



Bedford County Early Head Start Bedford/Fulton County Head Start

2020-2021 ANNUAL REPORT



Operated by:



A Message From: The President/CEO and Board Chair

Greetings!

What could be more precious than a child? And what could be more important for a child than to have a good beginning in life?

Allegheny Lutheran Social Ministries (ALSM) is blessed to have Early Head Start/Head Start as part of our organization. The program helps provide the requisites and environment for good beginnings of children from X to Y. Of course, in so doing, we touch the lives of their families and people in their communities. We take seriously our mission and pursue it with a particular joy because we are involved with precious children.

Our Early Head Start/Head Start program serves the needs of parents and children by fostering development in a variety of areas: learning readiness, transition to public school, health/nutrition, mental health, parental involvement, and social interaction. Perhaps the last area should be called “control of social interaction.” Those wonderful little voices sometimes seem never to stop!

To accomplish our mission, we partner with school districts and other community programs.

Our staff and our partners are committed to the parents and children we are blessed to serve, and it gives joy to and provide them with the support and companionship they need to thrive in their households and our communities.

In service,



Patricia W. Savage, President/CEO



The Rev. Ron Miller, Chair, ALSM Board of Trustees

Mission Statement

We are a comprehensive, family-oriented program of dedicated, compassionate facilitators who motivate families to help themselves and their children reach their full potential in an ever-changing environment. We work in partnership with families to build children's and parents' strengths, promote their self-esteem, and encourage self-sufficiency and life-long learning. We guide and support parents as their children's primary nurturers and educators. We provide individualized services to prepare each child for success in school and life.

We will continue to work in partnership with families and communities to identify and respond to their changing needs and the needs of their children through provision of services, resources, referrals, education and advocacy.

Vision Statement

We support ALSM's mission through an integrated and coordinated department for Children's Services that maximizes the quality, diversity and potential of our programs for meeting the current and future needs of the communities we serve.

We pledge to continue to work in partnership with families and these communities to identify and respond to their changing needs through the promotion of services, resources, referrals, education and advocacy.

About Children's Services:

Children's Services is part of Allegheny Lutheran Social Ministries (ALSM), a not-for-profit organization with services that span the generations. ALSM Children's Services programs, including Head Start and Early Head Start, are motivated by a strong set of organizational beliefs and values including the following: Quality, Inclusion, Empowerment, Collaboration, Learning, Advocacy, Wellness, Nurture, Diversity and Continuity.

We are dedicated to helping parents build on their strengths to improve the quality of life for their children and families. We also believe in and are committed to the importance of quality birth-to-school-age services.

We see the achievements of our program as the result of the combined efforts of our staff, parents and community. We work together to make our program the best that it can be.

Early Head Start

Early Head Start's programs are available throughout Bedford County and are designed to provide the same kinds of comprehensive child development and family support services as Head Start to families with children under age three and pregnant women.

Early Head Start's services include home visits, health and nutrition services and referrals to other social services that may be needed. Our Early Head Start programs also offer child care options for working parents.

Early Head Start's family focus is designed to help parents be better parents and help their children have a better start on a successful life.

Head Start

Head Start is a federally funded child and family development program that promotes the school readiness of income-eligible children from three to five years of age. The program strives to enhance the cognitive, social and emotional development of each child in a learning environment that supports each child's growth in language, literacy, mathematics, science, social and emotional functioning, creative arts, and physical skills.

Head Start also provides children and their families with health, educational, nutritional, social and other services that are determined based on family needs assessments. At least 10 % of enrollment opportunities are made available for children with disabilities, regardless of income.

Head Start recognizes the importance of family-focused early intervention and strives to build upon the strengths of each family. Services and opportunities for children and families are provided through Head Start's major service areas including:

Education:	Provides a variety of developmentally appropriate learning experiences to foster intellectual, social and emotional growth through the center, combination and home-based options to prepare your child for school.
Transition:	Provides children and parents with information and educational opportunities to prepare them for entrance into the public school system.
Disabilities Services:	Ensure that children with disabilities receive the full range of developmental services in an inclusive environment.
Health & Nutrition:	Emphasizes the importance of early identification and treatment of health problems and comprehensive health care.
Mental Health:	Recognizes the importance of providing mental health and psychological services to children and parents to encourage emotional and social development.
Parent Engagement:	Recognizes parents as the primary educator of their child and the most important influence on their child's lives, parental engagement is encouraged at all levels.
Social Services:	Provides a wide range of education and training opportunities connecting families and valuable resources in our community.

Head Start

Research Indicates...

Children having had Head Start services are:

More likely to:

- Have improved intellectual cognitive skills.
- Be healthier.
- Have enhanced self-esteem.
- Exhibit good social/emotional skill development.

Parents involved in Head Start:

- Have increased self-confidence.
- Have increased involvement with their children.
- Are more knowledgeable about their child's learning and development.
- Are more likely to continue involvement when their child enters the public school system.
- Are more aware of community resources.
- Feel they have more control over their lives.

Review/Audit:

Our most recent on-site federal review, conducted by the Office of Head Start, indicated we are in compliance with the Head Start performance standards.

Our most recent financial audit did not produce any findings to report.

In the 2020-2021 academic year, Bedford/Fulton Head Start provided services to **149** children. Bedford Early Head Start provided services to **68** children, and **7** pregnant women. These numbers are lower than average due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

Preparing Children for Kindergarten:

An important goal for the Bedford/Fulton Head Start and Bedford Early Head Start programs are to prepare our children for kindergarten. We want to prepare not only our children for kindergarten but also their parents.

- Home visits focus on the parent being the child's first and best teacher.
- All educational domains are covered with the children and parents on home visits.
- The Creative Curriculum and Teaching Strategies Gold Assessment Tool is used in classrooms to promote learning and assess children's progress.
- Parents As Teachers are used to track milestones of development for Home-Based services.
- Individual portfolios are compiled including a sampling of the children's work from both home visits and classroom. Parents are presented with this portfolio at the end of the program year.
- I Am Moving, I Am Learning focuses on gross motor skills and children making healthy choices. Activities are implemented in each classroom and during home visits.
- The Incredible Years Curriculum provides social and emotional lessons and development in the classroom.
- Classrooms focus on providing a safe and healthy learning environment where many opportunities for teacher-initiated and self-directed play allow children to explore and develop a sense of curiosity and love for learning.
- Individualization occurs for all children during the entire class day, as well as during home visits.
- Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) has been implemented into our program to increase social and emotional competencies in children and address challenging behaviors in early childhood.

Tell me and I forget. Teach me and I remember. Involve me and I learn."

Benjamin Franklin

Transition:

During the 2020-2021 program year, children and parents were provided resources, materials, and activities to support the transition. Parents received information and resources on preparing their children both for preschool and kindergarten. Information was provided on the Bedford/Fulton County Head Start and Early Head Start Facebook parent page as well as handouts given to children and families.

At 30 months old, children and families in Early Head Start were given resources and information to help the families choose a preschool program best for their child. Also included with these resources were information on toilet training, options for preschool, school readiness goals, a copy of the book, *Chica Chica Boom Boom*, and a memory game.

Every child leaving Head Start and entering kindergarten, received a kindergarten-themed book (*The Kissing Hand*) and a backpack filled with school readiness activities, books, and manipulatives.

Head Start teachers completed a developmental checklist for each child entering Kindergarten. These checklists were forwarded to the school districts for Kindergarten teachers to review and use for planning purposes.

Children who have an IEP and receive specially designed instruction from the IU08 or IU11 were given a transition meeting with the school district administration, the intermediate unit and Head Start staff to help to make their transition to Kindergarten as smooth as possible.



2020-2021

Bedford/Fulton County Head Start Indicators:

- 149 children received Head Start services.
- The average monthly enrollment was at or above 77%. (Funded enrollment is 173, but we did not meet those numbers due to the Covid-19 pandemic.) Our program conducted extensive recruitment efforts throughout the year, such as; contacting past and current parents, reaching out to other community resources, posting ads and flyers and advertising with yard signs.
- Enrolled children receive a vision, hearing, and speech screening along with a weight, height, and body weight index, with follow-up guidance provided.
- 89% of the children had a medical home.
- 100% of children received preventive dental care. 83.8% had a dental home. 51.6% of children received a dental exam (Covid-19 impacted our ability to utilize a mobile dentist and delayed children in receiving a dental exam).
- 92.6% of the children were up to date with immunizations. 75.8% were up to date for Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment. (EPSDT)
- More than 29% of all children enrolled were identified as having a disability.
- 100% of all children enrolled were categorically eligible.
- 139 families received Head Start services.

2020-2021

Bedford County Early Head Start Indicators:

- 68 children and 7 pregnant women received Early Head Start services.
- The average monthly enrollment was at or above 88%. (Funded enrollment is 175, but we did not meet those numbers due to the Covid-19 pandemic.) Our program conducted extensive recruitment efforts throughout the year, such as; contacting past and current parents, reaching out to other community resources, posting ads and flyers and advertising with yard signs.
- Enrolled EHS children receive an age-appropriate vision, hearing, weight, height, and body weight index with follow-up guidance provided.
- 100% of children and pregnant mothers had a medical home. 67.6% of children are up-to-date on a schedule for Early Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment (EPSDT).
- 90% of Early Head Start children were up to date with immunization.
- 94% have a dental home, and 57.6% received a dental exam (Covid-19 impacted our ability to utilize a mobile dentist and delayed children in receiving a dental exam).
- 10% of all children enrolled were identified as having a disability.
- 100% of all children enrolled were categorically eligible.
- 3% receiving public assistance cash benefits and 3% in foster care. 5% of the children were over-income.
- 63 families received Early Head Start services.

"My children have been enrolled in Head Start. We are so thankful for how much support the program has given us. They have helped with getting my children ready for kindergarten and also offered us community supports to make our family stronger. I have also been able to volunteer and help out with Parent Café's, which I really liked!"

**Abigail McClain
Head Start Parent**

Parent Engagement Highlights 2020-2021

There are many opportunities throughout the year for parents to become involved:

- Policy Council: Leadership, decision-making, conflict resolution, and budgeting, are just a few of the skills practiced by parents who volunteer to participate. Sub-committees review program budgets, policies/procedures, and program planning.
- Volunteering: Provides parents the opportunity to volunteer and support classrooms in many ways, including: from working on homework with children to helping prepare supplies that are utilized in the classroom.
- Parents participate in-home visits by planning individual activities with parental input.
- Fathers or the male role model of the household of Head Start/Early Head Start participants are offered a variety of activities in which to participate each year. Male-focused activities are developed for home visits, and special evening involvement events where male-focused activities are introduced to allow them the opportunity to interact and learn about their child's development. This past year, children were able to go fishing locally with their father or male role model which proved to be a huge success, as well as a wonderful example of how our male-focused activities operate.
- 16% of the staff are past or current parents.
- Professional development opportunities were offered to current parents who were interested in obtaining their CDA certificate or GED (General Equivalency Certificate), or CDL.
- Parents receive information and tools to allow them to develop smoke-free homes. Families that smoke are offered information on ways to quit and are referred to additional support services.
- I Am Moving, I Am Learning involves parents in increasing the time their children spend doing physical activities. It encourages adults to be role models for being active while promoting healthy nutrition choices daily.

Field Trips

In light of the Covid-19 pandemic, we offered virtual field trips to our families. These opportunities included: students and parents learning about healthy cooking, outdoor hiking, geocaching experiences, virtual zoo visits that provided one-on-one time with zoo staff, and much more.

We believe that parents are the key to their child's development, and we support parents in teaching their children how to learn in everyday locations and environments.



As a past Headstart parent, and Policy Council member. Headstart and Early headstart is an awesome program to get your child an amazing start for the school career. I had two boys go through the Headstart program and with their Headstart they are becoming successful young men. My first and oldest now serves in the Army National Guard, works a full time job and plans to attend college in the fall. My second child is a senior in high school and also attends votech in which he excels with his grades, sports and welding. He plans to either attend The University Of Pittsburgh of Bradford in the fall and he will also be wrestling. Not only does Headstart help your child but also has many resources to give you those extra step to succeed as a parent and many other aspects. If I could tell new parents anything to help your child succeed is, be involved, do as much as you can, be that volunteer, attend policy Council, and lastly just show up for your child if no one else!

-Past Head Start Parent

Goals for Parent, Family, Community Engagement Framework

To amplify our focus on positive Family Engagement Outcomes, our families set goals in Parent and Community Engagement that builds on family strengths promote self-esteem, encourage self-sufficiency and support lifelong learning for all family members.

Some of our goal areas include:

- Increased home visit completion rates through effective tracking and reporting.
- Increased focus on family and community volunteer efforts to increase non-federal share donations.
- Increased use of technology to meet the family communication needs including parent-friendly apps and online family engagement systems.
- Improvements on strategies for meeting with parents which will include ensuring that environments are inviting and family-friendly and virtual options are offered.

"Children are the world's most valuable resource and its best hope for the future."

John F. Kennedy

Parent Socials and Parent Cafés

Parents were able to come together to share child development practices through our Parent Social and Parent Café experiences. This much-needed parent shared time is valued as parents get to know, and learn on one another to support guidance through the challenges and rewards of parenting young children. Parent Social events also introduce parents in the program to community supports that are available to all family members.



"I am so excited to receive guidance on how to help my child learn more and play more!"

Head Start/Early Head Start Parent

Collaborations & Partnerships:

Partnerships allow Head Start and Early Head Start enrolled children from working families to receive comprehensive services provided through Head Start/Early Head Start while children are at the center. They also provide families with services and resources to help them become self-sufficient.

Your Safe Haven

Provides education to families around preventing sexual abuse.

United Way of Bedford County

The United Way funds our literacy program. Approximately 270 Head Start and Early Head Start enrolled children received books.

Children and Youth Services of Bedford County

We collaborate with the Bedford County Children and Youth Services (CYS) agency providing support to families that have open cases. We work in partnership to assist families involved with CYS to obtain needed health care, keep recommended appointments, complete important goals required to have their CYS case closed and in some cases have staff assist in supervised visitations with families whose children have been temporarily removed from their home. Head Start/Early Head Start also provides services to foster children involved in CYS, when possible.

Central Fulton School District

Participate in collaborative scheduling that allows Head Start enrolled children to attend the district pre-school program and Head Start program.

Northern Bedford County, Northern Bedford School District

Northern Bedford County School District became an established partner in 2008-2009, when Head Start preschool services for eligible three and four-year-olds were offered within the elementary school. Head Start families were able to receive the services offered by the district, while benefitting from the comprehensive services provided by Head Start.

Intermediate Unit 11

Intermediate Unit 11 has been a partner since 1999, when preschool services for Head Start-enrolled three and four year olds in Fulton County were provided in an inclusive classroom with children enrolled in the IU program.

Intermediate Unit 08

IU8 and Head Start work together to make joint decisions to create an atmosphere of community, agency cooperation and coordination. The partnership promotes education and awareness, in order to benefit preschool children and their families by facilitating a smooth and effective flow of services from providers. Our collaborations facilitate the inclusion of children with disabilities and typical developing peers so all children may experience the enrichment that comes from sharing in their developmental years.

Early Intervention of Bedford & Somerset County DBHS

Early Head Start is a reliable participant in the Bedford County LICC and the Fulton County LICC and has been for many years. Representatives from Early Head Start actively collaborate with the other LICC members to participate in ChildFind activities, community fairs and events to increase Bedford and Fulton County residents' awareness of the programs and services our agencies provide. With parental permission, the Early Head Start Disabilities Manager directly refers children in Bedford and Fulton County to the Early Intervention program in the event developmental delays are indicated on screenings completed by the Early Head Start home visitors. The direct referral process from Early Head Start to the Early Intervention program is managed so that the parent is then contacted by Early Intervention, thus removing the parent from having to contact Early Intervention themselves. In today's day and age of busy schedules and lifestyles, it is often appreciated by families to be assisted in this process.

LOVE INC. of Bedford County

42 families and 120 enrolled children received Easter Baskets through Love INC. in 2021.

Cumberland Union Rescue Mission

52 low income families received food baskets from the Rescue Mission in December 2020. This helped to feed more than 246 family members of children enrolled in the Head Start/Early Head Start program during the holiday season.

Fulton County Early Head Start

Head Start works closely with this agency to ensure a smooth transition as children transition from their program into ours. We share referrals and support families in crisis and serve as members on each other's Policy Council.

Chestnut Ridge School District

Chestnut Ridge School District has been a partner since 1999, when preschool services for Head Start-enrolled four year olds in the district were provided services through a collaborative effort. Head Start children and families are able to receive the services offered by the district, while benefiting from the comprehensive services provided by Head Start.

Fulton County Partnership

Provide support to enrolled families through transportation to medical appointments, sponsor a dental clinic and transport families to work.

Everett Elementary

Since 2012 the Head Start program and the Title I staff at Everett Elementary have been working toward the common goal of helping children within the district be more prepared for kindergarten. Since that time, our staff, their kindergarten and Title I staff have met on a quarterly basis for resource sharing and program updates. Head Start families are invited to all Everett Elementary Family Nights. In the spring of each year, Head Start students are transported to the elementary school for a tour of the building and to participate in activities led by the district staff. Everett Elementary Title I reading students and their teachers visit the Head Start classroom in the spring as well so the elementary students can read to the Head Start children. This cooperative effort has been extremely positive for staff and families of both programs. A staff member of the school district serves as a community member of the Policy Council.

Early Head Start/Head Start and School Readiness

Our program uses the online Teaching Strategies Gold (TSG) Assessment Tool for Center-Based and Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP) to assess each child's developmental level and progress. These assessment tools are aligned to the Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework and the Pennsylvania Early Learning Standards. Three times per year, each teacher or parent-child educator decides for each developmental objective for each child on their caseload. Various developmental objectives are organized into areas of development and learning such as: Approaches to Learning, Social and Emotional Development, Language, Literacy, Cognitive, Math, and Motor Development. This information is used by each teacher and parent-child educator to plan for and implement an individualized education program for each child. Following each determination period, outcomes are analyzed to ensure that our children are making progress within each objective. Child outcomes are also used to guide the instruction and training of staff. School readiness goals are established within each domain of learning for both the Early Head Start and Head Start programs. These goals are developed from assessment information based on the needs of the children. School readiness goals are assessed in an ongoing manner and changed according to the needs exhibited by the children. An important part of our program is to ensure that parents have an understanding of their child's goals and how they can be working with their child to meet and exceed their individualized goals. Our program is dedicated to having our children be prepared for kindergarten. The outcome results indicate that our Head Start and Early Head Start programs are helping our children go to school with a solid educational foundation and are ready to continue their learning.

School Readiness (2020-2021)

The following chart contains our program's school readiness goals from fall 2020 to spring of 2021, and the percentage of our children who met, or exceeded the goals for the academic year. The child outcomes data tracking system was not able to provide accurate spring 2021 data.

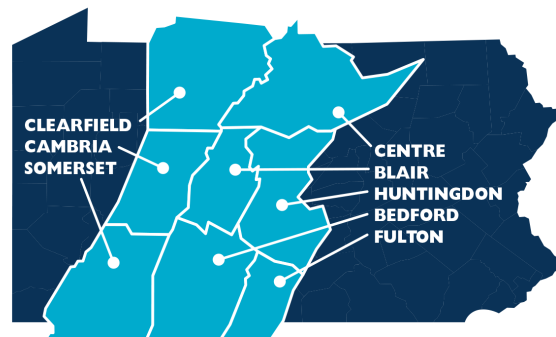
School Readiness Goals	Head Start	Early Head Start
Literacy: Phonological awareness	89%	71%
Knowledge of the Alphabet	73%	N/A
Social Emotional Development: Children will form and maintain positive relationships with adults and children	88%	62%
Participates cooperatively in group settings	77%	48%
Physical Development and Health: Fine Motor strength and coordination	84%	91%
Gross motor manipulation	90%	88%
Language: Uses language to express thoughts and needs	86%	89%
Uses appropriate conversational and other communication skills	84%	83%
Cognitive and General Knowledge: Number concepts and operations	74%	69%
Spatial Relationships	86%	68%
Approaches to Learning: Positive approaches to learning	87%	84%
Remembers and connects experiences	83%	83%

Financial Statement:

2021 Financial Statement for Head Start Services:

	Total Programs	Head Start	Early Head Start	CRRSA Funds	ARP Funds	Bedford Pre K	Tussey Pre K
Grants/Federal Share	\$3,206,154	\$1,879,814	\$825,455	\$82,908	\$142,414	\$187,539	\$88,024
Federal Food program funds	\$30,741	\$28,237					\$2,504
Non Federal Share	\$743,060	\$178,321	\$564,739				
Other program income	\$10,860	\$8,000					\$2,860
TOTAL FUNDING	\$3,990,815	\$2,094,372	\$1,390,194			\$187,539	\$93,388
Salary	\$1,663,885	\$1,014,920	\$483,583			\$113,321	\$52,061
Fringe Benefits	\$487,814	\$300,504	\$145,460			\$29,672	\$12,178
Travel	\$110,878	\$103,283	\$6,481			\$189	\$925
Occupancy	\$124,549	\$78,069	\$32,201			\$7,738	\$6,541
Communications	\$34,028	\$20,391	\$12,279			\$481	\$877
Program funded capital	\$111,052	\$8,398		\$52,663	\$49,991		
Program Supplies/ Services	\$658,216	\$348,979	\$138,346	\$30,245	\$92,423	\$29,666	\$18,557
Contract services	\$62,302	\$41,510	\$12,072			\$6,472	\$2,248
Non Federal Share	\$743,060	\$178,321	\$564,739				
Total Program Expenses	\$3,995,784	\$2,094,375	\$1,395,161	\$82,908	\$142,414	\$187,539	\$93,387
Proposed 2021 funding	\$3,708,381	\$2,024,795	\$979,714	\$74,640	\$296,732	\$245,000	\$87,500





Serving Eight Pennsylvania Counties: Bedford, Blair, Cambria, Centre, Clearfield, Fulton, Huntingdon & Somerset

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT OFFICE

998 Logan Blvd.
Altoona, PA 16602
814.696.4500
800.400.2285
www.alsm.org

• Children's Services

814.624.3200 or toll free
877.ALSM.KID (877.257.6543)
Bedford/Fulton Head Start
Bedford Early Head Start
Growing Years Early Learning Center & Kid Stop
Serving Bedford, Cambria, & Fulton Counties

• Lutheran Commons at Berlin Pike

814.443.4440
Senior Rental Assistance Housing in Somerset County

• Lutheran Commons at Pleasant Gap

800.400.2285
Senior Rental Assistance Housing in Centre County

• The Lutheran Home at Hollidaysburg

814.696.4527
Health Care Center
Independent Living Cottages at Blairmont & Hickory Commons & Hillcrest Apartments

OUR MISSION

To Serve People Through A Ministry Of Love, Compassion, And Mercy In The Name Of Our Lord, Jesus Christ

• Senior Daily Living Centers

800.400.2285
Serving Altoona & Somerset

• The Lutheran Home at Johnstown

814.255.6844
Health Care Center
Personal Care
Independent Living Cottages

• The Oaks at Pleasant Gap

814.359.2782
Personal Care at Schreffler Manor
Independent Living Cottages & Court Apartments

• ALSM at Home

855.280.2576
Serving Blair, Cambria & Somerset Counties

