

# ABC

head start

2014 – 2015  
Program  
Results



Opening  
Doors for  
Children  
and  
Families

Celebrating 30 years of excellence

# **ABC Head Start Program Results**

**September 2014-2015**

## **Table of Contents**

	<b>Page</b>
<b>Program Basics</b>	
Background	1
Program Assessment	1
<b>Evaluation Results</b>	
Evaluation Highlights	2
Child and Family Profiles	3
Family Demographics: Examination of Trends	3
Children: Kindergarten Follow-up Survey	5
Child Development Outcomes	5
Parenting Outcomes	6
<b>Initiatives and Events</b>	
Celebrating 30 Years of Excellence	8
Intake Process Review	9
St. Francis Pilot Progress Evaluation Pilot	9
<b>Feedback from Parents</b>	11

# Program Basics

## Background

### **ABC Head Start's Vision:**

- *Every child a successful learner;*
- *Every family a committed partner; and*
- *Every community a strong supporter.*

The program is designed to achieve the following goals:

- Children are ready for kindergarten.
- Parents support children in reaching their potential.
- Community resources are available to meet the needs of children and families.
- ABC Head Start has the capacity to meet the current and future needs of Edmonton's children and families.



## Program Assessment

Each year, ABC Head Start evaluates how well the program is meeting the needs of children and families. These results are shared with families and other stakeholders. ABC Head Start also collects demographic information for our families in an effort to identify and respond to emerging trends.

ABC Head Start evaluated the following areas:

- Kindergarten teachers who report on children for kindergarten readiness after completing Head Start;

- Parents who assess the benefits of the Head Start program for their children and families;
- Parents who assess the benefits of the Parent Programming for themselves and their families.
- Classroom staff provided progress evaluations at the St. Francis site as a pilot project
- In 2014-2015 ABC Head Start conducted a Family Services Review where program staff, current parents and past parents were interviewed about their experience with the Family Services offered by ABC Head Start. The information garnered from this review will influence future program development and decisions made as to how to better support the families we serve.
- Engagement Dialogues with all staff were also completed in the 2014-2015 program year in an attempt to understand the current landscape and perspectives of employees with respect to their engagement and satisfaction with their work environment as well as create a baseline and determine how to create a positive and engaged workplace culture. The information collected through these dialogues has been compiled and will be used in revising the organizations current appreciation structure and will guide future discussions about the Agency's internal culture and values.



# Evaluation Results

## Evaluation Highlights

- During the 2014-2015 school year, 479 children and families, comprised of 894 parents and caregivers participated in the Head Start program.
- Kindergarten teachers completed a *Kindergarten Follow-up Survey* for 143 of the 508 children (28%) who attended Head Start in the 2013-2014 program year. Through this survey, teachers examined kindergarten readiness and developmental progress.
- A representative number of 121 parents and caregivers from a total of 479 families (25%) completed a *Parent Survey* on the satisfaction of the outcomes for the year.
- Of the 479 families, 50 families (10%) completed the Parent Group Surveys.
- ABC Head Start piloted a Progress Evaluation in our St. Francis site of 48 children as an opportunity to collect more in-depth information related to each child's development over the course of the program year.



## **Child and Family Profiles**

- Forty three percent (43%) of the parents or other primary guardians, who participated in the 2014-2015 program spoke English as a first language.
- Fifty seven percent (57%) spoke another primary language in the home; major language groups included: Urdu, Somali and Arabic.
- Sixty three percent (63%) of families had annual incomes of \$36,000 or less with ten and a half percent (10.5%) below \$15,000.
- Fifty eight percent (63%) of families had members employed full or part-time.
- Thirty four percent (34%) of parents or primary guardians cited Canada as their country of origin, while sixty six percent (66%) indicated they originated from other countries; the majority of these being Pakistan, Somalia, and India.



## **Family Demographics: Examination of Trends**

	<b>2011-2012</b>	<b>2012-2013</b>	<b>2013-2014</b>	<b>2014-2015</b>
Parents who spoke English as a first language	37%	41%	36%	43%
Parents who spoke another language other than English as a first language	63%	59%	64%	57%
Families who had annual incomes of \$36,000 or less	72%	85%	81%	63%
Families who had annual incomes of \$15,000 or less	N/A	30%	29%	10.5%
Families who had members that were employed full or part time	54%	63%	58%	63%
Families who cited Canada as their country of origin	39%	36%	27%	34%
Families who cited a Country other than Canada as their country of origin	61%	64%	73%	66%

ABC Head Start strives to provide a relevant and effective program to our children and families and therefore we track demographic data related to the children and families we serve. Having a comprehensive picture of the backgrounds and current situations our families have/are experiencing is paramount to ensuring this objective.

As illustrated above, a significant majority of families served by ABC Head Start in the past 4 years have been immigrant and refugee families. In response to this trend, we have adjusted our programming to better support our clients. We have increased the partnerships we have with immigrant and refugee serving agencies and we have adjusted our classroom profile in specific communities to respond to this need. We have also implemented measures to address the language barrier that can exist for some families and have work in partnership with interpreter services to provide better support.

The data collected also demonstrates that the majority of the families that we serve live in a state of extreme poverty with 63% - 81% of families reporting incomes lower than \$36,000 regardless of family size. Serving families with income vulnerability means that we must align ourselves with various agencies to assist in providing these families with much-needed services and amenities.

In an effort to better support the needs and challenges that living in this socioeconomic status can bring, ABC Head Start has been actively involved in the EndPoverty Edmonton initiative through the City of Edmonton. We understand that as a community agency serving low income populations, it is paramount that we advocate to affect public policy on behalf of our families. We will remain actively involved in this initiative as it works to better support vulnerable Edmontonians and eliminate poverty in our community.



## **Children: Kindergarten Follow-Up Survey** **(for 2013-2014 Children)**

The Kindergarten Follow-Up Survey outcomes indicated that:

- 69% of the children were ready for kindergarten while 31% required additional assistance;
- 85% of the children were adjusting to kindergarten;
- 67% of the children demonstrated average or above average skills compared to their peers;
- 67% of the children had average or above average social-emotional skills;
- 58% had average or above average communication skills;
- 64% had average or above average pre-literacy skills;
- 65% had average or above average fine motor skills;
- 79% had average or above average gross motor skills;
- 72% had average or above average cognitive skills;
- 64% of the parents were actively involved in their children's kindergarten program;
- 86% of the children would be placed in Grade One at the end of the kindergarten year.



## **Child Development Outcomes**

- 96% of the parents indicated that their child shows greater interest in crafts and activities involving fine motor skills
- 98% of parents said their child demonstrated a greater interest in communicating with others throughout their day while 96% of parents identified that their child was more interested in being with others and had increased interest in social interactions;

- 96% said their child enjoyed Head Start;
- 98% of the parents revealed they are doing more to help their child develop;
- 98% of parents said they are doing more to keep their children healthy;
- 98% said being involved with Head Start benefitted their children.

## **Parenting Outcomes**

- 93% of the parents had a better understanding of how to help their child develop and learn;
- 87% indicated they had a better understanding of child development;
- 94% advised they were better able to parent their child;
- 87% expressed they felt less stressed.
- 84% of the parents learned about new resources for their family and 77% increased their use of them;
- 97% of the parents formed trusting relationships with Head Start staff and 64% with other parents;
- 66% of the parents said their families felt less isolated;
- 78% had increased their connectedness to community resources.



## **Parent Survey**

Parents were most often involved with the Head Start through the parent group activities, orientation, meetings, appointment and other contacts with Head Start Staff. Parents commented they would appreciate more

volunteer opportunities, specifically to contribute in the classroom and on field trips.

The Parent Survey questions were designed to gather parental views on child development outcomes, parenting outcomes, family and support connections and parental involvement in the Head Start Program:

- 100% of survey respondents were satisfied with their Head Start experience and 99% stated that they would recommend the program to other families;
- 26% of the parents were frequently involved and 53% were occasionally involved in Head Start;
- 81% were satisfied with the school bus services.



### Pre and Post Parent Group Survey

Fifty (50) of 479 families (10%) responded to a second parent group survey that measured pre and post results. Two questions were presented to the survey participants:

- (a) **I would like to get the following...**
- (b) **I was satisfied with the following from parent groups...**

	Pre-Measure Evaluations	Post-Measure Evaluations
<b>Support</b>	(36) 74%	(36) 72%
<b>Meet new people</b>	(40) 82%	(38) 76%
<b>Learn about community resources</b>	(36) 74%	(39) 78%
<b>Learn how I can help children</b>	(45) 92%	(46) 92%
<b>Learn about parenting</b>	(31) 63%	(41) 82%
<b>Learn more about how children learn through play</b>	(36) 74%	(40) 80%

# Initiatives & Events

## Celebrating 30 Years of Excellence

ABC Head Start celebrated 30 years of service in the 2014/2015 program year. This milestone was marked by an agency-wide event at Prairie Gardens Adventure Farm that included all of our staff, volunteers, families and community stakeholders. Southland Transportation Ltd. graciously sponsored and provided transportation for over 900 of our children and families from our sites in Edmonton, to and from Bon Accord, Alberta! The day included many farm related activities, delicious food, entertainment and FUN! A great time was had by all!

In addition, we also presented the first annual Aleda Patterson Community Spirit Award to Ann Babb! This award was presented in recognition of a leader in our community who exemplifies community initiative and involvement. We were pleased to honour Ann in this meaningful way!



## **Intake Process Review**

During the 2014-2015 program year ABC Head Start reviewed our Intake Process and concluded that the model was no longer effective for our families or our daily operations. In response to these findings we implemented a new intake model that would expedite the process while still providing a comprehensive process to families. In April 2015 we piloted the new intake model which reduced the wait times for families to be accepted in programming by hosting Registration Events where families were able to attend, complete assessments and have their child's registration confirmed prior to leaving the event. This process was well received by our families who were grateful to immediately know that their child was registered for an early learning program. We hosted 10 events over the month of April, May and June in various areas of the city. By the end of June 2015 we had



registered 71% of our families, an increase from 63% of families that were registered at that time the previous year. Not only were we able to increase the number of families registered but we were also able to evaluate in real-time what the recruitment needs for our sites would be allowing us to target our strategies to better support the community. We will continue to improve the Intake Process and to build upon its strengths to ensure that it remains efficient for both the agency and the families we serve.

## **St. Francis Progress Evaluation Pilot**

For the 2014-2015 program year, ABC Head Start piloted a progress evaluation in the St. Francis site. In an effort to collect data related to child development over the course of the year a pre and post survey was implemented and completed by classroom staff. The survey focused on tracking child development in the following areas: fine and gross motor skills, cognitive development, communication skills and social emotional development. The results demonstrated by this data were rich and provided a unique perspective. Below is some of the information collected from a total of 48 child evaluations:

- At the beginning of the program classroom staff reported that 56.3% of children were unable to consistently communicate their needs in an appropriate manner and by program's end 93% of children were able to consistently complete this task. This is an overall improvement of 49%.
- Classroom staff at St. Francis identified some children exhibited challenges with cognitive development. 58% of children were challenged in their ability to count from 1 to 10 at the beginning of the program year and 50% were rarely or never able to identify basic colors. At the end of program, the same staff recorded that 95% of children could now count from 1 to 10 (53% improvement) and 96% were able to identify basic colors (46% improvement).
- 83.4% of children struggled with demonstrating appropriate social skills at program commencement while only 6% were still struggling in this area at the end of the program year. This represents a 78% improvement in the social development of children throughout the course of the year.
- 50% of children entering the St. Francis site in September 2014 demonstrated challenges following simple instructions whereas only 4% left the program in June 2015 still demonstrating these challenges. This is an improvement rate of 46% over the course of the year.
- St. Francis staff reported that some children entering into the program were struggling with their gross motor skills as demonstrated by their ability to catch a ball (71%) and jumping on one foot (63%). At program completion the children's development in this area had progressed with 95% of children being able to consistently catch a ball with both hands and 98% of children being able to jump on one foot.
- At the beginning of program classroom staff reported that some children were also struggling with their fine motor skills. 67% of children were rarely, if ever, able to use scissors effectively and 50% were challenged when required to serve themselves food. At the end of program, 95% of children were able to use scissors effectively (improvement of 61%) and 89% of children were able to serve themselves (improvement of 39%).

Due to the success of this pilot we will be implementing a similar evaluation structure agency wide in 2015-2016.

## Comments about All ABC Head Start Programs

### **From Parents:**

"Head Start has made a huge difference in mine and my child's life. My son has come a long way in his development since joining ABC Head Start. I have been given lots of ideas to help my child and better myself as a parent. Putting my son in this program is without a doubt the best decision that I could have made for my child. The staff have all been so awesome and patient and the volunteers in the classroom make a wonderful aspect to the program."

"My wife and I very satisfied with their program that's why this is our third kid in the program."

"It was a great experience to attend this program. It played a very important role to help my child develop and learn. My child got social. He also learned how to express his feelings. He learned to work in a routine. He developed love for reading. He also learned to follow the rules and directions. As a parent I improved my parenting skills. I got knowledge about resources and services in the city. We had a great time. We are lucky we were part of it."

"ABC Head Start is an excellent program for children to start and develop a good relationship with the new world of school in which they are going to step in. For parents also it is a great opportunity to form supportive and trusting relationships with other people."

"Head Start is an amazing program and it helped my child. I actually have had 3 kids in Head Start and they did great work with all 3."

"ABC Head Start is a blessing for new immigrants and low income families whose children are new and trying to adapt to this system. All aspects of child's growth and development are very well addressed. This program is very supportive to the family as a whole."

