



YOUTH DEVELOPMENT, INC.

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION & FAMILY DEVELOPMENT

2023-2024 ANNUAL REPORT

MISSION

Partnering with families to help them solve life's problems. We do this by always finding a better way to provide accepting environments, diverse services, and proven results. YDI is a family and community-based agency that improves lives.

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ABOUT YDI

Youth Development, Incorporated founded in 1971, is a nationally recognized youth and family service organization in New Mexico. We provide preschool and child care, parental care, alternative education, job training, employment assistance, mental and behavioral health services, homeless assistance, emergency housing, mentoring, family development services, and supervised visitation.

In partnership with the Office of Head Start within the Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, YDI operates 28 Head Start centers throughout New Mexico; 18 in Bernalillo County, and 10 in Taos and Rio Arriba Counties. This partnership provides FREE HIGH-QUALITY early childhood education, family development services, and childcare for children ages 0 to 5 years old. The Head Start curriculum supports the physical, cognitive, social, and emotional development of young children and offers prenatal care and education for pregnant women.

This annual report is publicly available in print at YDI Offices, on the YDI website at ydinm.org and through YDI social media channels



MESSAGE FROM VICE PRESIDENT DEBRA BACA

Dear Parents, Guardians, Community Partners, Policy Makers, and Child Advocates:

As we reflect on the past year, we celebrate the positive outcomes across our Head Start, Early Head Start, and Family Development programs. Our success is driven by active family engagement, making Head Start unique as parents help govern the program.

Program Reach:

We served over 1,500 families through center- and home-based services in Bernalillo, Rio Arriba, Taos, Sandoval, and Torrance counties. PreK options are also available for families who do not qualify for Head Start.

Key Focus Areas:

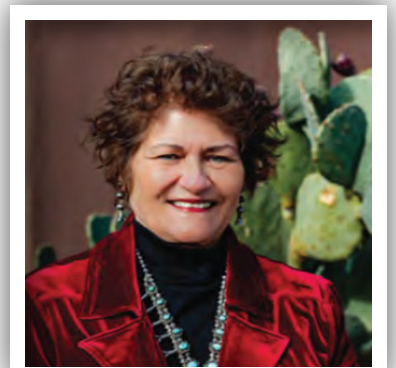
- **Teacher Credentials:** 52% of Head Start teachers hold bachelor's degrees. Staff meet high certification standards across education, special education, mental health, and administration.
- **Child Outcomes:** Using Teaching Strategies Gold, Head Start children improved 16% on average across developmental domains. Early Head Start exceeded expectations for 77% of children. Over 280,000 meals were served, and 1,003 social-emotional screenings completed.
- **Parent Engagement:** Parent and community support exceeded \$3 million. Home visitation supported 400 families, while 509 received individualized services. Father engagement increased 200%, with 47% of our workforce being current or former Head Start parents.

These achievements reflect the dedication of our YDI family, Policy Council, Board of Directors, and community partners. We are deeply grateful for your continued trust, collaboration, and belief in our mission to uplift children and families. Together, we create opportunities that transform lives.

With Gratitude and Warmest Regards,

Debra Baca
Vice President of Early Childhood Education

Debra L. Baca



POLICY COUNCIL

The Policy Council is made up of parents and community representatives and plays a pivotal role in guiding the direction and success of YDI's Head Start program. The council is a key decision-making body that helps ensure the program meets the unique needs of the families served.

Its primary role is to provide parents with a meaningful voice in the governance and management of their child's Head Start education, learning and development. The council acts as a link between families, communities, and program administrators.

Members are actively involved in the decision-making processes that affects the education and well-being of Head Start children to ensure that children receive the greatest benefits.

Meetings occur monthly in an environment where collaboration, transparency, and accountability are paramount. Through members' active participation, policy council members are a trusted resource for the families who depend on the comprehensive services YDI provides.



FAMILIES SERVED

FAMILIES RECEIVING SERVICES

The total number of families served included 541 through the Head Start program and 481 through Early Head Start. The services provided were tailored to meet the evolving needs of each family. Families categorically eligible for public assistance were able to access our services which included nutritious meals that contributed to a reduction in food insecurity.

2023-2024 ENROLLMENT

2023-2024 ENROLLMENT		
ENROLLMENT	HEAD START	EARLY HEAD START
Funded Enrollment	485	448
Total Cumulative Enrollment (including drops and new enrollees)	564	586
Average monthly enrollment for July 2023 – June 2024	90%	80%

FAMILY SERVICES PROVIDED	TOTAL NUMBER OF HEAD START FAMILIES WHO RECEIVED SERVICES	TOTAL NUMBER OF EARLY HEAD START FAMILIES WHO RECEIVED SERVICES
Emergency/crisis intervention such as meeting immediate needs for food, clothing, or shelter	52	37
Housing assistance such as subsidies, utilities, repairs, etc.	33	34
Asset building services such as financial education, and debt counseling	49	37
Mental Health Services	51	45
Substance misuse prevention	7	7
Substance misuse treatment	4	3
English as a Second Language (ESL) training	8	2
Assistance in enrolling into an education or job training program	41	35
Research-based parenting curriculum	68	150
Involvement in discussing their child's screening and assessment results and their child's progress	477	364
Supporting transitions between programs such as EHS to HS and HS to kindergarten	188	96
Education on preventive medical and oral health	140	120
Education on health and developmental consequences of tobacco product use	6	67
Education on nutrition	226	140
Education on postpartum care such as breastfeeding support	13	60
Education on relationship/marriage	9	7
Assistance to families of incarcerated individuals	1	0
Of these, the number that received at least one of the services listed above	509	431

EDUCATION AND SCHOOL READINESS

Curriculum and Teacher Development

Creative Curriculum and Teaching Strategies GOLD was used for the fourth consecutive year. The education team placed a strong emphasis on helping teachers deepen their understanding and proficiency with these tools. To support this effort, teachers participated in self-paced, online training through Teaching Strategies with the ultimate goal of completing the Inter-Reliability Testing during 2024-2025 school year. This testing will demonstrate the teacher's ability to accurately assess children's growth and development. Additionally, new teachers will complete this training as part of the onboarding process.

For Early Head Start children, 77% of children met or exceeded developmental expectations by the end of the 2023-2024 school year which is consistent with the previous year's outcomes. However, the percentage of children meeting or exceeding expectations in language development was lower than in the other five developmental domains, reflecting a trend seen in early childhood programs across the country. Specifically, 67% of children met or exceeded language expectations at the end of the 2022-2023 program year, compared to 66% at the end of 2023-2024.

Recognizing the need to enhance language development, YDI will continue the LENA Grow coaching program in Early Head Start classrooms. LENA was introduced in Head Start classrooms in Fall 2024. Research shows that LENA Grow increases conversation returns by up to 12% among teachers who complete the program, which has a direct impact on children's language development (Sallard, 2024).

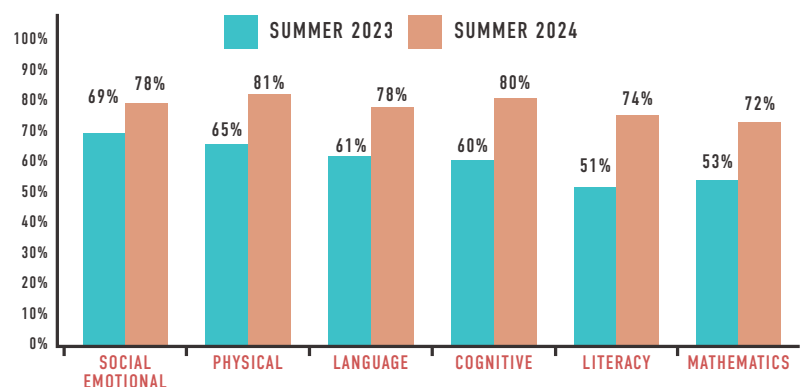
Head Start Outcomes

For Head Start children, 77% met or exceeded expectations by the end of the 2023-2024 program year, a significant increase from 55% in 2022-2023. Notably, at the start of the 2022-2023 school year, only 27% of children were meeting or exceeding expectations, compared to 60% at the beginning of the 2023-2024 year. This improvement explains the 22% increase over the course of the year.

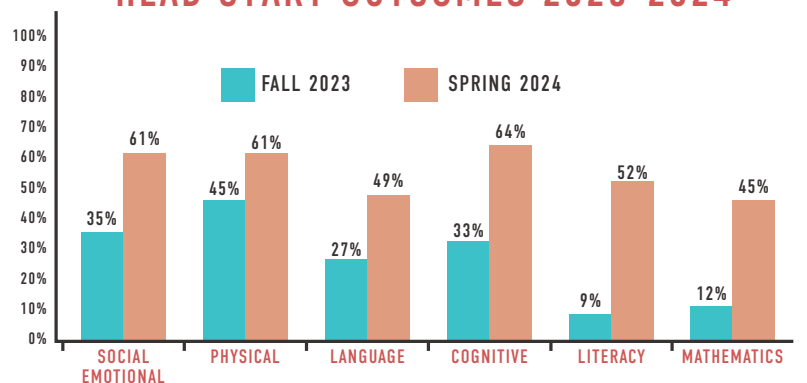
Ongoing Efforts

YDI's education team will continue to work closely with teachers to individualize instruction and further increase the percentage of children meeting or exceeding developmental expectations. Additionally, we will focus on enhancing the fidelity of our assessment process to ensure accurate and meaningful evaluations of each child's growth and progress.

EARLY HEAD START OUTCOMES 2023-2024



HEAD START OUTCOMES 2023-2024



MOBILE LIBRARY

The transformation of school buses into mobile libraries brought the joy of reading directly to children at the various Head Start centers. Spearheaded by current transportation coordinator Martha Sanchez, who played a key role in designing and equipping the library with books. This initiative provides children with a library experience without leaving their center.

The mobile libraries are filled with a variety of children's books that provide an engaging environment for children to explore reading in a fun and educational setting. Parents are equally enthusiastic about the program. Parents love hopping aboard to share story time with their little ones, turning every page together while building memories and growing family bonds one story at a time.

Through this creative initiative, YDI continues to demonstrate its commitment to early childhood education and family engagement, through access to books and the joy of reading.



HEALTH SERVICES

Health and Wellness

During the 2023-2024 program year, YDI's Head Start and Early Head Start programs served 1,037 children, prioritizing health as a cornerstone of school readiness. Staff supported families with health literacy, access to medical and dental providers, and personalized plans to address health concerns and conditions. Regular well-child visits and check-ups were emphasized to monitor developmental milestones and monitor issues like vision or hearing problems early. Staff worked with families to encourage treatment with medical and dental providers. For uninsured families, YDI connected them to low-cost healthcare services. By fostering health and wellness, the program laid a strong foundation for children and families, promoting long-term success in education and life.

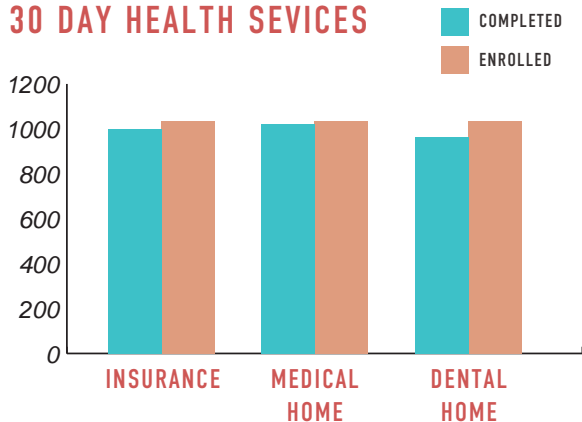
Health Screenings and Family Support

Children's hearing and vision screenings were conducted within 45 days of enrollment. These screenings supplement annual well-child visits and allow timely treatment for concerns like the need for glasses or hearing aids. Families submit medical and dental exam documentation within 90 days of enrollment, fostering strong relationships with healthcare providers. YDI's team supports families through referrals, reminders, and advocacy, helping them navigate the healthcare system. This proactive approach ensures children's health needs are addressed, setting them up for developmental success in school and beyond.

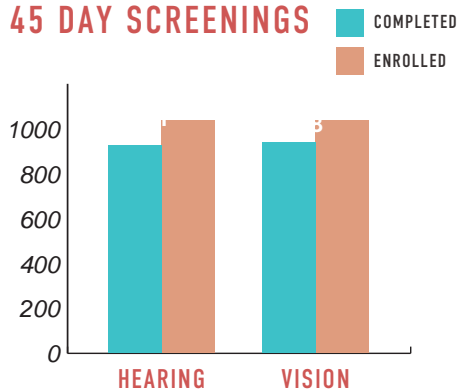
Building a Strong Health Foundation

To promote long-term health and well-being, YDI is committed to building a strong health foundation within the family unit. Healthy habits are more likely to take root when practiced both at school and at home. Our staff works with families to connect them with resources and organizations that benefit the entire family's health. In classrooms and centers, children and families learn about tooth brushing, handwashing techniques, emergency preparedness, fire safety, and other critical health-related topics. Through partnerships with community organizations, we offer educational resources and support to help families strengthen their health practices.

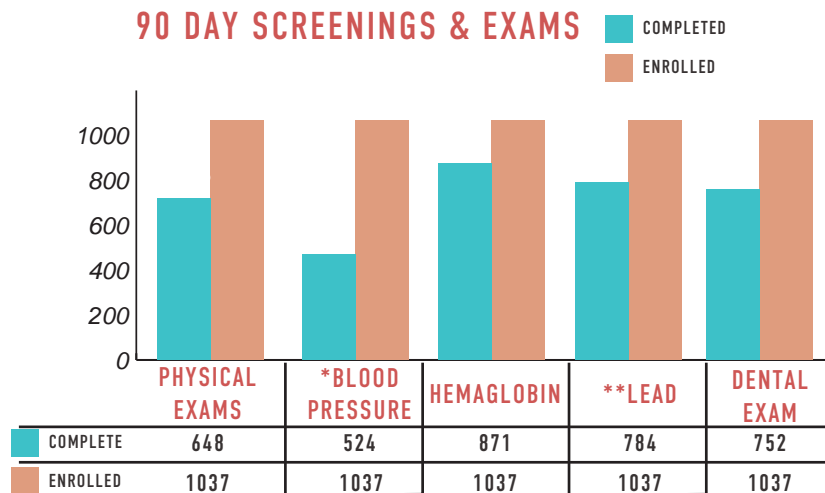
30 DAY HEALTH SERVICES



45 DAY SCREENINGS



90 DAY SCREENINGS & EXAMS



*3yrs
**12 months & 24 months

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

SCREENING: AGES & STAGES QUESTIONNAIRE: SOCIAL EMOTIONAL-2

YDI uses the Ages and Stages Questionnaire: Social Emotional-2 (ASQ: SE-2) tool to screen children's social and emotional development. The ASQ:SE-2 tool is based on the following seven behavioral categories:

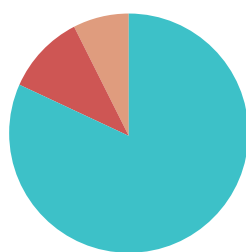
- Adaptive functioning
- Affect
- Autonomy
- Compliance
- Interaction
- Self-regulation
- Social communication

In 2023-2024, teachers completed 1,003 screenings within 45 days of each child's start date. For those identified as needing a referral, a total of 75 mental health consultations were provided. This represents an overall 3% decrease in children scoring in the low/no risk category, a 1.65% increase in those needing monitoring, and a 1.15% increase in children needing referrals. Six families either declined the referral or left the program before consultations were completed.

1003 SCREENINGS	HEAD START	EARLY HEAD START
No/Low Risk	398	407
Monitor	66	51
Refer	43	38
Total	507	496

ASQ: SE-2 RESULTS FOR HEAD START & EARLY HEAD START, 2023-2024

◆ NO/LOW RISK ◆ MONITOR ◆ REFER

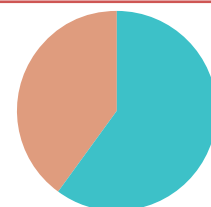


Mental health consultants are integral to the success of all Head Start programs, providing essential support in several key areas:

- **Classroom Observation and Consultation:** Consultants observe classrooms to assess safety, cultural relevance, and provide feedback for improvement.
- **Teacher Support:** Consultants assist teachers in fostering the social and emotional development of children, ensuring their overall well-being.
- **Support for Parents and Staff:** They offer guidance to parents and staff, helping them understand the importance of mental health services and how to access them for children in need.

EARLY CHILDHOOD MENTAL HEALTH REFERRALS, 2023-2024

◆ EARLY HEAD START ◆ HEAD START



75 MENTAL HEALTH REFERRALS
30 Head Start
45 Early Head Start

YDI is committed to providing an integrated consultative approach toward addressing children's mental health. Research highlights that mental health consultants take a distinctive approach to their work. Rather than offering direct services, they adopt a "consultative stance" (Johnston & Brinamen, 2006), which focuses on empowering staff to build respectful, supportive relationships. This approach has been proven effective when engaging and collaborating with families and builds trust and confidence in YDI staff to maximize children and family success.

In the upcoming year, we aim to enhance teachers' capacity to respond to trauma within the classroom to ensure children have a strong sense of belonging, are able to effectively communicate their needs and wants, regulate their emotions, and prepare them for success as they transition to kindergarten. These goals align with our commitment to providing a nurturing, supportive environment for every child in our Head Start program.

SERVICES FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

School readiness is a cornerstone of YDI's Early Childhood Head Start and Early Head Start programs, particularly in serving children with disabilities. Our educational staff continues to tailor structured planning for students with Individualized Education Programs (IEP) and Individualized Family Service Plans (IFSP) using the evidence-based Teaching Strategies GOLD curriculum. This curriculum equips our staff with proven techniques to foster inclusion and create a sense of belonging for young children with disabilities in early childhood environments (ECLKC, 2023).

YDI's Head Start program offered a range of services and resources aimed at building stable family relationships, enhancing children's physical and emotional well-being, and promoting school readiness. We worked closely with external agencies to support children with disabilities, using a comprehensive approach to support their education and development. Under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Head Start programs are required to enroll at least 10% of children with disabilities. YDI exceeded this requirement, with 21.3% of Head Start students receiving services through an IEP and 16.5% of Early Head Start children supported through an IFSP.

Strong partnerships with the Local Educational Agency (LEA) and Early Intervention (EI) services are vital in supporting educational staff, both in classrooms and through home-based programs. The collaborative relationship contributes to the children's success by meeting IEP and IFSP goals and supporting their growth and development to thrive in inclusive learning environments, so they reach their full potential.

DIAGNOSED DISABILITIES

PRIMARY DISABILITIES	EARLY START	EARLY HEAD START
SPEECH OR LANGUAGE IMPAIRMENT	67	
AUTISM	20	
DEVELOPMENT DELAY	30	85
INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY	3	4
TOTAL IDEA	120	89

2023-2024 HEAD START AND EARLY HEAD START REFERRALS

PROGRAMS	NUMBER OF CHILDREN SERVED (IDEA)	10% IEP & IFSP (IDEA)	IDEA Prior to this Enrollment Year	IDEA During this Enrollment Year	Number of Children Referred to IDEA	Received an Evaluation	Evaluated, Diagnosed with Disability	Evaluated, Diagnosed with Disability
HEAD START (CENTER BASED)	120	21.3% IEP (PART B)	86	34	62	46	23	23
EARLY HEAD START (CENTER-BASED & HOME-BASED)	89	16.5% IFSP (PART C)	53	63	48	21	20	1



FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

Youth Development Incorporated (YDI) Head Start centers in Bernalillo, Taos, and Rio Arriba counties have become vibrant hubs of family engagement, fostering connections that benefit children, families, and communities. Through a series of thoughtfully planned activities, YDI has successfully brought parents, grandparents, and guardians into the heart of their programming, ensuring that the goals of the Parent, Family, and Community Engagement (PFCE) Framework are realized.

LITERACY ACTIVITIES: YDI Head Start's dedication to literacy was on full display during their family reading events. These gatherings included storytelling sessions, book giveaways, and opportunities for families to read together. Parents and grandparents enthusiastically participated, creating cherished moments with their children. The events aimed to encourage a love of reading while equipping families with strategies to support literacy development at home.

HOLIDAY ACTIVITIES: The festive season brought families together for holiday-themed activities that celebrated cultural traditions and community. In Bernalillo, Taos, and Rio Arriba counties, parents worked side-by-side with their children to create holiday crafts, prepare seasonal treats, and participate in celebratory performances.

PLAYGROUND CLEAN-UP DAYS: YDI's playground clean-up days combined community service with fun and teamwork. Parents, grandparents, and guardians joined forces to beautify outdoor spaces where their children play and learn. Armed with gloves, rakes, and a sense of purpose, families worked collaboratively to transform playgrounds into safe and inviting environments.

MEETING THE PFCE FRAMEWORK GOALS

Through these initiatives, YDI Head Start has exemplified the PFCE Framework's goals, which include:

FAMILY WELL-BEING:

Activities like the playground clean-up days empowered families to take an active role in their children's environment, promoting a sense of pride and accomplishment.

POSITIVE PARENT-CHILD RELATIONSHIP:

Literacy and holiday activities nurtured connections between parents and children, emphasizing the importance of shared experiences.

FAMILIES AS LIFELONG EDUCATORS:

The literacy events equipped families with tools to continue their children's education at home.

FAMILIES AS LEARNERS:

By participating in events, families gained knowledge and skills to support their children's growth.

FAMILY CONNECTIONS TO PEERS AND COMMUNITY:

Each activity created opportunities for families to build relationships with other families and engage in their local communities.

A LASTING IMPACT

The success of YDI's family engagement activities highlights the power of collaboration between families, staff, and the community. By creating spaces where families feel valued and empowered, YDI Head Start is not only meeting its goals but also fostering a culture of connection and lifelong learning.



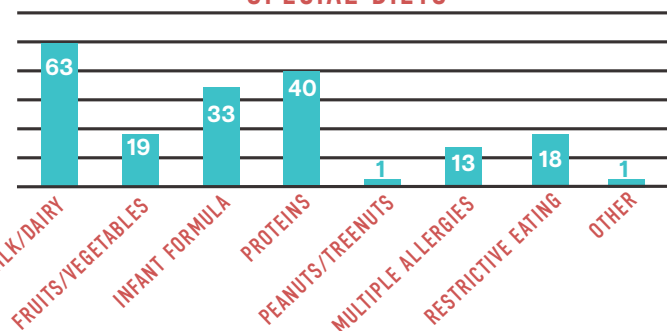
NUTRITION SERVICES

In 2023-2024, YDI served a total of 280,509 meals. Our team implemented 188 special diets to accommodate individual needs and addressed 302 nutritional concerns with the expertise of our consulting dietitian. These efforts were instrumental in ensuring that every child received the proper nutrition required to thrive, despite the many challenges families endure.

While food insecurity is a major concern, health and economic issues also impact families well-being. Based on Map the Meal Gap 2022: Analysis of County and Congressional District Food Insecurity and County Food Cost in the United States in 2020. Feeding America, one in five children experienced hunger, impacting the well-being of many households in our community. Children's weight varied as families dealt with health and economic hardships, along with food insecurity.

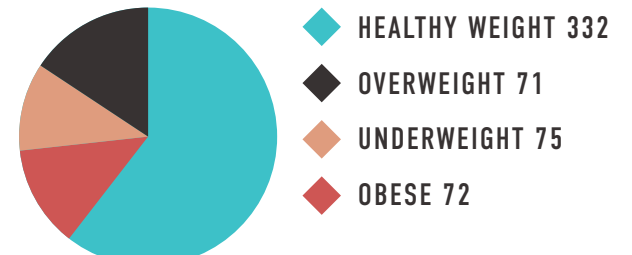
YDI is responsive and ensures that enrolled children have consistent access to nutritious meals, locally sourced fruits and vegetables, and opportunities for physical activity. The meals provided by YDI play a crucial role in supporting the overall health and development of the children, ensuring they receive the nourishment necessary for growth, learning, and readiness for school.

SPECIAL DIETS



MEALS SERVED	JULY 2023-JUNE 2024
Breakfast	95,215
Lunch	97,289
PM Snacks	88,005
Total	280,509

HEAD START WEIGHTS



EARLY HEAD START HOME VISITING

During the 2023-2024 school year, the Early Head Start Home-Based program served a total of 204 families, conducting over 4,118 home visits. These visits provided ongoing support for families in their second year of enrollment and assisted in smooth transitions to center-based care as needed.

The program hosted 22 socialization events, both in-person and virtual, to accommodate the varying needs of families. These events saw strong parent engagement, reflecting high participation and interest.

Home visits were conducted using Partners for a Healthy Baby curriculum, a research-based framework designed to:

- ◆ Improve prenatal health and promote healthy birth outcomes
- ◆ Strengthen bonding and attachment between parents and children
- ◆ Encourage positive parenting practices
- ◆ Support child health and development
- ◆ Enhance family stability and economic sufficiency

Throughout the year, families participated in training and enrichment opportunities. These activities were designed to foster personal growth, improve family dynamics, and support child development and included the following.

- ◆ Fun in the Sun
- ◆ Health Fair
- ◆ Home Wise
- ◆ Mental Health Awareness
- ◆ Nutritious Cooking with ICAN
- ◆ Public Library Tour
- ◆ Regulation/Co-Regulation
- ◆ Winter Wonderland
- ◆ Art Attack
- ◆ At-Home Learning
- ◆ Car Seat Safety
- ◆ Circle of Security
- ◆ Enlace Comunitario
- ◆ Financial Literacy
- ◆ First Aid/CPR

Activities and training were instrumental in enriching the overall experience of families in the program and providing them with essential skills and resources for long-term success.



HOME VISITING - PARENTS AS TEACHERS

KEY OUTCOMES

- ◆ Parenting knowledge and skills: Families enrolled in PAT reported improved parenting knowledge and skills.
- ◆ Families enrolled in PAT are more likely to ensure their children receive immunizations and regular well-child checkups.
- ◆ 100% of children aged 12 months and older received dental care.
- ◆ 80% of babies and young children received age-appropriate well-child visits as recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics.
- ◆ 100% of mothers-initiated breastfeeding after birth, with 73% continuing for six months or longer.
- ◆ 98% of families were referred to community support services that addressed their individual needs.



Left to right: Anna Parra Gonzales, Cindy Martinez, Teresa Garza, Aregmi Aguilar, Sylvia Chavez

In 2015, YDI launched its CYFD State Home Visiting Program. Initially serving 20 families in Rio Arriba with a single home visitor, the program has seen significant growth. By 2023, it expanded to serve 96 families, with a dedicated team of four parent educators and a program manager. Over the course of 2024, staff conducted 996 home visits, totaling 1,468 hours, and traveled approximately 19,083 miles to meet with families. The program's success has continued into the current year with a waitlist for new enrollments.

The Parents as Teachers (PAT) curriculum, an evidence-based home visiting model that empowers parents as their child's first and most influential

teachers is being implemented. The PAT curriculum is grounded in decades of research and has been validated through peer-reviewed studies and has consistently demonstrated a positive impact on families.

Parent educators focus on fostering parent-child interaction, development-centered parenting, and overall family well-being. Visits are tailored to each family's needs and occur monthly or bi-weekly. During these visits, parent educators provide information on child development, safety, and suggest activities that promote parent-child bonding. The program is entirely free, with eligibility limited to pregnant individuals or families with children under the age of five.

YDI Parent Educators cultivate meaningful, long-lasting connections with families, often extending beyond the five years of service. These strong relationships contribute to families' commitment to completing the program and successfully transitioning their children to kindergarten. In FY24, 53% of enrolled families had been with YDI for two or more years, while 21% had been enrolled for one to two years. In June 2024, 19 program graduates transitioned to kindergarten, reflecting the program's ongoing success. YDI remains dedicated to fostering these achievements and supporting families as they build a strong foundation for their children's educational journey.



NURSE-FAMILY PARTNERSHIP

The Nurse-Family Partnership (NFP) funded by the state of New Mexico is a maternal and infant health program that pairs first-time, low-income mothers with registered nurses who provide home visits from pregnancy through the child's second birthday. This program aims to empower mothers to build better futures for themselves and their children by improving prenatal health, fostering child development, and promoting self-sufficiency. NFP addresses the critical need for support in high-risk families by offering personalized, evidence-based care.

Outcomes Achieved:

- ◆ 91% of babies were born full-term
- ◆ 100% of babies received immunizations at 18 and 24 months.
- ◆ 96% of mothers-initiated breastfeeding,
- ◆ 80% of clients aged 18 and older were employed at 24 months.

These results highlight the program's success in improving maternal and infant health, supporting employment, and ensuring proper immunization. YDI's innovative practices and strong parental feedback further reinforce the positive impact of

the program on the community.

Research has shown that NFP significantly improves outcomes for both mothers and children. National data reveals a 48% reduction in child abuse and neglect, a 56% decrease in emergency room visits for accidents and poisonings, and a 50% reduction in language delays by 21 months. Additionally, the program leads to a 67% reduction in behavioral and intellectual problems by age 6, a 32% decrease in subsequent pregnancies, and an 82% increase in months of employment. NFP also demonstrates substantial economic benefits, with every \$1 invested yielding \$6 in future cost savings through reduced healthcare and social service expenses.

Looking ahead, NFP will focus on several key areas for continuous improvement. These include enhancing outreach efforts to engage more eligible families, expanding training for nurses to address emerging needs, and utilizing advanced data analytics to refine program strategies. Additionally, increased collaboration with local healthcare providers and community organizations will strengthen support networks for participants with the goal of further improving health outcomes and economic stability for families.



TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS

YDI exceeds federal Head Start standards, employing qualified staff and emphasizing professional development. In 2024, 57% of YDI's Head Start educators held a bachelor's degree in early childhood education, while 59% of Early Head Start educators and 70% of Assistant Teachers earned a Child Development Associate (CDA) credential or equivalent. YDI supports children and families in Bernalillo, Rio Arriba, and Taos counties by promoting bilingualism and cultural competence, enabling teachers to respect and incorporate children's heritage. Head Start educators must also have classroom experience and ongoing training in child development, curriculum design, and classroom management. These standards ensure children receive high-quality education from skilled professionals who understand their developmental and cultural needs.

Head Start Teachers

Head Start teachers play a vital role in early childhood education and must meet the following requirements:

- **Bachelor's Degree:** At least 50% of Head Start teachers must have a bachelor's degree in early childhood education or a related field.
- **Other Fields:** Teachers with degrees in other fields must complete equivalent coursework and have preschool teaching experience.
- **Associate degree:** Teachers without a bachelor's must hold at least an associate degree in early childhood education, with encouragement to pursue further education.
- **CDA Credential:** Teachers without a degree must have a Child Development Associate (CDA) credential focused on early education competencies.

Early Head Start Teachers

Early Head Start teachers work with children from birth to age three. The requirements for are slightly different due to the younger age group:

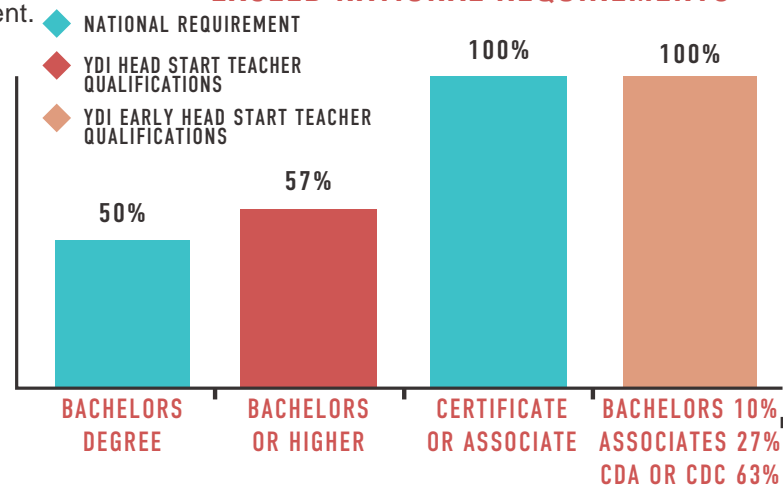
- **Infant/Toddler CDA Credential:** Teachers must hold a CDA credential with a focus on infant and toddler care or an equivalent certification.
- **Associate Degree:** Alternatively, they can have an associate degree in early childhood education or a related field that includes coursework in infant and toddler development.

Teacher Assistants

Teacher assistants in Head Start programs must also meet specific qualifications:

- **CDA Credential:** Teacher assistants are required to have a CDA credential or be enrolled in a CDA program with completion expected within two years of employment.
- **Associate Degree in a Related Field:** Alternatively, they may have an associate degree in early childhood education or a related field.

YDI TEACHER STAFF QUALIFICATIONS EXCEED NATIONAL REQUIREMENTS



TEACHER APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM

YDI's Early Head Start Teacher Apprentice program has proven to be a resounding success, offering both immediate employment and professional development opportunities for local residents. The Teacher Apprenticeship Program (TAP) in Taos and Rio Arriba counties increased the number of highly trained early childhood professionals now serving YDI families. The program provides apprentices with a viable career path in early childhood education, helping to alleviate employment challenges in rural areas.

The Early Head Start Teacher Apprentice program is a cornerstone of YDI's commitment to nurturing high-quality early childhood educators in underserved regions. It is designed for individuals interested in becoming certified Early Head Start

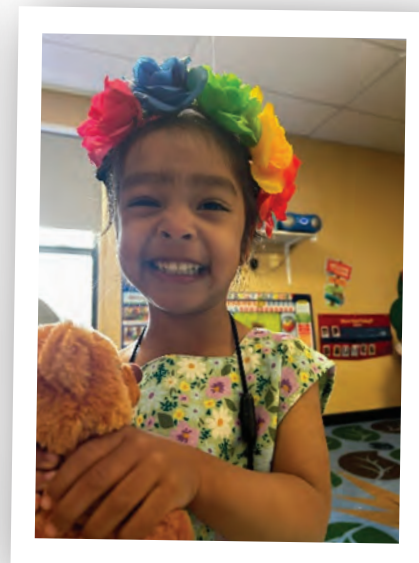
teachers, the program provides structured training, hands-on experience, and mentorship. Under the supervision of the Center Director and a dedicated Child Development Associate (CDA) Trainer, apprentices gain valuable experience by assisting in Early Head Start classrooms. They engage with infants and toddlers, helping create a developmentally appropriate learning environment while working toward their CDA credential with a focus on infant-toddler care.

Participants are required to complete a 45-hour Early Care, Education, and Family Support Entry Level Course within 30 days of employment. This ensures they have the foundational knowledge to provide quality care. Apprentices

must also attend CDA training activities, compile a CDA portfolio, and successfully pass a CDA exam. Throughout the program, participants receive ongoing mentorship from experienced YDI teacher-mentors, helping them develop both personally and professionally.

To qualify for the program, candidates must be at least 18 years old, have a high school diploma or equivalent, and possess a valid driver's license. They must also pass a drug test, TB skin test, and criminal background check, ensuring a safe and responsible workforce. Flexibility and the ability to travel between Early Head Start sites is required.

Through rigorous training, hands-on experience, and meaningful mentorship, YDI is developing a new generation of early educators.



PROMISING PRACTICES

LENA GROW

YDI is enhancing early childhood education in its Early Head Start classrooms with the integration of LENA (Language Environment Analysis) technology, supported by a \$500,000 grant from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. This three-year initiative focuses on improving language development and classroom interactions, benefiting children, families, and educators within YDI's programs.

LENA uses small, wearable devices to track the language environment, measuring adult-child verbal interactions and providing real-time feedback. The data helps identify language exposure patterns, allowing educators to adjust

their interactions to better support children's language development. This technology enables YDI to create more effective, developmentally appropriate learning environments. The grant enables YDI to integrate LENA across its classrooms, providing training for educators to use the system effectively. The initiative aims to create long-term positive outcomes for children by improving classroom interactions and addressing language development needs. This strategic integration supports YDI's mission to enhance early education in underserved communities, providing essential resources for educators and empowering families to play a key role in their children's growth.



STATE AND REGIONAL LEADERSHIP



The New Mexico Head Start Association (NMHSA) hosted the 2024 Region VI Head-Start Conference, themed “Head Start Rising Above the Rest,” in Albuquerque this year.

Dr. Jeannie Baca, YDI’s Quality Performance Officer, and Vice President of the NMHSA skillfully chaired the conference planning committee, ensuring a well-organized and impactful event. Debra Baca, Vice President of YDI’s Early Childhood Education and Family Development, was involved in various leadership roles with NMHSA over the years and was appointed to serve on the Region VI Board of Directors, furthering her dedication to the Head Start mission.

Head Start representatives and presenters from New Mexico, Texas, Arkansas, Oklahoma, and Louisiana, gathered to exchange insights, share best practices, and reaffirm their commitment to delivering culturally responsive, high-quality programs for young learners. The YDI staff was well represented and took particular pride in playing a lead role in contributing to the success of the conference. Next year’s conference will be hosted by the Texas HeadStart Association.



Debra Baca
Vice President Early Childhood Education and Family Development
Region VI Board Member



Dr. Jeannie Baca
Quality Performance Officer
Vice President, NMHSA

UCLA HEAD START MANAGEMENT FELLOWS

UCLA

Anderson
School of Management

Senior Associate Directors Dr. Patricia Rodriguez and Kathleen Barney of Youth Development Inc. recently completed the prestigious UCLA Head Start Management Fellows Program. Their final project focused on innovative strategies to enhance family engagement.

The Fellows Program, held at the UCLA Anderson School of Management, is a 12-day intensive leadership and management development course designed for Head Start executives. Over 80 hours of classroom instruction include lectures, group discussions, case studies, and workshops, all from a strategic planning perspective. The curriculum, developed by UCLA faculty through field research and focus groups, applies current management concepts to meet the specific needs of Head Start programs.

Since its inception in 1991, the program has trained over 1,700 directors and managers, equipping them to lead Head Start programs that serve nearly one million economically disadvantaged children and families across the U.S.



Left to right, Dr. Patricia Rodriguez, Kenneth Gilbert, Debra Baca, and Kathleen Barney

PARENT ADVOCACY LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE

Parents, guardians, policy council members, and staff participated in the 16th Annual Parent Advocacy Leadership Institute (PAL) in Santa Fe, NM hosted by the New Mexico Head Start Association in January 2024. The event provided families and educators information and training to advocate for early childhood education and resources.

The three-day event was sponsored by NMHSA, HELP New Mexico, YDI, and Lakeshore. Attendees were welcomed with an overview of the institute’s activities, and a keynote address on the legislative process. Participants engaged in breakout sessions that included role-playing and letter-writing workshops. The workshops provided communication tips on how to express their concerns related to early childhood education to their legislators.

Participants gathered at the State Capitol where they visited with legislators, toured the roundhouse and enjoyed the many interactive displays and presentations as part of Early Childhood Education Day.

Exhibits included showcasing the impact and benefits of Head Start and Pre-K programs across New Mexico. The institute concluded with a group reflection including discussions on lessons learned, how to be effective advocates, and how to stay engaged throughout the year. The event underscored HeadStart’s longstanding commitment to supporting children and families.



YOUTH DEVELOPMENT INCORPORATED: A GREAT PLACE TO WORK!

As a leading nonprofit in New Mexico YDI excels in both community service and workplace culture, making it a highly attractive place to work. YDI prioritizes employee well-being with a generous health insurance plan covering over 90% of premium costs and a 6% employer match for retirement contributions, reflecting its commitment to long-term financial security for its staff. The organization

also invests in continuous professional development through regular training, education leave, and career advancement opportunities, empowering employees to grow and enhance their impact. YDI's workplace culture is built on a foundation of diversity, inclusivity, and dedication. Its workforce comprises individuals from varied cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds, fostering a supportive environment that values collaboration and

camaraderie. Additionally, YDI provides annual financial incentives and competitive salaries, rewarding staff for their hard work and dedication to serving Albuquerque's youth and families. For those seeking meaningful, transformative employment, YDI is a mission-driven organization dedicated to making a difference in the lives of local families and communities.



LOOKING AHEAD

A LEARNING AND TRAINING CENTER

A cutting-edge Learning and Training Center on Coors Boulevard NW in Albuquerque, is being designed to serve the growing west mesa community.

The proposed 10,000-square-foot facility will feature classrooms, outdoor learning areas, a commercial kitchen, family rooms, early intervention spaces, and adult classrooms for professional development. The center will provide free child development services for 48 residents of the nearby West Ridge Development, in partnership with Chelsea Investment Corporation and YES Housing.

In addition to offering early education for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers, the center will serve as a professional development hub, providing training for parents and community members interested in becoming teachers. The center will also function as a practicum site for students pursuing Child Development Credentials.



The center will be designed with a focus on New Mexico's scientific ingenuity and will include a central playground for safety and supervision, as well as energy-saving solar elements. YDI aims to secure funding from federal, state, and local sources, including the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the New Mexico PreK program. The project will address the high demand for child development services in the West Mesa area, which is home to over 54,000 residents and lacks accessible early learning centers.

YDI is seeking community support, as well as contributions from government agencies, for the capital funding needed to complete this project, which aims to serve families for the next 50 years.

MONITORING REVIEW AND FINANCIAL AUDIT

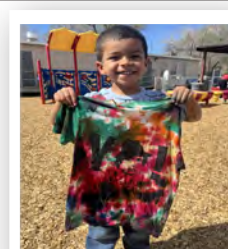
MONITORING REVIEW AND FINANCIAL AUDIT

On October 25-28, 2021, YDI completed the Focus Area One Monitoring Review. Reviews of Head Start agencies are conducted under the authority of the Head Start Act to determine whether Head Start agencies meet regulatory requirements with respect to program, administrative, and financial management, and to help programs identify areas for improvement and areas of strength as part of their ongoing self-assessment process. **The overall results of the October 2021 review for Youth Development, Inc. determined that the program met the requirements of all applicable Head Start Program Performance Standards, laws, regulations, and policy requirements.**

The agency financial audit report completed by SJT Group LLC for the 2022-2023 fiscal year revealed an "unmodified" auditor report. The audit was approved by the YDI Policy Council on May 11, 2024.

PROGRAM	BUDGET	FUNDING SOURCE
Head Start/Early Head Start	\$18,438,370	U.S. Dept. of Health & Human Services – Admin. for Children & Families (ACF)
American Rescue Plan One-Time Funding	\$1,101,320	U.S. Dept. of Health & Human Services – Admin. for Children & Families (ACF)
Pre-K	\$958,280	N.M. Early Childhood Education & Care Department (ECECD)
N.M. Pre-K Stabilization One-time Funding	\$1,974,625	N.M. Early Childhood Education & Care Department (ECECD)
Home Visitation	\$471,552	N.M. Early Childhood Education & Care Department (ECECD)
Food Program (CACFP)	\$744,462	N.M. Early Childhood Education & Care Department (ECECD)
Childcare Subsidies	\$262,596	N.M. Early Childhood Education & Care Department (ECECD)
Nurse Family Partnership	\$505,320	Nurse Family Partnership Incentive Fund
Nurse Family Partnership	\$791,147	N.M. Medicaid
Nurse Family Partnership	\$492,184	N.M. Early Childhood Education & Care Department (ECECD)
ECECD Systems Building (Home Visitation)	\$60,000	N.M. Early Childhood Education & Care Department (ECECD)
Project LENA Language Development Grant	\$250,000	W.K. Kellogg Foundation
Bernalillo County Home Visitation Work Group	\$250,000	W.K. Kellogg Foundation
N.M. Grown	\$25,000	N.M. Early Childhood Education & Care Department (ECECD)
Non-Federal Match **For fiscal year July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024	\$2,687,526	Community/Parent Volunteer Services
		*** Head Start receives their funds from the federal government, but 20% matching contributions must come from what is called non-federal share or in-kind contribution of time, resources, materials, and services. For example, every federal \$1.00 spent, programs need to generate \$0.25 of in-kind.
TOTAL	\$29,012,382	

CATEGORIES	2024 BUDGET AMOUNT	2025 PROPOSAL BUDGET AMOUNT
Personnel	\$9,606,739	\$10,220,485
Fringe Benefits	\$3,502,989	\$2,869,003
Travel	\$13,000	\$13,000
Equipment	\$24,922	-0-
Supplies	\$1,155,582	\$914,697
Contractual	\$798,776	\$899,722
Other	\$1,755,493	\$1,649,464
Indirect	\$1,580,869	\$1,871,999
TOTAL	\$18,438,370	\$18,438,370



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