



Annual Report

Berkshire County Head Start
Child Development Program, Inc.

2020
2021



Mission & Vision

Year in Review



Who We Are...

Our Mission

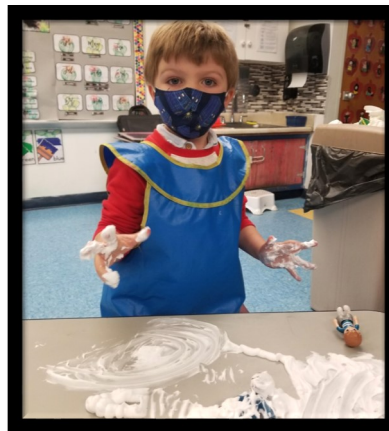
It is our goal to work with families and assist children to develop socially, cognitively, physically and emotionally while fostering a positive self-image and love for learning that will help them succeed in our program, in public school and later in life. We are dedicated to ensuring that all children and their families have an opportunity for a significant Head Start experience through support and partnership with community and staff, while emphasizing positive child outcomes through family participation.

What We do

Berkshire County Head Start was established in 1976. It is an early childhood program providing education, health, and comprehensive services to children and their families. We serve all of Berkshire County with sites in Great Barrington, Lee, Becket, Pittsfield, and North Adams. Our programs are rated on the Quality Improvement Rating Scale (QRIS) and we strive for excellence in all categories.

Berkshire County Head Start offers:

- Nutritious breakfast and lunch
 - Transportation from designated bus stops
 - Highly trained and dedicated teaching staff
 - Guidance to help families establish medical and dental care.
 - Family services; our Family Advocates provide parent and family support through home visits and links to supports in the community where our families reside.
- Home visitor program - Home Based Visitors work with parents and families in their homes to identify and achieve family goals and to strengthen their roles as parents to support their child's development and education.



Program Leadership

The role of the Management Staff is to oversee day-to-day operations related to the following areas:

- Support continuous quality improvement
- Manage and project program data
- Monitor goals, objective and regulatory compliance
- Support parent committees
- Generate and utilize data from operational reports
- Implement policies and procedures
- Provide training / technical assistance to Board and Policy Council
- Supervise staff and monitor budget
- Provide training and professional development
- Share reports with leadership

Berkshire County Head Start manages day-to-day activities and operating reports inform decisions made by the Policy Council and Board of Directors.

Senior Leadership



Brett Westbrook, MSW
Executive Director



Penny Evans
Director of Early Education



Doug Anzalone
Director of Finance



Maggie Steele
Director of Engagement
Services



Donna Denning
Director of Early Education



Lorie Harrington, RN
Director of Health and
Safety



Melanie Moran
Director of Human Resources

A Message from Our Executive Director

Brett Westbrook, MSW



Resilience and execution in a period of unprecedented change

To say that this fiscal year was an eventful one for Berkshire County Head Start would be an understatement. Knowing how important our services are to the people we serve, we knew that we needed to remain open and we needed to operate safely so that families could confidently access our services. Our program was able to quickly transition to virtual support in the height of the pandemic last year and then successfully transition back to in person services to provide the care and support that families need. Our staff quickly adapted to new and continuously changing policies, procedures and safety protocols to ensure that we were able to continue teaching young minds and support the diverse needs of families in our community. While managing all of that, staff were able to think outside of the box about creative and innovative strategies to implement curriculum in ways that makes learning fun and engaging for the children in our classrooms!

In every decision we made, we put the well-being of our families and staff at the forefront

In making the decision to reopen our program last year for in person services, our leadership team created a meticulous reopen plan to ensure the safety and wellbeing of our staff and families. These plans included detailed safety practices informed by the Office of Head Start, Department of Public, Center for Disease Control & Prevention and the Department of Early Education & Care. Because these plans were so carefully considered and thoughtfully implemented by all staff, our program has been successful in doing our part to prevent the spread of COVID 19 in our community. Moving into our new fiscal year, we will continue to seek guidance and support from the agencies mentioned above as safety is a priority in our program.

Performance and strategic progress

Our team has continued to participate in an ongoing strategic planning process to ensure that we are meeting our program goals. Some areas that we have seen tremendous progress:

- Enhanced salary scale to more closely align with market value compensation
- Strengthened human resource systems and resources
- Effective use of clinical resources to enhance positive social emotional outcomes for children
- Efficiency of data collection and utilization
- Strategic approach to professional development

I am proud to say that Berkshire County Head Start has delivered in a year of unprecedented disruption. We've worked hard to meet our mission, practice our values and provide continuity of care to our families during a time where it's needed the most.

PROGRAM RESILIENCE



PROGRAM

Strong COVID Safety Model
Adapting to COVID Challenges
Expansion and Improvement of
Program
Service to Community



STAFF

Increased Responsibilities Due
to COVID
Creative Thinking to Maintain
Engagement
Advocacy Skills for Program,
Children and their Families

***“ Resilience is
based on
compassion for
ourselves as
well as
compassion for
others” -***

***Sharon
Salzberg***



FAMILIES

Adaptability to Program
Restrictions
Engagement with the
Program in Virtual Setting
Commitment to their
Children and their Safety



CHILDREN

Adaptability to New Program
Requirements
Continued Ability to Learn
and Grow
Enhancing Creative Mindsets



Governance at Berkshire County Head Start

The policy council and the governing board work together to develop program goals and oversee services. Program activity and finance reports are reviewed monthly by the policy council and governing board to inform decisions and guide program improvement. Our Governance is involved in completing an annual self-assessment which inform overall goals for the program. Our major program objective is always to promote the best possible outcomes for children and families. The program's active governing bodies and management team utilized training and data analysis to support program goals and oversee effective Head Start services.

Lori Kays—Board of Directors, Community At Large



“ My name is Lori Kays and I joined the Board about six years ago. I love Head Start! I have never met a more dedicated and inspiring group of people. This last year and a half was difficult for all of us. Head Start continued to keep the organization going with creative and incredible new ideas for the families. Family is always first for Head Start. I am truly blessed to be a part of this organization!”

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

SUE DOUCETTE, President
RICHARD GRILLON, Vice President
DIANE JOHNSON, Secretary
AMANDA BLEIER, Treasurer
LORI KAYS
FRANCINE GERMAINE
DAN DILLON
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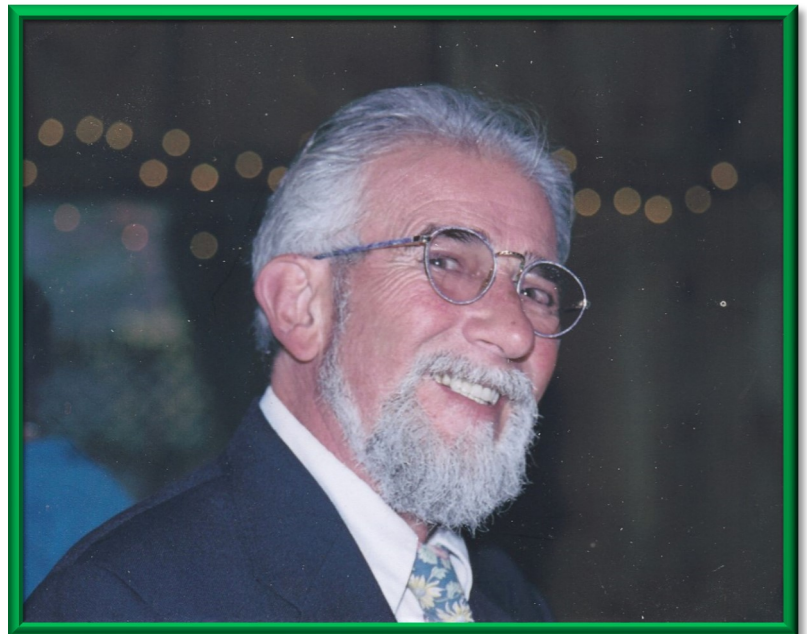
In Memory of Our Lost Board Members

Dan Dillon



Dan had served on our Board of Directors since 2006. We relied on his knowledge and caring demeanor to guide us through difficult decision making. He will be remembered as a kind, gentle man who loved his community and was willing to help in any way he could. Thank you, Dan, for all you have done.

Richard Grillon



Dick joined the Board in the early 1990s when Head Start first opened in the town of Washington, MA. He has been a Selectman in that town for 26 years. He was President of Berkshire Regional Housing and a VISTA volunteer. Dick retired after 33 years of state employment. Thank you, Dick, for all you have done to serve Berkshire County Head Start.

Thank you for your service and commitment to Berkshire County Head Start.

PARENT, FAMILY & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Berkshire County Head Start Child Development Program supported family well-being by emphasizing relationship building and home-to-school partnerships. Our Family Advocates and Home Visitors partner with families to identify strengths and needs to guide goal development. Families' goal progress and service referrals were tracked and reviewed monthly by the parent, family, and community engagement manager to identify trends in family needs. Program staff partnered with families to develop goals based on their strengths and needs and provided resources to support family goals.

253

Center based students

24

Home based students

Children by age:

2 years old	26
3 years old	86
4 years old	92
5 years old	45

Percent of eligibility:

Income at or below federal poverty line	33%
Public Assistance	31%
Foster Care	16%
Homeless	6%
Other	10%
Income at or below federal poverty line but not included in above	4%

5 CENTERS



LEE



GREAT



MEADOW



NORTH

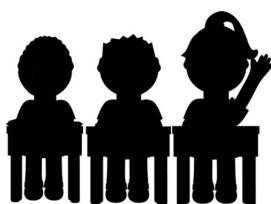


BRAYTON

BARRINGTON

LANE

COUNTY



Family Services

At Berkshire County Head Start we are proud to be partnering with families to give children a head start toward success!



Number of families involvement in discussing their child's screening & assessment results and their child's progress 200.



Number of Families that received the following program services to promote positive family outcomes:

Emergency/crisis intervention	217
Mental health services	217
Support transitioning between programs	72
Education on Nutrition	6%
Number of families experiencing homelessness	15

PITTSFIELD COORDINATED FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Berkshire County Head Start partners with the Coordinated Family and Community Engagement Programs (CFCE). CFCE are locally based programs serving families with children birth through school age. This grant is supported by funds provided by the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care. The grant promotes parent education, family engagement, child development, and early literacy.



We served a total of 404 Families and 556 Children!

- Completed 36 ASQ through our ASQ Online Family Access Portal online
- Offered 4 Positive Discipline Online Parent Session
- We had 12 parents attend the January Session

During our 2020-2021 year, CFCE provided:

- 23 Pre-Recorded Virtual Play and Learn Sessions
- 33 Interactive Zoom Preschool Play and Learn Groups
- 9 Interactive Zoom STEAM Groups
- 8 Interactive Zoom Author Study Groups
- 13 Outdoor In person Fun on the Farm groups (approved by the Pittsfield Board of Health)

PRIORITIZING MENTAL HEALTH

Staff Wellness

Berkshire County Head Start is promoting an awareness to Staff Wellness. This initiative is focused on a holistic approach including financial wellness, stress management, work/life balance, and physical well-being. Each month will have a theme and an associated wellness activity.

Our staff have ongoing access to the Employee Assistance Program, which provides a broad range of services to support:

- Marriage and relationship issues
- Work related mental health issues
- Legal financial challenges
- Stress and anxiety
- Alcohol and drug dependency
- Health and well concerns



Positive Social Emotion Outcomes for Children for Children

We continue to hold a strong partnership with the Brien Center and other mental health consultants who provide ongoing clinical observation and guidance to our staff to support the needs of children.

Our program continues to assess and enhance our trauma informed care framework .

Staff Support

Professional Development

Financial Support Toward Education Advancement

Our program continues to provide financial support for tuition and certifications related to the positions our staff hold to serve children & families. Additional staff are compensated & recognized for degree and for completion.



Enhancing Capacity to Provide Trauma Informed Care

We are implementing a clinical training plan to enhance trauma-informed practices in our classrooms, to ensure that we are providing ongoing professional development opportunities to support the needs of the children and families in our program. We are not only assessing the training needs for staff, but also exploring clinical supports & resources that will benefit our work.

Leadership Specific Trainings

- ⇒ Understanding Your Leadership Role
- ⇒ Managing Diverse Work Styles
- ⇒ Communication Skills
- ⇒ Establishing Performance Expectations
- ⇒ Handling Performance Problems
- ⇒ Managing Conflict
- ⇒ Legal Liabilities of the Supervisor
- ⇒ Situational Leadership

All Staff Trainings

- ⇒ Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework
- ⇒ Trauma-Informed Care
- ⇒ Understanding, Preventing, and Responding Effectively to Challenging Behavior
- ⇒ Playing Nice in the Sandbox, Even in a Radically Changing World
- ⇒ De-escalation



KINDERGARTEN READINESS

Berkshire County Head Start Child Development Program offered education strategies and services to support children's school readiness. The program used The Creative Curriculum to guide center-based learning activities, implemented the Growing Great Kids curriculum within its home-based services, and used Teaching Strategies GOLD to assess all children. Based on the assessment results, teachers developed learning plans to support each child's learning style. Teachers were supported by education supervisors who observed classrooms, analyzed data, and helped develop effective teaching strategies. To help families prepare for their children's kindergarten transitions, family advocates provided parents with information about kindergarten registration and enrollment and helped them obtain the required documentation. Then, school staff offered on-site visits for families and conducted observations in Head Start classrooms. To bring kindergarten teachers up to date, program staff provided a skills-at-a-glance form that outlined each child's developmental skills for their receiving school. The program implemented education and transition strategies to help families become ready for school.



Berkshire County Head Start, Fall/Spring 2020 – 21, Child Outcomes

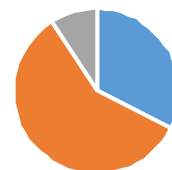
The data reflects children who were present for 2 or more checkpoints

Literacy
Fall



■ Meets Expectations ■ Below Expectations
■ Exceeds Expectations

Literacy
Spring



■ Meets Expectations ■ Below Expectations
■ Exceeds Expectations

KINDERGARTEN READINESS

Language Fall



- Meets Expectations
- Below Expectations
- Exceeds Expectations

Language Spring



- Meets Expectations
- Below Expectations

Cognitive Fall

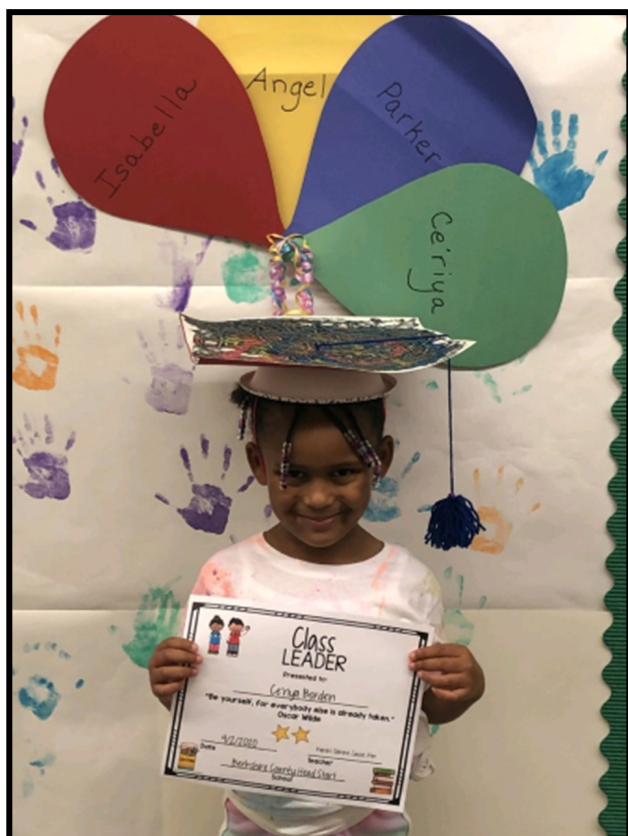


- Meets Expectations
- Below Expectations
- Exceeds Expectations

Cognitive Spring



- Meets Expectations
- Below Expectations
- Exceeds Expectations



KINDERGARTEN READINESS



Physical Fall



- Meets Expectations
- Below Expectations
- Exceeds Expectations

Physical Spring



- Meets Expectations
- Below Expectations
- Exceeds Expectations

Social Emotional Spring



- Meets Expectations
- Below Expectations
- Exceeds Expectations

Social Emotional Fall



- Meets Expectations
- Below Expectations
- Exceeds Expectations



The Impact

Through direct collaboration with the families, community service providers, and BCHS staff, we have many success stories for our children and our families.



“The implementation of virtual sessions was a great help to families. We were able to still provide educational services for children and support for their families. During our second virtual session we were able to also provide weekly socialization opportunities. Multiple parents expressed their gratitude to me regarding the virtual programming.” - **Family Advocate**



“Through the direct work of new processes and collaboration we worked with the family of a child who once struggled in classroom setting to create an entry plan to proactively address the child’s needs where we learned about the child and family’s strengths, interests, difficulties, and how best to support the child through difficult moments. We then entered the child into the program and worked closely with the family and their providers to clarify roles and provide a continuum of care and structure to the child within our program. Currently, the child is thriving, even with the added COVID restrictions within the program.” — **Family Support Specialist**

“Families loved activities and books sent home during program closure. They enjoyed HS staff keeping in touch by phone, text, emails and zoom.” - **Family Advocate**



Health Services

Berkshire County Head Start Child Development Program's qualified staff and Health Services Advisory Committee (HSAC) members collaborated with consultants, health care providers, and community partners to meet families' health needs. HSAC members provided additional health supports by sharing information about their agencies and providing training and resources for staff and parents on topics including smoking cessation and healthy eating.

Berkshire County Head Start Child Development Program continues to implement safety practices and procedures to ensure services were provided in safe environments. All Head Start staff participated in required annual health and safety training, which included topics such as infectious disease, medical emergencies, first aid, cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), and child abuse and neglect.



Health Services Advisory Committee (HSAC) members

Joan Johnston	Family Nurse Practitioner
Pam O'Bert	Berkshire Medical Center
Sylvana Bryan	Pittsfield Public School
Becky Krysiak	Health Families
Catherine Marchetto	Operation Better Start
Cheryl Thompson	Advocacy For Access
Linda Avalor	Operation Better Start
Terrie Gardino	Dufour Bus Company
Joyce Brewer	Berkshire AHEC
Michelle Sylvester	Berkshire North WIC
Sean Carollo	Lead Poisoning Prevention Program
Kayla Donnelly Winters	Pittsfield Health Dept.
Shaun Fox	RDN, LDN Nutrition Consultant

Health Services

95%

of children have health insurance.



99%

of children have continuous, accessible health care provided by a health care professional.



96%

of children have continuous accessible dental care provided by an oral health care professional.



99%

of children are up to date on all immunizations.

Berkshire County Head Start provides safe and healthy learning experiences indoors and outdoors. All children receive the following care and attention they need:



Oral Health



Nutrition



Physical Activity and Motor Development



Sleep and Rest



Perceptual Development

FINANCIALS

Revenue

	FED	STATE	OTHER	TOTAL
4200 · FEDERAL REVENUES	2,618,622	0	0	2,618,622
4300 · STATE REVENUES	0	2,080,166	0	2,080,166
4400 · PRIVATE REVENUES	0	209,975	33,391	243,366
Total Income	2,618,622	2,290,141	33,391	4,942,154

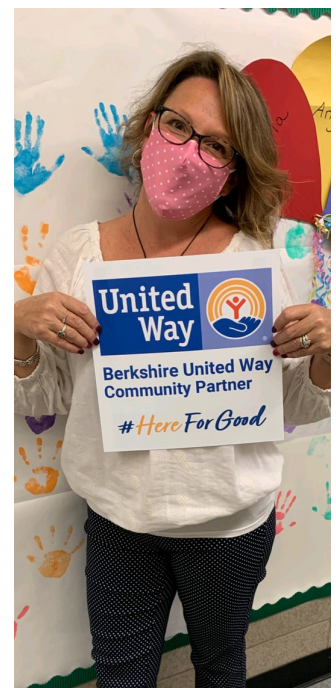
In Kind Revenue- Rent/Utilities	872,342
In Kind Revenue- Volunteers	11,922



- ⇒ Berkshire United Way **\$5,000** for parent education
- ⇒ BUW **\$40,000** to support staff Salaries
- ⇒ State Supplemental **\$286, 957** was awarded to support staff salaries and incentives
- ⇒ American Rescue Plan **\$379, 291** to support summer programming need, staff salaries, transportation, outreach strategies and classroom materials (2 year grant period)
- ⇒ Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRRSAA) **\$95,407** to support COVID related expenses for our program (2 year grant period)

Expenses

	FED	STATE	OTHER	TOTAL
SALARIES	1,526,879	1,312,563	0	2,839,442
FRINGE BENEFITS	378,770	358,022	0	736,792
INSURANCE EXPENSES				
UTILITIES EXPENSE	131,468	112,734	0	244,202
CONTRACTED SERVICES	91,607	78,805	671	171,083
SUPPLIES EXPENSE	41,534	27,849	5,763	75,146
MAINTENANCE EXPENSE				
TRAINING EXPENSE	29,245	5,979	0	35,224
ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES	231,286	211,343	711	443,340
OTHER EXPENSES	192,717	60,144	7,145	260,006
Total Expense	2,623,506	2,167,439	32,251	4,823,196





BERKSHIRE COUNTY HEAD START CHILD DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM, INC.