

**The Community Group Early Head Start Child Care Partnership
Annual Report to the Public July 2019 – June 2020**



Our Mission

The Community Group (TCG)'s mission is to create, manage, and nurture high-quality programs focused on education and related services that support children, families and educators.

Background

Established in 1970 as a preschool center to serve the child care needs of working families, TCG has steadily expanded its programs in response to the education, child care, training and enrichment needs of children and families in Lawrence and Methuen, MA. In 2015, TCG was awarded an Early Head Start Child Care Partnership (EHS-CCP) grant which brought EHS programming and funding into existing community-based early childhood programs. In 2019, TCG was awarded a second EHS-CCP grant in order to provide comprehensive EHS services to 72 children through enrolment in TCG early education and care programs. These programs include Family Child Care homes, Community Day Early Learning Center and the Teen Parent Infant/Toddler program at Lawrence High School. All 72 children are integrated into infant, toddler and preschool classrooms which meet Massachusetts Early Education and Care (EEC) licensing standards, while simultaneously benefiting from specialized services provided to EHS children. These services include comprehensive, health, nutrition and wellness programming, and case management, including assistance with medical, dental, mental health, employment, housing and other identified needs. The primary goal of TCG's EHS program is to nurture the relationship between the child and his or her parent(s) and to focus on the strengths of each and every family.

A Year Like No Other

On January 9, 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) reported 59 known cases of mysterious coronavirus related pneumonia in Wuhan, China. By January 21, 2020, the United States confirmed its first case of novel coronavirus, or COVID-19. Less than 2 months later, on March 11, 2020, the WHO declared a global pandemic. Simultaneous to the declaration of a global pandemic, COVID cases in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts were rising; on March 16, Governor Charlie Baker issued a state of emergency due to the pandemic and ensuing public health crisis. Lawrence, MA quickly became an epicenter of COVID cases, and EHS-CCP programming was closed for in-person services from March 16 through July, 2020. The impact of COVID on the local community has been devastating. As of February 8, 2021, the city has reported 17,238 confirmed cases and 221 deaths. (MA Dept. of Public Health)

During the months when in-person programming was closed (both center based and family child care homes), EHS-CCP staff found innovative ways to continue to support our children and families. Weekly mental health email letters were sent to families in English and Spanish and offered supports around adjusting to new routines, wearing masks and transitioning back to in-person care. In addition, diapers and formula were distributed bi-weekly and emails with information on accessing food and other critical resources were sent to families.

In late July of 2020 in-person programming began to re-open under strict health and safety protocols established by the MA Department of Early Education and Care. As EHS-CCP classrooms and FCC homes re-opened, they did so using the Massachusetts Child and Youth Serving Programs Reopen Approach; Minimum Requirements for Health and Safety Standards, revised August and December 2020 as COVID-19 Child Care Playbook, Implementing the Minimum Requirements for Health and Safety [COVID-19 Child Care Playbook](#)

As challenging as 2020 was, it also helped us refocus on our core purpose and mission. The challenges we faced brought us together in ways we could not have predicted, and they have strengthened our priorities and values as an organization.

Our Chief Executive Officer, Maria Gonzalez Moeller, recently commented on lessons learned during 2020, noting “we’ve learned that TCG is built to persevere. Our mission is to serve families, and nothing - not even a pandemic - could stop us from doing our job. We learned that our most important asset is our people, and that in times of challenge, the relationships and trust that we have built with one another will carry us through those tough times. We learned that when our old ways don’t work any more, we become flexible, adaptable, and innovative.”

ANNUAL FUNDED ENROLLMENT	
<u>Early Learning Center</u> (Ballard Way):	16
<u>Lawrence High School Teen Parent Center</u> :	8
<u>Family Child Care</u> (approx. 15 providers):	48

CHILDREN SERVED (cumulative)	
Under 1 year:	47 children or 41% of total served
1 year old:	43 children or 37% of total served
2 years old:	22 children or 19% of total served
3 years old:	4 children or 3% of total served

TOTAL CHILDREN	116
TOTAL FAMILIES	116
Percent of eligible children served: *estimated	

AVERAGE MONTHLY ENROLLMENT
JULY 2019 – JUNE 2020
 71=98.6%
 *parents were given the option of continued enrollment while children were not physically able to attend

MEDICAL AND DENTAL

Children with health insurance: 116
 Children up-to-date on physical exams*: 87
 Children up-to-date on immunizations: 37
 *as determined by a health-care professional

Children with a dental home: 22
 Children up-to-date on a schedule of
 Age-appropriate preventative and primary
 oral health care: 69

SCHOOL READINESS

TCG’s EHS-CCP approach to school readiness means that “children are ready for school, families are ready to support their children’s learning, and schools are ready for children.” The following School Readiness Goals were approved by our EHS-CCP Policy Council in October 2019.

Domain	Center Base and Family Child Care
Social and Emotional	Children will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage in positive interactions through secure relationships with consistent known adults • Develop personal and playful relationships with other children • Manage, understand and express emotions. • Begin to develop a sense of identity and sense of belonging to a family and a group of peers
Approaches to Learning	Children will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate interest, and curiosity in the exploration of their environment • Show creativity and imagination in play, learning, and interactions with others • Manage actions and behavior with the support of familiar adults
Language Development and Literacy	Children will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand, respond to, and learn through communication and language experiences • Use different forms of communication to express needs and wants and engage in conversations with others • Demonstrate basic literacy skills by being read to and showing awareness of pictures and print
Cognition	Children will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use problem solving strategies • Use beginning math concepts during daily routines and experiences, including sense of number and quantity, spatial awareness, and classification • Actively explore their environment to discover cause and effect and develop understanding of how objects can be used
Physical Well-Being and Motor Development	Children will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate gross motor skills • Demonstrate fine motor skills • Begin to demonstrate self-help skills and healthy and safe behaviors with the support of an adult • Use their senses to experience interactions and explore objects in their environment

PROGRAM INCOME AND EXPENSES

<u>EHS Annual Report for the FY20 Continuation (FY21) Application</u>				
		Actual FY20 (Jul 19-Jun 20)		Projected FY21 (Jul 20-Jun 21)
<u>Funding Source Department of Health and Human Services</u>				
Early Head Start Partnership Funds		\$1,136,168.53		\$1,309,848.00
Training & Technical Assistance		\$14,709.49		\$27,660.00
Total Federal Funding		\$1,150,878.02		\$1,337,508.00
EHS State Supplemental Grant (Non-federal Share)		\$87,866.00		\$87,866.00
		\$1,238,744.02		\$1,425,374.00
<u>Early Head Start Partnership Expenses</u>				
		<u>Amount</u>		<u>Amount</u>
Personnel		\$473,297.84		\$501,586.00
Fringe Benefits		\$124,284.15		\$142,469.00
Supplies		\$53,825.69		\$96,714.00
Contractual - Family Partners		\$246,212.65		\$289,402.00
Contractual - Other		\$115,039.64		\$141,560.00
Other		\$78,756.79		\$94,075.00
Indirect		\$147,327.26		\$159,568.00.00
Total		\$1,238,744.02		\$1,425,374.00
Non Federal Share Obtained		\$113,944.00		
Non Federal Share Required				\$303,870.00

AGENCY FINANCIAL AUDIT AND OFFICE OF HEAD START REVIEW

Community Day Care of Lawrence, Inc. (d/b/a The Community Group) audit for the period ending June 30, 2019 saw no findings. Additionally, the Office of Head Start performed a Program Monitoring Review and released a subsequent Program Performance Summary Report of TCG's EHS-CCP program on June 29, 2020. Results indicated we have made satisfactory progress across all evaluated content areas, including implementation of services, fiscal management, ensuring the health and safety of children, providing quality learning environments, engaging families and communities, and program management and quality improvements.