



# Head Start

ANNUAL REPORT 2015



## Early Learning Programs

### Ounce of Prevention 2015 Head Start Annual Report

**Name of Delegate Agency:** Casa Central  
**Program Number:** 007  
**Program Name:** Casa Central Early Learning Programs  
**Address:** 1343 N. California  
**Phone Number:** 773.645.2300  
**Fax Number:** 773.645.1432  
**Head Start Director Name:** Amanda McMillen  
**Head Start Director Email:** [amcmillen@casacentral.org](mailto:amcmillen@casacentral.org)

**Agency Web Site Address:** <http://www.casacentral.org>  
**Agency Type:** Social Service Agency / Non –Profit (Non-CAA)

#### Agency Description:

Casa Central “transforms lives and strengthens communities, with a special focus on Hispanics. Our network of social services propels a diverse population of all ages toward self-sufficiency and a higher quality of life.”

As part of the 14 comprehensive bilingual, bicultural, bilingual programs, Casa Central’s Early Learning Academy provides Head Start services to children, ages 0-5 and their families. The program has two options: Center-based (Early) Head Start/Child Care collaboration site, providing full-day, early learning services in a classroom setting; and a Home-based program, serving hard to reach populations (teen parents and immigrant families) within the comfort of the family’s home. Three of the six (Early) Head Start/Child Care classrooms also hold a partnership with Chicago Public Schools Preschool for All program, which provides certified teachers in the classrooms. The Center-based program is an approved ExceleRate Gold program, and utilized the research-based Creative Curriculum, and Teaching Strategies GOLD developmental assessment tools to support quality education to fit the needs of all children in the program. The Home-based program use the Creative Curriculum Learning Games and Parents As Teachers, as well as the Teaching Strategies GOLD developmental assessment.

The programs have partnerships with local health providers to ensure that children are up-to-date on their immunizations and physicals; this does not supplant a medical and dental home, which family support staff works to help families establish. The center has three staff

per classroom, and each family is assigned a family support staff person. Home-based Parent Educators have a caseload of 12 families. The site has a program director and an education coordinator. The content area staff includes Family Development Coordinator, Eligibility Coordinator, Systems Manager, Mental Health Consultant, and Nurse. The program serves 181 Head Start and 72 Early Head Start children and their families, and specializes in preparing children for entry into kindergarten or Head Start with an emphasis on social-emotional development, literacy enhancement and math comprehension.

## Site Locations:

Early Learning Academy Home-Based  
1335 N. California Avenue  
Chicago, IL 60622

Early Learning Academy Center-based  
1343 N. California Ave.  
Chicago, IL 60622

## Community Areas Served:

- Hermosa
- Humboldt Park
- Logan Square
- West Town

## During the 2015-2016 program year, Casa Central Children Services:

- Provided Head Start services to **293 households**
- Enrolled **305** children
- Helped **89 Head Start** children (49%) successfully transition to **Kindergarten** and **35 Early Head Start** children (48%) transitioned to Head Start.
- Served over **15.6%** (56) **children with special needs** and their families
- Provided **supportive services to 275** families
- Ensured **251 (82%)** children had an **identified medical home** and **92%** (281 children) were **up-to-date on their immunizations**.
- Aided **224 children** and their families to identify a **dental home**; with **73%** receiving a **dental exam**
- Ensured **294** children had **insurance**
- **75 fathers** participated in program activities
- Served **19,159** breakfasts; **20,644** lunches; **20,011** snacks

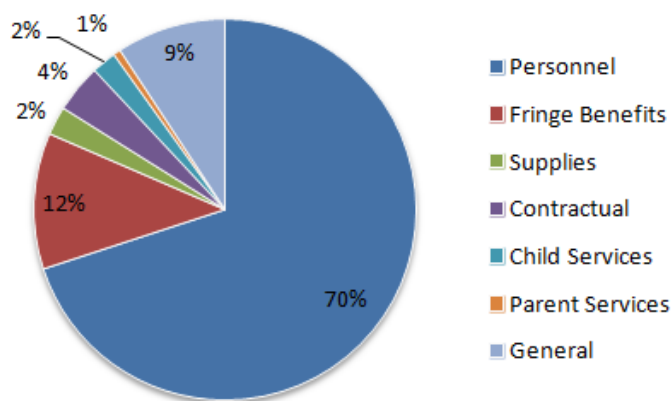
## OVERALL DELEGATE BUDGET 2015

Total Public and Private Funds received: \$2,326,304

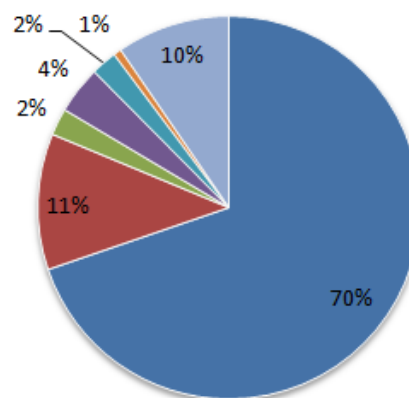
Public Funds		Private Funds	
Source	Amount	Source	Amount
Federal	\$1,787,980	Individuals, Corporations, Foundations, etc.	72,273
State	0	In-kind	217,051
Local School District	249,000		
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,036,980</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>289,324</b>

## 2015 Budget and Actual Expenditures

2015 Ounce-Early/Head Start Budget for Casa Central



Year 2015 Casa Central Ounce Early/Head Start Expenditure



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## CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SERVED

### Grantee Funded Enrollment

	Head Start Enrollment	Early Head Start Enrollment
<b>Center-based Program</b>		
<b>a. 5 days per week</b>		
<b>1. Full-day enrollment</b>	75	16
<b>2. Part-day enrollment</b>	0	0
<b>b. 4 days per week</b>		0
<b>1. Full-day enrollment</b>	0	
<b>2. Part-day enrollment</b>	0	0
<b>Home-based Program</b>	106	56
<b>Unallocated Slots</b>		
<b>Total:</b>	181	72

### Casa Central

Total Children Served: 305

Total Families Served: 293

Average monthly enrollment (as percentage of funded enrollment): 100%

Number of Eligible Children in Community		Percentage of Eligible Children Served in Agency	
Head Start ages 3-4	Early Head Start ages 0-2	Head Start	Early Head Start
3,716	2,913	4.9%	2.4%

## Health

### Percentage of enrolled children who received medical and dental exams

	Received Medical Exams	Received Dental Exams
Casa Central Head Start and Early Head Start	73%	87%



## PARENT EDUCATION ACTIVITIES

**Health & Nutrition:** Casa Central partnered with the American Heart Association and Aramark to implement a pilot nutrition education program titled *Healthy for Life (HFL)*. HFL consisted of three modules spanning four-weeks each. Over 20 parents participated from both the Center-based and Home-based programs, and parents were able to learn practical techniques to improve their and their family's health, including "Your Well-being: What's Your Health Assessment," "Cooking Skills and Food," and "Shopping." Each of these modules were research-based curricula from the American Heart Association, implemented by health educators, and participants demonstrated increased knowledge and skills.

**Mental Health:** Parents received training on "Why is Children's Mental Health Important?" Parents learned about themes related to mental health in children ages 0-5 and how mental health can affect school success. Additionally, parents received training on developmental screening and the referral process to the Chicago Public Schools for children identified as needing further assessment for special needs services.

**Education and Literacy:** Math and literacy continue to be the primary focus for Casa Central Early Learning programs in order to prepare children for school. This year Casa Central teachers participated in fidelity training for the Creative Curriculum, which supports children in many areas of development, including mathematics, gross and fine motor skills, language, literacy, dual language skills, social-emotional development, and cognitive development. Additionally, teachers utilize the Everyday Math curriculum to supplement the focus on math language and cognition in everyday activities.

**Community and Social Services:** At parent meetings, featured speakers shared on specific topics parents have indicated as being of interest during the fall participant survey. These speakers are from local community service providers and inform parents of resources available, how to access services, and eligibility requirements. Some examples of community organizations that provided training and services to parents include La Rabida Hospital provided pedestrian and transportation safety; Wintrust Bank trained parents on "Money Smart for Adults" building knowledge, security, and confidence.

**Other Community-related Education:** Each year, Casa Central engages hundreds of volunteers throughout the community and beyond. Volunteers work within the Center-based program to provide support, activities and special crafts for the children. For example, volunteers from ComEd provided children with hands-on Science Technology Engineering and Math (STEM) activities such as making their own lava lamps and building structures out of straws.

The programs provided curriculum and learning activities during parent meetings and held discussions on topics, such as: "Preparing Your Child for the First Day of School" and "Child Development". Casa Central encourages frequent parent involvement and communication by promoting an open-door policy for parents to visit the programs at any time and volunteer within their child's classroom. Home visits and parent conferences address individual child development and how parents can support learning at home.

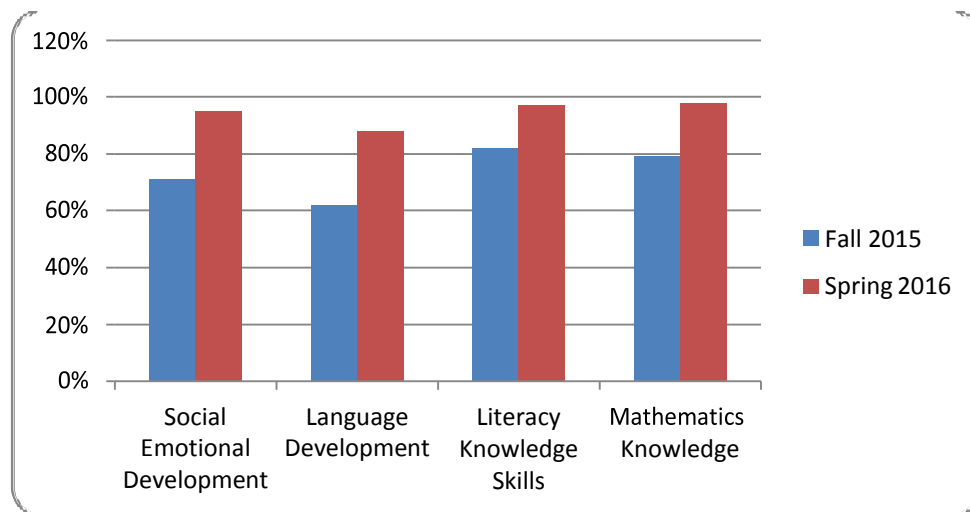
**Parent Committee Meetings:** Each program has a Parent Committee and elects officers and representatives that take on an active role in the program's Policy Committee and the grantee's Policy Council. The program Policy Committee met monthly. This year, they participated in training on Head Start and the role of committee members in interviewing and hiring staff; fiscal management of the program, including monthly budget reviews and program amendments; participated in the annual Self-Assessment and reviewed the Quality Improvement Plan and changes made; reviewed the 2016 Community Needs Assessment, Program Information Report and Selection Criteria and recommended changes.

**Other special gatherings or activities:** Each center hosted activities designed for parents and children: male involvement activities; literacy events; Hispanic heritage celebrations; transition celebrations; seasonal celebrations; food experiences; and field trips. Additionally, the programs hosted a Family Fun Festival in Humboldt Park in which over 500 children and parents participated and joined in games, music and healthy snacks for the entire family.

**Kindergarten Readiness:** Kindergarten Readiness activities included a focus on literacy, language, and math skills in classrooms. Each program worked with a local education advocacy group that came to the programs to talk to parents in the fall about educational options in the Local Education Agency (LEA): program types, eligibility, and application process. They also distributed school district catalogs.

**Special Efforts to Prepare Children for Kindergarten:** Children transitioning to kindergarten are in classrooms with a certified teacher, via a partnership with the local LEA, and the focus of the training for teachers from the partnership is to ensure the skills (cognitive and social-emotional) needed for kindergarten are present and acquired in the activities that the children participate in.

Each child receives regular developmental assessments utilizing the Teaching Strategies GOLD assessment tool, which regularly evaluates each individual's progression regarding academic, fine and gross motor, and social emotional growth based on expectations for their age. Teaching Strategies GOLD is utilized throughout the City of Chicago as a respected tool to accurately analyze a child's preparedness for entering kindergarten based on whether they are "meeting" or "exceeding" expectations for their age level. Teachers and Home Educators create checkpoints three times a year to review each child's progression and utilize the information to engage parents in the child's learning and set individual learning goals for each child based on their strengths and areas of concentration. By the Spring of 2016, over 90% of children in the Early Learning Programs met or exceeded expectations in Social-Emotional Development, Language Development, Literacy Knowledge Skills, and Mathematics Knowledge (see table 1).



**Table 1: Percentage of Children Meeting or Exceeding Developmental Expectations**

**Transition Activities to Promote Kindergarten Readiness:** For children with special needs, we have worked with local schools to ensure that the parent and child have visited the school and classroom they will be placed in the fall. When possible, the Head Start teacher, Special Needs staff and/or Family Development Specialist will visit the new school, as well. For all children, a file with their most recent screenings is provided to the parents to take to the new school.

## Summary of Audit Findings

There were no financial audit findings in the grantee, partner or delegate agencies for FY2015.

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There were no financial audit findings in the grantee, partner, or delegate agencies for FY2015.

## Summary of Information Required by the Secretary

The Ounce Board of Directors and Policy Council were given brief summaries and links to all Program Instructions and Information Memorandums.