



Annual Report 2016 - 2017



Higher Horizons Head Start and Early Head Start



Dear Friends,

As children and families in need of Head Start (HS) and Early Head Start (EHS) services arrive at our doorstep in increasing numbers, I am gratified by the generosity of the Board of Directors and community donors, the dedication of volunteers, and the tenacity of Higher Horizons' staff. Despite challenging economic times, Higher Horizons has many accomplishments to report. During the 2016-2017 program year, Higher Horizons made great strides in preparing children for kindergarten as evidenced by the strong results as measured by Teaching Strategies® (TS) GOLD, a nationally recognized child outcomes measurement tool. This strong performance is allowing Higher Horizons to close the achievement gap for children enrolled in the program by providing high quality and comprehensive early care and education services.

Once again, Higher Horizons is positioned to achieve unparalleled success as a Head Start and Early program. We will continue to emphasize high quality and comprehensive early care and education services to families in the years to come through responsible stewardship and management of the program.

The Board of Directors offered guidance and resources in 2016-2017 by supporting the strategic direction at Higher Horizons. We will continue to strengthen relationships with existing partners to identify new community and economic development opportunities, and develop new relationships with stakeholders throughout Fairfax County.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I thank you for your continued support. The sustainability plan created in 2017 will become the fabric of Higher Horizons organization. We have, identified the actions, to maximize the chance to survive and thrive, in times of uncertainty in the future. We look forward to creating meaningful partnerships that will begin to bear fruits in the coming year.

Sincerely,

Mary Ann Cornish

Mary Ann Cornish
Executive Director

Mission Statement

Higher Horizons provides quality early childhood development and family services to low-income families to help support and empower children, families and staff as they grow to their fullest potential through education, information, resources and advocacy. We offer consistent, comprehensive, comprehensive services that support the core elements of Head Start. We believe that everyone has gifts and talents to offer within our diverse community. We are committed to delivering these services with pride and excellence.

Introduction: What's the Secret to our Success?

It's all about the collaborative relationships that support our program. Higher Horizons Head Start and Early Head Start collaborates with various Fairfax County programs, human service agencies, public schools, and other organizations to ensure that families receive the support they need to realize their dreams of raising healthy, happy and successful children.

In 2010, Higher Horizons was awarded additional funding through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. Where an Early Head Start facility in the Seven Corners community of Fairfax County was opened. With the ARRA funding, Higher Horizons became a grantee, expanding the agency along with the current delegate agency funding and relationship with the Fairfax County Department of Family Services – Office for Children.

Staff and parents work as partners to ensure that children receive individualized education and support services to maximize their development. Comprehensive Head Start services are delivered in quality, nurturing and educational environments both in the center and in the homes, as we continue to engage families as active participants in their child's education. We value the support of our community partners as we continue to help children enter school, ready to learn, leading to readiness for life. During the 2016-2017 program year, Higher Horizons served 298 children and their families in the Head Start and Early Head Start program.

ABOUT HEAD START AND EARLY HEAD START

Head Start is a national child development program for preschool children that provides services to promote optimal academic, social and emotional development for income-eligible families. Created in 1965, Head Start is the most successful, longest operating, national school readiness program in the United States. It is a child-centered, family-focused comprehensive and community-based human development program with a goal of supporting children and families in becoming productive citizens. Head Start provides comprehensive education, health, nutrition, dental, mental health, social services and parent involvement opportunities to children and their families; Head Start has contributed to the enhancement and productivity of communities across the country.



The Head Start program serves pre-school children, ages three to five years, in center-based classrooms and home-based environments. A primary focus of Head Start is the development and enhancement of school readiness skills for pre-school children.

The Early Head Start program serves pregnant women and their children, birth to age three. It provides guidance, information and direct services to foster the healthy development of children and their families during the most formidable years. The mission of Early Head Start is to promote healthy pre-natal outcomes for pregnant women, enhance the development of very young children, and promote healthy family functioning. Like Head Start, Early Head Start focuses on quality services, prevention, parental involvement, and inclusion.



THE HEAD START BENEFIT

For more than 50 years, the national Head Start program has devoted its resources to supporting the optimal growth and development of young children and their families, with the understanding that the support would help create and maintain stronger, more vibrant communities. In times of economic hardships, growing demands on families, and a smaller resource base for community growth, the services that Head Start delivers have become more valuable. Head Start brings benefits that add value to the lives of children, parents and communities. Through better educated young people, families are strengthened to a new level of self-sufficiency, and transformed communities benefit from increased employment, a higher salary bases, and more engaged citizens. Head Start proves itself to be an added value to the Commonwealth of Virginia.

The tables below illustrate *Enrollment* data and *Health Outcomes* for the 2014-2016 program year at Higher Horizons:

ENROLLMENT 2016-2017	Head Start Fairfax County Delegate	Early Head Start Fairfax County Delegate	Local Head Start Fairfax County Delegate	Early Head Start Seven Corners Grantee
Funded Enrollment Center Based	88	16	84	40
Funded Enrollment Home Based	-	36	-	36
Number of Children Served	95	81	89	81
Number of Pregnant Women Served	-	15	-	9
Average Monthly Enrollment	100%	100%	100%	100%
Percentage of Eligible Children Served	100%	100%	100%	100%

HEALTH OUTCOMES	Head Start Fairfax County Delegate	Early Head Start Fairfax County Delegate	Local Head Start Fairfax County Delegate	Early Head Start Seven Corners Grantee
Percentage of enrolled children who are up-to-date on a schedule of age appropriate preventive and primary health care.	100%	100%	90%	93%
Percentage of enrolled children up-to-date on immunizations or have received all immunizations possible at this time.	96.8%	91.3%	90%	96.3%
Percentage of enrolled children with accessible, continuous care provided by the dentist.	97.9%	80.3%	88%	93%

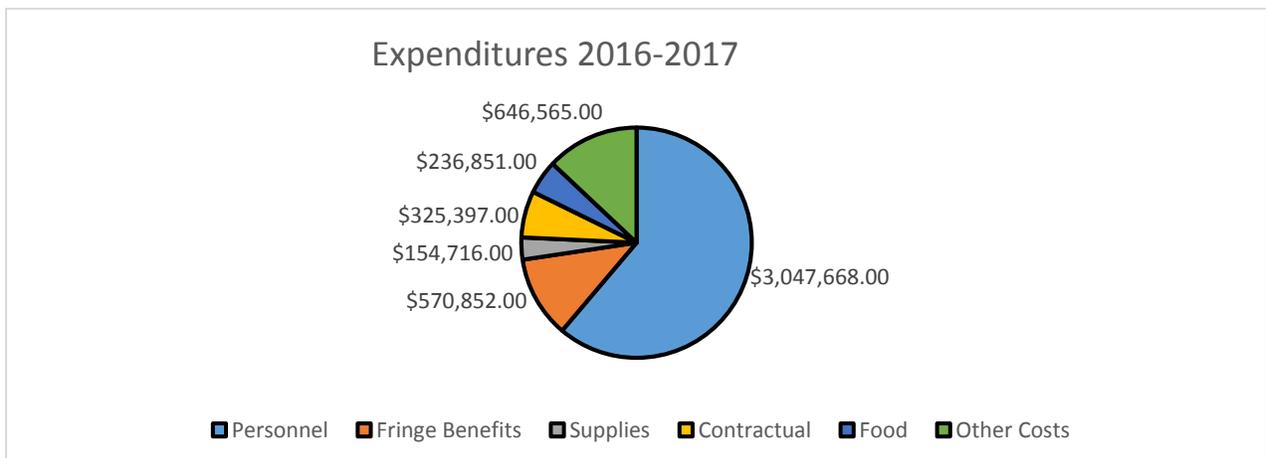
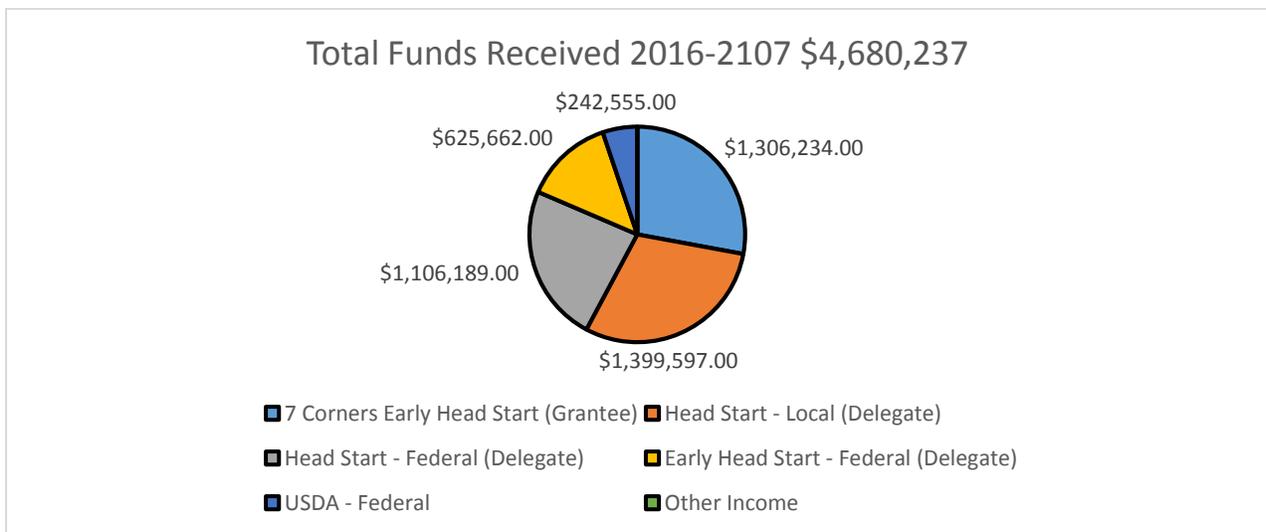
FUNDING & EXPENDITURES 2016-2017

Summary of OHS Federal Review Findings – Grantee & Delegate Programs

Higher Horizons EHS at Seven Corners met the conditions established in the Head Start Performance Standards Designation Renewal System, and Higher Horizons received a five-year, non-competitive funding award in 2016.

There were no financial audit findings in the grantee or delegate programs at Higher Horizons for 2016-2017. The field work was completed on October 26, 2017 and the A-133 annual financial audit was submitted to the clearing house on January 09, 2017. Federal Form 990 was filed January 10, 2018.

Based on information gathered during the annual audit and quarterly on-site financial monitoring visits from Fairfax County, Higher Horizons has been in compliance with Head Start Program Performance Standards, laws, regulations and all other policy requirements. If this document ‘toots our horn,’ it tells us we’re doing great in providing quality services to children and families!



Head Start and Early Head Start Center-Based

Performance and Growth Report by Checkpoints

Higher Horizons Head Start and Early Head Start is a full year program. Three checkpoints are conducted during the program year. The checkpoints are labeled as the fall, winter, and spring. The first checkpoint period in the fall is from the first day of school to the middle of November. During this period, children begin to learn about the school, their classrooms, teachers and classmates. Children proceed to begin to understand and follow the daily schedule. Teachers observe and learn about the children in their classrooms. Teachers also make observations about children's interests, personalities, challenges, cultures, and families. Teachers also make observations and document children's actions during daily activities and social interactions. These observations are used as documentation to help finalize levels for each developmental area by the checkpoint dates. The scores generated from the checkpoint represent the children's initial developmental stages.

After the initial data from *Teaching Strategies*® GOLD and moving forward to know children's strengths and weaknesses, teachers set up educational goals for each child. These goals are implemented in weekly, individual lesson plans and daily activities to assist children in reaching new developmental levels. After each checkpoint, teachers obtain new data from Teaching Strategies® GOLD according to the observation notes and set up new goals for the next reporting period. The data is generated from Teaching Strategies® using the *Widely Held Expectation Snapshot* reporting tool.

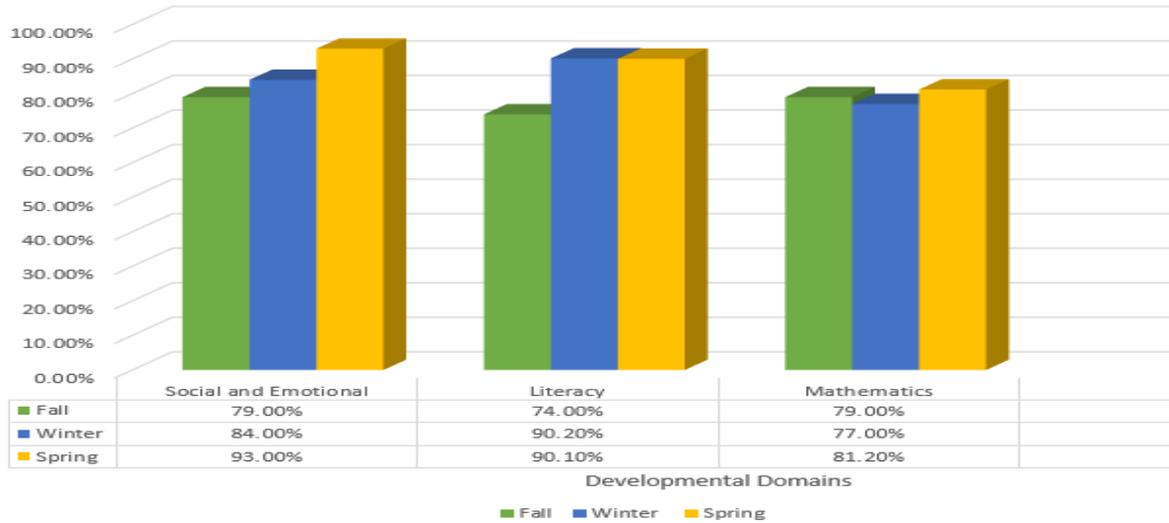
In the Head Start and Early Head Start programs, teachers focus on these developmental areas: Social-Emotional, Physical, Language, Cognitive, Literacy and Mathematics. The following charts show the scores for the three checkpoints for the 2016-2017 school year.

Higher Horizons provides teachers with training to support children in increasing their scores at various educational levels. The following training was provided for teaching staff:

- How to Support Dual Language Learners using the *Planned Language Approach*
- Developing Language Activities for Infants and Toddlers
- Social Emotional Development for Preschool, Infants and Toddlers
- Appropriate Math and Sciences Activities for Preschool, Infants and Toddlers
- Center on Social Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (CSEFEL) Infant and Toddler Training
- Al's Pal's® for Head Start
- CLASS®
- LEAP® as the Supplemental Nutrition Curriculum
- Using Creative Curriculum® Resources Planning

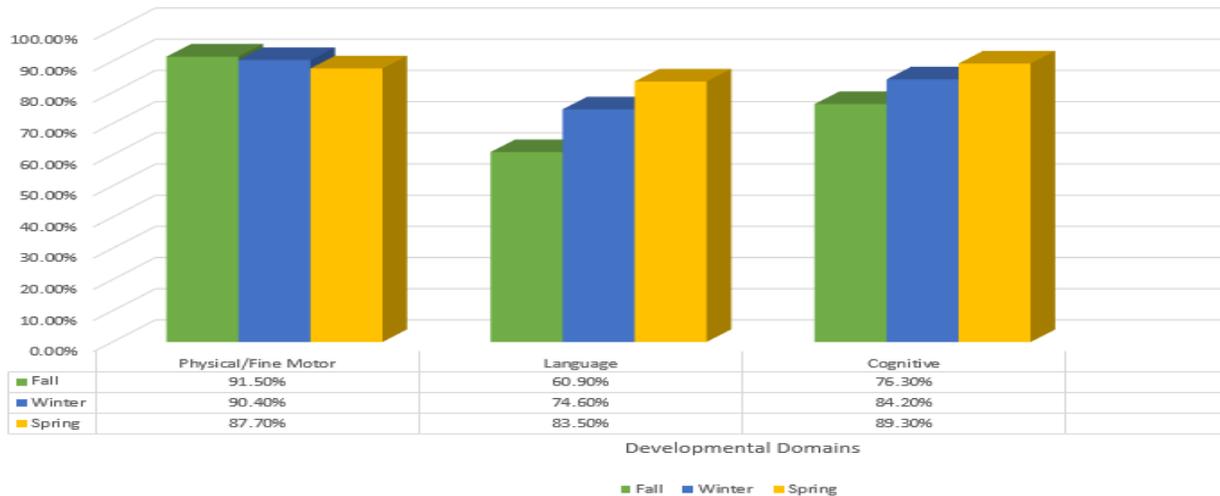
The charts below show the scores for the 2016-2017 checkpoints:

Percent of Children Meeting Widely Held Expectations



At the Fall Checkpoint, 74% of the children were meeting the Widely Held Expectation. For the Social and Emotional Domain, there was a growth of 19.0% from Fall to Spring. Children at Higher Horizons also made growth in Literacy and Mathematics. A 16.1% growth in Literacy, and 2.2% growth in Mathematics.

Percent of Children Meeting Widely Held Expectations



At the Fall Checkpoint, 60.9 % of the children were meeting the Widely Held Expectations and progressed to 83.5 % with a growth of 22.6% for the Language Domain. This growth is also evident in the Cognitive Domain. Children made a 13.0% growth from Fall to Spring. There was a decline in the Physical/Fine Motor Domain. Children were at 91.5 % and dropped 3.8% from Fall to Spring to 87.7%.

The Early Head Start Home Based Program

The Home Based program option is another option for Early Head Start children and families. It is designed to capitalize on the learning opportunities in the home environment. Some families are better suited for home-based services than the center based program. The education, health, nutrition, and social service needs of the children and families are incorporated in the Home Based program by the home visitor assigned to each family. Below is a snap shot of the services that families received while enrolled in the program:

- *85% of weekly 90-minute visits were made by the home visitors demonstrating to families how they can enrich their child's development and school readiness by providing weekly skill-building play activities that parents can replicate with their children using common materials found around the home. Home visitors utilize *Parents as Teachers: Born to Learn Curricula* to enhance service delivery.
- Home Visitors conducted a needs assessment known as the *Family Partnership Plan*, with each assigned family. This assessment provided insight on each family's strengths, needs, and set a basis for allowing them to set achievable goals for their family. Additional assessments were provided to enrolled pregnant women to ensure positive pregnancy outcomes. Home Visitors also assisted expectant mothers to access proper medical and dental coverage, scheduling prenatal visits and providing pertinent fetal and prenatal developmental information.
- Home Visitors worked with local Medicaid providers and physicians to ensure all infants had a medical home. 95% of infants enrolled in the program had a medical home by their 1st and 2nd birthdays.

Of the 72 families served by the Early Head Start Home Based program during 2016-2017

- 92% of enrolled were participants in the Women, Infants & Children (WIC) program
- 56% of enrolled children received Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits
- 3% received Supplemental Security Income (SSI) for a family member
- 85% of enrolled parents resided in dual parent households
- 27% of enrolled families attended classes to build English language skills
- 36% of enrolled parents attended one or more college level classes
- 9 pregnant women received services and delivered healthy babies

Annual Report – Family Services

Head Start believes partnering with families to provide and connect them with relevant services within the community -culturally and linguistically. These services are designed to strengthen families as well as provide a foundation for family success. For example, The Parent, Family, and Community Engagement Framework (PFCE) which is the head start road map for progress in achieving outcomes that leads to positive and continuing change for Head Start families. The PFCE is a research based method that Family Engagement Advocates used to promote parent and family engagement and children's leaning and development through the school year. Family Engagement Advocates work with their families to develop individualized Family Partnership Plans (FPP) as early as enrollment, that incorporates family goals that are achievable.

Higher Horizons encourages the role of parents as their child's first teacher in their learning. Higher Horizons employees build relationships with families that support positive parent-child relationships, family well-being (social and emotional) and our partnerships in the community. We had several parent education and activities provided 2016-2017 school year for our families: Literacy Night, Open Enrollment Fair, Transition to Kindergarten Meeting, multiple field trips for center-based, socialization field trips for home- based families, Baby Shower for pregnant mothers, Parent meetings, Open House, Parent-Teacher conferences, Mother's Day appreciation, Father's Day appreciation, Coat drive and Car Seat Safety Drive, Salvation Army, Dominion Power of Alexandria and Fairfax Angel Tree.