



# Luzerne County Head Start, Inc.

## 2017 - 2018 Annual Report to the Community

Serving pregnant women, children birth to age five, and their families in Luzerne and Wyoming Counties



*Enhancing the Development of the Whole Child*  
**Our Motto:** *Children need to be well to do well*

## WHAT MAKES UP OUR HEAD START PROGRAM?

At Luzerne County Head Start (LCHS), our Early Head Start and Head Start programs promote the school readiness of eligible children from birth to age five. In order to best prepare our children for success, we take a comprehensive approach to meeting the needs of the whole child through four major components. They include:

- Family Involvement
- Health and Nutrition
- Education
- Social Services

## POLICY COUNCIL

Head Start Policy Council members are elected to represent Luzerne County Head Start and the two counties we serve. Policy Council members meet monthly and help guide the program to ensure quality education and services for children and their families. Policy Council members are currently enrolled Early Head Start and Head Start parents, as well as community members.



## POLICY COUNCIL OFFICERS

**CHAIRPERSON** - Jennifer Cebrick

**ASSISTANT CHAIRPERSON** - Shaqwanna Foster

**SECRETARY** - Kim Gittens

**TREASURER** - Heather Kreitzer

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### PRESIDENT

Dr. Frances G. Langan  
*Keystone College*

### VICE PRESIDENT

Ina Lubin  
*Community Member*

### TREASURER

George Rable  
*Benco Dental*

### SECRETARY

Stacey Kile  
*Geisinger Health Plan*

### EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Lynn Evans Biga

*Luzerne County Head Start welcomed three new members to our Board of Directors including, Jane Smedley Anzalone, Anzalone Law Offices; Kirk S. Borchert, FNCB and Dan Landesberg, Geisinger South Wilkes-Barre and Geisinger Wyoming Valley.*



Luzerne County Head Start continues to work to fulfill its mission of enhancing the quality of life for eligible children and their families in Luzerne and Wyoming Counties. We strive to meet the needs of the whole child, meaning every child, in every school, in all of our communities deserves to be healthy, safe, engaged, supported and challenged. This approach helps us stay committed to our mission that children need to be well to do well. The early education programs we provide help ensure success for our students, both academically and socially, and provide comprehensive health, education, nutrition and support to help build strong relationships among families. In addition to meeting the needs of children and their families, we continue to focus on staff health and wellness. Our dedicated staff is the foundation to our program and their well-being is important to its continued success. Together with our parents, staff, and our community partners, we look forward to another year of helping children develop an early foundation for learning.



Dr. Frances G. Langan  
*President, Board of Directors*



Lynn Evans Biga  
*Executive Director*

## HEAD START HAPPENINGS

Luzerne County Head Start had a fulfilling year supporting and engaging with our families and children. It was also a year of new milestones and learning opportunities. Additional funding allowed us to provide high-quality early learning programs to more children in our community. This year, we also expanded our partnerships and were happy to welcome many volunteer groups to our Early Head Start and Head Start programs.

- **LCHS Ranks among Top Early Learning Programs in Pennsylvania**

Pennsylvania's Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL) confirmed the state's quality rating and improvement system, known as Keystone STARS, accepts federal Head Start monitoring data as documentation of the quality indicators at the highest level, STAR 4. This means Luzerne County Head Start and all Head Start programs in compliance in Pennsylvania are rated among the top early childhood education providers in the state.



- **LCHS Teams up with Luzerne County Community College**

An increase in federal funding allowed Luzerne County Head Start to provide services for an additional 34 students in two classrooms located on Luzerne County Community College's campus. One of the classrooms is a STEM room, where the focus of learning is placed on science, technology, engineering and math. The two classrooms also serve as a lab for college students pursuing careers in early childhood development.



## FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

Luzerne County Head Start sees parents as a child's most important influence towards their child's success. Building a shared partnership with families gives parents opportunities to stay involved with the education of their child.



**619** volunteers participated in Head Start activities to support children's development; **409** of those volunteers were former or current parents.

(Luzerne County Head Start Statistic)

## CHILDHOOD BEGINS AT HOME

Luzerne County Head Start was chosen as the location to kick off the local Childhood Begins at Home campaign. The campaign raises awareness about the importance of evidence-based home visiting programs. Research shows home visiting programs, such as Early Head Start, can lead to a reduction in child abuse and neglect, as well as improved family health, literacy and economic security. Our Early Head Start program includes weekly home visiting services for infants, pregnant women, toddlers and their families in Luzerne and Wyoming Counties.



*"Thanks to the support of Head Start and home visiting programs, I've been able to complete my coursework to become an EMT/paramedic and start the process of buying a home. This program has given my family so much and I cannot express how grateful I am."*  
- Alyssa Hudock – LCCHS mom

## COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Head Start staff and families develop community partnerships to build peer networks, link families and children to needed services, and support successful transitions for children and families.

- **Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)**

Administrators from Luzerne County Head Start and Policy Council parents in collaboration with administration from local school districts came together to discuss ESSA. The goal was to collectively identify strategies for future collaboration between school districts and LCHS, which will support young children and families as they transition from Head Start to kindergarten and elementary school.



*“Early Head Start and Head Start gave my grandchildren opportunities and educational experiences they would not have received at home. They learned independence and structure and it helped them make a smooth transition to kindergarten.”*

*- Mary Noble, Former LCHS grandmother*



*Navient and LCHS partnered to offer Jump Start, a summer learning experience that began in 1999 to help 3 and 4-year-old children get a ‘jump start’ to their early childhood education.*



*PA State Treasurer, Joe Torsella, visited LCHS to kick off the Keystone Scholars program. The pilot program gave every registered child born or adopted in 2018/2019 in Luzerne County a \$100 scholarship grant to be invested for higher education.*



*Families attended LCHS’s Parent Leadership Forum, where State Rep. Eddie Day Pashinski served as keynote speaker. Families learned how they could become parent advocates and leaders at home, in their children’s schools, or in their community.*

## LUNCHEON & SCHOLARSHIPS

Luzerne County Head Start held its annual luncheon to mark its 53rd year of providing opportunities for our community’s most vulnerable children and families. Yasmina Vinci, Executive Director of the National Head Start Association, served as keynote speaker. Eleven former LCHS students, who plan to continue their education after high school, were honored with scholarships totaling \$17,000 as part of the Luzerne County Head Start Alumni Scholarship Program. To date, LCHS alumni have been awarded 252 scholarships totaling



\$237,750. The scholarships are funded through private sponsors, including local businesses and community organizations. LCHS also recognized several community organizations that support our mission, including Luzerne County Community College and President, Thomas Leary, who received the Head Start Hero Award.

**If your business or community organization would like to support a former Head Start student as part of our Alumni Scholarship Program, please contact Luzerne County Head Start at 570-829-6231.**

## HEALTH AND NUTRITION

Children need to be well to do well. All children who attend Head Start receive a nutritious breakfast and lunch. They are also provided with health services such as immunizations, vision, hearing and lead screenings, dental, medical, mental health services, and early identification of health problems. It should be noted when reviewing the below outcomes that a portion of Early Head Start children prior to the age of one, or before the eruption of their first tooth, are not required to have a dental home.



### HEAD START:

By the end of the 2017-2018 school year

98.2% of children had health insurance

97.1% of children had a medical home

93.7% of children had a dental home

98.5% of children were up to date on immunizations

### EARLY HEAD START:

By the end of the 2017-2018 school year

98.4% of children had health insurance

96.2% of children had a medical home

57.9% of children had a dental home

73.3% of children were up to date on immunizations

## LEAD TASK FORCE

Members from Luzerne County Head Start took part in a roundtable discussion at King's College in Wilkes-Barre on lead exposure and testing. The purpose was to talk about the importance of making lead screenings mandatory in the state of Pennsylvania. Lead screening detects the risk for lead poisoning by measuring the amount of lead in the blood. Head Start nationally requires testing for possible lead exposure.



## STAFF HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Luzerne County Head Start understands the importance of and supports staff health and wellness through the development of a staff wellness committee. We value opportunities for professional development and understand that highly trained and knowledgeable staff provides improved child outcomes and family support.



Administrators from Luzerne County Head Start and Capital Area Head Start attended a leadership conference called Building Healthy Communities at UCLA Anderson School of Management. The conference focused on supporting the health and well-being of staff.

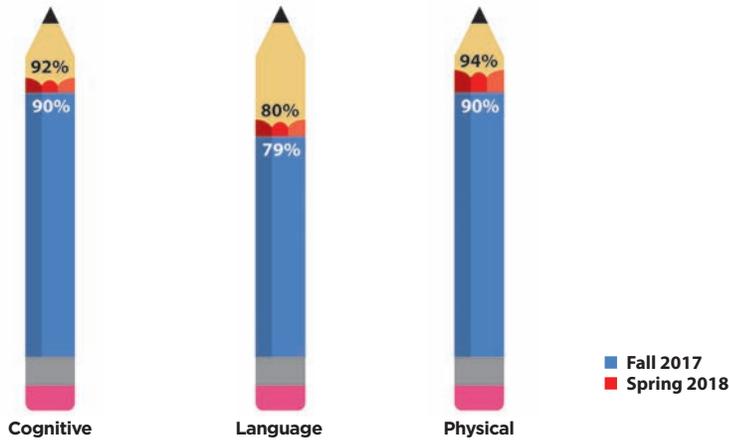


Staff members at Luzerne County Head Start were addressed by Neal M. Horen, Ph.D., Georgetown University, about the importance of taking care of oneself and how staff wellness plays a key role in early childhood education.

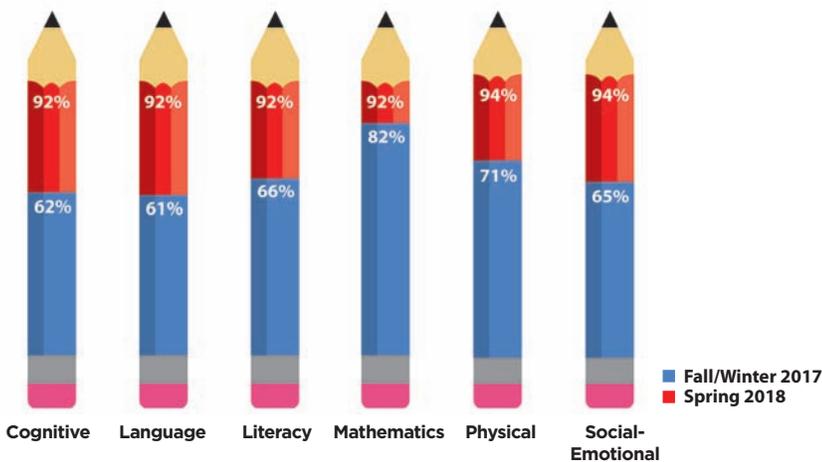
# EDUCATION

The premise of Head Start is simple. Every child, regardless of circumstance at birth, has the ability to reach their full potential. The graphs below represent the percentage of children meeting or exceeding age-appropriate skills from Fall of 2017 to Spring of 2018.

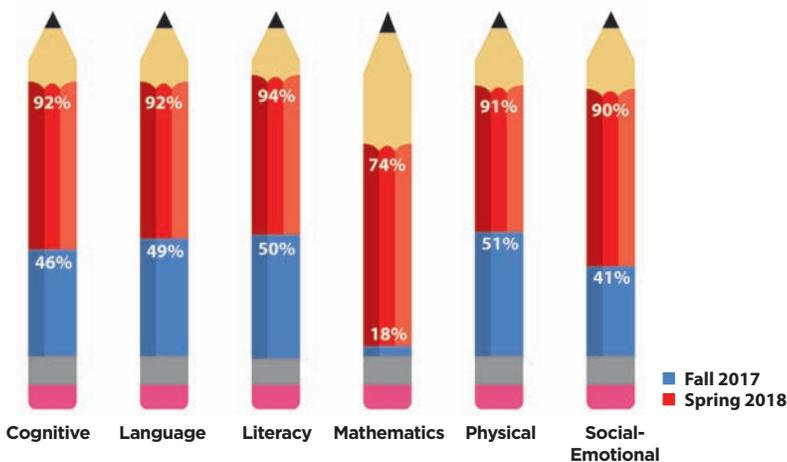
**Early Head Start Children 0-3-Years-Old**  
Teaching Strategies GOLD Domain Outcomes 2017-2018



**Head Start Children 3-Years-Old**  
Teaching Strategies GOLD Domain Outcomes 2017-2018



**Head Start Children 4-Years-Old**  
Teaching Strategies GOLD Domain Outcomes 2017-2018



**HEAD START CHILDREN**  
**3 & 4 year olds: 857**  
**Disability: 158**  
**Foster: 34**  
**Homeless: 72**  
**Buses in operation: 19**  
**Children who receive transportation: 514**  
**Meals served: 251,429**  
**Families: 814**  
**Home language is English: 654**  
**Home language is Spanish: 190**



**EARLY HEAD START CHILDREN**  
**Infants/Toddlers: 318**  
**Pregnant Women: 36**  
**Disability: 55**  
**Foster: 18**  
**Homeless: 19**  
**Families: 286**  
**Home language is English: 275**  
**Home language is Spanish: 75**



The 2018 Community Indicators Report developed by the Institute for Public & Economic Development states that only about ¼ of eligible 3 & 4 year olds (23%) were enrolled in a high-quality Pre-K program. According to the Office of Child Development and Early Learning Reach and Risk Assessment, 35.4% of children in Luzerne County and 18.5% of children in Wyoming County under the age of 5 are living in economically high risk families with incomes at or below 100% of the federal poverty guidelines.

## SOCIAL SERVICES

Our programs help to provide outreach and assistance to children and families in need and also help families identify and reach goals centered on employment, training and parenting.

Luzerne County Head Start, in partnership with Maternal and Family Health Services, added a satellite WIC (Women, Infants and Children) nutrition center at our South Hanover Street, Nanticoke facility. Another satellite WIC nutrition center is located at our Beekman Street, Wilkes-Barre facility. Our Early Head Start center in Tunkhannock, Wyoming County also shares space with a WIC Nutrition Center. This location allows our families in Wyoming County convenient access to WIC services.

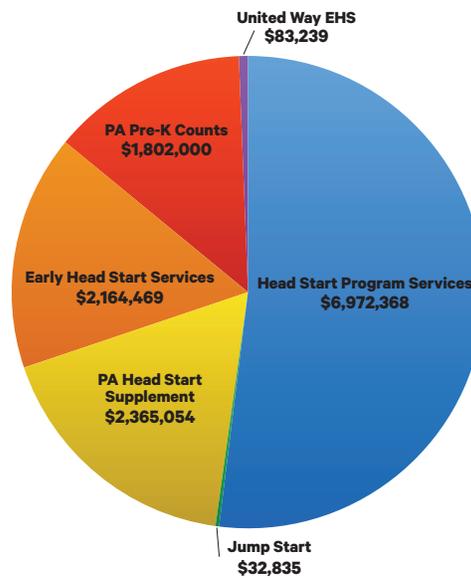


Luzerne County Head Start held a six session parenting curriculum called Positive Solutions for Families. The sessions were facilitated by Lori Losen, a certified Theraplay® therapist, who provided caregivers with tools and strategies to help them develop positive relationships with their children, family members and community.

## LUZERNE COUNTY HEAD START BUDGET AND FINANCIALS

Results of the 2017 financial audit of Luzerne County Head Start reported no findings or material weaknesses.

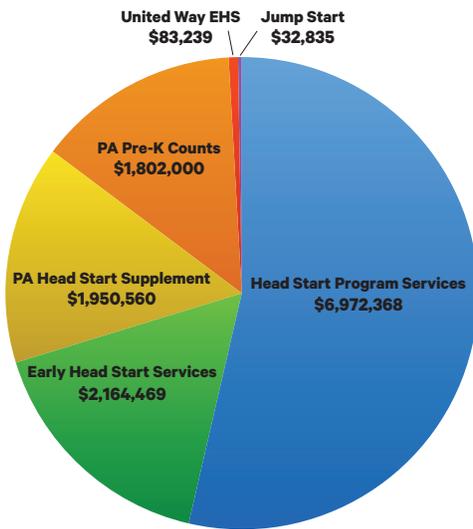
2018 Projected Budget by Program



**525** Head Start families and **250** Early Head Start families received WIC services

(Luzerne County Head Start Statistic)

2017 Expenses by Program



**Early Head Start and Head Start**

**Administration**

**\$ 1,822,307**

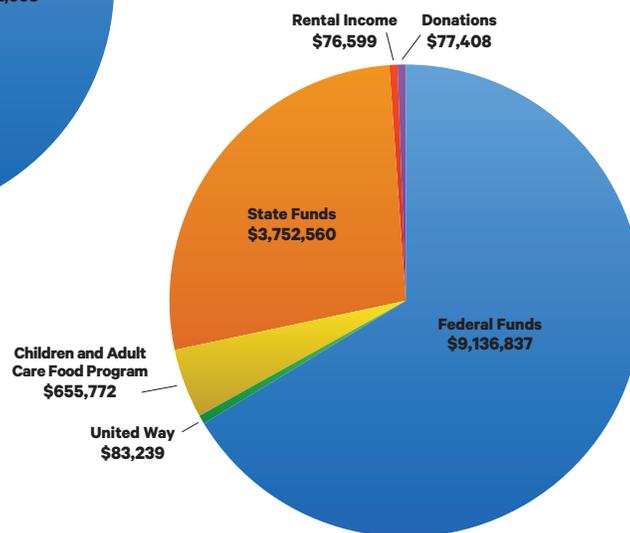
**Transportation**

**\$ 692,830**

**Non-Federal Share**

**\$ 2,297,767**

2017 Funding Sources



**100%** funded enrollment was maintained during the program year.

(Luzerne County Head Start Statistic)

## ACCOUNTABILITY

Our most recent monitoring report dated February, 29 2017 finds our program in full compliance with all federal regulations.



**Luzerne County Head Start, Inc.**

23 Beekman Street  
Wilkes-Barre, PA 18702

Presorted  
First-Class  
US POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
Permit No. 123  
Wilkes-Barre, PA

## **2017-2018 ANNUAL REPORT**

[www.lchs.hsweb.org](http://www.lchs.hsweb.org)

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Luzerne County Head Start, Inc. is an equal opportunity employer.

## **#HeadStartAdvantage**



United Way  
of Wyoming Valley



# **Luzerne County Head Start, Inc.**



**570-829-6231 • 800-551-5829**

Visit [www.lchs.hsweb.org](http://www.lchs.hsweb.org) to learn more about the comprehensive services we provide to children and families.