



TABLE OF CONTENTS

02 Our Leadership

03 A Message from our CEO

04 Our Mission

05 Who We Serve

06 Family Engagement

07 Kindergarten Readiness

08 Health and Wellness

10 Financials and Budget

12 Looking Ahead

13 Community Partners



Our Leadership



Board of Directors

Chair - Brian Saxton

Vice Chair - Arthur Havlicek

Secretary - Linda Tinsley

Mark O'Reilly

Ashley Hines

Danielle Persky

Kaccee Dochenetz



Policy Council

Bangor - Efrain Chavez

Benton Harbor (DEC) - Serina Newton

Cassopolis - Ashley Jaffee-Montgomery

Decatur - Starr Smith

Dowagiac - Heather Weber

Dowgaic (SMC) - Samantha Litaker

Gobles - Yvette Mason

Mattawan - Michelle Hedgepsth (Chair)

New Buffalo - Amanda Simpson (Treasurer)

Niles - Mary-alice Wirick

Paw Paw - Jessica Heistand

River of Life - Lovie Lloyd

South Haven - Ebone Wilborn

Spinks - Danielle Long

Watervliet - Samatha Carter

Sherry Bennett - Community Member

Mellody Buzalski - Community Member

Kristen Chism - Community Member





A Message From Our CEO

I am thrilled to present the 2024 Annual Report for Tri-County Council for Child Development, Inc. As I reflect on the past year, I am overwhelmed with pride and gratitude for our dedicated staff, supportive partners, and the resilient families we serve. Since our inception in 1972, we have been steadfast in our commitment to fostering early childhood development across Berrien, Cass, and Van Buren counties. Our Head Start program, operating in 23 locations with 41 classrooms, continues to be a beacon of support for families from the prenatal stage through age five, making a tangible difference in our community.

This year has been a turning point for us as we embark on several exciting upcoming changes, including new facilities, a new mission, and even a new name to be unveiled soon. We believe these changes will revolutionize our ability to serve our community, and we eagerly look forward to the positive impact they will bring.

Additionally, we have worked to increase wages for our staff, recognizing their daily hard work and dedication to our organization. Our partnerships with local community organizations have been instrumental in expanding services to families, including providing food for the families we serve and ensuring that basic needs are met so children can focus on learning and growing.

On behalf of Tri-County Council for Child Development, Inc., I would like to thank you for your unwavering support and belief in our mission. Together, we are making a profound difference in the lives of children and families in our community.

Sincerely,
Chanda Hillman
CEO, Tri-County Head Start

Our Mission

To be a vibrant and progressive educational agency supporting the development of children 0-5 years of age while promoting healthy family functioning for Head Start children and families in Berrien, Cass, and Van Buren Counties

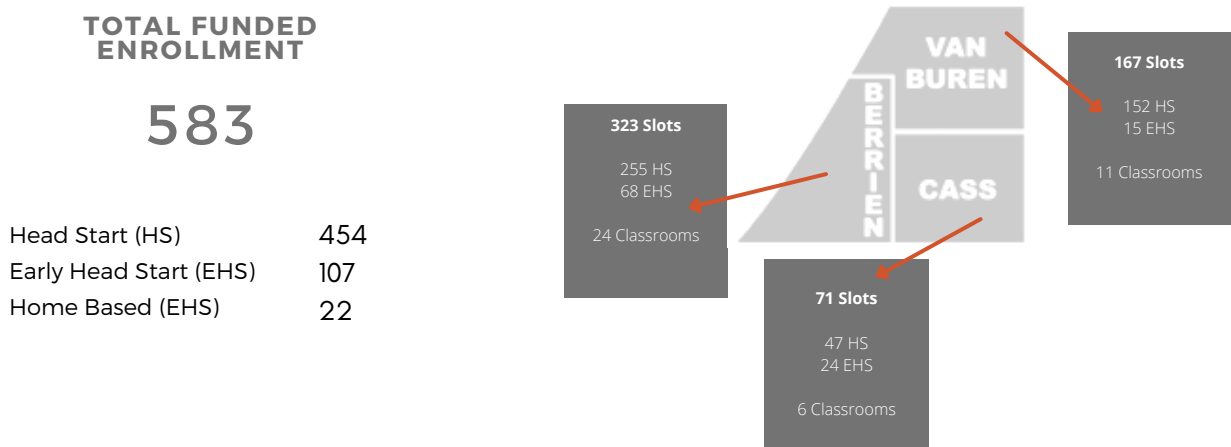
Since our inception in 1972, Tri-County Head Start (TCHS) has served over 40,000 children and families in Berrien, Cass, and Van Buren counties.

TCHS, supports children, families, and communities on their path to success. Using a comprehensive approach focusing on the whole child and their family by partnering with families to allow students to develop academically, socially, intellectually, and emotionally.

TCHS is committed to high-quality services and applying a learning mindset to everything we do.



Who We Serve



Who We Serve

Cumulative Enrollment
596

Total Number of Families
517



Average Monthly Enrollment - 83%



Families Served for more than 1 year - 41%



Average Daily Attendance - 81%

TYPES OF ELIGIBILITY

26%

100% POVERTY

15%

MCKINNEY VENTO

46%

PUBLIC ASSISTANCE

3%

FOSTER

5%

OVER-INCOME (101-130%)

5%

OVER-INCOME (OVER 130%)



RACE & ETHNICITY

Black 26%
White 46%
Multi-Racial 19%
American Indian/Alaska Native 2%
Hispanic/Latino 20%



FAMILY EDUCATION

Advanced Degree or Bachelors Degree 4%
An Associates Degree, Vocational School, or some College 25%
High School or GED 56%
Less than High School 15%



PRIMARY LANGUAGE

English 91%
Spanish 8%
Other 1%



Family Status

Single parent families 51%
Two-parent families 49%



Family Status

Caregiver employed 76%
Caregiver enrolled in job skills training or post-secondary education 9%

Family Engagement

At Tri-County Head Start we serve the whole family by supporting, engaging, and educating families. A Family Advocate is assigned to each family to build personal relationships, support them in meeting their needs, and help them identify and achieve goals.

Family Relationships



51% of all families completed the Family Strengths Assessment (FSA). The FSA is a strengths assessment that helps determine a family's strengths and needs.



Of the families that completed an FSA, 86% of them completed a Family Partnership Agreement (FPA). The FPA is an individualized goal-setting process to help support families.



Of the families that completed an FPA, 20% of them were able to accomplish their goal in the 2023-2024 program year.

Family Activities

Policy Council

Parent Committee Meetings

Conscious Discipline Parenting Classes

Conscious Discipline Book Club

Fantastic Fathers & Families

The Whole Child Family Expo

Location Review Committee

Great Michigan Read Book Club



Transportation

| | |
|---|--------|
| Total Number of Miles Driven | 67,030 |
| Average Number of Students Riding the Bus Per Day | 107 |

Kindergarten Readiness

Each year our preschool teachers observe and interview a kindergarten teacher in their community. This helps our teachers understand the expectations and share those with our families and also provides our teachers with the opportunity to share what they do to prepare students and families for the transition to kindergarten.

Kindergarten teachers often say that students need self-help skills to be able to write and recognize their names, count from 1 to 20, and identify some letters. Although our student assessment system does not directly measure these skills, several of the measured indicators closely match, and all are practices embedded in our daily routines.

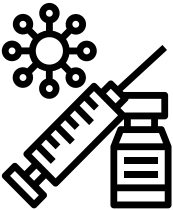
The data below shows the percentage of preschool students who are at or above their age-level expectations for the most closely matched skills/indicators.



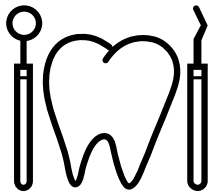
| Child Observation Record | Students at or above age level |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| Personal Care, Healthy Behaviors, Knowledge About Self | 70 |
| Numbers and Counting | 59 |
| Alphabetic Knowledge | 45 |
| Writing | 53 |

Health and Wellness

Tri-County Head Start helps children and families learn and maintain a healthy lifestyle by supporting healthy families and ensuring children are up-to-date on all immunizations, medical exams, dental exams, and dental treatments. TCHS has a registered dietitian nutritionist who designs our menus and teaches both children and families about nutrition and creating healthy habits. Our Health Services team helps families track upcoming appointments and due dates for immunizations and exams, and our Family Advocates connect families with health providers in our area.



99% up to date
on
immunizations



80% with at
least 1 dental
exam



98% Of Well
Childs Up-to-
date



89% Up-to-date
on Dental
Treatment



128,204 Meals Served

15.8% of children served with an IEP or IFSP

Conscious Discipline

Tri-County Head Start has been invested in supporting Social-Emotional Education for over a decade. In the upcoming school year, TCHS is recommitting to Conscious Discipline.

Conscious Discipline is not something we do; it is something we believe in. It is brain-based, social-emotional learning that builds resilience in students, educators, families, and the community. Conscious Discipline emphasizes bully-proofing interactions in our schools, families, and communities. It supports children's development of accountability and responsibility and helps develop emotionally healthy humans.

“Discipline isn’t something you do to children; it is something you develop within them” - Dr. Becky A. Bailey



Conscious Discipline has proven to be transformative, brain-based, and practical. In a major study conducted in 2013, scores from twelve scales were used to compare conscious discipline with non-conscious discipline classrooms drawn from 66 teachers, 1,386 students, and 868 parents at 24 sites in three states over an 8-month period. Results were drawn from teachers, parents of children, and trained classroom observers.

Overall, compared to Non-Conscious Discipline classrooms, the Conscious Discipline classrooms significantly:

- Improved the quality of student/teacher interactions.
- Improved the social and emotional behavior of students.
- Improved the social-emotional behavior of teachers.
- Improved classroom and school climate
- Increased student academic readiness

Budget and Expenses

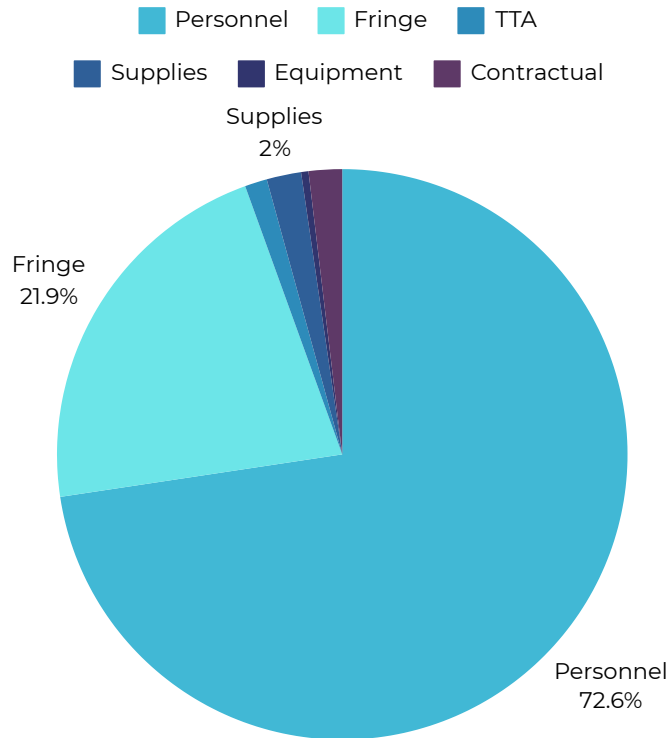
February 1, 2023 - January 31, 2024

\$14,645,455.25

| | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------|
| Operating Funds | \$12,661,647 |
| Head Start | \$8,630,071 |
| Early Head Start | \$3,654,231 |
| Training and Technical Assistance | \$161,845 |
| Head Start | \$67,849 |
| Early Head Start | \$93,996 |
| InKind | \$1,147,251 |
| Head Start | \$676,215 |
| Early Head Start | \$471,036 |
| CACFP | \$309,346 |
| GSRP | \$208,808 |
| MISC | \$156,558.25 |
| Foundation | \$125,000 |
| Trusted Advisor | \$24,848 |
| Various Sources | \$6,710.25 |

| Category | Budget | Expenditure |
|------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Personnel | \$8,083,517.00 | \$6,888,004.00 |
| Fringe Benefits | \$2,183,155.00 | \$2,336,244.00 |
| Supplies | \$242,381.00 | \$262,017.00 |
| Contractual Agreements | \$178,015.00 | \$221,680.00 |
| Other | \$1,627,551.00 | \$1,289,515.00 |
| Equipment | \$347,028.00 | \$18,190.00 |
| T/TA | \$161,845.00 | \$166,876.00 |
| Total | \$12,823,492.00 | \$11,182,526.00 |

2024/2025 Budget



Tri-County Head Start is funded through a Department of Health and Human Services Head Start award. The Federal grant period and fiscal year for TCHS is February 1 through January 31. TCHS operates both a Head Start and Early Head Start program, in addition to blended classrooms with the Great Start Readiness Program (GSRP), the state funded preschool program.

Monitoring Results

An annual audit for fiscal year 2022 was conducted by Kruggel Lawton, CPA, and independent auditor, with no findings.

As part of our Federal Grant Award, three monitoring reviews are conducted, results of the most recent reviews are as follows:

- Focus Area 1 Monitoring Review: January 2021 - No Findings
- Focus Area 2 Monitoring Review: December 2022 – Area of Noncompliance: Background Checks (Head Start Act 648A(g)(3)) Area of Concern: Teachers with waivers and on compliance plans (HSPPS 1302.91(e)(1) and 1302.91(e)(2)(ii) (Both findings have been corrected)
- CLASS Review: March-May 2023 Video Pilot

| Domain | Score | Quality Threshold | Competitive Threshold |
|-----------------------|--------|-------------------|-----------------------|
| Classroom Support | 6.1250 | 6 | 5 |
| Emotional Support | 5.5333 | 6 | 5 |
| Instructional Support | 2.9750 | 3 | 2.3 |

Looking Ahead

Looking ahead to the coming year, we anticipate several exciting developments that will shape the future of our organization:

- Finalizing new 5-year goals with a team comprising of staff, community members, and families, all guided by insights from our Community Needs and Self-Assessment. These goals will chart our course from 2025 to 2030, ensuring we remain responsive to the evolving needs of those we serve.
- The eagerly awaited Grand Opening of our Millburg Center promises to be a momentous occasion in our organizational journey. As our inaugural brick-and-mortar establishment boasts eight classrooms and eight acres, the center represents a significant milestone. Embracing the surrounding nature experience, it will offer immersive outdoor experiences, gardens, and even a chicken coop, enriching the educational experience for our students.
- Expanding our reach to accommodate more families through a sustainable tuition-based model supported by a blend of state, private, and public funding. With demand for childcare outstripping supply by a staggering 3,200 seats in our region, our efforts will help alleviate the strain on families.
- Unveiling a new organizational name that pays homage to our roots while embracing our expanded footprint. This new name will serve as a beacon of our growth and evolution.
- Reimagining our mission to encapsulate our aspirations and the invaluable services we provide to the tri-county area. By articulating our purpose with clarity and conviction, we aim to foster deeper connections with our community and drive meaningful change.
- As we embark on this transformative journey, guided by our shared vision and unwavering commitment to excellence, we look forward to making a lasting impact for the next 50 years.



Thank You To Our Community Partners

Berrien Community Foundation
Berrien County Health Department
Bill Nygren Foundation
Brandywine Schools
Cass County Council on Aging
Corewell Health of Southwest Michigan
Gates Chevrolet in South Bend
Great Start Collaborative Berrien
Great Start Collaborative Cass
Great Start Collaborative Van Buren
Helping Hands of Cass County
Jacquis from Transcendental Coaching
Jeremy Mutchler (RAW Strength Gym)
Kalamazoo Athletic Wellness
Lawn Boys Bangor
Lowes Benton Harbor
O'Reillys South Haven
Perrigo
Ryan Meyer from MI REALTY
Sisterhood Counseling
Slackers Family Fun Center
South Haven Community Foundation
Strikers Bowling Alley
Sunshine and Pebbles Yoga
The Frederick S. Upton Foundation
Van Buren Family Court
Van Buren ISD
Van Buren Library



775 Hazen Street, Paw Paw, Michigan 49079 269-657-2581
TCHS is a 501(c)3 funded through grants and community support
This report is also available at www.tricountyhs.org.
Approved by Board and Policy Council: 07.09.2024