

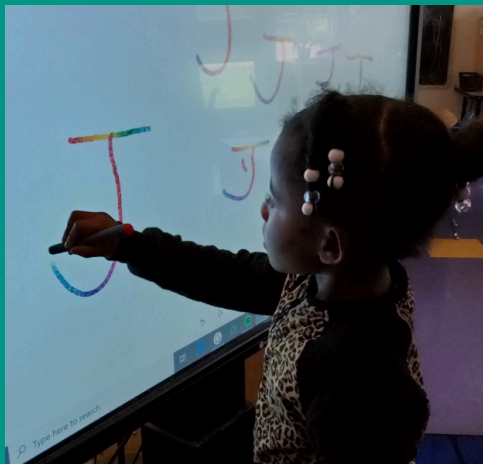


2025 ANNUAL REPORT



2024-2025

Program
Year



Follow us at the links below!



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LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Child Start Team,

As we reflect on the 2024–2025 school year, I want to pause and recognize the collective effort that carried us through a year of progress, persistence, and forward movement. The work you do every day matters deeply, and this year demonstrated what is possible when an organization stays focused, aligned, and committed to its mission.

One of our most important accomplishments this year was becoming fully enrolled in Head Start and exiting under-enrollment status. This was not a quick fix or the result of one strategy. It required coordination, consistency, and shared responsibility across the entire organization. From classrooms to family services, operations to leadership, this achievement reflects a team that stayed engaged, adapted when needed, and followed through. Reaching full enrollment is a meaningful milestone and sustaining it will continue to take all of us working together.

Throughout the year, you continued to show up for children and families with care, professionalism, and determination. Even in moments that required flexibility or change, you remained focused on providing stable, high-quality services, and maintaining strong relationships with families and community partners.

As we look ahead to the coming year, I am confident in our ability to keep building on this momentum. There is still important work to do, and I know we are well positioned to strengthen our programs, support one another, and continue meeting the needs of the families we serve.

I also want to acknowledge the importance of caring for ourselves and each other. The work at Child Start is demanding, and sustaining our impact depends on staying connected, supportive, and mindful of our well-being. Thank you for continuing to show respect, teamwork, and commitment to one another.

Child Start is strong because of the people who make it work every day. I am grateful for your dedication, and I'm proud of what we accomplished together this year. I look forward to what we will continue to build in the year ahead.

With sincere appreciation,

Tanya Bulluck
Executive Director, Child Start



TANYA BULLUCK
Executive Director





ORGANIZATION OVERVIEW

Child Start is a local nonprofit organization focused on early learning for lifelong success. We work with child care providers to ensure quality care for our community's children and administer the Head Start programs.



Mission

Child Start provides early childhood development services that prepare young children for lifelong success.

Vision

Child Start will be the pre-eminent organization in the Wichita community for child care services, training and programs, and recognized as such.

Core Values

Integrity

We will conduct ourselves in a manner that inspires confidence in Child Start and in ourselves individually, as well as respect for the field of early childhood education.

Respect

We will treat those we serve, our colleagues, and the public with respect.

High Quality Services for Children and Families

We will strive to deliver and encourage others to deliver services that meet the highest standards currently established in the field of early childhood education.





CHILD START'S IMPACT



This report provides information for Child Start's Head Start 0-5 Program for the fiscal year ending April 30th, 2025.

The Annual Report provides: (1) the total amount of public and private funds received and the amount of each source; (2) an explanation of budgetary expenditures and proposed budget for the fiscal year; (3) the total number of children and families served, the average monthly enrollment, and the percentage of eligible children served; (4) the results of the most recent review events by the Secretary and the financial audit; (5) the percentage of enrolled children that received medical and dental exams; (6) information about parent involvement activities; (7) the organization's efforts to prepare children for kindergarten; and (8) any other information required by the Secretary.

The program's focus is to prepare children for school readiness and lifelong success. Our partners in achieving this goal are the families and the communities we serve.





CHILD START'S IMPACT IN NUMBERS



313	Total number of children/pregnant women served in EHS
457	Total number of children served in HS
170	Average monthly enrollment in EHS
319	Average monthly enrollment in HS
28%	Percentage of income eligible children in EHS
25%	Percentage of income eligible children in HS
3.8%	Percentage of over income children in EHS
2.1%	Percentage of over income children in HS
79.6%	Percentage of children that received medical exams in EHS
93.7%	Percentage of children that received medical exams in HS
91.7%	Percentage of children that received dental exams in EHS
74.6%	Percentage of children that received dental exams in HS



OVERALL COMMUNITY IMPACT

CHILD DEVELOPMENT



Children and Expectant Mothers Served

744 Children served in a classroom setting or at home through the home-based program

26 pregnant mothers also received services

Early Intervention and Specialized Services

100 children served that qualified for special education services under IDEA

56 additional children who did not qualify for services under IDEA but received individualized lesson plans to address special needs that would otherwise have gone unaddressed

The Head Start Program Performance Standards mandate that 10% of a program's total enrollment be filled by children eligible for services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).





OVERALL COMMUNITY IMPACT

DEVELOPMENT GROWTH

Cognitive ToyBox Assessment Results 2024-2025

Domains	Check Point 1	Check Point 2	Check Point 3
Approaches to Learning	80%	85%	80%
Cognition	70%	70%	66%
English Language Development	50%	73%	58%
Language and Literacy Development	75%	73%	72%
Perceptual, Motor, and Physical Development	97%	95%	96%
Social-Emotional Development	87%	90%	92%
Subdomains	Check Point 1	Check Point 2	Check Point 3
Language and Communication	84%	87%	86%
Literacy	69%	61%	60%
Mathematics Development	67%	66%	62%
Scientific Reasoning	80%	86%	84%

Cognitive Toy Box® is a formative assessment platform designed for early childhood programs, providing teachers with quick, play-based assessments to track children's growth across developmental domains.

Checkpoint data shows strong and consistent success in Perceptual, Motor, and Physical Development, as well as continued growth in Social-Emotional Development and Language and Communication.





OVERALL COMMUNITY IMPACT

FAMILY SERVICES

Father Involvement

104 fathers involved in Head Start activities

196 fathers involved in Early Head Start activities

Out of total parent involvement

Parent Involvement

655 parents involved in Head Start activities

Families Supported

676 families served

98% of families identified as needing additional support were provided services

241 family goals were set by families and supported by the program

82% of goals set by families have been completed or are ongoing

Child Start's Head Start 0-5 Program serves Butler, Harper, Greenwood, and Sedgwick counties in Kansas

The Head Start Program Performance Standards mandate that 10% of a program's total enrollment be filled by children eligible for services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).





SELF-ASSESSMENT SUMMARY

Strengths

- Improved Monitoring Systems: PIR monitoring was completed monthly in the first three quarters and weekly in the final quarter, allowing the program to submit the PIR two weeks early.
- Stronger Onboarding & Training: Updated onboarding improved consistency, and new required trainings were added for all new staff.
- Enhanced Staffing Structure: Expanding Education Supervisors from 3 to 6 increased site-level support. Adding an Enrollment Specialist helped process an average of 96 applications per month with a 13% correction rate.
- Family Engagement Growth: Parent-Teacher Conference participation increased 14.4% (347 → 397), and several Family Outcomes domains improved, such as Employment (68% → 83%) and Medical Engagement (76% → 90%).
- Safety & Security Improvements: Upgraded cameras, added classroom visibility screens, and increased police presence strengthened site safety.
- Child Development Progress: Social-Emotional Development improved (87% → 92%) and Perceptual, Motor, and Physical Development remained high (95–97%).
- Nutrition Program Gains: Improved monitoring reduced food profit loss by 92% (from -\$49,693.29 to -\$3,795.47).

Food Loss/Profit	Loss/Profit 23-24 FY	Loss/Profit 24-25 FY
Totals	(\$49,693.29)	(\$3,795.47)





SELF-ASSESSMENT SUMMARY (CONT.)



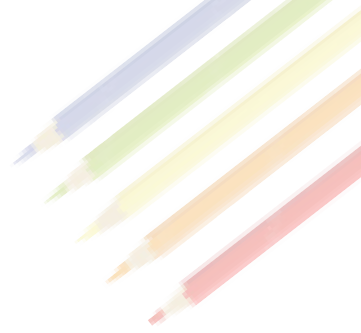
Progress Made in Addressing Prior Concerns

- Program Design and Management (Process Review & Efficiency)
 - The program reviewed and updated key procedures across multiple departments, aligned documentation with GoEngage® workflows, and strengthened internal monitoring systems. Refined task expectations, clearer timelines, and improved data reporting addressed the need for streamlined processes and reduced redundancies.
- Chronic Absenteeism
 - Attendance procedures were updated to require more frequent follow-ups and earlier communication with families. Attendance is now monitored weekly, and expectations are shared at the beginning of the program year to reinforce consistency. Data-driven adjustments helped stabilize attendance and identify challenges earlier in the year.
- Classroom Safety Incidents
 - Safety practices were strengthened through expanded staff training, enhanced site-level security features, and implementation of more consistent safety monitoring through AIR note procedures. Facility improvements and increased law-enforcement collaboration further reduced safety risks.
- Full Enrollment Initiative (Waitlist Management & Proactive Outreach)
 - The program strengthened application processing by reinstating ERSEA leadership, adding an Enrollment Specialist, and creating more efficient tools for monitoring application corrections. Waitlist management was reinforced through updated tracking systems and clearer procedures, supporting more proactive outreach and overall enrollment stability.

Areas of Focus Identified for 2025-2026

- High Staff Turnover: A 46% turnover rate continues to affect capacity, coverage, and timelines across departments.
- Family Services Workflow Strain: Staffing shortages prevented completion of the third home visit for many families, slowing goal updates and re-enrollment.
- Declines in Key Child Development Areas: Literacy, math, and English Language Development scores decreased across checkpoints, indicating the need for stronger instructional supports.
- Inconsistent Application Processing Timelines: Some months showed elevated correction rates and delays related to staffing shortages and scheduling coordination.
- Father Involvement Remains an Opportunity: Data shows improvement, but still indicates a need for more targeted strategies to engage male caregivers.
- Training Evaluation System Not Yet Implemented Consistently: Without evaluation data, training effectiveness cannot be fully measured or adjusted.
- Head Start Director Vacancy: Hiring a Head Start Director to help reduce the operational strain created by the extended period without leadership in this role.





HEAD START AND EARLY HEAD START PROGRAMS



Child Start's Head Start and Early Head Start programs are federally funded initiatives that provide comprehensive early care and education, along with essential support services, to low-income children and families. These programs promote school readiness by enhancing children's physical, social, emotional, and cognitive development. Head Start serves children ages three to five, while Early Head Start serves pregnant women, infants, and toddlers up to age three.

Like many programs across the country, Head Start and Early Head Start have experienced classroom staffing shortages due to the ongoing childcare workforce crisis that intensified following the pandemic. Child Start has not been immune to these challenges. However, over the past year, the organization has made meaningful progress in addressing staffing shortages while continuing to meet enrollment needs. Through targeted strategies and intentional investments in recruitment and retention, Child Start is beginning to see positive impacts in both staffing stability and enrollment capacity.





HEAD START AND EARLY HEAD START PROGRAMS (CONT.)



Retention, Recruitment, and Professional Development

We began a new training initiative that provided focused training for new classroom staff during the first two weeks of employment in an effort to combat staff turnover and to provide better services to the children in our care. This training included intensive observations of model classrooms and coaching from the School Readiness Coaches. In the spring, we began using the Working Genius assessment to help new staff identify areas of their work that may cause frustration plus the areas where they will excel. We provide training on how to be prepared for this frustration and how to use your genius to offset these challenges.

As part of our commitment to strengthening social-emotional practices across the organization, Child Start welcomed a certified trainer from Conscious Discipline to lead one of our quarterly professional development days. This targeted, in-person training provided staff with deeper insight into the foundational principles of Conscious Discipline and its practical application within early childhood classrooms. The session enhanced staff knowledge and understanding of brain-based discipline strategies, emotional regulation, and relationship-centered classroom management. This investment in high-quality professional development supports our continued focus on children's social-emotional growth and mental health, while ensuring staff feel confident and aligned in their approach to creating safe, connected, and responsive learning environments.

Contracting with a Substitute Service

To help combat staffing shortages and maintain classroom continuity, Child Start began contracting with an outside substitute staffing agency. Through this partnership, seven substitute teachers have been successfully onboarded. Each substitute completes a full-day of Child Start Substitute Orientation, which provides comprehensive training including nutrition and family-style meal service, strategies for managing challenging behaviors, health and safety procedures, foundations of Head Start and Early Head Start, licensing requirements, and additional program-specific practices. This strategic partnership has strengthened classroom coverage, reduced disruptions for children and families, and supported teaching staff by ensuring consistent, trained support when regular staff are unavailable.

Expand Functional Partnerships and Strategic Alliances

Head Start continued the Summer STEAM program, which focused on growing partnerships with homeless shelters this year. New partnerships have included Ember Hope, IRC, St. Anthony Homeless Shelter, Open Door, Human Kind, Lords Diner, Rainbows, and Wichita Children's Home. We helped create several new connections and we saw an increase in the number of homeless families served and on our waitlist.



KINDERGARTEN READINESS



During the 2024-2025 program year, there were 105 children transitioned to Kindergarten in Sedgwick, Harper, and Butler counties. These transitions reflect our continued commitment to ensuring children and families are prepared for a smooth and confident entry into the K-12 system.

This year, the program implemented Cognitive ToyBox as the primary assessment tool for measuring child outcomes. Child progress is monitored continuously throughout the year, allowing teachers to document growth and celebrate accomplishments in real time. Outcomes are assessed in the following domains: Approaches to Learning; Social and Emotional Development; Language and Literacy; Cognition (including Science and Mathematics); and Physical Development.

A key focus during the 2024-2025 year was strengthening social-emotional development and supporting children's mental health. To guide this work, staff implemented Conscious Discipline alongside the Teaching Pyramid framework. These evidence-based approaches support positive behavior, emotional regulation, and nurturing classroom environments. Outcome data is regularly shared with the Board of Directors, Policy Council, staff, and families to ensure transparency and continuous program improvement.

Family engagement remained a cornerstone of our program model. Teachers met individually with parents and guardians four times during the school year, including two Home Visits (Fall and late Spring) and two Parent-Teacher Conferences (Winter and early Spring). During the initial Home Visit, teachers and families collaborated to establish individualized goals for each child and completed the ASQ developmental screener. These goals were revisited and updated throughout the year during conferences and the final Home Visit. As goals were achieved, new goals were developed to support continued growth. Families were encouraged to share their aspirations for what they would like their children to know and be able to do before entering kindergarten.

To further support successful transitions, families received kindergarten transition plans and activity resources to continue learning experiences over the summer months and sustain developmental progress. In the Spring, all child files were carefully reviewed, consolidated, and submitted to receiving school districts to ensure they had the most current health and developmental records, supporting a seamless transition into kindergarten.





KINDERGARTEN READINESS

TIMELINE OF TRANSITION ACTIVITIES:

FALL - Initial home visits were completed, and information was distributed to parents/guardians regarding kindergarten choices, the transition process, and educational services. Monthly activities for children to enhance school readiness skills began through goal setting and individualizations.

WINTER - Parent-Teacher Conferences were held, and all families with a child age-eligible for kindergarten worked with their Family Advocate to create a Kindergarten Transition Plan. Parents/Guardians were provided information on their local school districts, the location of their neighborhood school, and the Choices Fair for children transitioning to USD 259. School districts provided information about Open Houses and Kindergarten Round Ups at local schools for each child.

SPRING - Teaching staff completed “Getting Ready for Kindergarten” creative curriculum study, and the sites doing Frog Street completed Theme 9 reading changes. Enhanced focus was placed on conducting activities that promote independence. Some sites took field trips to visit kindergarten classrooms. The last Home Visit occurred in May, during which transition activities were distributed and reviewed with parents.

SUMMER - Distribution of children’s records to their respective school districts occurred.





PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Early Childhood Connections (ECC) improves the quality of early childhood education by building a strong support network that connects caregivers with essential resources and professional learning opportunities. ECC provides training on critical topics including child development, health and safety, nutrition, and best practices in early care and education. Trainings incorporate resource sharing, hands-on learning activities, and collaborative discussion to strengthen caregiver knowledge, confidence, and program quality.

In 2025, ECC served nearly 1,000 early care and education professionals across a five-county service delivery area. Many of those served either owned child care businesses or were employed at licensed child care facilities. ECC prioritizes early engagement with providers by participating in child care licensing orientations throughout the service area. During these orientations, specialists introduce available services and conduct follow-up outreach to offer individualized support, including guidance on professional development opportunities and business best practices. This collaboration with the City of Wichita Child Care Licensing helps providers build sustainable programs while supporting their career growth.

Throughout 2025, ECC delivered professional development services to more than 3,000 caregivers, totaling over 6,000 training hours. As a result, more than 85% of participants reported increased knowledge following ECC training.

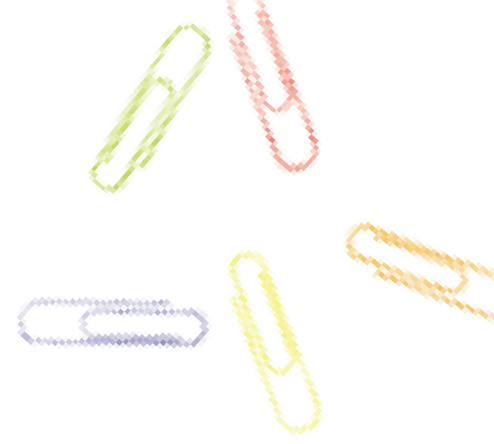
In addition to professional development, ECC provides coaching and technical assistance to support caregivers, child care professionals, and families. Services include guidance on child development, licensing requirements, creating enriching learning environments, implementing social-emotional supports, managing licensed child care businesses, and assisting families in locating child care services. ECC serves as a comprehensive resource for individuals seeking support in providing high-quality early care and education.

As community demand for child care continues to grow and available child care slots remain limited, ECC also supports providers in maintaining enrollment and connecting families to available care. Providers are contacted quarterly to verify vacancy information, ensuring families have access to accurate and up-to-date child care availability.





PARENT INVOLVEMENT



Child Start continued its Summer STEAM initiative, which hosted weekly STEAM events each Friday throughout the summer months. These events provided meaningful opportunities for children and families to explore science, technology, engineering, the arts, and mathematics through hands-on, community-based experiences.

To build excitement and reinforce learning, classrooms aligned weekly lesson plans with each STEAM theme. Teachers intentionally integrated STEAM-focused activities into daily instruction, encouraging participation and preparing children for the upcoming Friday event. This alignment helped extend learning beyond the classroom and supported family engagement.

We are pleased to report another year of increased attendance at Summer STEAM events, reflecting strong family interest, effective community partnerships, and the continued success of this initiative.

Centers also continued to host monthly PACT (Parents and Children Together) events, designed to strengthen family engagement and foster meaningful connections between home and school. These events were scheduled at convenient times—during drop-off, pick-up, or after school—to encourage maximum family participation.

Throughout the year, families enjoyed a variety of interactive and creative activities, including Pancakes with Pals, a student fashion show, and a “drive-in” movie night where children and family members worked together to design and decorate a cardboard box car for the event. Additional activities throughout the year continued to promote collaboration, creativity, and relationship-building.

PACT events provide intentional opportunities for families to engage in their child’s learning environment, connect with staff, and build relationships with other families. Participation in these events remains strong and continues to reflect our commitment to family partnerships as a core component of the Child Start program model.

Child Start continued its committees to ensure parents are included in the early conversations and planning stages. We believe that by working together we can create a more enriching and supportive environment for our children. Parents are encouraged to be active participants by sharing their perspectives and ideas as we continue to grow and improve our programs.





COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT



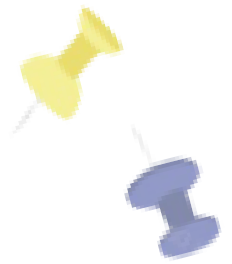
Staff participated in community parades, special events, seasonal festivals, and holiday celebrations. Some of the events attended were Open Streets ICT, Urban League Family Resource Fair, Drug Endangered Children, Horace Mann Community Resource Fair, River Fest, and Feets on the Streets. This outreach helps bring awareness to our organization and connect with families who could potentially benefit from our services.

The Education Team continued the Summer STEAM initiative, which hosted weekly STEAM events each Friday throughout the summer months. Child Start partnered with a variety of agencies and locations across the city to broaden families' exposure to new environments and learning opportunities. Experiences included visits to the Sedgwick County Zoo, Botanica, Exploration Place, a splash pad in Andover, a live theater performance, the public library, Great Plains Nature Center, and PBS Kids.



Our Health Literacy Event was enhanced to incorporate health professionals from the community, such as Sedgwick County Health Department dentistry, services, and immunizations, the Juvenile Intervention Unit, and Sedgwick Co Fire Department. In total we had 23 booths regarding health and safety. Lunar Culinary provided healthy snacks, and local businesses including Scheels, Wholesale Foods, and Jumpy Jump Land donated gift cards and other prizes for the event.





COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT (CONT.)

Child Start has maintained an active Health and Mental Health Advisory Committee which meets quarterly to collaborate on issues related to health, nutrition, and mental/disability services. The committee is comprised of doctors, dentists, MHDB consultants, psychologists, play therapists, dieticians, USD 259 employees, dental hygienists, and more. They were instrumental in helping to ensure proper cleaning protocols were in place to reduce illness in the classrooms. Dental committee members offered to visit centers to provide oral health education at parent meetings since oral health care and getting children dental exams are the biggest challenges each year.

The program broadened their outreach in helping families who are without insurance to apply for Presumptive Eligibility, not only in Butler County but now Sedgwick County as well. Enrollment Specialists were trained on the process in addition to the Site Nurses so this can begin earlier in enrollment stages.

A group of volunteers from Fleeson, Gooing, Coulson & Kitch L.L.C came to El Dorado for a day and painted the exterior wall on the back and side of the building.

Blooming Minds had several community involvement opportunities including Wichita Advanced Learning Library, WIC Office, Health Department, Salvation Army, Kansas Department of Aging, and Central Plains.

Stewie, the therapy dog from the Wichita Police Department, came through for monthly site visits. On his visits, he would spend time in each classroom interacting with the children.

El Dorado participated in the Old Fashioned Christmas Parade, Thankful Thursday, and Skelly Literacy/Math Night. Several recruitment events were corroborated with events taking place at the local school district, including their Homecoming Parade. Outreach also took place during the Butler County Fair.

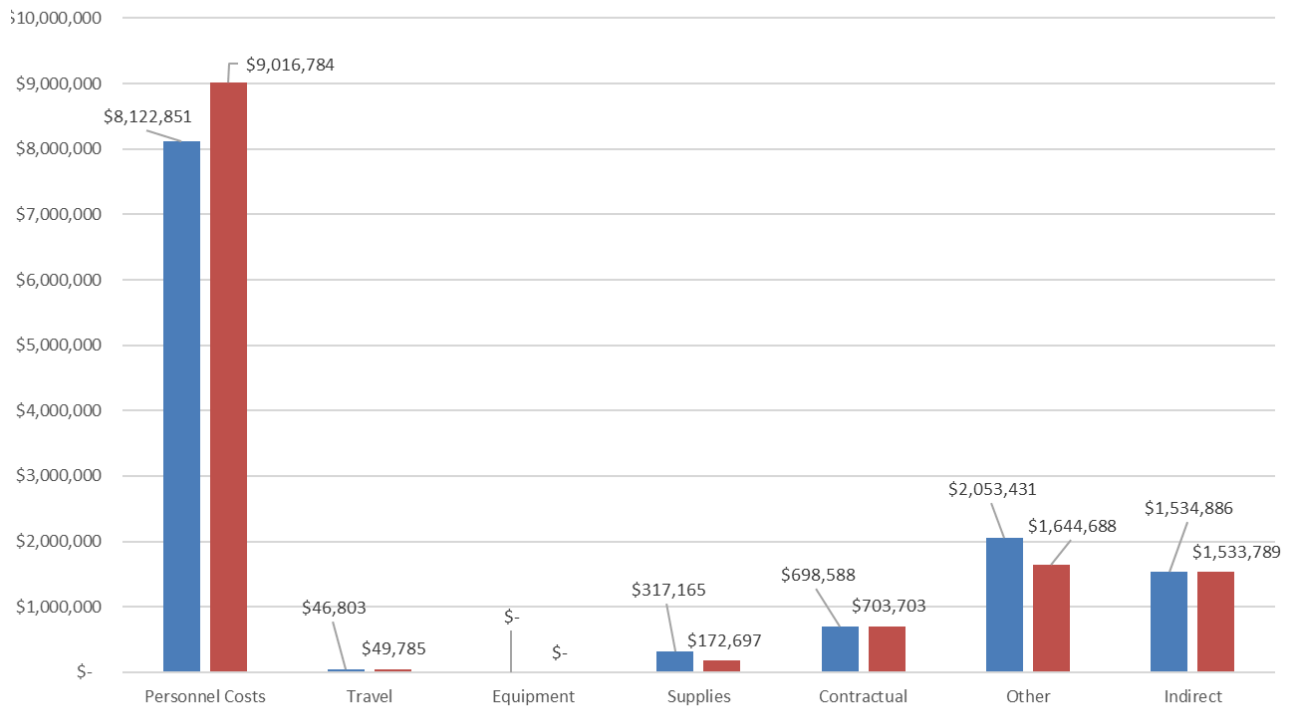




FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

Child Start's full annual Audit Report for the 2024-2025 program year is available on our website. Fiscal year end 04/30/25.

Head Start/Early Head Start Program Expenses



- Personnel Costs:** includes all 0-5 program salaries, wages, and fringe benefits
- Travel/Training:** includes only out-of-town travel costs and training costs
- Equipment:** includes equipment purchases > \$10,000
- Supplies:** includes all office, classroom, and program supplies
- Contractual:** includes program operations that are contracted with outside agencies (i.e. child care providers, etc.)
- Other/Occupancy:** includes all costs associated with building costs (i.e. rent, utilities, etc.) and all other costs
- Indirect:** includes costs associated with the charging of our federal indirect rate





FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

Child Start's full annual Audit Report for the 2024-2025 program year is available on our website.
Fiscal year end 04/30/25.

HEAD START/ EARLY HEAD START SOURCES OF INCOME	BUDGET	ACTUAL
Grant Revenue	\$13,121,446	\$12,773,724
Other Income	\$ --	\$193
Gain/Loss	\$ --	\$ --
Interest Income	\$ --	\$2
CACFP/KSDE Grant	\$ --	\$341,335
Donations	\$ --	\$ --
In-Kind Contributions	\$2,680,362	\$3,045,736
TOTALS	\$15,801,808	\$16,160,990



Child Start, Inc.
Schedule of Findings and Questioned Costs
Year Ended April 30, 2025

Section I - Summary of Auditor's Results

Financial Statements

Type of auditor's report issued on whether the financial statements were prepared in accordance with GAAP: Unmodified

Internal control over financial reporting:

- Material weakness(es) identified? _____ Yes X No
- Significant deficiency(ies) identified? _____ Yes X None Reported

Noncompliance material to financial statements noted? _____ Yes X No

Federal Awards

Internal control over major federal program:

- Material weakness(es) identified? _____ Yes X No
- Significant deficiency(ies) identified? _____ Yes X None Reported

Type of auditor's report issued on compliance for major program: Unmodified

Any audit findings disclosed that are required to be reported in accordance with 2 CFR 200.516(a)? _____ Yes X No

Identification of major federal programs

<u>AL Number(s)</u>	<u>Name of Federal Program or Cluster</u>
93.600	Head Start Cluster

Dollar threshold used to distinguish between Type A and Type B programs: \$750,000

Auditee qualified as low-risk auditee? X Yes _____ No

Child Start, Inc.
Schedule of Findings and Questioned Costs (Continued)
Year Ended April 30, 2025

Section II - Financial Statement Findings

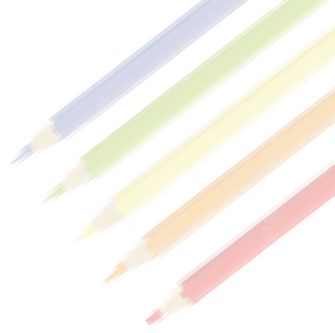
None

Section III - Federal Award Findings and Questioned Costs

None

Section IV - Summary Schedule of Prior Year Findings

None



FUTURE OUTLOOK



Child Start is delighted to announce that we will be opening a new center in Haysville, KS. We are excited to be able to bring accessible child care to this new community.



CONTACT US



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THANK YOU

We are thankful for the people and partnerships that help us maintain our mission to provide services to the children of our communities. This would not be possible without your continued support.

