



EARLY HEAD START ANNUAL REPORT

Serving eligible families in Middlesex County



FISCAL YEAR
2023

JANUARY –
DECEMBER
2023



aces Early Head Start

ACES EARLY HEAD START SERVICES
300 WASHINGTON STREET
MIDDLETOWN, CT 06457

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WHO WE ARE



OUR MISSION

At ACES Early Head Start, our mission is to foster a future where each individual thrives within resilient communities grounded in authentic connections and secure attachments. We aim to nurture enduring success through comprehensive education, health and family services.

OUR VISION

At ACES Early Head Start, we envision a future where equality and prosperity are the norms, where everyone has the opportunity to thrive. Through education, health, and family services, we nurture individuals and family's potential, creating a more equitable and just society.

OUR GOAL

The goal of this program is to promote the development of 60 infants/toddlers and pregnant persons and enable caregivers to fulfill their roles as parents and move toward self-sufficiency.

EARLY HEAD START POLICY COUNCIL

Jessica Stark, *Policy Council Co-Chairperson*
Jordan Paisley, *Policy Council Co-Chairperson*

ACES GOVERNING BOARD

Susan Riccio, *Chair*



Advocacy, Commitment, Excellence, Service.
Dedicated to enhancing and transforming lives through education, innovation, and leadership.

FROM THE EARLY HEAD START DIRECTOR

Greetings Middlesex County,

As we reflect on the accomplishments of the past fiscal year, I am pleased to share with you the highlights of ACES Early Head Start's activities and achievements during 2023.

Despite the ongoing challenges, ACES Early Head Start maintained full enrollment throughout the year. Moreover, we exceeded the 10% mandate for enrolling children with disabilities (those whom are Part C eligible), underscoring our commitment to inclusive early childhood education.

I am proud to report that our financial stewardship remained exemplary, with the most recent ACES financial audit as of June 30, 2023, yielding no findings for Early Head Start. This achievement reflects our unwavering dedication to fiscal responsibility and transparency.

Despite facing a staffing shortage at the beginning of the 2023 program year, our team ensured no home visits were missed, thanks to the steadfast support of our Family Development Coordinator and Education and Disability Manager. Their dedication ensured uninterrupted support for our families. In October 2023, we welcomed a new Home Visitor/Family Advocate, further enhancing our community service. Her professionalism and dedication embody the values of ACES Early Head Start, and we are grateful to have her on our team.

I am delighted to highlight our FA2 (Focus Area 2) Federal Review that took place the week of July 24, 2023. This intense, week-long review scrutinized each component, including Education, Health, Mental Health, Family Service, ERSEA, and Fiscal. Staff and child files were meticulously reviewed; and parents, staff, community members, and governing bodies were interviewed. After a few months of waiting, we received our FA2 report, which showed no citations—a perfect outcome for any Early Head Start program.

Furthermore, for the fiscal year 2023, ACES Early Head Start successfully housed five families through the utilization of the ECHO (Early Childhood and Housing Opportunity) voucher program. ECHO, a collaborative effort between the Connecticut Department of Housing and the Connecticut Office of Early Childhood, aims to address housing challenges faced by families.

After hearing concerns about transportation at last year's community brunch, I initiated a partnership with River Valley Transit. Originally intending to offer staff a "Transit Ride," the collaboration has grown significantly. Now, not only does an individual attend ACES Early Head Start's Policy Council, but I also serve on the River Valley Transit Advisory Committee. This partnership fosters direct connections between families and community partners. Additionally, we're developing opportunities for families to experience a "Transit Ride" and learn about the system firsthand.

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to our community partners, the ACES Governing Board, our Policy Council members, families, and staff for their tireless efforts in making 2023 another remarkable year for ACES Early Head Start. Together, we will continue to nurture children and families through quality early childhood education and support services.

Thank you for your ongoing support and commitment to our mission.

Warm regards,



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Heather M. Granja'.

Heather M. Granja
Program Director

FISCAL YEAR 2023 EXPENDITURES

The EHS (Early Head Start) budget is separated into two categories:

1. **OPERATIONS**, which are costs related to the day-to-day management of the program, including staff salaries and costs to support services to families. This also includes **Training & Technical Assistance**, which are costs related to the training of EHS staff.
2. **NON-FEDERAL SHARE**, which are in-kind donations or services received from third parties or contributed by the agency during the program period. Total must equal 25% of federal award, unless a waiver is applied for an approved by the Regional Office.

This report reflects funded enrollment, funding sources and activities for ACES Middlesex County Early Head Start Partnership for the fiscal year January 1, 2023 through December 31, 2023, in accordance with Head Start Act 644(a)(2).

Total Federal Share: \$1,102,394

Total Non-Federal Share (In-Kind Contributions): \$289,314 (\$275,599 required)

FEDERAL SHARE

CATEGORIES	EXPENSES
Salaries	\$389,860
Benefits	\$53,474
Supplies	\$99,320
Contractual – Middlesex Health	\$391,858
Training & Technical Assistance	\$15,250
Other – Building Maintenance	\$105
Other – Local Travel	\$52
Other – Advertising	\$878
Other – Consultants	\$29,953
Other – Communication	\$2,163
Other – Computer Software	\$9,687
Other – Technology Support	\$8,000
Other – Technology Leases	\$2,067
Other – Translation Services	\$1,515
Other – Dues & Fees	\$6,643
Other – Parent Services	\$3,408
TOTAL EXPENDED	\$1,102,394

NON-FEDERAL SHARE

CATEGORIES	EXPENSES
ACES Facilities & Office Space	\$158,332
MDSX Facilities & Office Space	\$35,935
Salaries & Benefits (Consultants)	\$26,161
Volunteers – Governance	\$68,886
TOTAL NON-FEDERAL SHARE	\$289,314

WHO WE SERVED

All demographic data based upon 2022-2023 Program Information Report (PIR) unless otherwise noted.

PROGRAM OPTIONS:

- 60 Home Visiting slots available:
 - Children ages 0-3 years: 54
 - Expectant People: 6

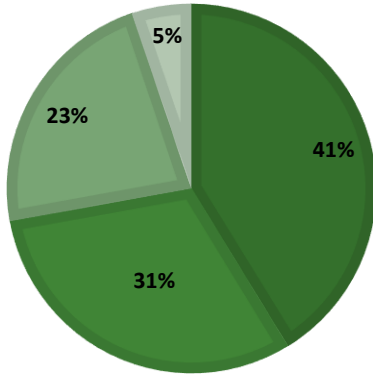
2022-2023 SERVICE NUMBERS:

- 97 total children
- 90 total families
- 20 total expectant people

AVERAGE REPORTED MONTHLY ENROLLMENT: 100%

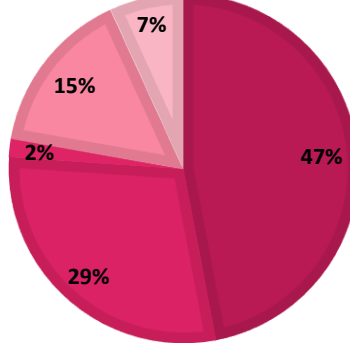
CHILD AGES

- Under 1 year
- 1 year old
- 2 years old
- 3 years old



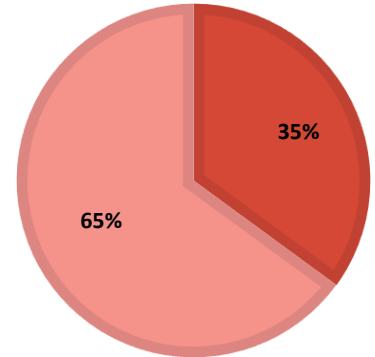
ELIGIBILITY

- Income eligible
- Public Assistance
- Foster Care
- Homeless
- Over Need



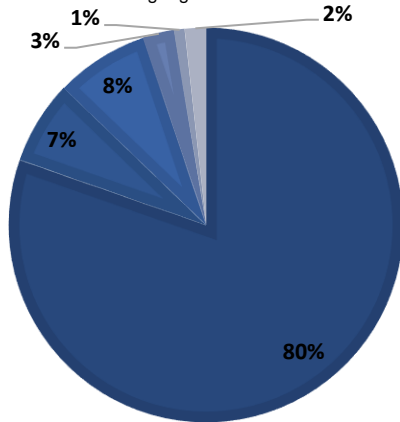
ETHNICITY

- Hispanic or Latino origin
- Non-Hispanic or Non-Latino origin



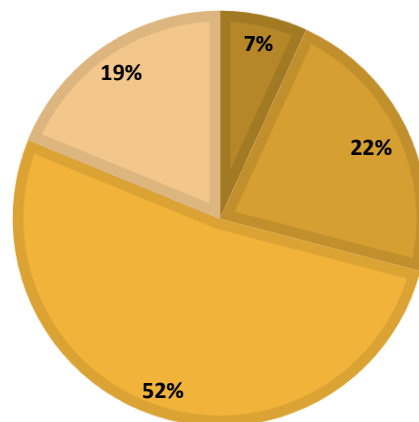
LANGUAGE

- English
- Spanish
- Middle Eastern & South Asian Languages
- East Asian Languages
- European & Slavic Languages
- African Languages



RACE

- Asian
- Black/African American
- White
- Biracial/Multi-racial



CHILD HEALTH OUTCOMES

EHS is not interested only in the children enrolled in the program, but in the entire family. We ensure that families have quality information on good health habits and offer workshops and in-service training. Our staff assists families in obtaining the most up-to-date physicals and vaccinations, and link families to dental services in the community.

88%

of enrolled children were **up to date** on a schedule of age-appropriate **preventive and primary health care, and oral health care**, according to the CT Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic, and Treatment (EPSDT) schedule for well childcare.

PREPARING CHILDREN FOR KINDERGARTEN

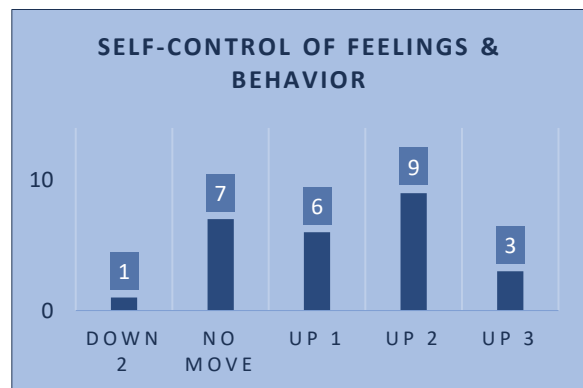
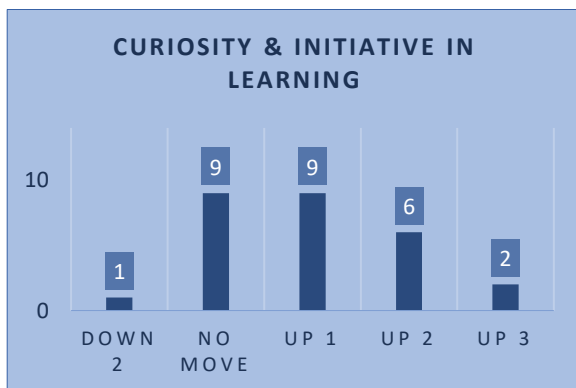
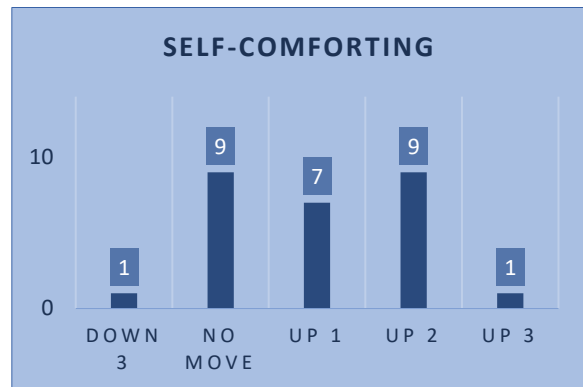
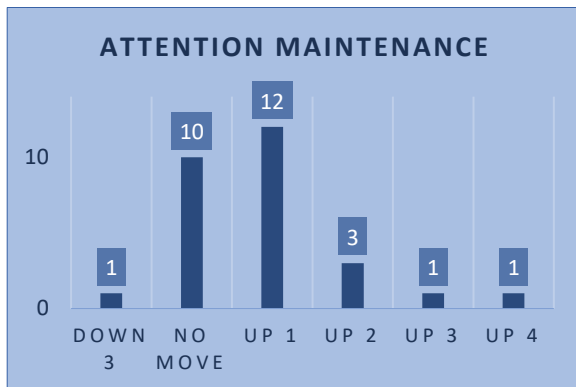
ACES Early Head Start developed nine school readiness goals for the 2019-2020 program year to align with the five central domains of the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework (2015):

- Approaches to Learning
- Social and Emotional Development
- Language and Literacy
- Cognition
- Perceptual, Motor, and Physical Development

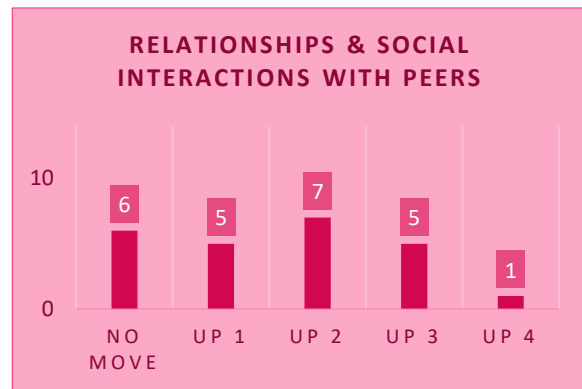
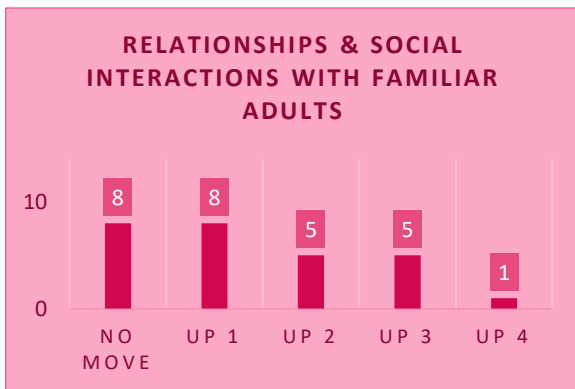
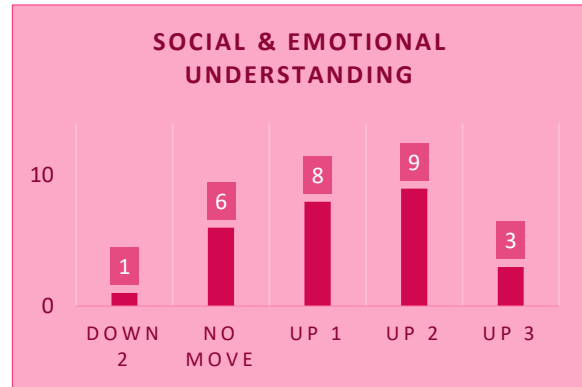
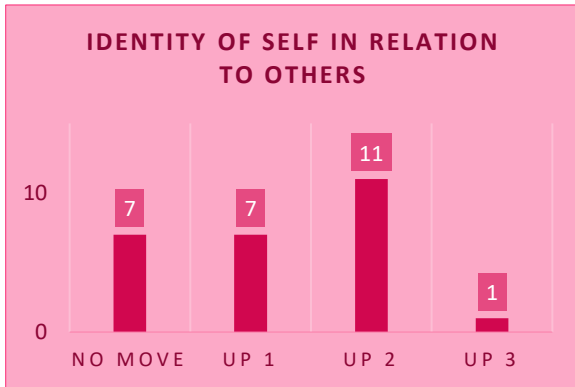
During our 2019-2020 Winter cycle, we piloted the ChildPlus Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP) assessment and made the full switch to using that assessment for the 2020-2021 program year. The DRDP is a child assessment for children birth through age five, developed in California as part of their technical support system. ChildPlus is offering this assessment as part of their information system, providing all child data in one system. This assessment better suits our needs and allows for more parent-friendly reports that are informative as well as easy to understand.

The growth data in this report reflects a subset of children with sufficient data through the 2021-2022 program year (September 1, 2022 – August 31, 2023). The DRDP assessment compares children to themselves with growth being determined by an increase in scoring bands. The bands are as follows: Responding Earlier, Responding Later, Exploring Earlier, Exploring Middle, Exploring Later, Building Earlier, Building Middle, Building Later & Integrating Earlier.

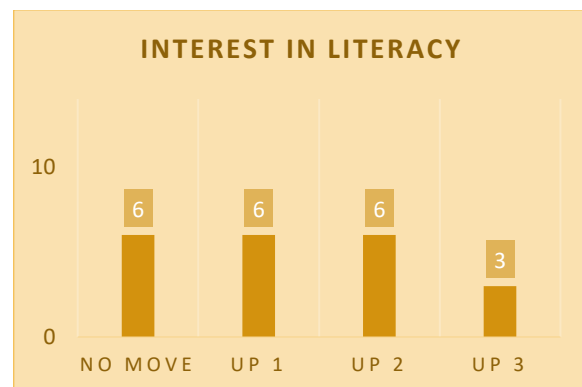
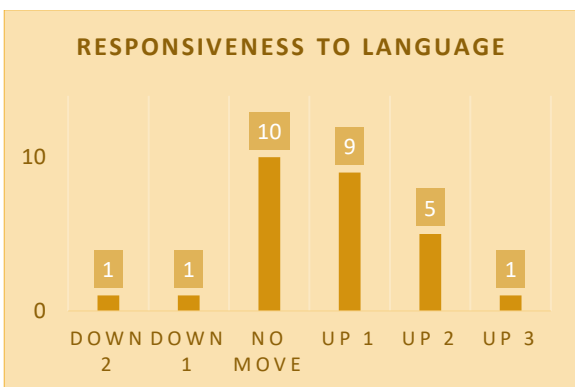
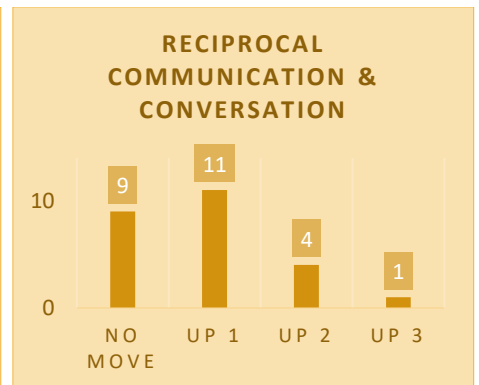
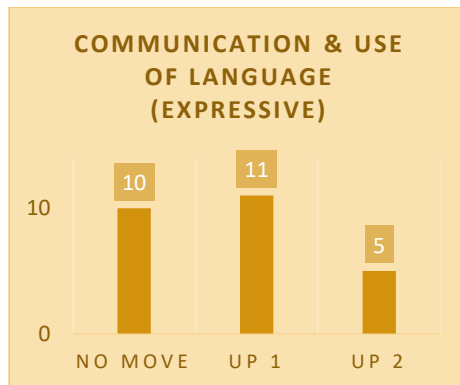
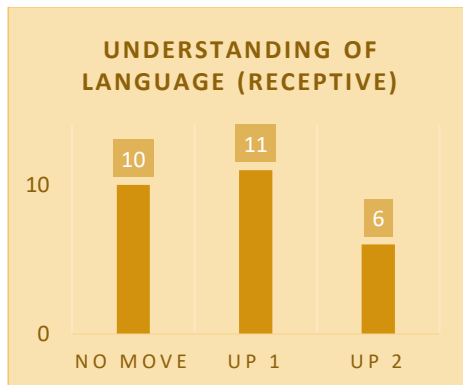
APPROACHES TO LEARNING – SELF-REGULATION: GROWTH



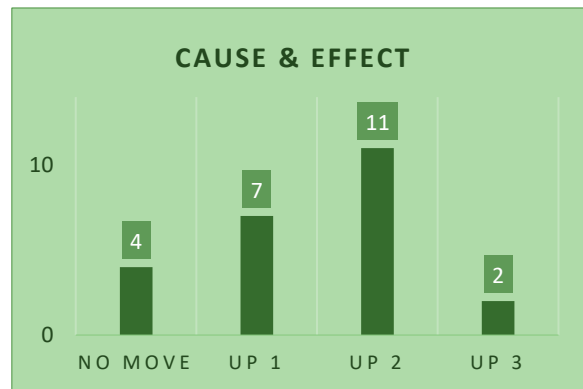
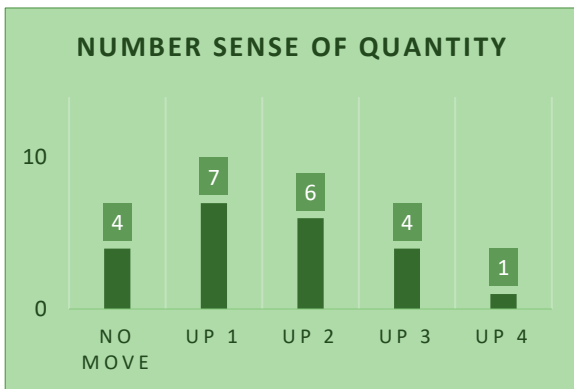
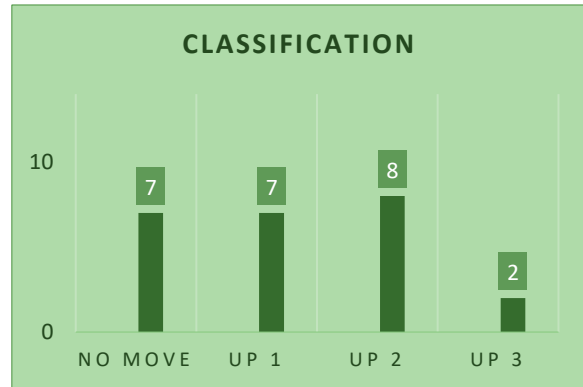
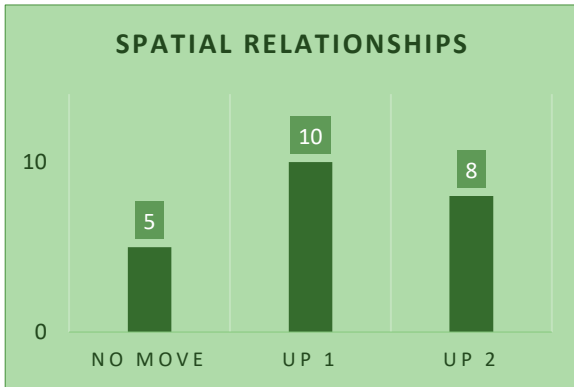
SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT: GROWTH



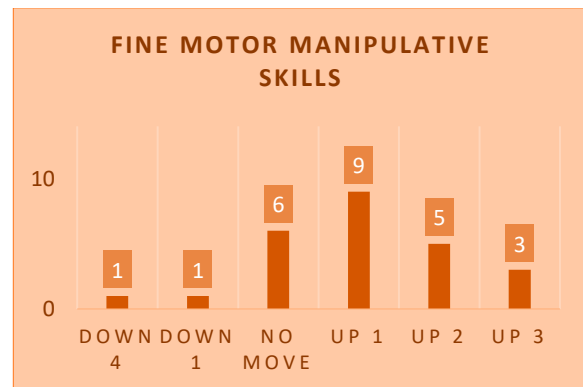
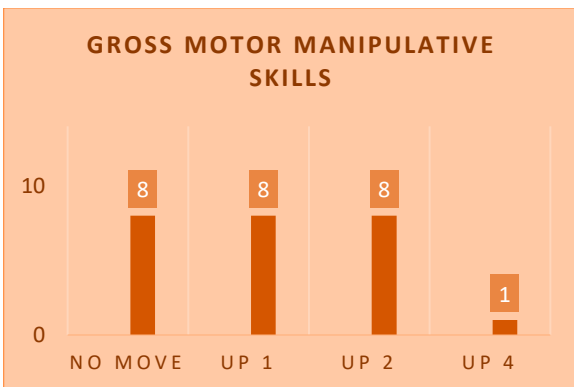
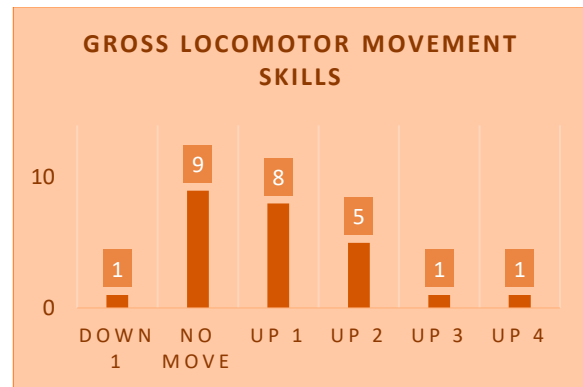
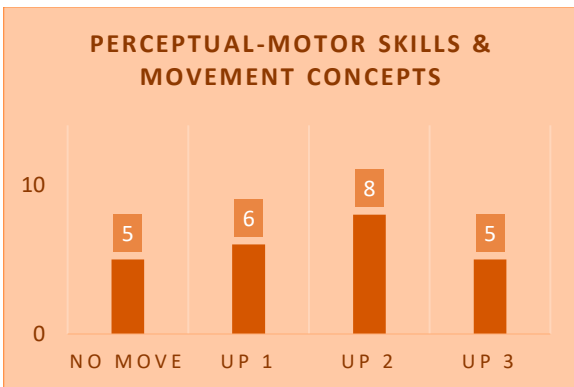
LANGUAGE & LITERACY DEVELOPMENT: GROWTH



COGNITION, INCLUDING MATH AND SCIENCE: GROWTH



PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT: GROWTH



PARENT INVOLVEMENT ACTIVITIES

POLICY COUNCIL

- Members were elected from Early Head Start parents, as well as ACES Governing Board and community representatives
- Met regularly, approved hiring, and approved grant proposals
- Volunteer sub-committees met in the areas of Personnel and Self-Assessment
- Head Start Orientation and Governance training was provided to all interested parents and community members

PARENT COMMITTEE ALLIANCE

- In-Person, Middletown, CT
 - Held 8 meetings
 - Average attendance: 4 parents
 - 17 parents met during the Family Fun Day event in Middletown
- Grace Church
 - Held 2 meetings
 - Average attendance: 2 parents

Topics Addressed:

- Parent Observations
- Policy Council Updates
- Program Updates
- Health and Safety
- Parent Advocacy
- Community Events
- Parent Suggestions
- Meeting Their Needs

PARENT EDUCATION

Topics included: health and wellness, safety in the home and outdoors, promoting language acquisition, family goal setting, child development, importance of music and movement, dental health, healthy nutrition, reading to children and reading children's cues.

FAMILY FUN DAY

- The annual event was held August 4, 2023 in Middletown at the EHS office on 300 Washington St.
- Families engaged in games and movement activities, as well as interacting with some of our community partners and their resources.

SOCIALIZATION PLAYGROUPS

The purpose of our socialization playgroups for infants and toddlers is to support the child's development by strengthening the parent/child relationship. Socialization playgroups are designed to reinforce many of the activities and goals that are developed by the family and home visitor during their home visits. Parents are very hands-on during socialization playgroups.

Family Activities	# Events	Average # Parents	Average # Children
ACES Early Head Start Socialization	15	5	6
Grace Episcopal Church Socialization	5	2	2
Walk & Talk	8	3	4

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

- City of Middletown
- Columbus House
- Community Health Center, Inc.
- CT Birth to Three
- CT Dental Health Partnership
- CT Dept. of Children and Families
- CT Foodbank
- Diaper Bank of CT
- ECHO Program
- Faith Lutheran Church
- Grace Episcopal Church
- Hallie House
- Injury Free Kids
- Integrated Refugee & Immigrant Services (IRIS)
- LEARN Young Children and Families
- Liberty Bank
- Middlesex Central CT Chapter of the American
- Middletown Adult Education
- Middlesex Health
- Middletown Fire Department
- Middletown Police/PAL
- Middletown School Readiness Council
- Middlesex United Way
- River Valley Transit
- Russell Library
- Shoreline Soup Kitchens and Pantries
- The Connection, Inc.
- Women, Infants & Children (WIC)

BIRTH TO THREE PARTNERS

- ABC Intervention
- American School for the Deaf
- Beacon Services of Connecticut
- Creative Interventions
- Easter Seals of Greater Waterbury
- Jane Bisantz & Associates, LLC
- LEARN: Partners for Birth to Three
- Reachout, Inc.
- Rehabilitation Associates of CT, Inc.
- Sarah, Inc. – Kidsteps
- TheraCare

LOCAL EDUCATIONAL AGENCY PARTNERS

- Clinton Public Schools
- Cromwell Public Schools
- Middletown Public Schools
- Old Saybrook Public Schools
- Portland Public Schools
- Westbrook Public Schools