and the entire nation.



Yolanda Hildago, an EHS–CCP provider with TEAM since 2016, has made significant strides in pursuing accreditation, displaying her commitment to the field. Yolanda has been certified as a Quality Ambassador Trainer, and has also successfully piloted the State of Connecticut’s Elevate Program and NAFCC’s Provider Accreditation Portal. Yolanda’s expertise and experience will be invaluable in guiding and supporting fellow providers through the accreditation process, ensuring that more early childhood education professionals meet and exceed national standards of quality and care.

Want to hear more from Kio and Yolanda about their journey to accreditation? Use the QR code to visit our website and watch the video!





STORIES FROM THE HEART OF HEAD START

Luz

Luz, a single mother of one daughter, Marianys, courageously moved herself and her daughter out of an unsafe living situation shortly after her daughter was born. It was difficult for Luz to obtain employment without reliable, affordable childcare. Luz came to TEAM's Slocum Center in June of 2023 to learn more about TEAM's early childhood program. It was upon her first visit that Luz felt she had found a program that would not only be the right fit for her daughter, but would provide support to her as well. During the enrollment process, Luz was able to express concern for her daughter's development and shared that she struggled with meeting basic needs. Before leaving the enrollment appointment, Luz was enrolled in TEAM's Diaper Bank and had a full understanding of the program's approach to partnering with mom and the local Birth to Three agency for her child's developmental evaluation.



Marianys was enrolled at TEAM shortly thereafter, and as a result of mom being proactive and partnering with our program for an evaluation, she began receiving services for a developmental delay and speech. Luz was thrilled that her daughter was thriving in a safe, high quality learning environment. Luz knew it was time to work on stabilizing her living situation. She and Marianys were splitting time between living at a friend's house and a relative. While working with TEAM, Luz disclosed that she and her daughter were homeless.

Through the "Head Start on Housing" initiative, a partnership with the Office of Early Childhood, National Center for Housing & Child Welfare, CT Dept. of Housing & TEAM, Luz qualified for and became the recipient of an accelerated housing assistance voucher. Shortly thereafter, she and her daughter moved into their very own apartment. TEAM's client support fund assisted Luz with household items and furnishings to start them off in their new place. Feeling safe and stable in her own apartment while knowing her daughter is making major strides with her development has brought about an immense sense of pride and reassurance to Luz; one she hasn't experienced before.



"Being part of TEAM has changed my life. The teaching staff communicate with me about Marianys' development and she has learned so much. I see a big difference in her development, behavior and language. I am very grateful for all the staff. I feel safe, happy and at peace in my apartment. I feel confident that I can continue to make my life better. Thank you, TEAM, for everything."

-Luz

STORIES FROM THE HEART OF HEAD START

Booker



A longtime member of the contractor's union, Booker unfortunately suffered a job-related injury that left him disabled and not able to return to the trade. Shortly thereafter, Booker found out that he was going to be entering a new chapter in his life - becoming a single dad to his beautiful newborn daughter, Nova. Booker dedicated each day to caring for Nova and as she approached her first birthday, a family member shared about the "outstanding early childhood program" that her children attended - TEAM's center-based, infant/toddler option in Ansonia. Booker immediately inquired about the program and shared that he "fell in love with the school. Everyone I worked with from the start made me feel like family at a time that I often felt alone". Booker completed the center's enrollment process and enrolled in TEAM's Diaper Bank.

After starting the program, TEAM staff began working through a series of child development screenings with Nova. With dad's full support and the assistance of TEAM's Behavioral Health & Disabilities Coordinator, a referral to Birth-to-Three (B23) was facilitated, and after receiving an Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP), Nova began receiving 1:1 services to strengthen her development while at the center. Booker fully embraced the process and communicated often with both TEAM's teaching staff and B23 clinicians. While working closely with TEAM's Family Support staff, Booker enrolled in and completed the Circle of Security parenting curriculum cohort. Booker's experience was exceptional as he shared "it not only strengthened my bond with my daughter, but it also taught me things about myself."

Booker continued to work intensely with the Family Support staff. After sharing how difficult it had become to maintain rising rent costs and utility payments on his fixed income, he began working with staff to become an active participant in the Head Start on Housing initiative, a partnership with the Office of Early Childhood, National Center for Housing & Child Welfare, CT Dept. of Housing & TEAM. Booker has recently been approved and is awaiting an accelerated housing assistance voucher; one that will allow him and Nova to stay in their current rental property while providing a rental subsidy.

Booker's journey with TEAM's early childhood program continues, as his daughter has recently entered a preschool classroom. Nova continues to make great strides with her development and is currently supported by TEAM and the local Board of Education's special education department to support her Individualized Education Plan (IEP).

"The gratitude I have for TEAM is beyond words. Each staff member has been on a journey with me and has made me feel like I am not alone. I don't know where Nova or I would be without TEAM—I have trusted the process, and they have been a support net like none other." – Booker



GROUP EARLY START DENVER MODEL PILOT PROGRAM

As a result of ARPA funding generously awarded to TEAM, the early childhood program was able to partner with Rehabilitation Associates Inc., a local comprehensive therapy center, to pilot the “Group-Based Early Start Denver Model (G-ESDM)” program during the 2023-2024 program year. The Group Early Start Denver Model is a type of behavior therapy specific to young children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), inclusive of toddlers and preschoolers. While building upon the foundations of ESDM and using Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA), GESDM uses a play-based approach to teach foundational communication and social skills to young children during classroom time with peers. With an evidenced based, proven success rate for children with autism, it has also demonstrated scalability and beneficial for all young children in childcare settings.

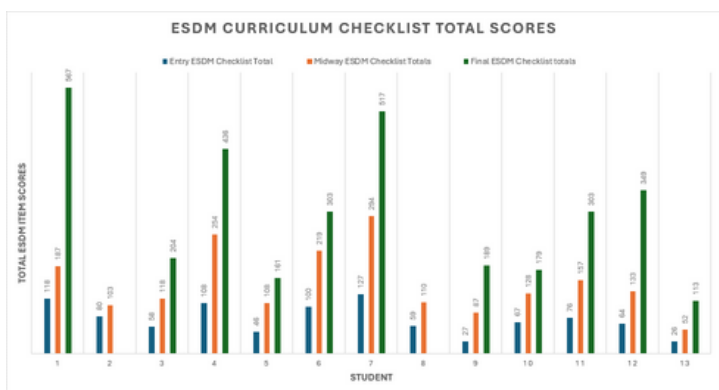


The interconnectedness between the GESDM approach and the work of Head Start was exemplified throughout the course of the pilot. Both programs foster a holistic approach to positive child outcomes through family engagement & home visits, professional development for early childhood educators, hands on classrooms experiences and a strengths-based approach to behavioral health practices.



After evaluating data collected over the course of the program year pilot, **participant children demonstrated significant gains across all developmental domains!** TEAM Educators indicated an increased sense of support in creating and fostering inclusive learning environments for children of all abilities and families expressed a heightened feeling of support as well as advocating for their child’s needs.

TEAM is proud of the success of the pilot and plans to continue this work into the next program year via our federal Head Start funding.



PROGRAM LOCATIONS

Early Childhood Center – 80 Howard Ave, Ansonia
Margaret Egan Center – 35 Matthew St, Milford
Richard O. Belden Cultural Center – 54 Grove St, Shelton
Slocum School – 25 Rumford St, Waterbury

TEAM, Inc. Board of Directors

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Leslie Youngblood

Kate Zarro

David Morgan – President & CEO



Elena DiLorenzo, Parent Policy Council Chairperson, recently spoke at a press conference with Congresswoman Rosa DeLauro, advocating for the permanent expansion of the Child Tax Credit.

Parent Policy Council

Elena DiLorenzo

Laneisha Gatling

Chanelie Malla

Stella Matembe

Melanie Matos

Tyesha Page

Virjuan Sanchez



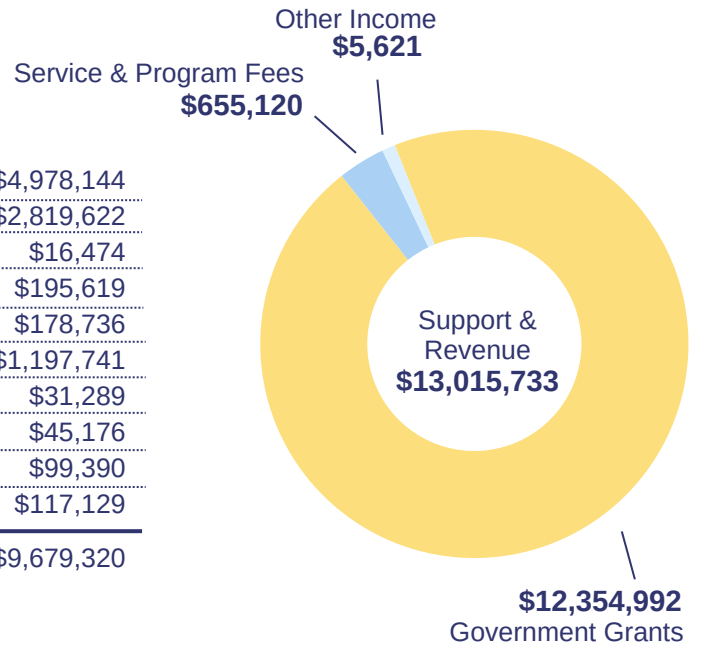
PROGRAM FUNDING

FEDERAL FUNDING

Early Head Start	\$4,978,144
Head Start	\$2,819,622
Diaper Bank	\$16,474
COVID-19 Childcare Stabilization Fund	\$195,619
COVID-19 Staffed Family Child Care Network	\$178,736
CACFP	\$1,197,741
CSLFR ARPA Parent Fees Childcare	\$31,289
COVID-19 Child Day Care Enrollment Based Grant	\$45,176
COVID-19 School Readiness Enrollment-Based Grant	\$99,390
CSLFR ARPA	\$117,129
Subtotal	\$9,679,320

STATE FUNDING

State Head Start	\$466,306
Early Head Start Child Care Partnership C4Kids	\$289,020
Child Day Care	\$1,038,355
Wage Supports for Early Childhood Educators	\$299,701
School Readiness	\$582,290
Subtotal	\$2,675,672



The proposed Early Childhood budget for FY25: \$16,104,842

TEAM's audit is posted on the state EARS system and the Federal Audit Clearinghouse.

