



# Early Head Start & Head Start Annual Report

2021-2022

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# STARFISH FAMILY SERVICES

## Our Mission

Strengthening families to create brighter futures for children.

## Our Vision

A society in which all children, families, and communities have opportunities to grow, learn, and thrive.

## Who We Are

Founded in 1963, Starfish Family Services is a nonprofit human service agency, recognized as a champion for children and families across metro Detroit who have limited access to essential resources such as education, healthcare, and economic opportunities. We provide high-quality programs and support services that focus on early childhood education and development, behavioral health wellness, and empowered parents. Through our holistic approach, Starfish partners with families so they have access to the right resources at the right time.



# HOW DO WE CARRY OUT OUR MISSION?

## Blueprint For Brighter Futures

The Starfish Blueprint for Brighter Futures is an integrated strategy that articulates and defines a holistic approach for children and families to thrive. It will steer our course so that we are aligned as One Starfish to ensure three primary outcomes: Healthy Families, Successful Students, and Empowered Families.

### HEALTHY FAMILIES

Families are supported so their physical and mental health needs are holistically addressed.

### SUCCESSFUL STUDENTS

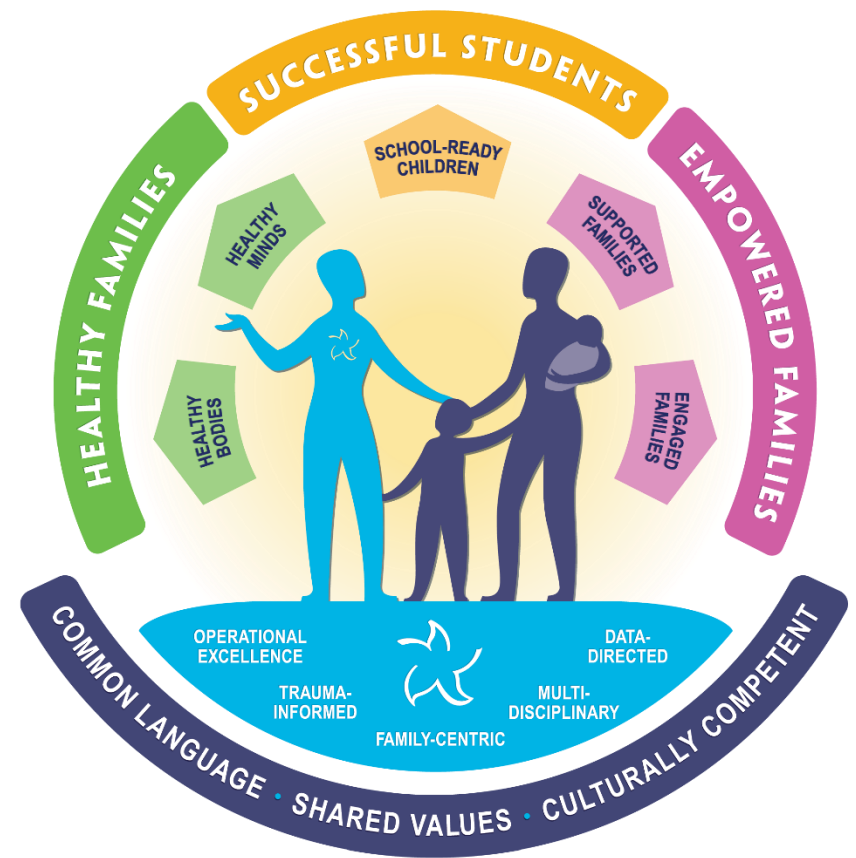
Academic and social success are achieved through high quality early childhood education and addressing behavioral health needs.

### EMPOWERED FAMILIES

Families actively partner with us to identify and achieve goals; parents and children always have a voice at Starfish.

## WHY DO WE NEED A BLUEPRINT?

With several centers across Wayne County in 2020-2021, our reach continues to grow. And as we grow, it's important for us to ensure that the way we collaborate is innovative, mindful, consistent, but creatively flexible, sustainable, and ultimately leads to even brighter futures for our children and families.



## LETTER FROM THE SENIOR DIRECTOR OF INFANT AND EARLY CHILDHOOD SERVICES

Dear Starfish Community,

I am beginning my 20<sup>th</sup> year at Starfish Family Services and my 2<sup>nd</sup> year leading our early childhood education programs. Looking back, starting something new at the tail-end of a pandemic, was a scary choice that I did not realize at the time and do not regret for one second. Being in the early childhood space is my passion and keeps me going. The 300+ early childhood professionals I work with daily are some of the most kind, creative, fun, and passionate people that I will ever meet. I'm wondering how many people collectively experienced the same type of choices that had to be made at the end of the pandemic: Should I continue to do what I'm doing? Should I do something new and outside of my comfort zone? Should I keep my children home with me or take them to school where I might not have control over the unknown. Do we choose safety and comfort in our own spaces, or do we step outside, trust the people around us, learn, and grow? We all had very serious choices to make in late 2021 and early 2022.



The data that you are about to view for the 21-22 school year was a strange year to say the least, where we were partially in and partially out of the covid 19 pandemic. It was a time of uncertainty, ongoing fear, new experiences and learnings, and in turn, new opportunities. It was a year of continuing stressors and struggles brought on by the pandemic with closing and opening of classrooms, job insecurity for many people in metro-Detroit, real and perceived fears, continued loss, and uncertainty for each day ahead. We all had to be brave and resilient in our work, home and communities. In reviewing the data in our annual report from the 2021-2022 school year, you will see that it is in alignment with national stories about how the covid pandemic has impacted children, families, and our education system. We continued to have days where we had to close classrooms or buildings, some from covid, other days due to the workforce crisis that the pandemic brought us.

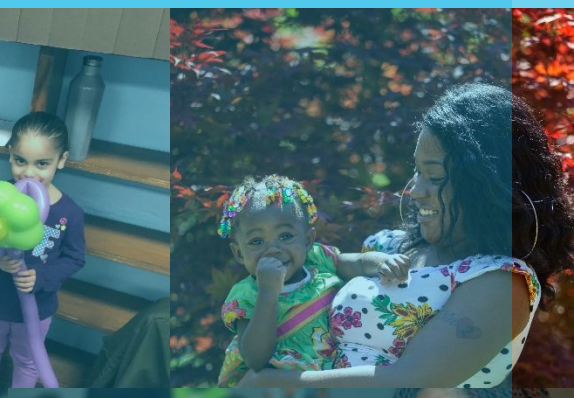
You will see that Children's access to primary care and dental services continued to be impacted by the pandemic. Many of us were fearful to participate in routine medical care out of the fear of contracting covid. Kindergarten readiness for our preschoolers continued to be lower than pre-pandemic years because we lost several years of typical development and consistent learning opportunities. Many families and professionals working with young children and families were simply focused on making sure we all felt safe, secure, and protected, both literally and figuratively. Physical and emotional safety were our top priorities coming out of the pandemic. You will see in our annual report, that at times, we struggled to juggle adult stressors and responses to the pandemic while at the same time managing the feelings and responses from the children in our care. This was evident in our unusual number of behavioral incidents, as well as our non-compliances, which highlighted the need for more intensive, and different types of training to manage adult stress as well as the stress of the children in our care. As early childhood experts, we know that children born during the pandemic missed a lot of important developmental and social milestones. We need to be present, patient and flexible in order to help children catch up developmentally and socially.

I want to highlight the strength of parents and caregivers who responded to the immediate needs of their families; over 1,100 Starfish parents and caregivers advocated with employees for basic needs and crisis assistance during the pandemic. Many of our families were also able to keep up with primary care and immunization appointments. While we hope that all families are able to access these services regularly, We continue to see disparities in access to care and services between families in Detroit vs. outer Wayne County cities. The pandemic made these disparities very clear.

At the end of the 21-22 school year, we committed to getting back to the basics of early learning, building relationships, and realigning our programming to better support our children, families and employees. We integrated our infant and early childhood behavioral health teams into our early education department, knowing that this is what was needed after years of isolation, fear and collective trauma. Our focus and approach during the summer of 2022 was to strengthen in-classroom support to families, children, and our employees in order to make space for learning. We continued to learn well into the last school year how to adapt, respond and be flexible to ongoing needs of children, families, and employees in this post-pandemic world. We thank our families for trusting their children to our care and we hope to see full enrollment with busy classrooms and hallways full of families going into the new year. The Surgeon General has recently put a report out about the new crisis of loneliness and its impact on physical and mental health post pandemic. Our doors are open, we are here in partnership and support. We hope to see every family enrolled at Starfish in one of our hallways or at one of our family events sometime soon. We encourage you to rebuild relationships and connections and partner with us to strengthen our programs and services again. See you soon!

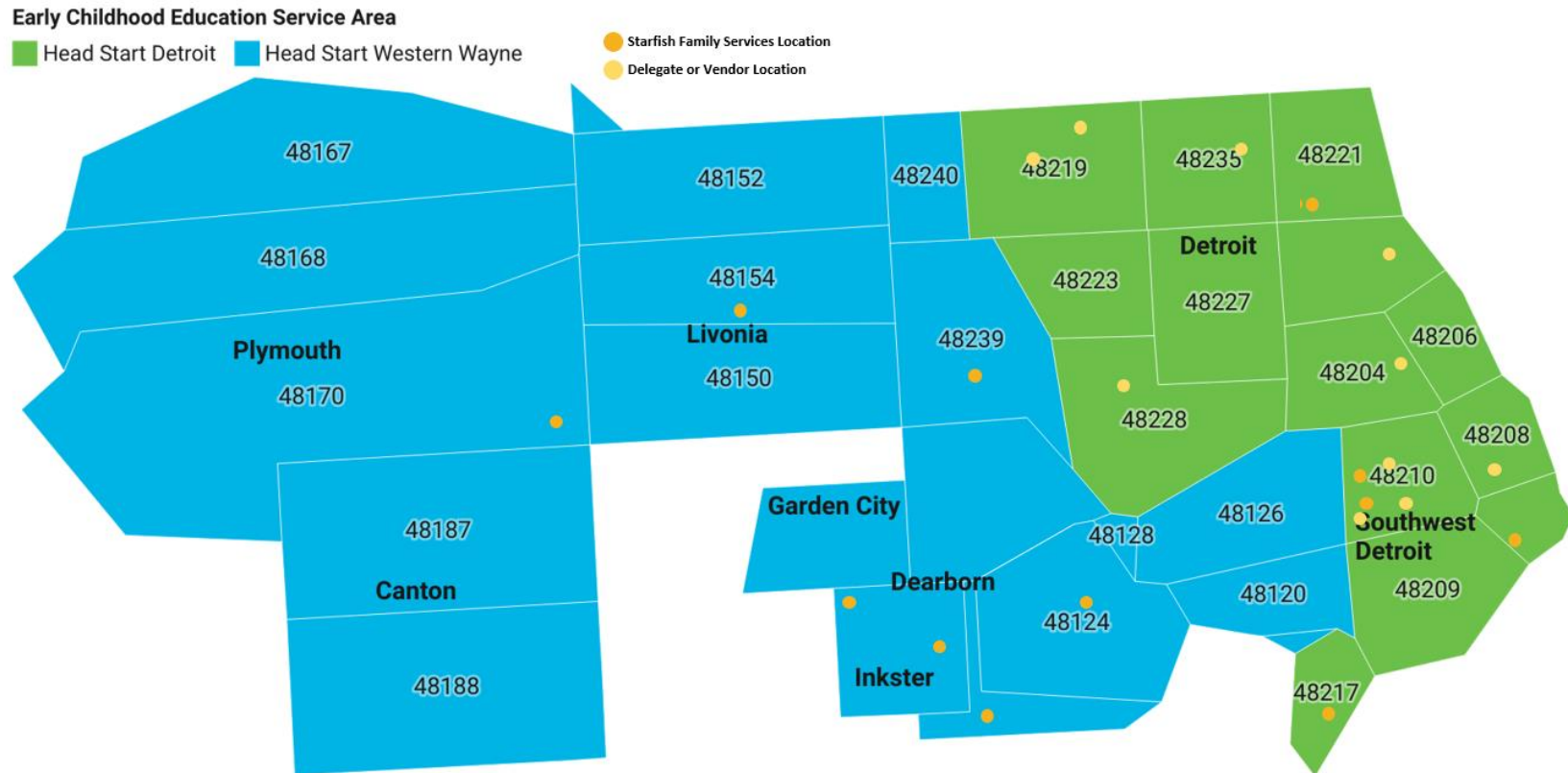
Jennifer Jonika, MS, LLP, IMH-E® (IMHM-P)  
Executive Director of Early Childhood Services





WHO DO WE SERVE?

# Program Locations



Created with Datawrapper

Starfish Family Services, along with Subrecipients Development Centers and Focus HOPE, provided Head Start & Early Head Start services in the city of Detroit through Detroit Birth to Five grant 05CH010519. The Detroit service area is shaded **green**.

Through Western Wayne Birth to Five grant 05CH011335, Starfish Family Services provided direct services for children and families living in the Western Wayne County area. The Western Wayne service area is shaded **blue**.

## Eligibility Type & Income Level

In keeping with federal eligibility regulations and Head Start Performance Standards, the vast majority of the families served by Starfish Family Services and its subrecipient agencies are below the federal poverty line, which ensures that families have access to high-quality educational and social services regardless of their income.

Eligibility Type 2020-2021		
	Detroit	Western Wayne
	Birth to Five 05CH010519	Birth to Five 05CH011335
Below Income	800	362
Public Assistance	35	38
Allowable Over Income	77	11
Over Income	76	24
Homeless	18	19
Foster Children	3	16
Total	1,009	470

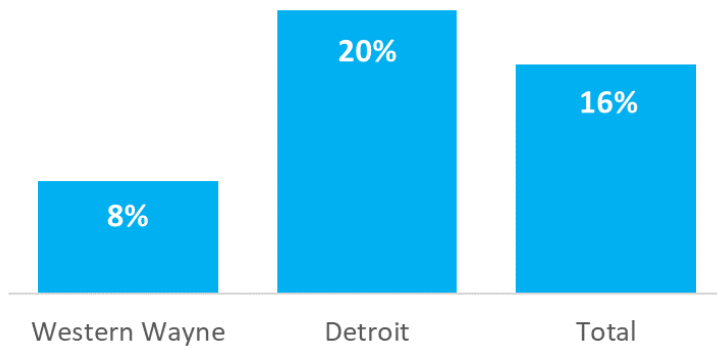


# Community Demographics

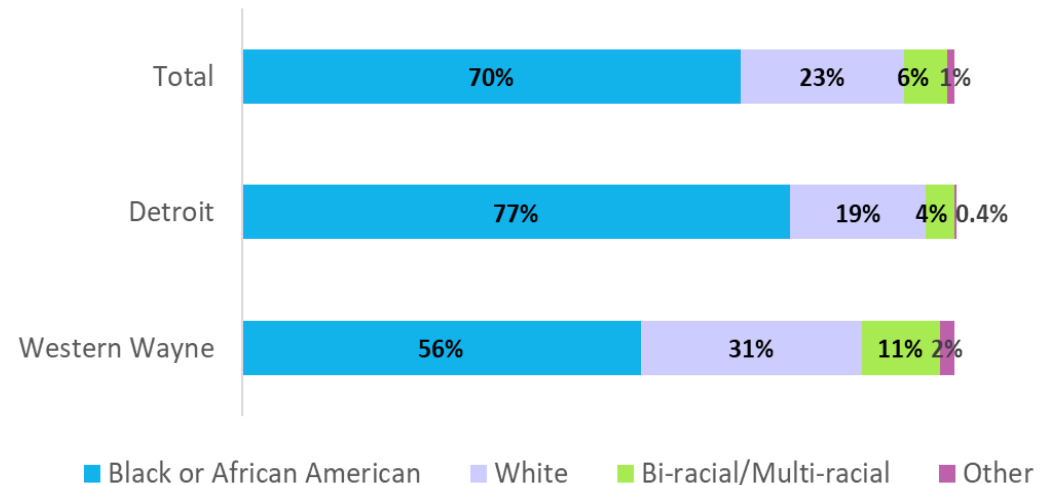
## ETHNICITY & RACE

The communities we serve are diverse in ethnicity, race, language among other identifiers. In total, 16% of our children are of a Hispanic or Latino/a/x ethnic background, varying greatly when comparing between Detroit (20%) and Western Wayne grants (8%). We find similar variation for the race of our children and families; overall we serve 70% Black or African American children compared to the 56% served by Western Wayne grants.

Across our entire platform, **16% of children served are Hispanic or Latinx**. Significantly more Hispanic families are served in Detroit.



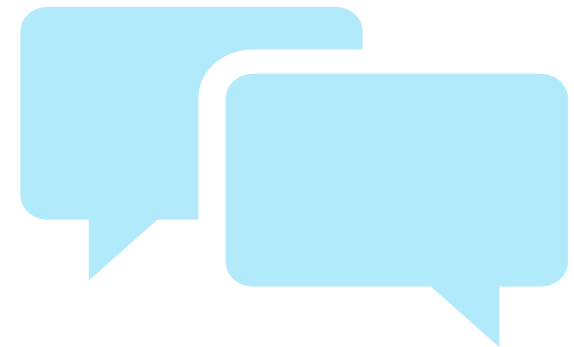
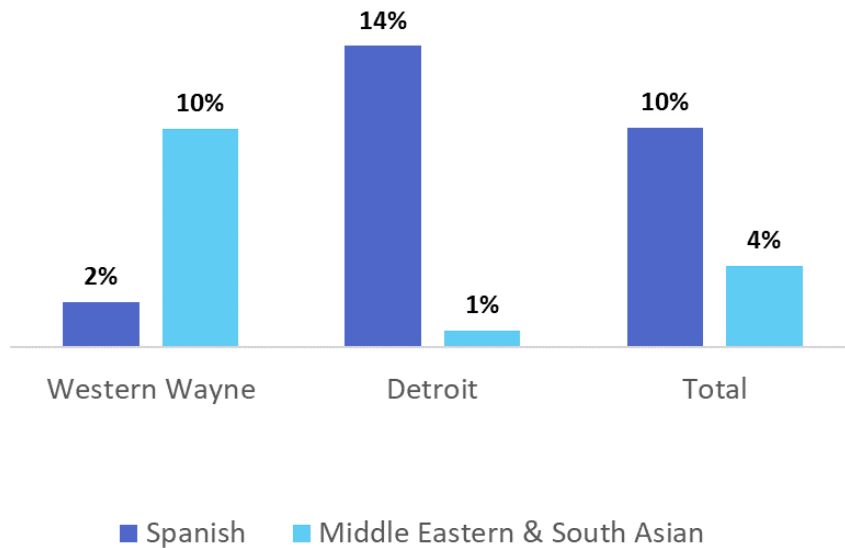
In total, 70% of the children and families served are **Black and African American**.



## LANGUAGE

Most of our children and families speak primarily English at home (84%), however, the remaining include those who speak Spanish as well as Middle Eastern or South Asian languages. Spanish-speakers tend to be concentrated in the Detroit service area and Middle Eastern and South Asian languages – primarily Arabic - in the Western Wayne Service Area.

In total, 16% of our families speak languages other than English, with Detroit serving **Spanish-speaking** families, and Western Wayne serving **Arabic-speaking** families.



During the 2021-2022 school year, 18% of the total children served were **Dual Language Learners**.

# Program Enrollment

## EARLY HEAD START

	Actual Enrollment	Percent Enrolled
September 2020	406	79%
October 2020	424	82%
November 2020	432	84%
December 2020	426	83%
January 2021	413	80%
February 2021	404	79%
March 2021	400	78%
April 2021	403	78%
May 2021	394	77%
June 2021	396	77%
July 2021	403	78%
August 2021	394	77%

## HEAD START

	Actual Enrollment	Percent Enrolled
September 2020	713	80%
October 2020	744	83%
November 2020	749	84%
December 2020	735	82%
January 2021	738	82%
February 2021	748	84%
March 2021	739	83%
April 2021	742	83%
May 2021	731	82%
June 2021	723	81%
July 2021	34	68%
August 2021	34	68%



HOW DID WE SUPPORT  
EMPOWERED FAMILIES?



## Family Engagement

During the 2020-2021 program year, **89% of our families received at least one family service**. The program provided **5,018 total family services**.

According to our Program Information Report (PIR):

- **889 families** received services for **emergency support** and intervention such as meeting immediate needs for food, clothing, or shelter
- **847 families** were involved in discussing their child's screening and assessment results.
- **444 families** were provided **parenting education**
- **304** received services associated with **health-related matters**

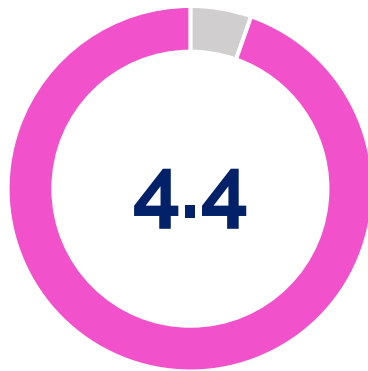
Across our Head Start and Early Head Start platform, 39 families experienced homelessness during the enrollment period. Of these families, **33% were able to acquire housing by the end of the program year**, exceeding the national average of 23%. Collectively, we served 35 children who were in foster care.

Family Services Provided		
	Detroit Birth to Five 05CH010519	Western Wayne Birth to Five 05CH011335
Emergency/Crisis Intervention	640	249
Housing Assistance	120	31
Asset Building	95	20
Mental Health Services	280	24
Substance Misuse Prevention	65	2
Substance Misuse Treatment	46	0
English as a Second Language	29	6
Adult Education/Job Training	271	20
Research-based Parenting Curriculum	356	88
Family Involvement in Screening & Assessment	541	306
Supporting Transitions	327	154
Education on Preventive Medical & Oral Health	413	82
Education on Health & Developmental Consequences of Tobacco Use	77	12
Education on Nutrition	346	139
Education on Postpartum Care	105	11
Marriage/Relationship Education	108	2
Assistance to Families of Incarcerated Individuals	50	3
Total Number of Families	<b>791</b>	<b>357</b>

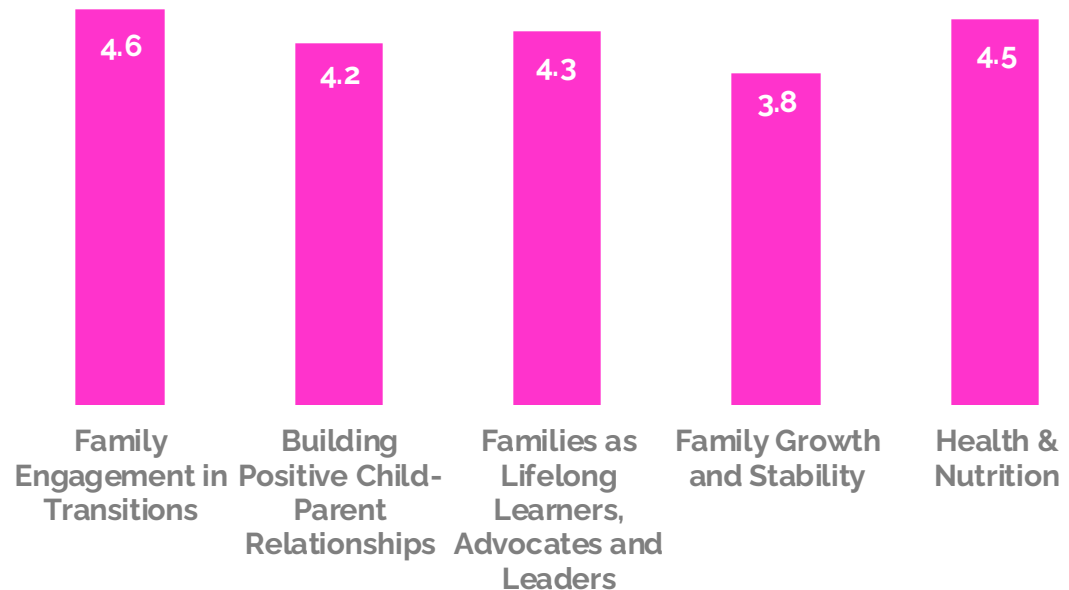
## Family Engagement

Starfish Family Services and its Subrecipient agencies foster an environment that supports family connections and active engagement. Family Service Workers and Family Service Guides developed supportive relationships with parents, provided families with critical resources in their communities, and assisted families and caregivers with establishing and achieving goals for themselves and their families.

Parent Gauge is a family engagement assessment tool provided through National Head Start Association (NHSA) designed specifically for Head Start and Early Head Start programs and in alignment with the Office of Head Start's Parent Family Community Engagement (PFCE) Framework. Family Service Workers, Family Service Guides and Home Visitors interview families to identify each family's strengths, needs and perception of our program. 1,980 interviews took place throughout the 2021-2022 program year.



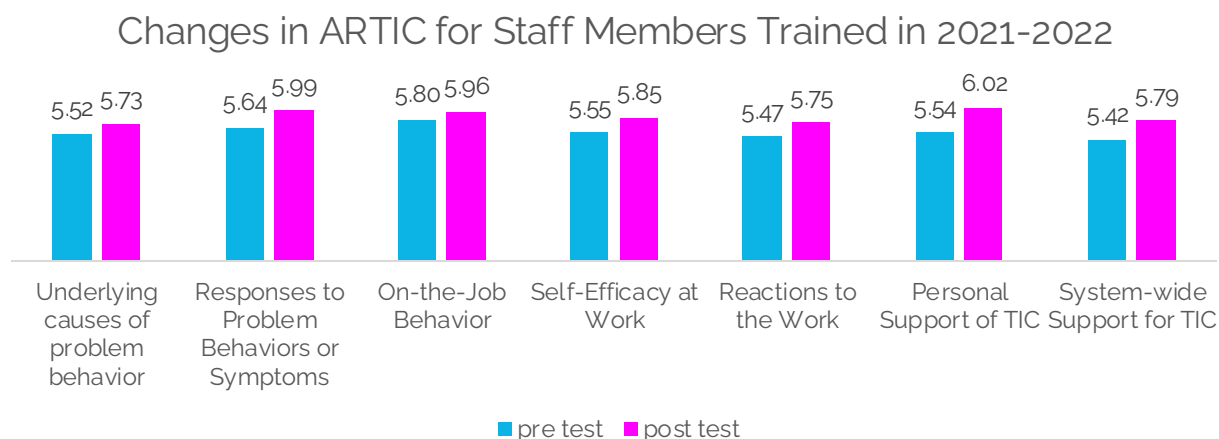
On an agreement scale of 1 to 5, families **highly agreed** that programming met their family's needs.



PCFE-Aligned Parent Gauge Domain

## Trauma Informed Approach

Starfish implements a robust trauma-informed program. All employees receive Trauma Smart® trauma awareness training. This research-based, intensive, 20-hour professional development series was designed to increase staff awareness of trauma, its effects on young children, and how to incorporate trauma-informed strategies in the classroom. Starfish used Attitudes Related to Trauma-Informed Care (ARTIC) to measure staff changes in knowledge, attitudes, and beliefs regarding trauma-informed care. Pre- and Post-ARTIC surveys were completed by employees who attended the Trauma Smart professional development series during the 2021-2022 school year. Gains were observed in every category. A summary of the ARTIC scores are outlined below for our entire ECE platform:



A common indicator of exposure to childhood trauma is known as the Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs). **Over 25% of children had been exposed to at least 1 ACE.** During the 2021-2022 school year, Preschool Behavioral Health Therapists provided intensive, trauma-informed support across Starfish's early childhood programming. The PBHTs were available to meet with parents, providing information, consultation, and referrals. Through this process, **127 children were referred for mental health services.**

In addition, Starfish provided trauma-awareness education to families participating in our Detroit and Western Wayne grants. The parent education component of Trauma Smart™, called Smart Connections, is designed to 1) increase caregiver awareness of the impact of trauma and the importance of connection, 2) provide practical trauma-informed strategies to utilize at home, and 3) empower parents to support children through tough times while building resilience. Parents and caregivers learn the same strategies that the teachers are using in the classroom through a two-part series that includes ten training modules. Because of the pandemic, the Smart Connection series was conducted virtually. During the 2021-2022 school year, **76 families received trauma awareness education** across our entire ECE platform. Parent evaluations indicated that 100% of families stated that they would "likely" or "very likely" practice what they learned at home.



HOW DID WE SUPPORT  
HEALTHY FAMILIES?



## Health Indicators

Our Early Childhood Education program understands that the health outcomes of our children and families directly impact a child's overall outcomes. Starfish and partner agencies consistently coordinate health, nutrition, and oral health services to meet the needs of pregnant participants and children birth to five. Family Service Workers (FSW) and Family Service Guides (FSG) collect and maintain important family health information to individualize resources and support to meet each family's needs.

FSWs/FSGs and Health Specialists partner with caregivers to ensure families understand the importance of achieving an up-to-date health status for their children including continuous care and timely follow-up.

Throughout all of programming, the majority of our Early Head Start and Head Start children and families had a Medical and Dental Home at end of year. The percentage of children with current immunizations ranged from 86.9% - 97.2%. Our families continued to encounter obstacles maintaining a schedule of Preventive and Primary Care due to the impact of the pandemic in our community.

**At the end of the 2020-2021 program year, the following number of participants were up-to-date on these health indicators:**

Head Start	Detroit Birth to Five	Western Wayne Birth to Five
Medical Home	556 (94.9%)	281 (87.8%)
Dental Home	543 (92.7%)	267 (83.4%)
Health Insurance	566 (96.6%)	282 (88.1%)
Immunizations	563 (96.1%)	311 (97.2%)
Schedule of Preventive & Primary Care	280 (47.8%)	148 (46.2%)
Dental Exams	410 (70%)	176 (55%)
Treatment for Chronic Conditions	15 (51.7%)	14 (58.3%)

Early Head Start	Detroit Birth to Five	Western Wayne Birth to Five
Medical Home	353 (90.5%)	104 (75.9%)
Dental Home	345 (88.5%)	89 (65%)
Health Insurance	368 (94.4%)	109 (79.6%)
Immunizations	317 (81.3%)	119 (86.9%)
Schedule of Preventive & Primary Care	131 (33.6%)	26 (19%)
Treatment for Chronic Conditions	6 (30%)	1 (33.3%)



HOW DID WE SUPPORT SUCCESSFUL STUDENTS?

# Child Outcomes

Child outcomes data was collected using HighScope Child Observation Record Advantage (COR Advantage). The HighScope COR Advantage tool provides an assessment associated with the research-based HighScope curriculum and aligns with the 5 Developmental Domains of the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework: Ages Birth to Five (HSELOF, 2015).

Teaching staff collected data through anecdotal observations of children and scored on a 0 – 7 scale according to the COR framework. Child outcomes data was reviewed for all groups, including children with special needs and Dual Language Learners. Outcomes for School Readiness Goals were based on children who were enrolled 100% of the time for the data collection period of Time 1 (September-November 2021) through Time 3 (March-May 2022).

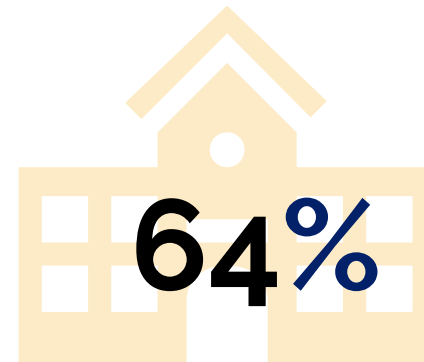
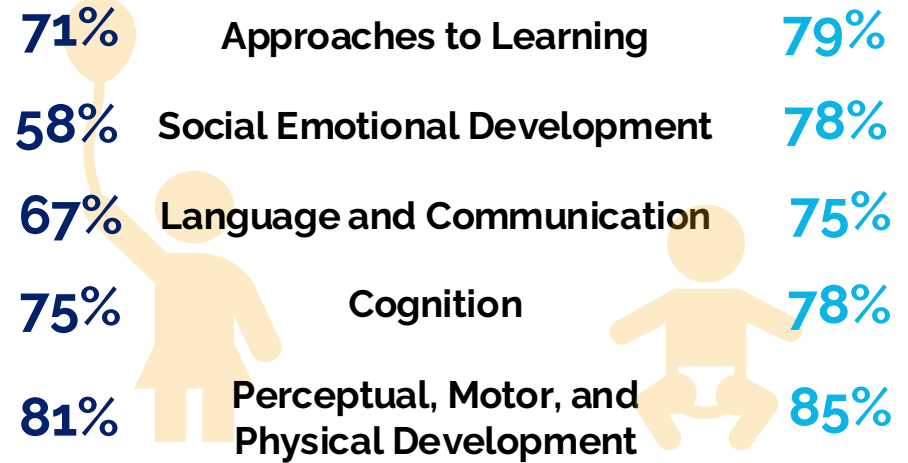
## Kindergarten Readiness

HighScope views children scoring at a level of 4 or higher as being ready for kindergarten. An analysis of the COR data for kindergarten bound children indicated that 64% of our transitioning preschool children scored at or above the 4.0 threshold in every category.

An extensive analysis of our end of year COR data revealed the following indicators of proficiency for each of the developmental domains:

### Head Start

### Early Head Start



## Kindergarten Ready

# RECENT REVIEW BY SECRETARY



# Recent Review by Secretary

## Special Monitoring Reviews

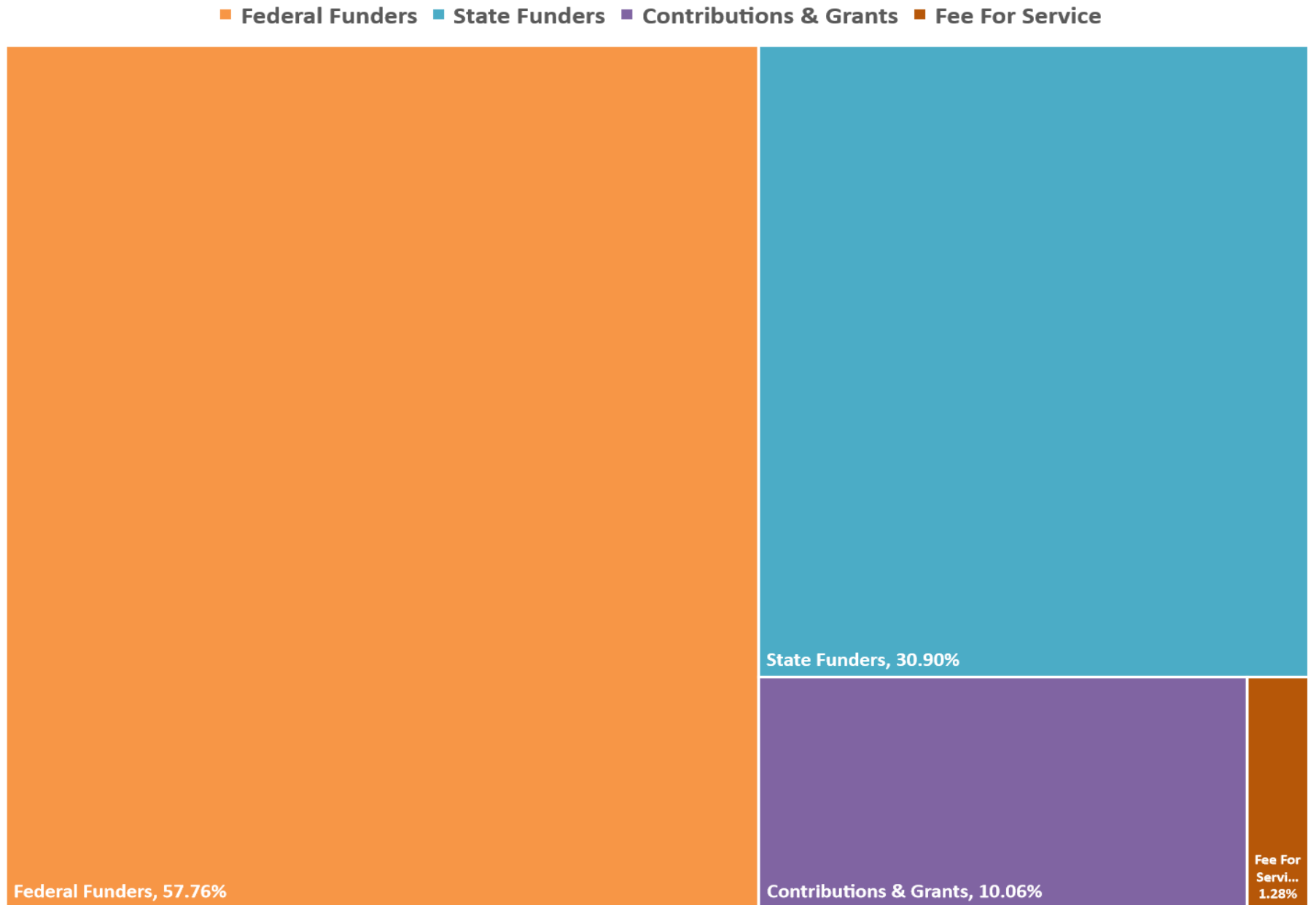
The Administration for Children and Families conducted a monitoring review on 6/29/21 regarding an incident that occurred at our contractual vendor. On 9/15/2021, Starfish received official notification that the Detroit BT5 05CH010519 grant was found to be out of compliance regarding 1302.90(c)(1)(ii)(F) Personnel Policies-Standard of Conduct and 1302.102(d)(1)(ii) Achieving Program Goals-Reporting. In response, Starfish conducted an extensive root cause analysis and established a robust Corrective Action Plan. Regarding the reporting noncompliance, Starfish revised its Incident Reporting Policy and Procedures and created a Reporting Flow Chart to ensure timely reporting. Our corrective response to address the standard of conduct finding included extensive professional development regarding Safe Sleep, Active Supervision, Responsive Care Giving, Standard of Conduct, Discipline/Non-corporal Punishment, and Mental Health Wellness. All employees were required to complete a knowledge check after completion of the mandatory trainings through our online training platform. Onsite screenings were also conducted by our curriculum coaches to support and check for applied knowledge and fidelity. In addition, the program developed an onboarding checklist, supervision template, and updated ECE training plan. The Administration for Children and Families (ACF) conducted a follow-up monitoring review in January 2022 to determine whether the previously identified findings had been corrected. Based on the information gathered during this review, both areas of noncompliance were corrected and the Office of Head Start closed the previously identified findings.

The Western Wayne BT5 05CH011335 grant and Detroit BT5 05CH010519 grant received two non-compliances in July 2022 regarding Safety Practices associated with Criminal Records Checks following a Special Monitoring Review in May 2022. The first noncompliance was associated with Sec. 648A- Staff Qualifications and Development regarding obtaining Criminal Record Checks prior to hire. The second noncompliance was under 1302.102 - Achieving program goals related to monitoring Criminal Record Checks. Starfish has 120 days to correct the identified noncompliance's and submit a Corrective Action Plan. The follow-up monitoring review will be completed by the Administration for Children and Families during the 2022-2023 program year.

# BUDGET & FINANCIALS

# Revenue

## Revenue and Other Support FY 2021-2022



# Grant Awards

Total Grant Awards by Source 2021-2022

- Detroit Birth to Five Federal
- Detroit Birth to Five Non Federal
- Western Wayne Birth to Five Federal
- Western Wayne Birth to Five Non Federal
- ARP (America Rescue Plan) & CRRSA (Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations)





## **Auditor's Report**