

Early Head Start • Head Start

Annual Report 2024-2025

Accredited by the Council on Accreditation (COA)
and by the Better Business Bureau (BBB)



Vision and Mission

Family Services of Westchester (FSW) is a leading nonprofit organization dedicated to strengthening families and communities across Westchester County through comprehensive, high-quality programs. With a long-standing commitment to equity, access, and whole-child support, FSW provides early childhood education, mental health services, family stabilization programs, and community-based resources that empower individuals at every stage of life. Our Head Start and Early Head Start programs exemplify this mission by delivering culturally responsive, data-driven, and family-centered services that help children thrive and families succeed.



Vision Statement

To be the recognized leader in advocating and providing quality social and mental health services to strengthen families, children, and individuals.

Mission Statement

Family Services of Westchester, founded in 1954, offers a broad range of social and mental health services to strengthen and support families, children and individuals at every stage of the life cycle, from infancy to adulthood.

Message from Leadership

This year reflects the tremendous dedication, resilience, and shared commitment that define our early childhood work. Our teams, families, and community partners continue to come together with one purpose: ensuring that every child receives the strongest foundation for learning, development, and lifelong success.

Across our centers, home-based programs, and delegate site, we expanded opportunities for children, strengthened family engagement, deepened our collaboration with external stakeholders, and advanced the systems that support school readiness and whole-family stability. The data in this report highlights not only the progress our children made, but also the collective effort required to support them, through high-quality instruction, health and mental health services, family partnerships, and continuous improvement.

I remain incredibly proud of our staff, grateful for the trust families place in us, and encouraged by the growing network of supporters who help make this work possible. Together, we are building a stronger early childhood system, one that lifts children, empowers families, and strengthens the communities we proudly serve.



Andrea Beltran Ruggiero, MPA
Executive Vice President, Community Health

Program Governance

Board of Directors

The Family Services of Westchester Board of Directors (BOD) is comprised of nine (9) Westchester County community members and two (2) Head Start Policy Council representatives. During the 2024-2025 program year, the Board continued to provide effective oversight and governance of the organization, demonstrating a strong commitment to fiscal accountability, program quality, and regulatory compliance. Board members bring a diverse range of expertise, including public health, maternal mental health advocacy, fiscal management, strategic planning, early childhood education, and legal affairs. Board Chair Lisa Copeland contributes extensive experience in early childhood education and development, further strengthening governance leadership. FSW affirms that there were no changes to the governance structure during the 2024-2025 program year.

Policy Council

The Family Services of Westchester Head Start Program Policy Council is comprised of elected parents of currently enrolled children and community representatives. The Policy Council convenes monthly to review, provides input on, and approves key program plans, policies, and decisions, serving as a critical link between Parent Committees and program governance. During the 2024-2025 program year, Policy Council membership remained consistent, supporting continuity in leadership and decision-making. Meetings were held in both in-person and virtual formats throughout the program year to ensure accessibility and meaningful participation.

Parent Committee

The Family Services of Westchester Head Start Program Policy Council is comprised of elected parents of currently enrolled children and community representatives. The Policy Council convenes monthly to review, provide input on, and approve key program plans, policies, and decisions, serving as a critical link between Parent Committees and program governance. During the 2024-2025 program year, Policy Council membership remained consistent, supporting continuity in leadership and decision-making. Meetings were held in both in-person and virtual formats throughout the program year to ensure accessibility and meaningful participation.

Head Start and Early Head Start Locations

FSW-OPERATED HEAD START & EARLY HEAD START SITES

Site Name	Address	Funded Slots	Phone
Mount Kisco Head Start	95 Radio Circle Drive, Mount Kisco, NY 10549	17 Head Start	(914) 244-8825
The Ellen Farrar Center	114 East 4th Street, Mount Vernon, NY 10550	62 Head Start	(914) 863-9010
Port Chester Head Start	17 Spring Street, Port Chester, NY 10573	187 Head Start	(914) 452-0202
Eastview Head Start/UPK	350 Main Street, White Plains, NY 10601	51 Head Start	(914) 422-2223
North Street Center Early Head Start	456 North Street, White Plains, NY 10605	40 Early Head Start	(914) 428-8225
Rochambeau Head Start/UPK	228 Fisher Avenue, White Plains, NY 10606	132 Head Start	(914) 422-2420
New Rochelle Early Childhood Center	32 Lecount Place, New Rochelle 10801	43 Head Start	(914)-863-9909
Yonkers Children's Place	10 St. Joseph's Avenue, Yonkers, NY 10703	149 Head Start	(914) 375-4102

PARTNER AND DELEGATE AGENCY SITES

Partner/Delegate	Address	Funded Slots	Phone
St. Peter's Child Care Center	204 Hawthorne Avenue, Yonkers, NY 10705	150 Head Start	(914) 476-2152
Collin Allen Child Development Center	103 West 2nd Street, Mount Vernon, NY	34 Head Start & 12 Early Head Start	(914) 664-7005
Lois Bronz Children's Center	30 Manhattan Avenue, White Plains, NY 10607	34 Head Start & 16 Early Head Start	(914) 761-6134
Boys & Girls Club of Northern Westchester	351 Main Street, Mount Kisco, NY 10549	45 Head Start	(914) 666-8069

Executive Summary

Family Services of Westchester (FSW) operates a comprehensive early childhood system that includes Head Start (HS), Early Head Start (EHS), and a Head Start delegate program at St. Peter's Child Care Center. During the 2024-2025 program year, the FSW Head Start system demonstrated strong enrollment and community reach, delivered high-quality and comprehensive services, and supported measurable child development gains that reflect meaningful progress in school readiness and overall program quality.



Enrollment & Reach

Family Services of Westchester was funded to serve 904 Head Start children and 77 Early Head Start infants, toddlers, and pregnant women, including 150 Head Start children at the St. Peter's delegate site. Over the 2024-2025 program year, the program cumulatively enrolled 610 Head Start children including 153 children at St. Peter's, 83 Early Head Start children (81 children and 2 pregnant women) reflecting strong community reach across Westchester County.



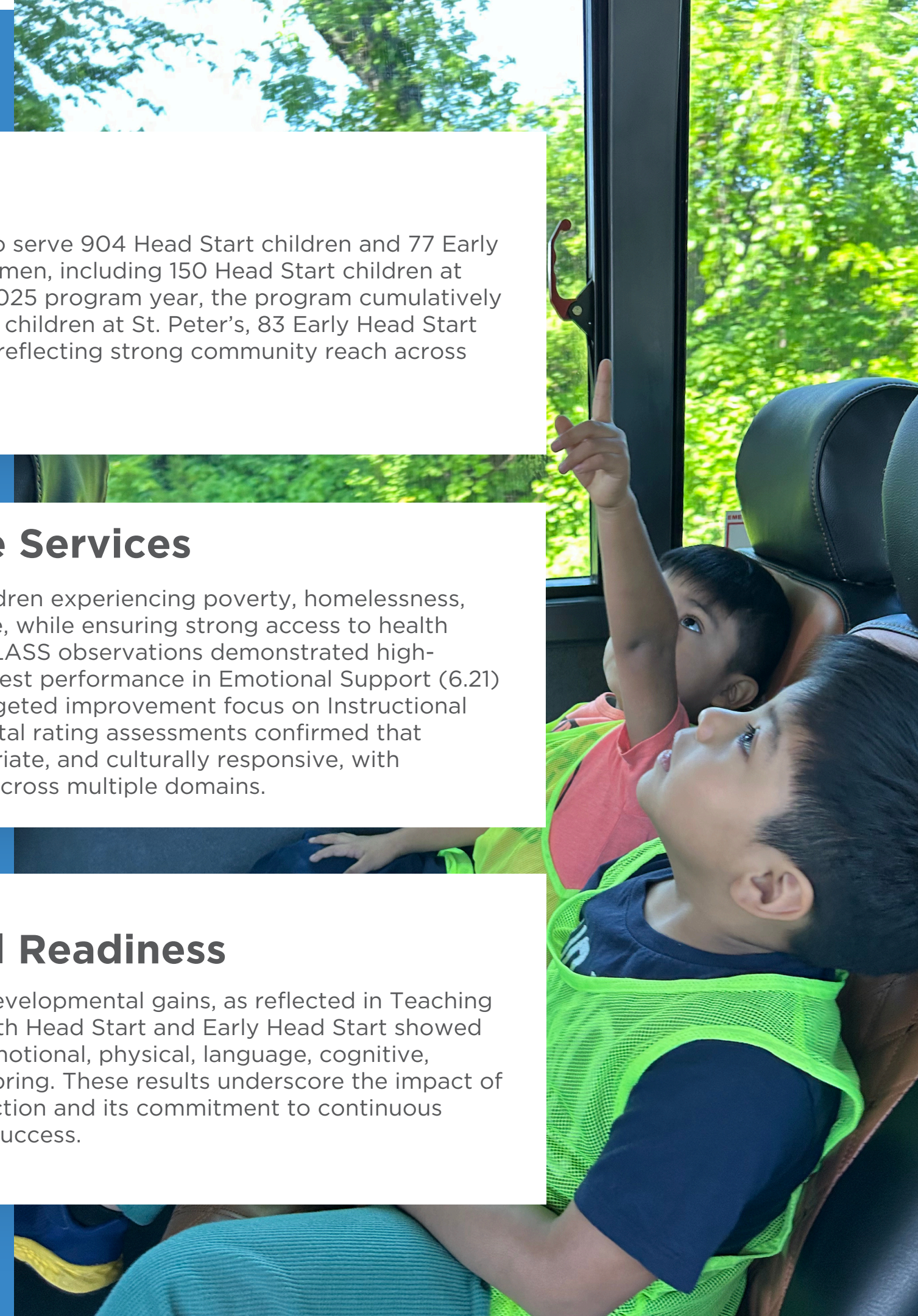
Quality & Comprehensive Services

The program served a high proportion of children experiencing poverty, homelessness, foster care involvement, and public assistance, while ensuring strong access to health insurance, medical homes, and dental care. CLASS observations demonstrated high-quality teacher-child interactions, with strongest performance in Emotional Support (6.21) and Classroom Organization (5.48), and a targeted improvement focus on Instructional Support (3.19). ECERS and ITERS environmental rating assessments confirmed that classrooms are safe, developmentally appropriate, and culturally responsive, with structured improvement plans implemented across multiple domains.



Child Outcomes & School Readiness

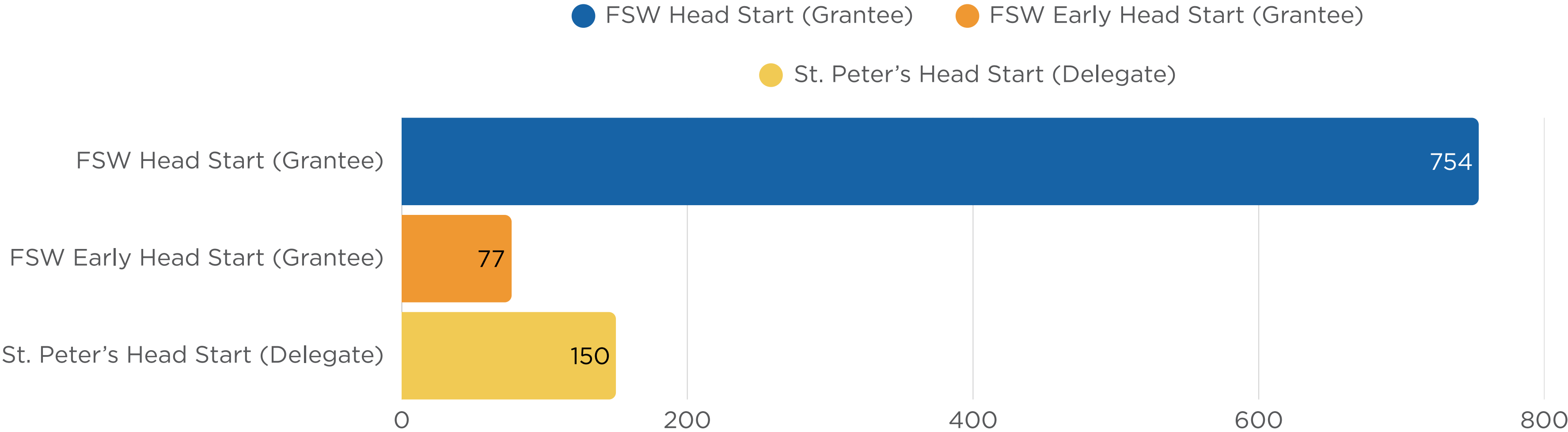
Across the year, children made measurable developmental gains, as reflected in Teaching Strategies GOLD (TS GOLD) assessments. Both Head Start and Early Head Start showed growth across all domains, including social-emotional, physical, language, cognitive, literacy, and mathematics, between fall and spring. These results underscore the impact of FSW's comprehensive, research-based instruction and its commitment to continuous program improvement and school readiness success.



Program Overview

FSW’s Head Start and Early Head Start grants are administered from the central office in Tarrytown, NY, and include both directly operated sites and a delegate partnership with St. Peter’s Child Care Center in Yonkers. The funded enrollment data below provides an overview of the program’s service capacity across all components, Head Start, Early Head Start, and the St. Peter’s delegate site, reflecting the total number of children and families the program is authorized to serve during the 2024-2025 program year.

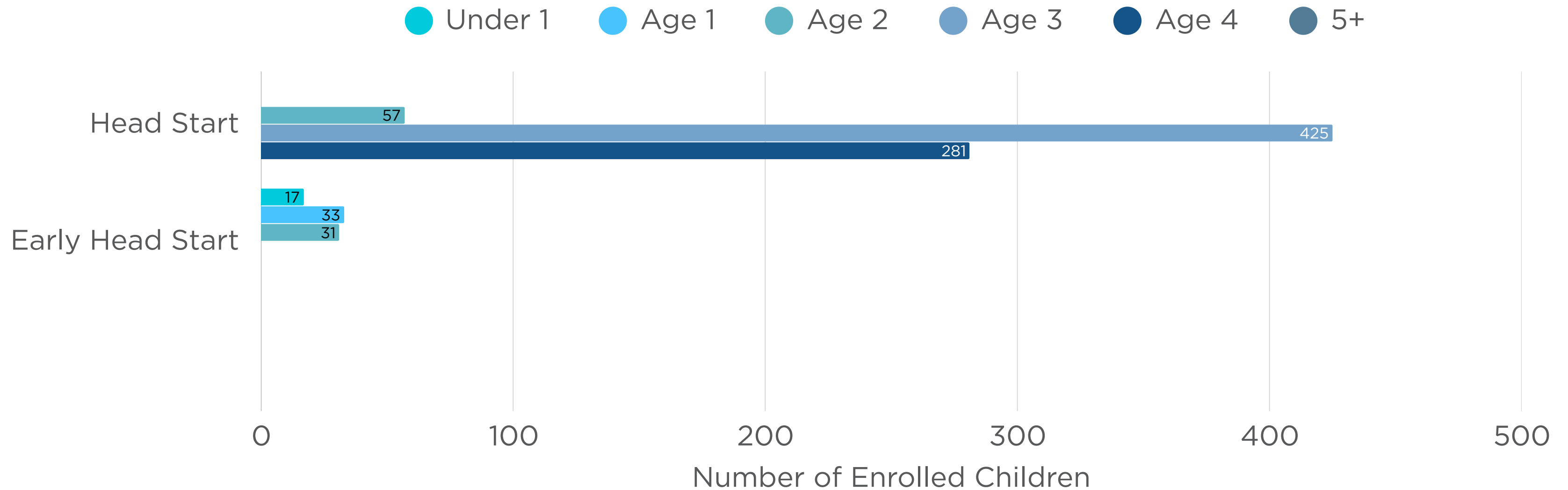
Funded Enrollment by Program



Enrollment, Eligibility & Community Need (ERSEA)

Cumulative enrollment reflects all children and families served throughout the year, including those who enrolled and exited mid-year. During the 2024-2025 program year, FSW Head Start enrolled a total of 763 preschool children, the majority of whom were 3 and 4-year-olds. Early Head Start served 83 participants, including 81 infants and toddlers and 2 pregnant women, reflecting the program's commitment to supporting children from birth through age three. In addition, the St. Peter's delegate program enrolled 153 Head Start children.

Cumulative Enrollment by Age

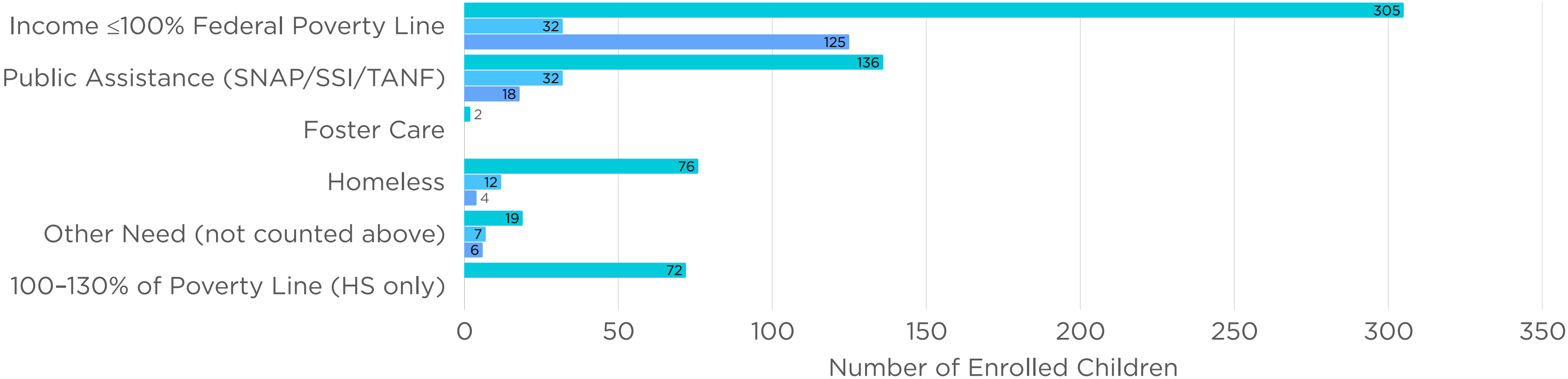


Eligibility & Vulnerable Populations

FSW’s Head Start and Early Head Start programs consistently prioritize families facing the greatest socioeconomic and structural barriers. Across all components, the program serves a large proportion of children living in deep poverty, experiencing homelessness, or relying on public assistance, reflecting both community need and strong adherence to federal eligibility requirements. This data demonstrates that FSW continues to meet its mandate to enroll the most vulnerable families first while responsibly using selection criteria to include a small number of over-income families with significant documented needs. The following chart illustrates the distribution of primary eligibility types across the program.

Primary Eligibility Type

● HS ● EHS ● St. Peter’s



Attendance

Attendance and Family Stability

During the program year, chronic absenteeism was most often related to childhood illness, which is common among young children and particularly impacts families with limited access to consistent health care and stable housing.

In addition, some children who were identified as chronically absent did not complete the full program year due to circumstances beyond the program's control, including family relocation, housing instability, changes in employment schedules, and transitions to other early childhood settings. These patterns reflect the real-life challenges experienced by many of the families Head Start is designed to support.

Throughout the year, staff maintained consistent outreach, relationship-building, and support efforts to encourage continued enrollment and engagement, reinforcing the program's role as a stabilizing resource for families navigating complex circumstances.



Head Start

Of 763 enrolled children, 495 met the definition of chronic absenteeism; 339 of those remained enrolled through the end of the year.



Early Head Start

Among 57 children, 28 were chronically absent, with 26 remaining enrolled.

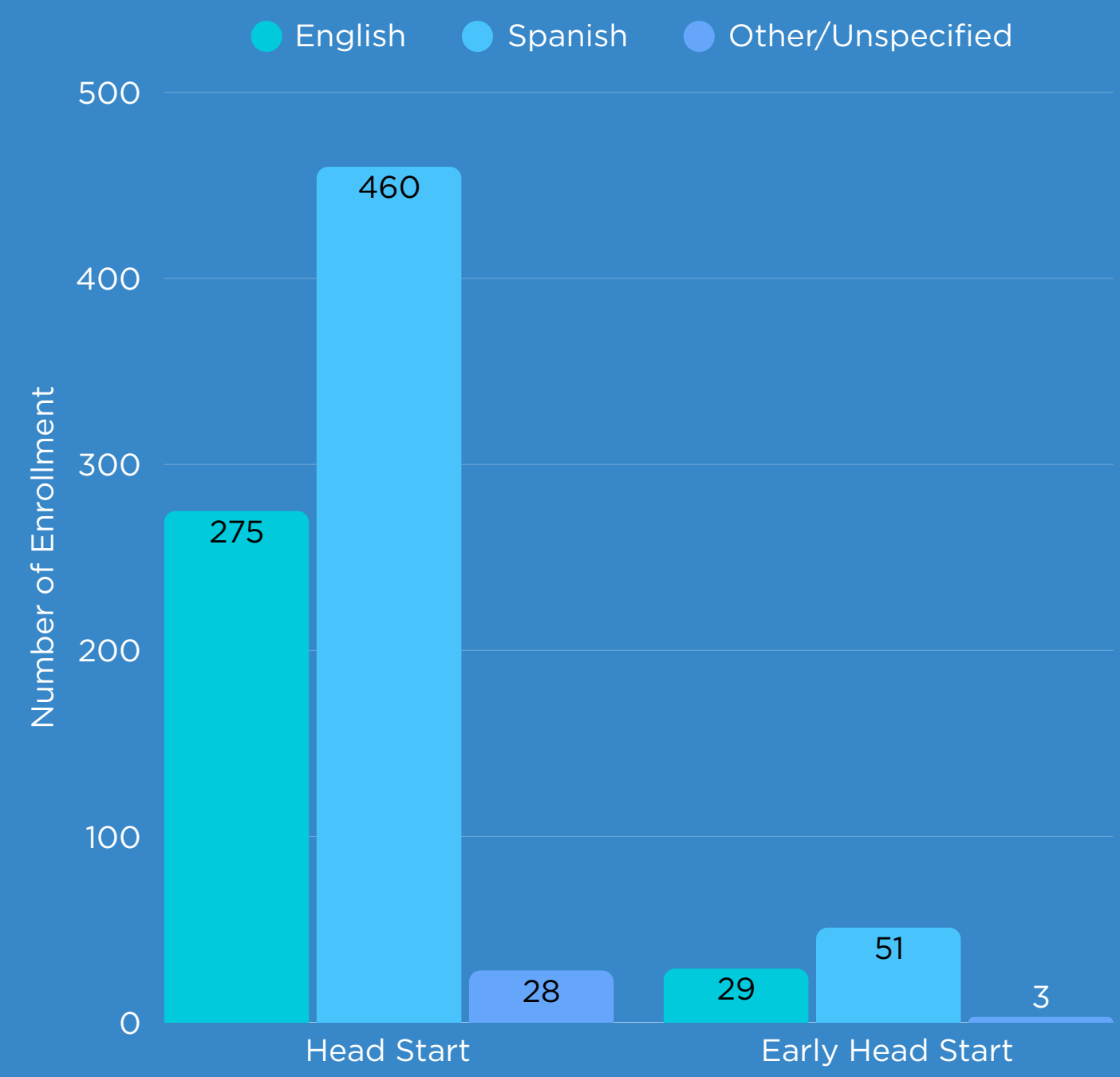


Home Language & Dual Language Learners

During the 2024-2025 program year, family home language data across Family Services of Westchester's Head Start, and Early Head Start programs reflect the range of languages spoken by families served. Spanish was the most frequently reported home language across the programs, particularly within Head Start and Early Head Start, while English remained the primary language for many families. A smaller number of families reported other languages, indicating the presence of multilingual households. These data inform the program's planning for bilingual staffing, translated materials, classroom instruction, and family communication to support effective participation and engagement for all children and families.



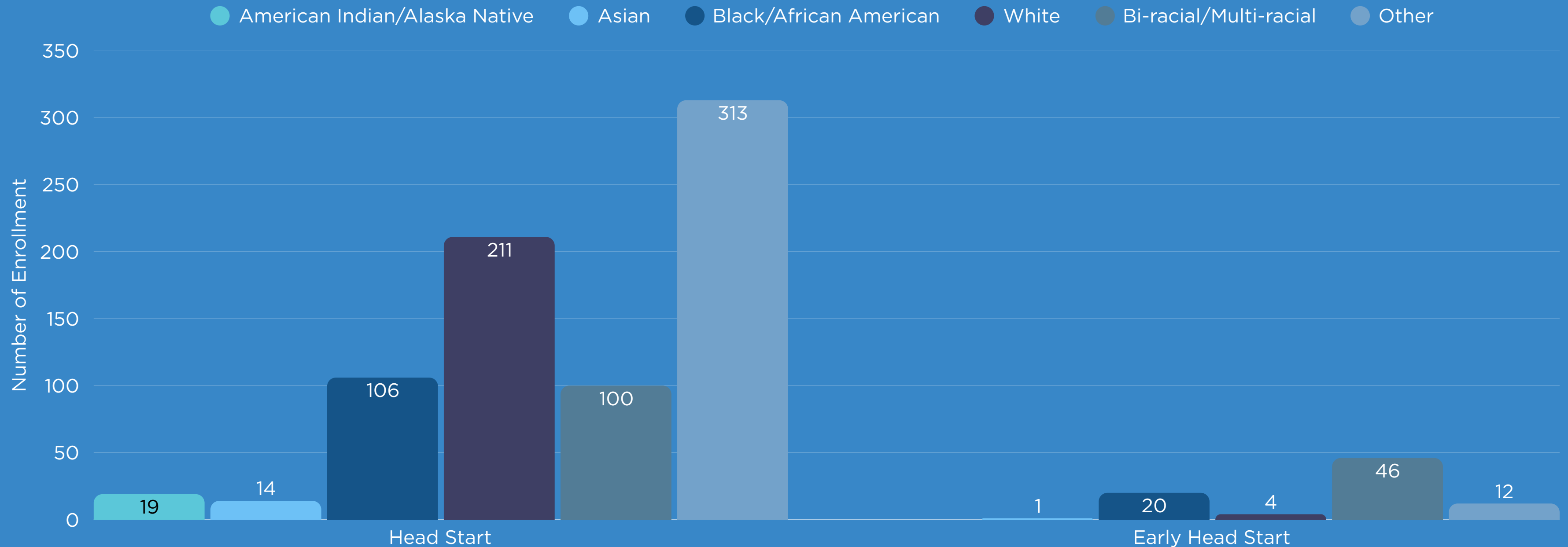
Dual Language Learners by Program



Race & Ethnicity

Race and ethnicity data across Family Services of Westchester’s Head Start and Early Head Start programs reflect the broad diversity of the communities served. This information is self-reported by families at enrollment and is used to inform culturally responsive curriculum planning, classroom materials, and family communication practices. A higher proportion of families selected “Other” or chose not to specify a racial or ethnic category, which is common in early childhood programs and reflects both the diverse identities of families and individual preferences around self-identification. These patterns support the program’s ongoing commitment to inclusive, culturally responsive services.

Race & Ethnicity by Program



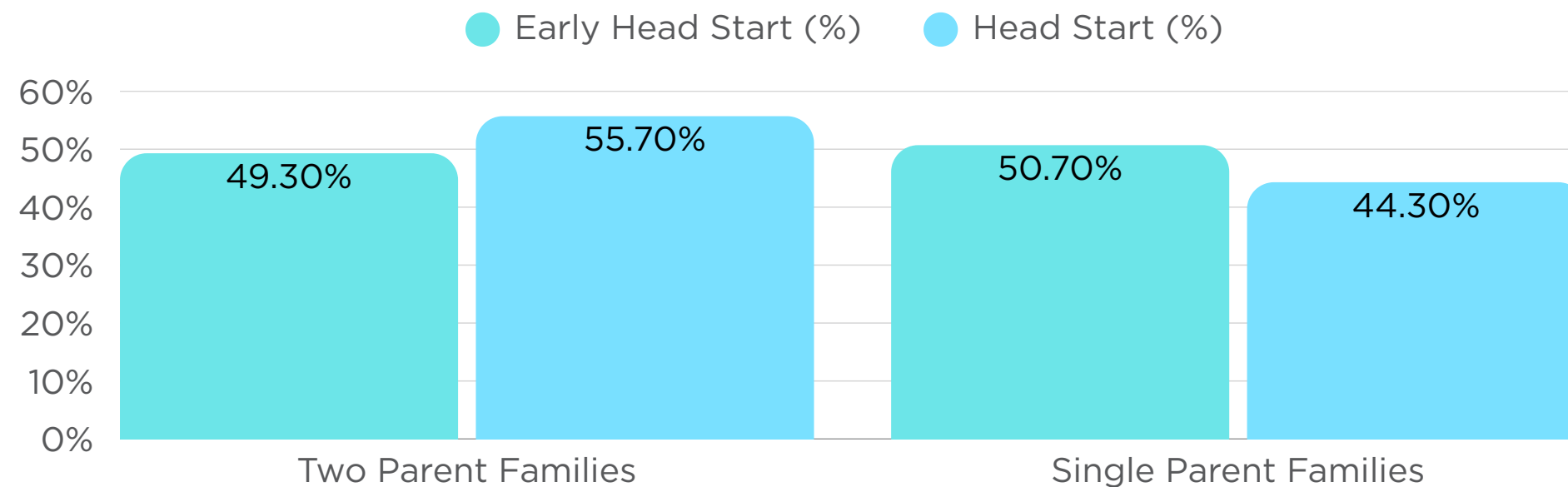
Families Served

During the 2024–2025 program year, Family Services of Westchester’s Head Start system, including the directly operated program and the St. Peter’s Child Care Center delegate, served a total of 763 families. Of these families, 55.7% were two-parent households and 44.3% were single-parent households, reflecting a range of family structures across the Head Start program.

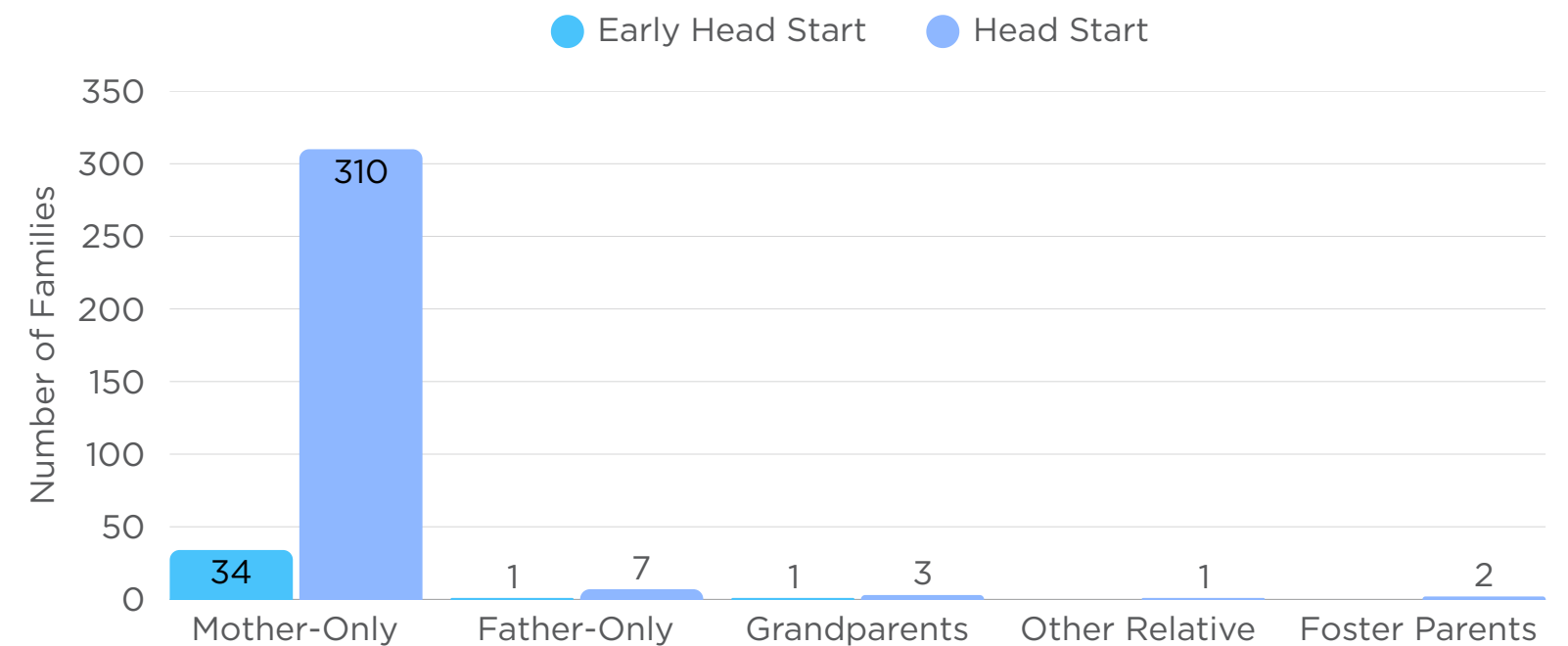
Early Head Start served 69 families, with family composition nearly evenly split between household types. 49.3% of Early Head Start families were two-parent households, while 50.7% were single-parent households. This balance highlights the presence of families requiring additional supports during pregnancy, infancy, and toddlerhood.

Across both Head Start and Early Head Start, these data inform the program’s family engagement approach, ensuring services are responsive to family structure and caregiver needs. Family engagement strategies continue to focus on supporting caregivers and promoting positive outcomes for children and families.

Family Structure by Program

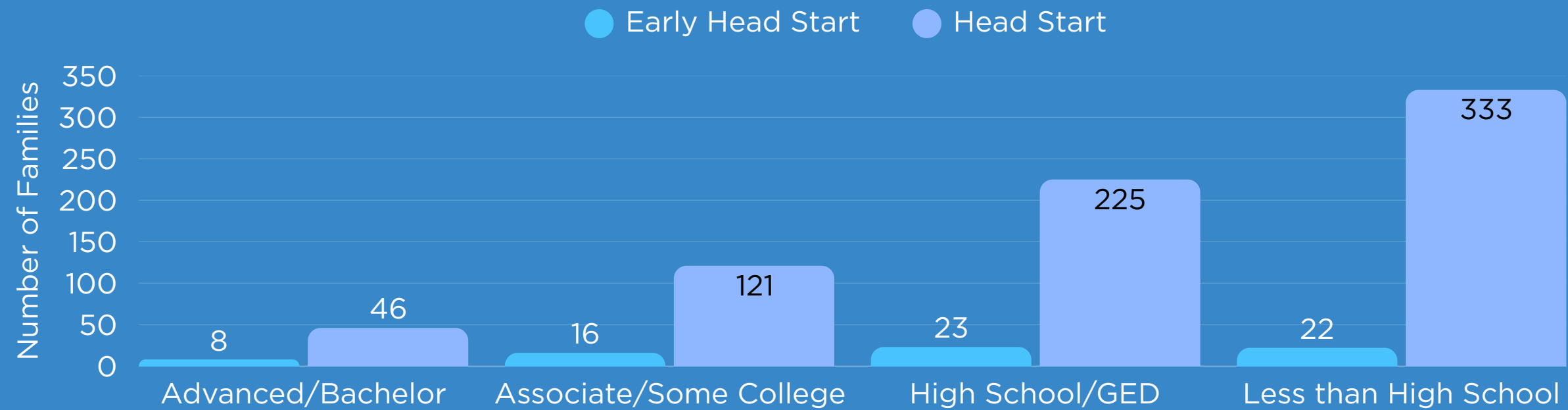


Primary Caregiver Composition by Program



Family Education & Economic Engagement ¹³

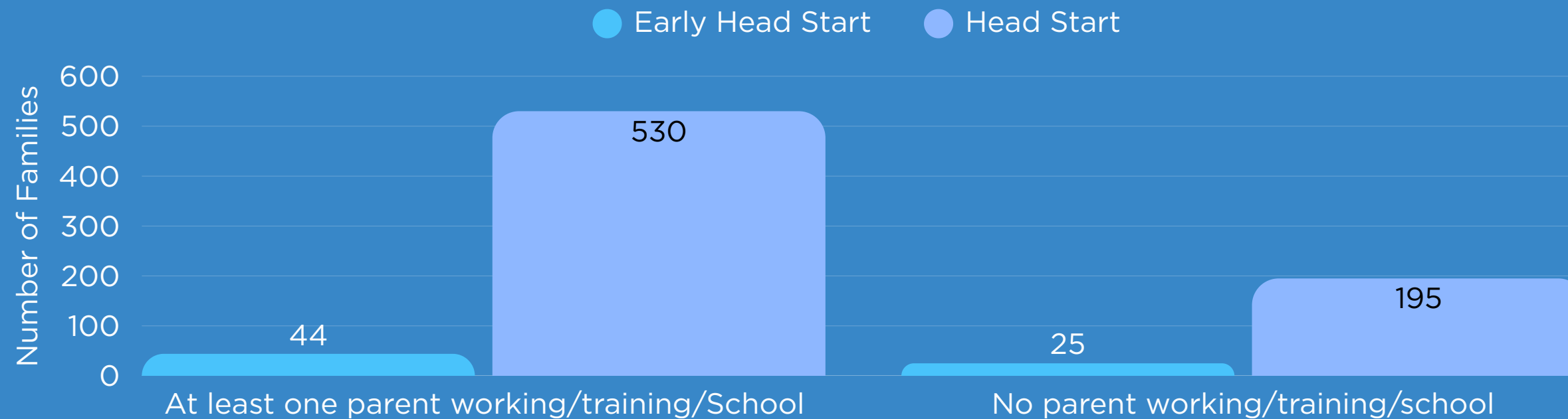
Parent/Guardian Education Levels



Family Services of Westchester's Head Start and Early Head Start programs serve families with a wide range of educational backgrounds, from parents and caregivers with advanced degrees to those who did not complete high school. This diversity reflects the complexity of the communities served and reinforces the importance of offering flexible, individualized supports rather than one-size-fits-all services.

Notably, the majority of parents and caregivers are actively engaged in employment, job training, or school. This level of engagement demonstrates strong family motivation and resilience and highlights the critical role that reliable early childhood education plays in supporting workforce participation, educational advancement, and long-term economic stability for families.

Family Employment, Job Training, and School Status



Health and Nutrition Services

Family Services of Westchester's Head Start and Early Head Start programs take a comprehensive approach to child and family well-being, with a strong focus on nutrition, health, and oral health. This year, FSW was recognized nationally by the Office of Head Start as one of only three programs featured in the "Spotlighting Programs: Exceptional Nutrition Service Delivery" panel. The Office of Head Start described the selected programs as "exemplary" in their commitment to high-quality nutrition services.

This recognition reflects FSW's data-informed approach to supporting family nutrition. Through a focused Performance and Quality Improvement (PQI) initiative, the program strengthened connections to SNAP benefits and partnered with community organizations to offer on-site and virtual application assistance. Families also participated in culturally responsive nutrition workshops and received grocery gift cards and take-home food bags to help reduce food insecurity.

In classrooms, children received nutritious meals aligned with CACFP guidelines, participated in family-style dining, and engaged in age-appropriate nutrition education. Families received individualized guidance on healthy eating, infant feeding, budgeting for nutritious meals, and accessing resources such as WIC, food pantries, and medical and dental care.

Together, these efforts demonstrate FSW's commitment to advancing child health and ensuring families have the tools and resources needed for long-term well-being.



Health and Oral Health

During the 2024-2025 program year, Family Services of Westchester analyzed health and oral health data across Head Start, Early Head Start, and the St. Peter's Head Start delegate program to assess children's access to insurance coverage, ongoing medical homes, and preventive health services. This data is drawn from cumulative enrollment and reflects both conditions at enrollment and at the end of the program year, allowing the program to evaluate the effectiveness of outreach, follow-up, and family support efforts. Tracking these indicators is essential to ensuring compliance with Head Start Program Performance Standards and to understanding how the program supports continuity of care, removes barriers to access, and strengthens connections to community health and dental providers for children and families served.

Early Head Start: 76 insured at enrollment, 81 insured by year-end; with a medical home.

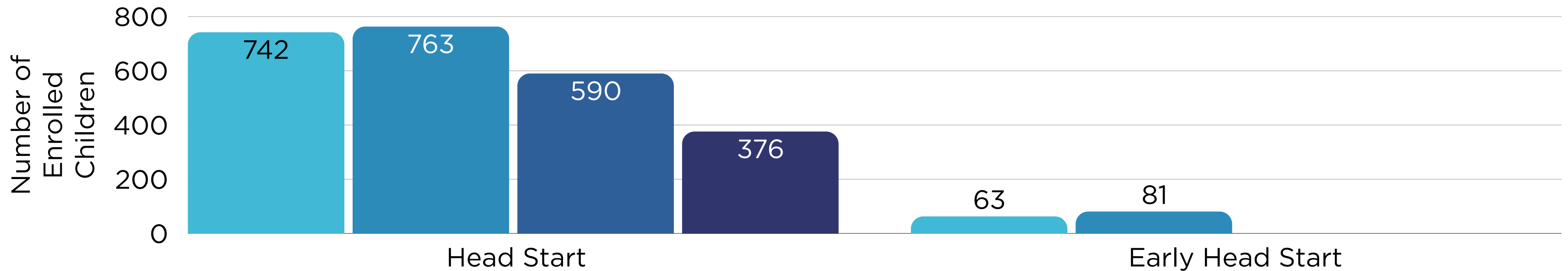
Head Start: 749 children insured at enrollment and 763 insured by year-end; all 763 had an ongoing source of health care.

Health and Oral Health Summary Table

Oral health and preventive care remain essential components of our comprehensive health services. The following table summarizes key indicators across programs, including the number of children with a dental home, receipt of preventive oral health services, completion of professional dental exams, and children up-to-date on EPSDT preventive care. These data reflect strong coordination with families and community providers to support children's ongoing health and well-being.

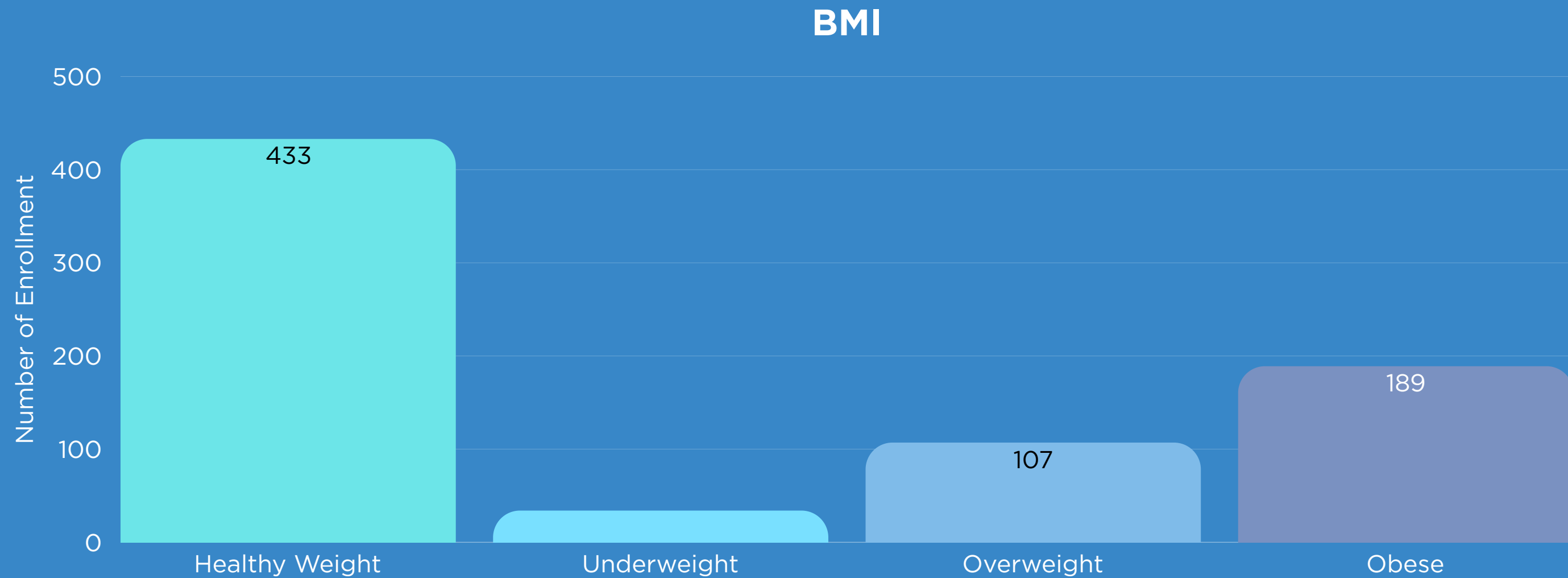
Health & Dental Compliance Rates By Program

- # Up-to-Date on Preventive Care (EPSDT)
- Children w/ Dental Home
- Children Who Received Preventive Dental Care
- Children Who Received Dental Exams



Nutrition and Healthy Weight

During the 2024–2025 program year, Family Services of Westchester analyzed child nutrition and weight data across all Head Start preschool programs, including the St. Peter’s delegate, using BMI-for-age measures aligned with the 2022 CDC growth charts. Of the 763 Head Start children assessed, 433 children were within a healthy weight range, indicating overall positive nutrition and growth outcomes. At the same time, 107 children were classified as overweight and 189 as obese, highlighting the continued need for targeted nutrition education, physical activity opportunities, and family engagement around healthy lifestyle habits. A smaller group of 34 children were identified as underweight and received individualized monitoring and follow-up in coordination with families and health care providers. These findings reinforce the importance of the program’s comprehensive nutrition services, CACFP-aligned meal planning, and ongoing collaboration with families to promote healthy growth and long-term wellness for young children.

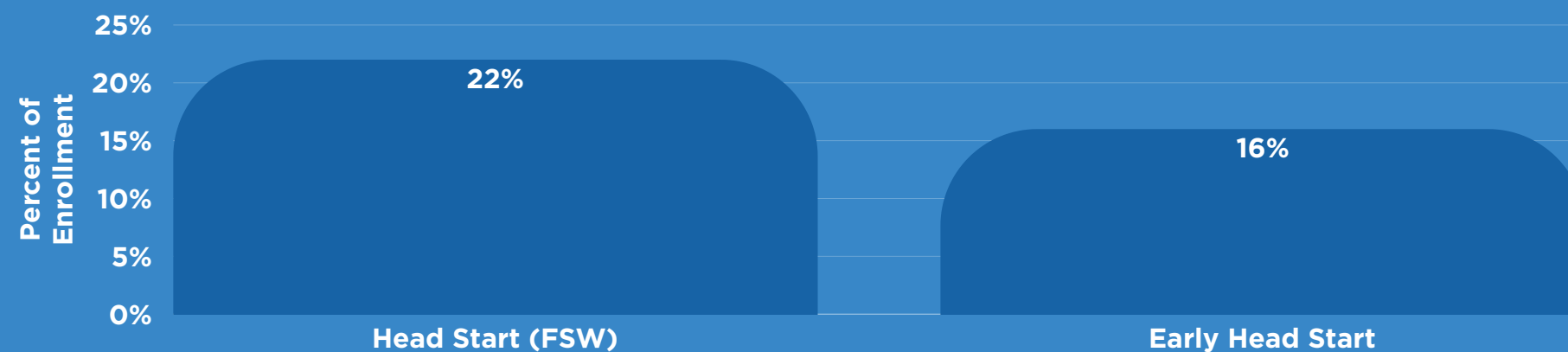


Early Intervention and Preschool Support Services

During the 2024-2025 program year, Family Services of Westchester reviewed IDEA participation and service delivery across Head Start and Early Head Start to assess access to individualized supports. Head Start exceeded the federal 10% benchmark, with 22.8% of enrolled children receiving services through an Individualized Education Program (IEP). This reflects strong screening, referral, and coordination practices to ensure children with identified needs receive appropriate services.

Among children referred for evaluation, 66.3% ultimately received IDEA services, while some did not receive services due to parent refusal, pending evaluations, or service availability challenges. These data continue to guide targeted strategies to strengthen family engagement, improve coordination with evaluation agencies, and support timely access to individualized services across all program options.

Children Served Under IDEA with IEP/IFSP



Children Referred but Did Not Receive IDEA Services



Family and Community Engagement

Family and community engagement is a cornerstone of program quality. During the 2024–2025 program year, families and community partners contributed significant volunteer support across both programs. Parent volunteers played an especially strong role, supporting classrooms, participating in leadership opportunities such as Policy Council, and engaging in school-readiness and family learning activities. Community volunteers further strengthened programming through event support, partnerships, and enrichment opportunities. This level of engagement reflects strong relationships, trust, and shared investment in children’s success.

Family & Community Engagement Summary

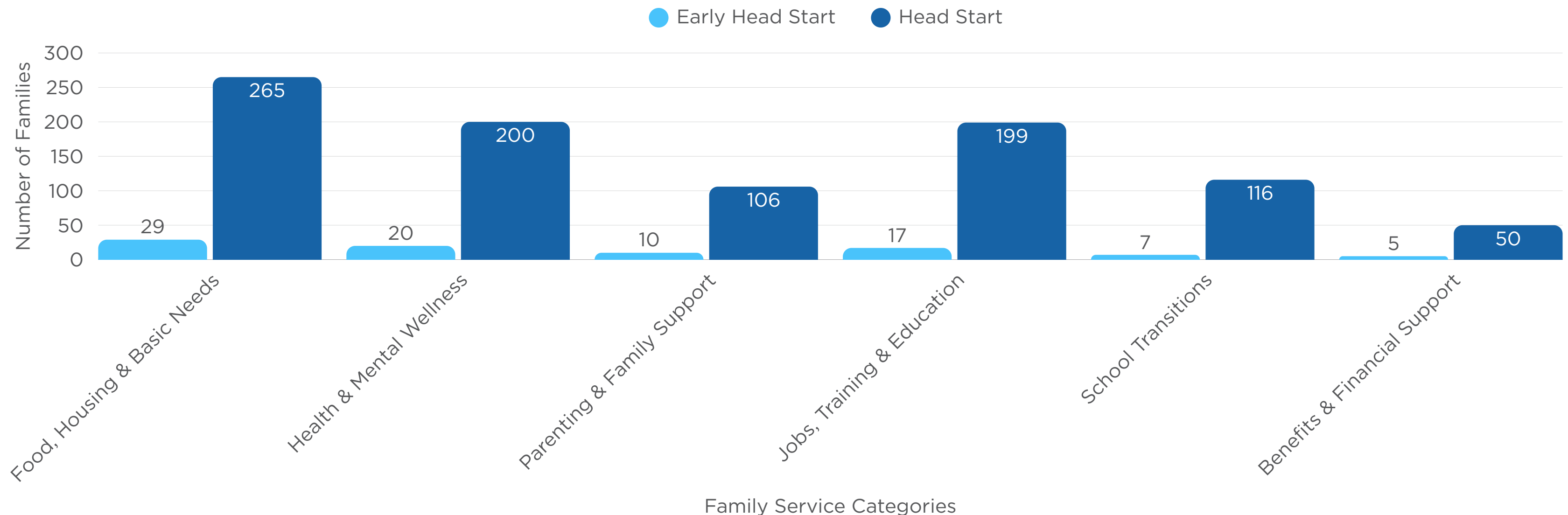
Program	Parent Volunteer	Community Volunteers	Total	Key Engagement Activities
Head Start	654	200	854	Classroom volunteering, literacy and school-readiness workshops, , Policy Council participation, field trip support
Early Head Start	38	11	49	Family learning experiences, parent workshops, infant-toddler engagement activities, community resource events



Family Referrals and Community Support Services

Family Services of Westchester's Head Start and Early Head Start programs connect families to a wide range of community resources based on their individual needs. The most common areas of support included food, housing, and basic needs assistance; access to health and mental wellness services; parenting and family support; employment, job training, and education supports; help with benefits and financial resources; and assistance with school transitions. These referrals reflect the program's comprehensive, two-generation approach to strengthening families. By addressing both child and family needs, the program helps promote stability, reduce barriers, and support long-term success for children and caregivers.

Family Services Provided by Category

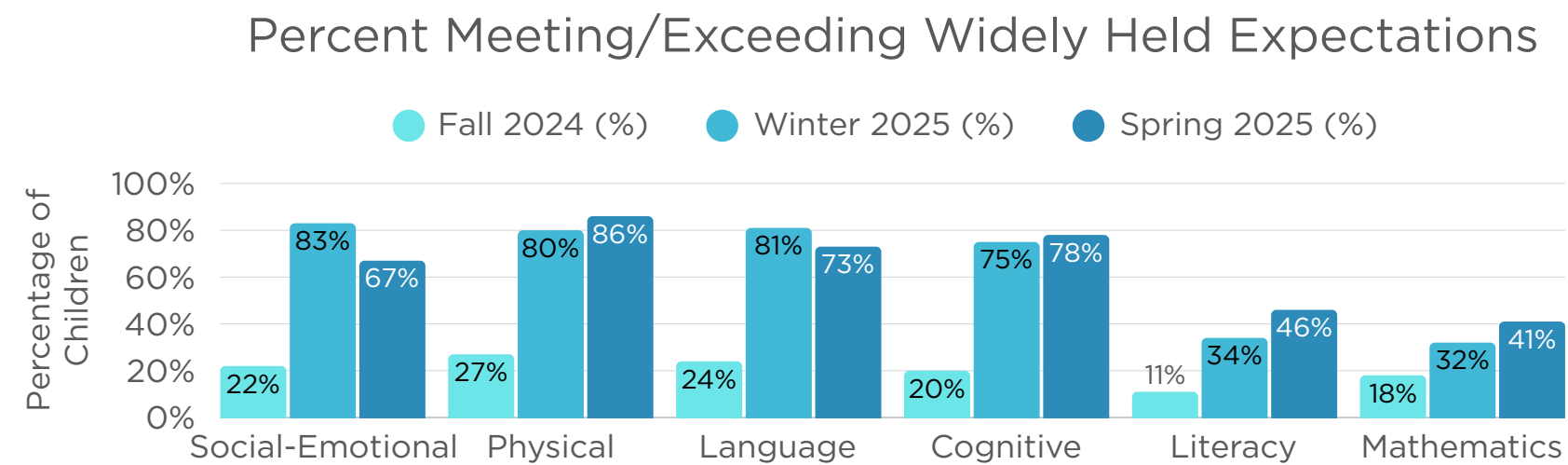


School Readiness

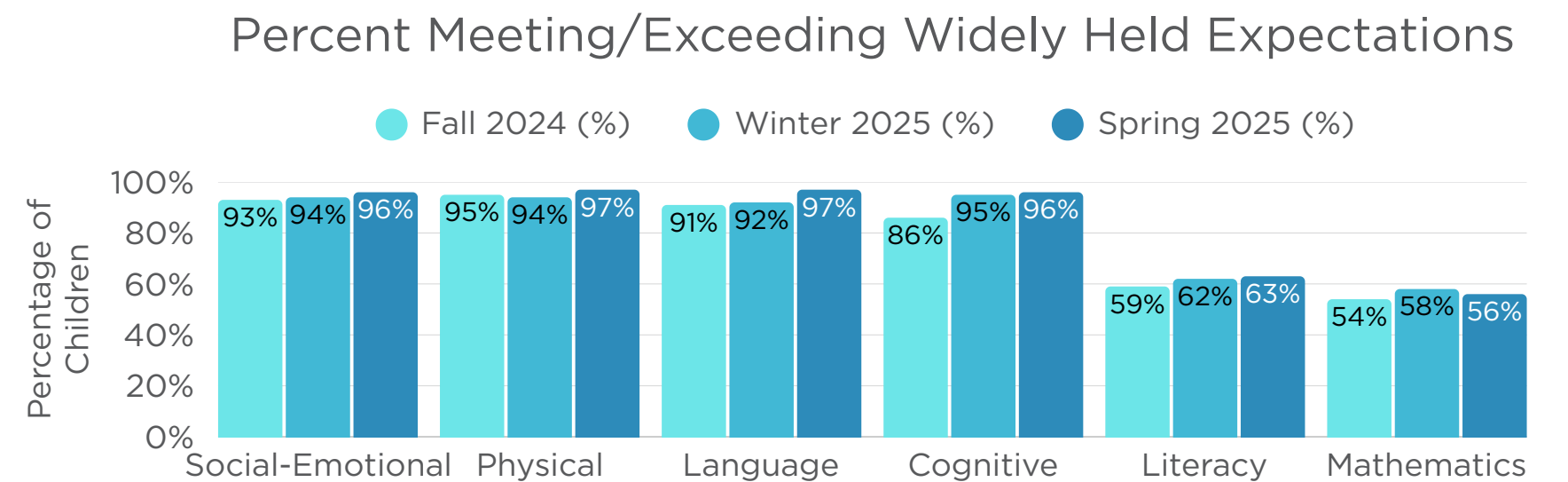
The following data presents Head Start and Early Head Start children’s progress toward meeting or exceeding Widely Held Expectations across key school readiness domains during the 2024–2025 program year. Child outcomes were assessed using Teaching Strategies GOLD, a research-based, developmentally appropriate assessment system aligned with the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework. Data were collected and analyzed at three checkpoint periods, Fall 2024, Winter 2025, and Spring 2025—to monitor growth over time. Overall results demonstrate consistent developmental progress across domains, with particularly strong outcomes in social-emotional development, physical development, language, and cognitive skills. These findings reflect the effectiveness of intentional teaching practices, curriculum fidelity, individualized supports, and ongoing professional development aimed at ensuring children enter school ready to succeed.

Following review of Fall and Winter Teaching Strategies GOLD data, Family Services of Westchester implemented targeted professional development focused on responsive caregiving, behavior support, classroom management, and intentional language, literacy, math, and fine-motor instruction. Program enhancements included the launch of the Read and Rise literacy program with Scholastic, distribution of literacy and kindergarten readiness materials, and collaboration with Volunteer New York to support home-based numeracy through Apple Tree Math Kits. Planned next-year actions include strengthening math instruction, expanding social-emotional supports through Second Step and coaching, enhancing dual-language literacy resources, and refining data review cycles to support timely, targeted interventions.

EARLY HEAD START OUTCOMES



HEAD START OUTCOMES

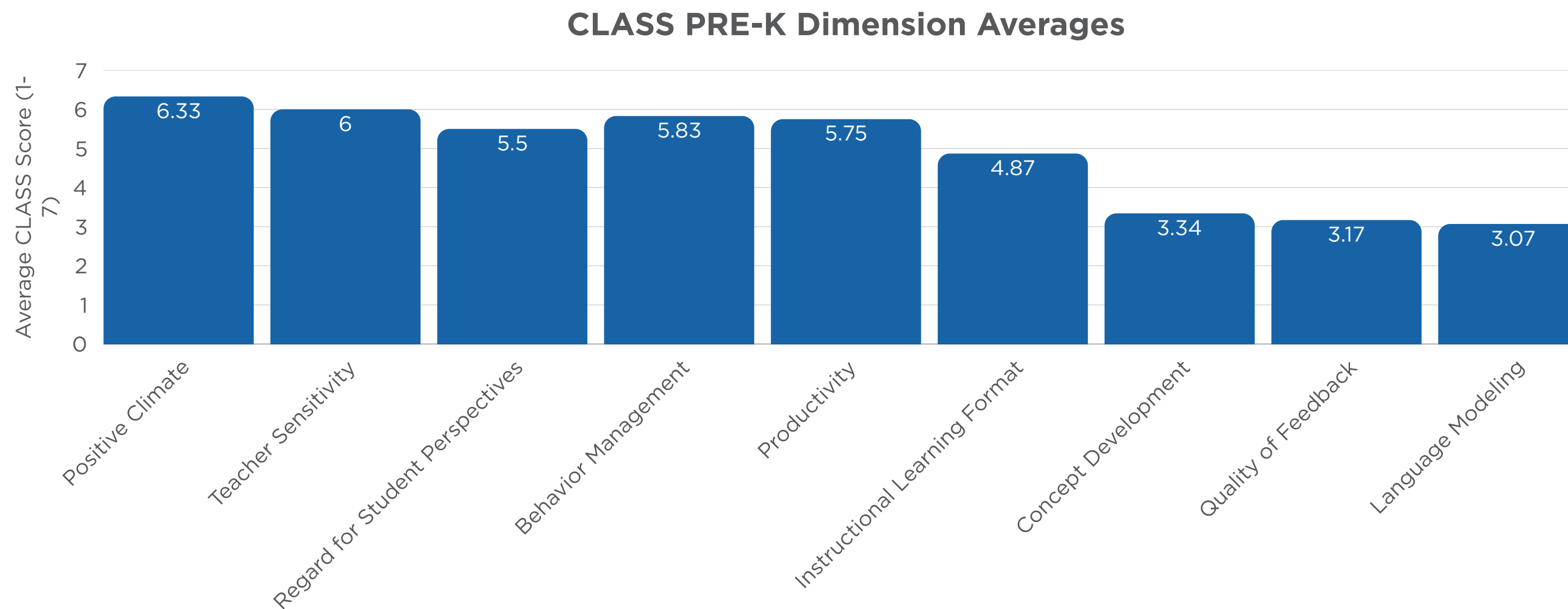


Quality of Teaching & Interactions – CLASS Data

FSW uses the CLASS® tool to measure the quality of teacher-child interactions. Scores range from 1-7, with 6-7 considered excellent quality, 3-5 considered good quality, and 1-2 indicating a need for improvement.

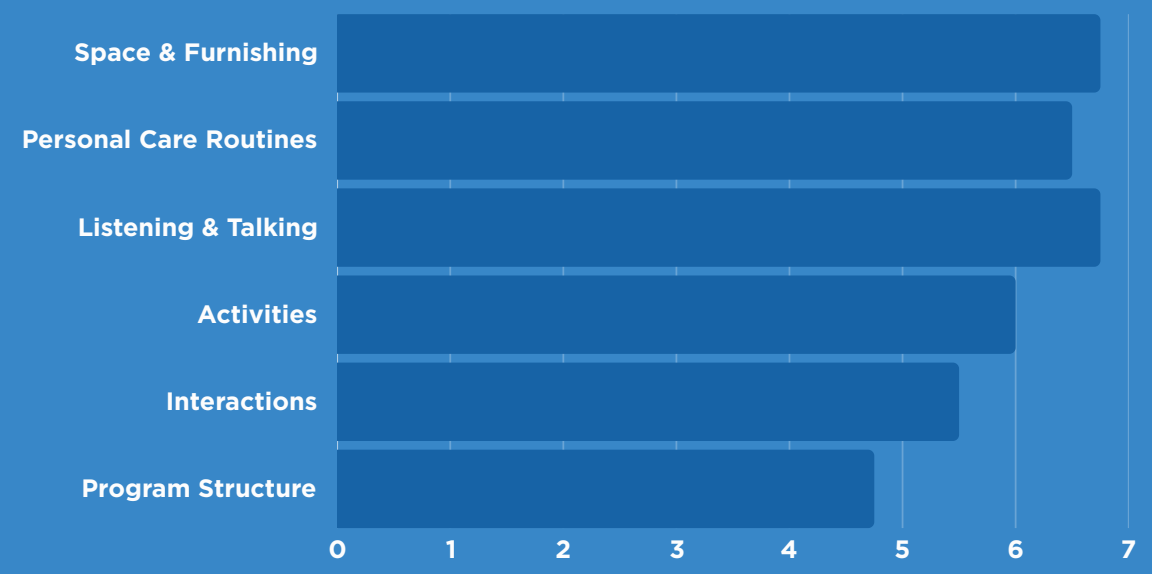
In Spring 2025, FSW completed 43 Pre-K CLASS observations across multiple sites. Results showed very strong Emotional Support and strong Classroom Organization, reflecting warm, well-managed classrooms. Instructional Support was identified as a growth area, with a current average score of 3.19.

For 2025-2026, FSW has set a goal to increase Instructional Support to 4.00 through expanded coaching and strengthened instructional practices.



Environment Quality – ECERS AND ITERS

ITERS-R Infant & Toddler Classroom Quality by Domain



ITERS-R Infant & Toddler Classroom Quality

Family Services of Westchester uses the Infant/Toddler Environment Rating Scale-Revised (ITERS-R®) to assess the quality of infant and toddler learning environments. Scores range from 1-7, with higher scores reflecting stronger quality.

In Spring 2025, ITERS-R assessments were conducted in three Early Head Start classrooms. Results indicate high-quality learning environments, with particularly strong performance in space and furnishings, personal care routines, and listening and talking. Areas for growth included strengthening peer interactions, expanding activity offerings, and increasing individualized routines. These findings are guiding classroom improvement plans, coaching, and targeted professional development for the upcoming program year.

ECERS-3 Preschool Classroom Quality by Domain



ECERS-3 Preschool Classroom Quality

Family Services of Westchester uses the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale-Third Edition (ECERS-3®) to assess the quality of preschool learning environments. Scores range from 1-7, with higher scores reflecting stronger quality.

ECERS-3 self-assessments conducted across preschool classrooms indicate overall strong learning environments, with highest performance in space and furnishings, personal care routines, and teacher-child interactions. Areas for growth include strengthening learning activities and program structure, particularly expanding child-initiated experiences and balancing daily schedules. These findings are guiding classroom improvement plans, coaching, and targeted professional development for the upcoming program year.

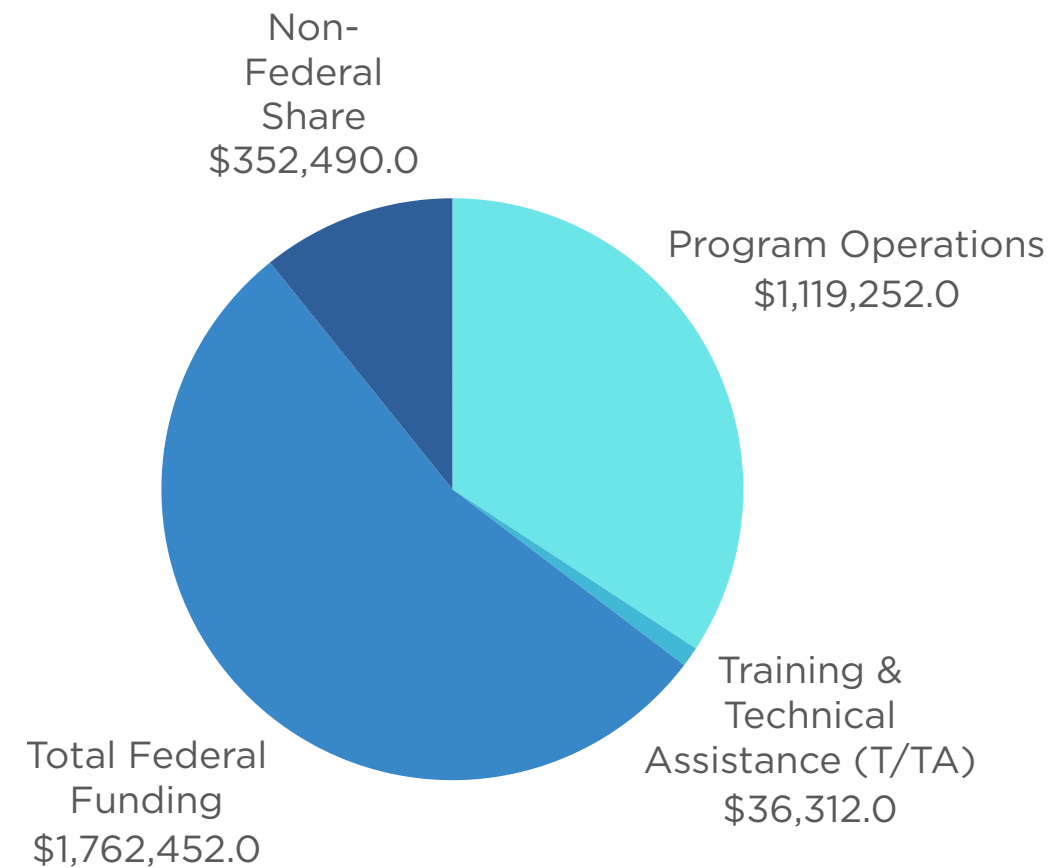
Funding Overview

During the 2024-2025 program year, Family Services of Westchester received a total of \$16,532,149 in federal program operations funding to deliver comprehensive Head Start and Early Head Start services in alignment with federal requirements. The agency also received \$187,184 in Training and Technical Assistance (T/TA) funding, which supported staff professional development, continuous quality improvement, and effective implementation of services across all program areas.

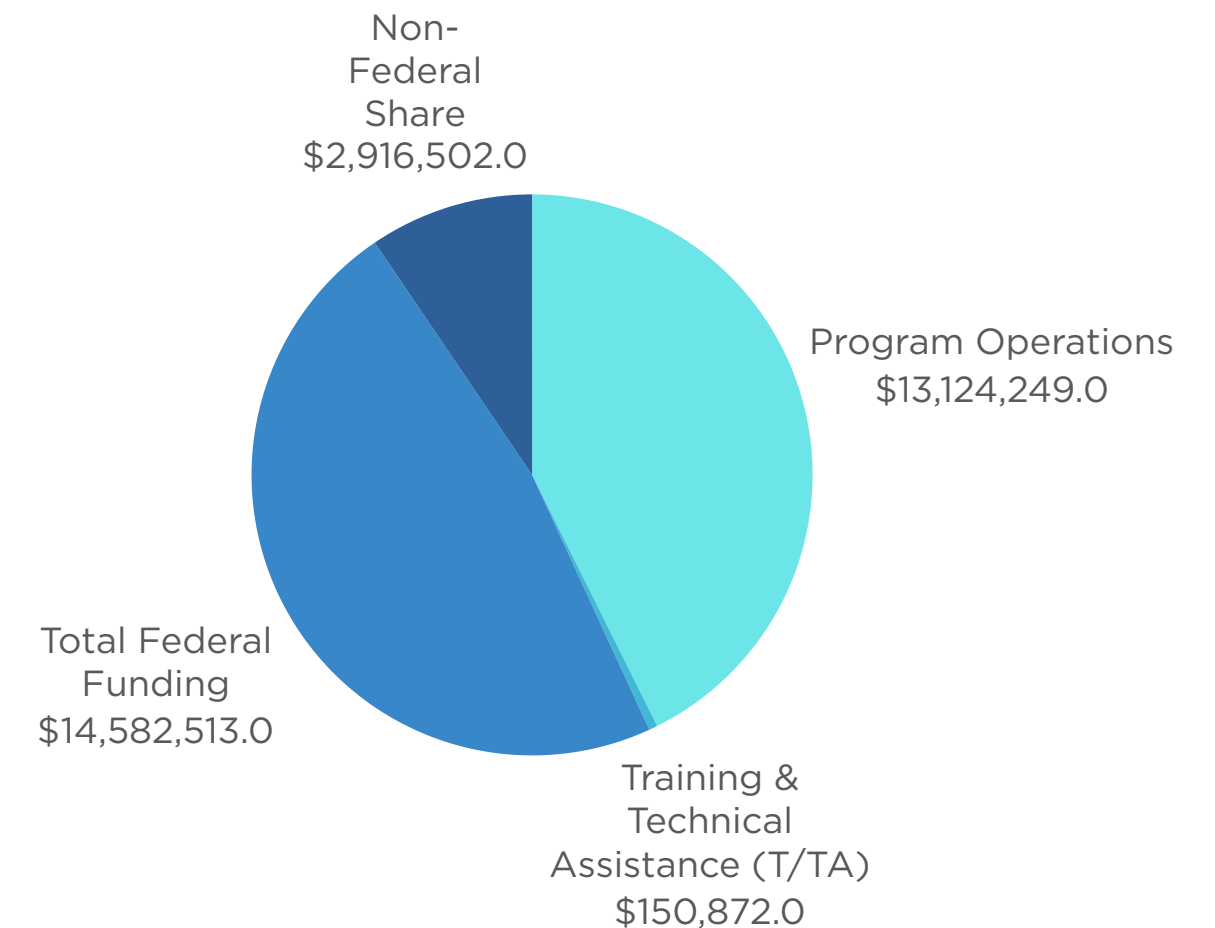
To meet the required 20 percent non-federal share, FSW secured contributions through volunteer services, in-kind professional supports, donated facilities, and strong community partnerships, ensuring full compliance with Head Start fiscal requirements.

In addition to federal Head Start funding, FSW received \$260,000 from the White Plains School District to operate a Half-Day Universal Pre-Kindergarten (UPK) program. While separate from the Head Start grant, this local investment expanded access to early learning opportunities and supported blended programming aligned with district and New York State UPK standards. Through a combination of direct services and partnerships with delegate and community-based organizations, FSW supported high-quality programming for Head Start children and Early Head Start children, strengthening workforce capacity and maintaining full alignment with Head Start Program Performance Standards.

EARLY HEAD START



HEAD START



Strategic Roadmap: Priorities for 2025–2026



SUCCESS



Data & Improvement

- Strengthen Data Use
- Ensure Consistency
- Engage Board & Council



ERSEA & Access

- Recruit High-Need Families
- Reduce Attrition
- Enhance Enrollment Tracking



Health & Nutrition

- Improve Medical & Dental Follow-Up
- Expand Mental Health Supports
- Enhance Nutrition Services



Family Engagement & Stability

- Increase Parent Leadership
- Strengthen Attendance
- Expand Basic Needs Support



Teaching & Learning

- Strengthen Instructional Support
- Improve Classrooms (ECERS/ETERS)
- Expand Coaching & PD



As we conclude this Annual Report, I extend my sincere appreciation to the families, staff, governing bodies, community partners, and stakeholders whose commitment strengthens our work each day. Your dedication ensures that children and families across Westchester receive high-quality early childhood services, compassionate support, and meaningful opportunities for growth. Thank you for your continued trust, collaboration, and advocacy on behalf of the families we serve. Together, we remain steadfast in our mission to advance excellence, uphold strong program accountability, and build a foundation of success for every child entrusted to our care.

