



Head Start Annual Report 2024-2025



The Guidance Center's Head Start program provides comprehensive services to Early Head Start and Preschool children and their families in 21 communities in the Downriver area and Southwestern Wayne County.

Enrollment Information

125 children transitioned to kindergarten at the end of the school year.

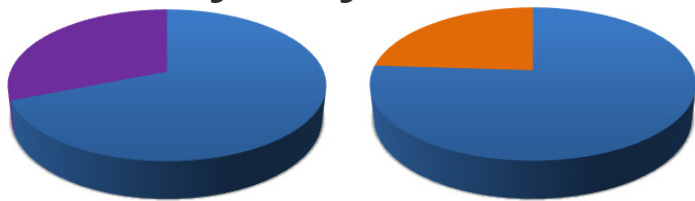
18 children transitioned from Early Head Start to Head Start.

3 pregnant mothers transitioned their babies into Early Head Start after their birth

During 2024/25 **90** total staff were employed in Early Head Start/Head Start program, with more than **27%** being former or current Early Head Start/Head Start parents.



Average Daily Attendance



Early Head Start: **69%** Head Start: **76%**

Early Head Start/Head Start monthly enrollment:

85%

During 2024-25, Early Head Start enrolled 15 children with an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) and Head Start enrolled 37 children with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP). Most were children deemed eligible for special education services under speech and language impairment (SPLI), early childhood developmental delay (ECDD) and Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD).



Percentage of Eligible Children Served

100%

Head Start

100%

Early Head Start

The Guidance Center served

12 pregnant mothers
118 Early Head Start children
411 Head Start children

throughout the program year, both income eligible and over income, with no more than 10% of the children being over income.

During 2024/25, services were provided at **5** sites in our community:

Belleville-Owen
Lincoln Park
River Rouge
Romulus
Taylor-New Hope



Celebrating 60 years of Head Start

The Guidance Center’s Early Learning Programs hosted a joyful **Game Night Celebration** in honor of the 60th anniversary of the Head Start Program, bringing together families, staff, and community partners for an evening of fun and connection. More than 75 families from across all five of our sites joined in the festivities, enjoying a variety of interactive games and activities led by over 25 local vendors. Guests were treated to a free, delicious catered dinner, creating a warm and welcoming environment that encouraged family engagement and community spirit.

The celebration also featured raffle prizes donated by more than 20 community partners. The event culminated in a heartfelt moment as everyone gathered to sing “Happy Birthday” to Head Start, honoring six decades of commitment to early childhood education and family support. The evening truly reflected the mission of Head Start—building strong foundations for children and families through learning, collaboration, and celebration.

Celebrating our amazing teachers

To show our appreciation for our teachers in May, TGC volunteers, directors, and specialists stepped in during naptime so teachers could relax and enjoy a fun, hands-on cooking experience with Zee the Cook. The lively demonstration was filled with laughter, teamwork, and delicious creations—just one small way to say thank you for all the love, care, and dedication our teachers bring to every classroom each day.

“From Bump to Backpack” event supports families from pregnancy to kindergarten

The Guidance Center’s Early Learning Programs hosted “From Bump to Backpack,” a heartwarming and informative event designed to support families through every stage of early childhood — from pregnancy to the first day of kindergarten. The fair brought together expectant parents and families with young children for a day filled with learning, fun, and community connection. One room featured custom onesie painting and educational presentations focused on pregnancy and infant care, while another offered an engaging kindergarten readiness workshop to help families prepare their little ones for school success.

The event also showcased over 30 community resource vendors, providing families with valuable information, services, and support to help them thrive. “From Bump to Backpack” beautifully combined the joy of a community baby shower with the purpose of a kindergarten transition fair — celebrating growth, learning, and the journey of parenthood.

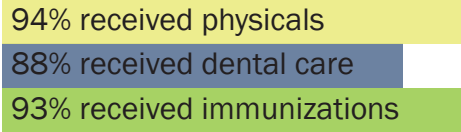


Health Information

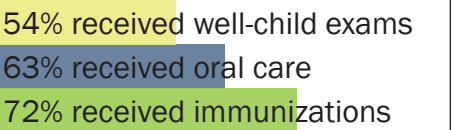
In the summer of 2025 The Guidance Center’s Early Learning Programs hosted four Health Fairs, serving over 118 families across our sites, which included essential dental, hearing, and vision screenings before the start of the school year. Each fair also featured several community resource vendors offering families valuable information, support, and connections to local programs that promote health and wellness. By combining screenings with community engagement, these fairs not only helped families meet important school readiness requirements but also strengthened our commitment to the whole-child approach — supporting every child’s health, growth, and success.

During the 2024-25 program year, we centered our focus on helping families establish a connection with medical and dental homes. We continued to work with community organizations such as Western Wayne Family Health Centers, Wayne County Health Department Lead Testing and Hearing and Vision Units, Coventry Community Care and WIC (Women, Infants and Children) to provide additional support for our children and families.

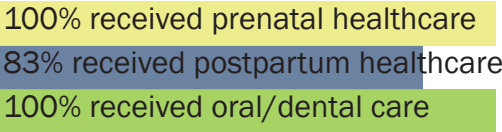
Head Start Students: 411



Early Head Start Students: 118



Pregnant Mothers: 12





Head Start Medical Homes: **390 (95%)**



Head Start Medical Insurance: **390 (95%)**



Head Start Dental Home: **363 (88%)**



EHS Medical Homes: **103 (87%)**



EHS Medical Insurance: **103 (87%)**



EHS Dental Home: **79 (67%)**



Obstetrical Homes: **12 (100%)**



Pregnant Mom Medical Insurance: **12 (100%)**

Community leaders inspire young readers during March is Reading Month

March was a vibrant celebration of literacy for The Guidance Center's Early Learning Programs, as we welcomed an incredible lineup of elected officials, first responders, and community partners to join us in honoring Reading Month. Special guests included Mayor of Taylor Tim Wooley, State Representative Tyrone Carter (Michigan's 1st House District), and U.S. Representative Debbie Dingell (Michigan's 6th Congressional District, pictured below), among many others who generously shared their time and love of reading with our Head Start children.

In addition to our government leaders, we were thrilled to host guests from local libraries, chambers of commerce, school boards, and more, each bringing their unique stories and enthusiasm for early literacy. Their presence across all five of our sites inspired our young learners and families, reinforcing the power of reading and community connection. This year's Reading Month truly highlighted how collaboration and shared commitment can spark a lifelong love of learning in every child.



From parent to professional: welcoming our new Parent Involvement Specialist!

We are thrilled to welcome our new Parent Involvement Specialist **Leslie Windless**—a familiar face whose journey truly embodies the mission and heart of The Guidance Center's Early Learning Programs. Once a dedicated parent with all four of her children enrolled in our program, she has grown from an engaged family participant to a passionate advocate and now a valued member of our professional team.



Her story is one of perseverance, empowerment, and transformation — rising from poverty to a leadership role that will inspire and uplift other families following in her footsteps. We couldn't be prouder to have her continue her journey with us, now helping other parents find their voice, their confidence, and their path to success. Her story reminds us that with support, education, and opportunity, families can thrive and dreams can become reality.

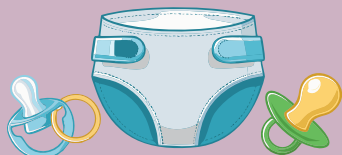
Celebrating our program's first certified doula

We are proud to celebrate **Amanda LaFond**, the first staff member in The Guidance Center's Early Learning Education Program to become a certified doula! Amanda has long been a compassionate advocate for expectant mothers enrolled in our Early Head Start program, offering guidance, comfort, and care through every stage of pregnancy and early parenthood.

Amanda's dedication truly shone during her first birth experience as a doula. When one of our expectant mothers unexpectedly required an emergency C-section at 32 weeks with twins, Amanda rushed to the hospital to be by her side—becoming her only support person during the delivery. Both mom and babies are doing wonderfully. We're incredibly proud of Amanda for her commitment, compassion, and leadership in bringing the spirit of Head Start to life: empowering families and nurturing new beginnings every step of the way.



TGC teams raise more than \$6,600 in diaper drive



In Spring 2025 The Guidance Center held a Diaper Drive Competition! This event united four dedicated teams across our agency in a friendly competition with a powerful purpose — to support our Early Head Start families with essential baby supplies. Together our teams raised over \$6,600 worth of diapers, wipes, and other baby necessities, helping us meet crucial in-kind match requirements while making a meaningful difference for our youngest learners and their families.



Nutrition Information

Our program works hard to serve meals that are diverse, nutritious, and colorful — because we know children learn best when their bodies are well-nourished. This year, we strengthened our commitment to healthy eating by incorporating Reggie Rainbow into our curriculum. Through this fun and engaging nutrition education program, children learn about the importance of eating a variety of colorful fruits and vegetables to stay strong and healthy.

In addition to hands-on learning, we proudly served:



42,188
Breakfasts

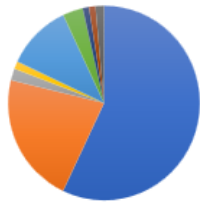


41,572
Lunches

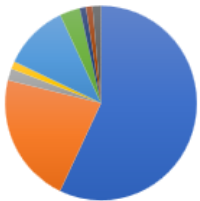


34,305
Snacks

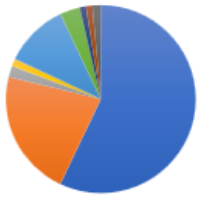
Head Start Financial Information



- Salaries / Contractual - \$5128118
- Fringe Benefits - \$1955052
- Supplies - \$175525
- Equipment - \$115165
- Occupancy - \$985831
- Food - \$306966.92
- Other Expenses - \$96480
- Training - \$97033
- Insurance / Legal / Audit - \$129118



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Head Start/Early Head Start Budget PY 24-25

Total Head Start / Early Head Start Budget: \$8,989,289

Head Start Program (Federal Funds) - \$8,495,820
Head Start Supplemental (One-Time Federal Funds)* - \$186,502
USDA Child Food Program - CACFP (Federal Funds) - \$306,967

Total Head Start / Early Head Start Funding:
\$8,989,289

**Please note that no additional public or private funds were received.*

Head Start/Early Head Start Expenditures PY 24-25

Total Head Start / Early Head Start Expenditures: \$8,989,289

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Head Start Supplemental (One-Time Federal Funds)* - \$186,502
USDA Child Food Program - CACFP (Federal Funds) - \$306,967

Total Head Start / Early Head Start Funding: \$8,989,289

Head Start/Early Head Start Proposed Budget PY 25-26

Total Head Start / Early Head Start Budget: \$8,871,366

Head Start Program (Federal Funds) - \$8,495,820
Public / Private Funds** - \$-
USDA Child Food Program - CACFP (Federal Funds) - \$375,546

Total Head Start / Early Head Start Funding:
\$8,871,366

***Please note that no additional public or private funds were received*

Per TGC Financial Audit FY 22-23 (Most recent Audit Report)

Received an Unqualified Opinion for FY ending 9/30/24

Total Assets @ 9/30/24 - \$33,912,437 | Total Liabilities @ 9/30/24 - \$ 8,858,238 | Net Assets @ 9/30/24 - \$25,054,199

The Guidance Center audit of fiscal year 24/25 was completed on January 16, 2025 and was good with an unmodified opinion.

Funded by the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services.