

**Southeastern Vermont Community Action (SEVCA)
Head Start Annual Report
June 2009**

GENERAL PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Southeastern Vermont Community Action (SEVCA) Head Start is funded to serve 87 children. Any child living in Windsor County that turns 3 years old by September 1st may be eligible for the program if they meet other program requirements, notably income eligibility. Windsor County consists of the following towns: Andover, Baltimore, Barnard, Bethel, Bridgewater, Cavendish, Chester, Hartford (incl. White River Junction), Hartland, Ludlow, Norwich, Plymouth, Pomfret, Reading, Rochester, Royalton, Sharon, Springfield, Stockbridge, Weathersfield, Weston, Windsor, West Windsor, and Woodstock.

There are currently 7 classrooms at 4 different sites:

Chester ~ Chester Community Preschool has two collaborative Head Start classrooms in partnership with the Windsor Southwest Supervisory Union, serving 37 children, of which 22 are Head Start eligible.

Springfield ~ Pine Street Preschool has two regular Head Start classrooms and one child care classroom, serving 52 children, with at least 34 being Head Start eligible.

White River Junction ~ Northwoods Head Start Center has one Head Start classroom serving 15 children.

Windsor ~ The Children's Place Preschool has one Head Start classroom and serves 18 children.

FUNDING AND BUDGET

Public & Private Funds ~ In 2008-09, SEVCA Head Start received a federal grant of \$701,194. A matching non-federal share of \$175,299, in cash and in-kind donations, was also generated, for a total of \$876,493 in program resources.

Federal Grant Budget Summary

Personnel: \$420,241
Fringe Benefits: \$146,786
Travel: \$1,960
Supplies: \$35,200
Other: \$87,155
TOTAL: \$691,342
Training & Technical Assistance: \$9,852
Total Grant Budget: \$701,194

Budget Narrative

Personnel: \$420,241 – staff wages
Fringe Benefits: \$146,786 – required payroll costs and employee benefits
Travel: \$1,960 – out-of-town staff travel for attending a training / conference, etc. not offered locally.
Supplies: \$35,200

Office Supplies: \$8,000 – paper, pens, copier rental, printing needs, etc. for operating the program.

Child & Family Services Supplies: \$25,700 – includes monthly budgets for curriculum enhancement (\$3,000), classroom manipulatives and other materials (\$14,000), family services materials (3,000), and playground equipment (\$5,700).

Food Service Supplies: \$1,500 – cost of monthly nutrition projects for each classroom and other needed kitchen supplies.

Other: \$87,155

Rent: \$19,500 – rent and/or utilities for one classroom and administrative office space

Telephone / Utilities: \$16,607 – telephone, fuel oil, electricity, & internet service for classrooms sites and administrative office

Liability Insurance: \$3,500 – required coverage to be licensed and protect against liability

Building Maintenance: \$11,248 – includes Springfield Center roof repair and other anticipated building maintenance needs

Local Travel: \$5,300 – reimbursement for an estimated 10,816 miles of local work-related travel at 49 cents per mile

Child Services Consultants: \$10,000 – cost of contracts with Mental Health Consultant – to observe the classrooms, support staff and see families as needed; and Nutrition Consultant – to meet with families and review menus as needed

Volunteers: \$1,500 – volunteer-related expenses, including Volunteer Appreciation Dinner, volunteer packets, training, etc.

Substitutes: \$4,500 – coverage when classroom staff are absent due to illness or other reason.

Parent Services: \$1,500 – activities for parents, such as train rides, fathering initiatives, and other parent involvement activities

Accountant & Legal Services: \$8,500 – Head Start’s share of annual audit cost and other accounting or legal costs incurred by Head Start

Training & Staff Development: \$5,000 – to supplement the T&TA account for needed training

Training & Technical Assistance (T&TA): \$9,852 – staff training and development costs

ANNUAL FINANCIAL AUDIT RESULTS

Schedule of Findings and Questioned Costs for the Year Ended September 2008

1. The auditors’ report expresses an unqualified opinion on the financial statements of Southeastern Vermont Community Action, Inc.
2. No significant deficiencies relating to the audit of the financial statements are reported in the *Report on Internal Control Over Financial Reporting and on Compliance and other Matters Based on an Audit of the Financial Statements Performed in Accordance with Government Auditing Standards*.
3. No instances of noncompliance material to the financial statements of Southeastern Vermont Community Action, Inc. were disclosed during the audit.
4. No significant deficiencies relating to the audit of major federal award programs are reported in the *Report on Compliance with Requirements Applicable to Each Major Program and Internal Control Over Compliance in Accordance with OMB Circular A-133*.
5. The auditors’ report on compliance for the major federal award programs for Southeastern Vermont Community Action, Inc. expresses an unqualified opinion on all major programs.
6. There were no audit findings which the auditor would be required to report under section 510(a) of OMB Circular A-133.
7. The program tested as major programs include:
 - 81.042 Weatherization
 - 93.568 Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program
 - 93.569 Community Services Block Grant
8. The threshold for distinguishing Type A and B programs was 300,000.
9. Southeastern Vermont Community Action, Inc. was not determined to be a low-risk auditee.

FINDINGS-FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AUDIT – None

FINDINGS AND QUESTIONED COSTS- MAJOR FEDERAL AWARD PROGRAMS AUDIT – None

ENROLLMENT & PERCENT OF ELIGIBLE CHILDREN SERVED

Total Number of Children and Families Served:

This program year we served 99 families and 105 children. Of these, 46 were three-year-olds, 49 were four-year-olds and 10 turned five after September 1st so they missed the Kindergarten cut-off date. Twenty-nine children were enrolled for their second year in Head Start and one child was enrolled for his third year. There were 18 children that left the program throughout the year, 4 of whom left before the first 45 days of the program. Of the 99 families served, 54 were two-parent families and 45 were single-parent families.

Average Monthly Enrollment / Percent of Eligible Children Served:

The program was enrolled at full capacity throughout the entire program year, from September 2008 to May 2009. Children were eligible according to the following categories:

| Center | 100% of Federal Poverty Level | 130% of Federal Poverty Level | Over Income | Homeless | Other (Foster care, SSI, CC Subsidy, Declaration of No Income) | Total |
|----------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------|----------|--|------------|
| Chester | 6 | 5 | 7 | 0 | 3 | 21 |
| Springfield | 20 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 29 | 53 |
| White River Junction | 8 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 5 | 15 |
| Windsor | 4 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 10 | 16 |
| Total | 54 | 11 | 8 | 1 | 31 | 105 |

HEALTH OUTCOMES

Medical & Dental Care:

We began the year with a parent orientation at which we provided information explaining what parents should expect during their child’s well-child exam. This helped to ensure that all the information needed on the child’s physical form was complete, and gave parents the accurate information the needed to question their physician if a particular practice was not being completed by the physician.

There were 101 children with ‘medical homes’ (i.e., regular primary care doctors) when they enrolled in Head Start, and at the end of the school year all 105 children had them. Of those, 94 were up-to-date with all physicals and follow-ups at the end of the year.

We had a new “Tooth Tutor” this year – Michelle Pinders, RDH. Michelle traveled to the classrooms to educate the children about dental hygiene. She explained the importance of visiting the dentist and what happens at the dentist’s office. Michelle also worked with families to find dental homes and to remind them when their children were due for follow-up appointments.

There were 61 children with dental homes when they enrolled, and by the end of the year that increased to 92 children. Of those, 86 had up-to-date exams, 16 needed treatment, 11 had received the needed treatment and 5 still were awaiting their appointments.

Percentage of Children Who Received Medical & Dental Exams

| Center | Medical Exams | Total Children | % per Classroom | Dental Exams | Total Children | % per Classroom |
|----------------------|---------------|----------------|-----------------|--------------|----------------|-----------------|
| Chester | 21 | 21 | 100% | 20 | 21 | 95% |
| Springfield | 43 | 53 | 81% | 39 | 53 | 74% |
| White River Junction | 14 | 15 | 93% | 14 | 15 | 93% |
| Windsor | 16 | 16 | 100% | 13 | 16 | 81% |
| Total | 94 | 105 | 90% | 86 | 105 | 82% |

Overall, 90% of the 105 children enrolled in the program received medical exams. The remaining 10% did not get them for a number of reasons, including: Parents not returning the form to Head Start, scheduling the appointment after the close of the year, or not following through with the appointment.

We had 82% of the 105 children receiving a dental exam. We are still working with dentists to help them understand the need for children to be seen by three years of age. The Springfield area is also the community with the fewest dentists willing to take Medicaid, which is the primary source of insurance for Head Start children; thus, it is difficult to find dentists to see all those children.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT ACTIVITIES

The 2008-09 program year provided a variety of formal and informal opportunities for parents to become involved in the program and their child's development. Each month the Family Service Specialist facilitated parent group meetings that offered the opportunity for parents to present ideas and suggestions for the Head Start program within their community. These meetings also included guest speakers who provided expertise on a variety of topics such as financial management, nutrition tips for children, and social and emotional behaviors of young children. Parents were also invited to participate in some of Head Start's planned In-Service training sessions, such as children with disabilities and yoga techniques for relieving stress.

In addition to monthly meetings and in-service trainings, we also provided some activities that focused primarily on the involvement of fathers and other significant male figures in children's lives. In the fall a train ride was organized for dads and their children (some grandpas, uncles and moms came too). We also had four 'Dad Nights': Two spaghetti dinners, one pizza/movie night and a barbeque combined with planting a garden. Parents were also offered ongoing opportunities to participate in classroom activities, curriculum planning, field trips, the health advisory committee, and having meals at Head Start with our monthly Buddy Breakfast and Ladies Luncheon.

We wrapped up the year with a certified CPR/First Aid training, Parent Volunteer Dinner (prepared and served by the Head Start managers) and a family picnic at each site on the last day. The following table indicates the various parent involvement activities and the number of participants in each:

| <i>Parent Involvement Activity</i> | <i>Participants</i> |
|------------------------------------|---------------------|
| Child Pedestrian Safety | 16 |
| Community Resource Availability | 13 |
| Second-Step | 12 |
| Nutrition (Budget and Balance) | 3 |
| IDA Savings | 9 |
| CPR/First Aid | 7 |
| Train Ride | 57 |
| Pizza/Movie Night | 11 |
| Spaghetti Dinner-Springfield | 18 |
| Spaghetti Dinner-Windsor | 3 |
| Parent Recognition Dinner | 47 |
| Children with Disabilities | 3 |
| Yoga-stress reducer | 2 |
| BBQ/Garden | 9 |

This program year, Head Start staff conducted 301 Parent / Teacher conferences and 125 Home Visits, and provided Head Start parents with 364 referrals to community services.

EFFORTS FOR PREPARING CHILDREN FOR KINDERGARTEN

Child Outcomes Analysis for Children Transitioning to Kindergarten Spring 2009

[F=Fall Assessment Period

W=Winter Assessment Period

S=Spring Assessment Period]

| Creative Curriculum | Forerunner | Step 1 | Step 2 | Step 3 | Comments |
|--|-------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---|
| Overall Progress | | | F S | | Shows improvement from fall to spring, with Step 3 increasing from 3 to 23 children |
| Social-Emotional Development | | | F S | S | Area of strength for the program with 27 of 44 children at Step 3 |
| Physical Development | | | F | S | Area of Strength for the program with 33 of 44 children at Step 3 |
| Cognitive Development | | F | F S | | Shows improvement from fall to spring, with Step 3 increasing from 2 to 21 children |
| Language Development | | | F S | | Shows improvement from fall to spring, with Step 3 increasing from 4 to 19 children |
| Head Start Framework | Forerunner | Step 1 | Step 2 | Step 3 | Comments |
| Social and Emotional Development | | | F S | S | Area of Strength for the program with 28 of 44 children at Step 3 |
| Approaches to Learning | | F | S | | Shows improvement from fall to spring, with Step 3 increasing from 1 to 20 children |
| Language Development | | F | F S | | Shows improvement from fall to spring, with Step 3 increasing from 1 to 25 children |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Understands an increasingly complex and varied vocabulary | | | F S | | Shows improvement from fall to spring, with Step 3 increasing from 9 to 22 children |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develops increasing abilities to understand and use language to communicate information, experience, ideas, feelings, opinions, needs, questions and for other varied purposes | | | F | S | Area of Strength for the program with 30 of 44 children at Step 3 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Uses an increasingly complex and varied spoken vocabulary | | | F | S | Area of Strength for the program with 32 of 44 children at Step 3 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Phonological Awareness | | | F S | | Shows improvement from fall to spring, with Step 3 increasing from 8 to 23 children |

| | | | | | |
|--|--|---|-----|---|---|
| ▪ Associates sounds with written words | | F | S | | Shows large improvement from fall to spring, with Step 1 decreasing from 13 to 4 children, and Step 3 increasing from 3 to 16 |
| Literacy Development: | | | F S | | Shows improvement from fall to spring, with Step 3 increasing from 4 to 19 children |
| ▪ Book knowledge and appreciation | | | F S | | Shows improvement from fall to spring, with Step 3 increasing from 5 to 21 children |
| ▪ Print awareness and concepts | | F | F S | | Shows improvement from fall to spring, with Step 3 increasing from 5 to 22 children |
| ▪ Recognizes a word as a unit of print | | F | S | | Shows improvement from fall to spring, with Step 3 increasing from 3 to 12 children |
| ▪ Identifies at least 10 letters of the alphabet, especially those in their own name | | F | S | | Shows improvement from fall to spring, with Step 3 increasing from 5 to 14 children |
| ▪ Knows that letters of the alphabet are a special category of visual graphic that can be individually named | | F | F S | | Shows improvement from fall to spring, with Step 3 increasing from 5 to 17 children |
| Mathematics Development: | | F | F S | | Shows improvement from fall to spring, with Step 3 increasing from 3 to 20 children |
| ▪ Number and operations | | F | F S | | Shows improvement from fall to spring, with Step 3 increasing from 2 to 20 children |
| Science Development: | | F | F S | | Shows improvement from fall to spring, with Step 3 increasing from 3 to 19 children |
| | | | | | |
| Creative Arts: | | | F S | S | Area of strength for the program with 25 of 44 children at Step 3 |
| | | | | | |
| Physical Health and Development: | | | F | S | Area of Strength for the program with 29 of 44 children at Step 3 |

Overview of Classroom and Program Outcomes Report:

The Outcomes Report is based on the use of Creative Curriculum observation and assessment strategies for all of the classrooms. Teachers observe and document children’s daily activities and keep a running record of these observations. The assessment is completed three times per year – November (fall), January (winter) and April (spring). Teachers use observations and recorded documentation to complete the Individual Child Profile, which focuses on four developmental areas: Social/Emotional, Cognitive, Physical, and Language. Within these four areas are 50 indicators that teachers observe and document for each child. The teacher then rate the child on these indicators from lowest to highest: Forerunner, Step 1, Step 2 and Step 3.

Once the teacher has entered this data into a software program (CCPort), the program generates a report showing the progress of the classroom as a whole. This report shows progress of each developmental area according to the following indicators:

1. Creative Curriculum
2. Head Start Child Outcomes Framework Domains:
 - a. Social and Emotional Development
 - b. Approaches to Learning
 - c. Language Development
 - d. Literacy Development
 - e. Mathematics
 - f. Science
 - g. Creative Arts
 - h. Physical Health and Development

3. Head Start Mandated Outcomes:
 - a. Understands an increasingly complex and varied vocabulary
 - b. Develops increasing abilities to understand and use language to communicate information, experience, ideas, feelings, opinions, needs, questions and for other varied purposes
 - c. Uses an increasingly complex and varied spoken vocabulary
 - d. Phonological Awareness
 - e. Associates sounds with written words
 - f. Book knowledge and appreciation
 - g. Print awareness and concepts
 - h. Recognizes a word as a unit of print
 - i. Identifies at least 10 letters of the alphabet, especially those in their own name
 - j. Knows that letters of the alphabet are a special category of visual graphic that can be individually named
 - k. Number and operations

The Education and Disabilities Services Manager then takes the computer files and reports and creates an Outcomes Report for children transitioning to Kindergarten, showing graphs in each of these areas of the number of children at each progress level. An analysis form is created to show progress levels for each marking period and where the children fall.

It is important to note that only 44 children are included on this report, although the program has a total of 49 children moving on to Kindergarten. Three of the children counted in the report are not actually moving to Kindergarten, due to a data entry error, so there are actually eight children not included in this report. The software program used (CCPort) only includes children that were entered for the fall assessment and continue to be assessed for winter and spring. If a child enters the program after the fall assessment period, they are not included in reports for winter and spring. This accounts for five of the children. One child left the program after the winter assessment, and did not return for spring assessment. One child left after the winter assessment and returned after spring data was collected. Finally, one child counted in the report was entered as a 3-4 year old child, but lives in Windsor. This town has a later cut-off date for age eligibility, and therefore should not have been included in the report. The progress of these particular children can be visually tracked with their Individual Child Profile, which is located in their file. The program also utilized the expansion of the Forerunner created by Teaching Strategies for The Creative Curriculum. The Individual Child Profile now has three steps within the Forerunner to more accurately assess a child in this category.

Areas of Strength for the Program:

Particular areas of strength include:

1. Social / Emotional Development, with 27 of 44 children at Step 3
2. Physical Development, with 33 of 44 children at Step 3
3. Creative Arts, with 25 of 44 children at Step 3
4. Developing increasing abilities to understand and use language to communicate information, with 30 of 44 children at Step 3
5. Using an increasingly complex and varied vocabulary, with 32 of 44 children at Step 3.

There was also a large improvement for children in the mandated outcome of ‘associating sounds with written words,’ with Step 1 decreasing from 13 to 4 children, and Step 3 increasing from 3 to 16 children.

Areas to Focus on for the Program:

Although there has been great progress in the Cognitive Development Area of Literacy Development, outcomes in this area are lower than the Spring Outcomes from 2007-2008 for children transitioning to Kindergarten. For Literacy Development, 30 children were performing at Step 3 last Spring, whereas only 19 children are performing at Step 3 this year. This decrease could be attributed to better analysis of children's development using the more specific steps for the Forerunner level on the Individual Child Profile.

Action Plan for the Program:

Teachers will be encouraged to look for materials to be purchased with their monthly education budget to help support these areas of focus as well as to attend trainings in these areas. These areas will be considered high priority when scheduling Education Services Meetings and In-Service Trainings.

TRANSITION PLAN

Transition is an important part of the Head Start program. Transitioning families and children to and from the program is an ongoing process with specific events and activities planned throughout the year to help families feel comfortable. Transition plans may be as simple as making two or three visits to the next setting or as complex as any individual child may need. It is important to be guided by the needs and comfort level of the child.

Transition Goals:

The transition process shall consider the following goals:

- Continuity of services and care
- Minimal disruption of the family system
- Enhanced child development from one environment to the next
- Planning, preparation, implementation and evaluation within and between programs and with the family

Tips for transition:

- Prepare children for new experiences by talking about it before it happens.
- Read books about making changes.
- Involving parents in the transition process.

TRANSITION ACTIVITIES / EVENTS**Ongoing activities:**

- Enrollment: All children who are three years old by September 1, and meet other necessary Head Start guidelines are enrolled in the program throughout the year.
- Transition Books: Each classroom has books available about public school in the area, discussing what kindergarten will be like in the fall.
- Reading Books: About growing older, Kindergarten experiences, and the feelings around transition from one place to another.
- Daily Discussion: Teachers encourage children to talk about going to the "Big School", becoming familiar with what the experience will be like, and with whom they will be spending their day.
- School Visits: Teachers will make arrangements with area elementary schools for children to visit.
- Visitors: Throughout the year visitors from the elementary school will visit the classroom to meet the children and spend time with them. These include the principal, Kindergarten teacher, school nurse, librarian, etc.

August:

- Enrollment of children into the program
- Teaching Team send letter to Kindergarten students.
- New families interested in the program are encouraged to come and visit the classroom.

September:

- Transition Plan is discussed with families at the first home visit for Head Start Families and the First Parent / Teacher Conference for Community Children.
- Courtesy call made by Head Start teachers to Kindergarten teachers to ask about how former Head Start children are doing. (If new teacher, former teacher can make the call and introduce new teacher.)
- Open House / Community Event held at each center inviting all school personnel, former and present Head Start families and children, and community volunteers.

October:

- Parent Meeting: Parents can invite former Head Start parents to their meeting to discuss their experience with the transition process, possibly becoming, "Parent Mentors."

November:

- Invite the school nurse to come and visit the classroom(s) and possibly read a story.
- Invite Kindergarten teachers to visit the classroom

January:

- Contact local PTA groups and invite them to come to a Head Start Parent Meeting, so that transitioning parents can get to know how they can be involved in public school PTA
- Invite school principal to visit the classroom

February:

- Invite Kindergarten teachers to share a meal at Head Start
- Registration for Kindergarten will be announced for all towns

March:

- Head Start teachers will contact Kindergarten teachers about scheduling times to visit the classroom, and discuss dates for the Head Start – Kindergarten Connection Meeting
- List of each child eligible for Kindergarten will be sent to the corresponding Kindergarten teacher.
- Provide interaction between children that are attending the same public school, but are not in the same classroom

April:

- Head Start children will start making visits to the Kindergarten classrooms and tour the school.
- Plans for the Head Start – Kindergarten Connection Meeting will be finalized.
- Teaching Teams will complete the Teacher Observation Form for Transition on children moving on to Kindergarten and send to the corresponding schools.
- Transition meetings will be scheduled for children with IEPs.
- Schedule a visit from the school bus driver for children to explore a school bus.

May:

- Head Start children will finish making visits to Kindergarten classrooms and a tour of the school.
- Head Start – Kindergarten Connection Meeting will be held at each center.
- Food Service Providers will work with teaching teams to provide "cafeteria style" meals to children for the last two weeks of school.
- Teaching Teams will provide activities to families to do at home over the summer.