



## Annual Report - Program Year 2010-2011

Northwest Community Action provided comprehensive Head Start services to 195 children and their families in our four county service area. Of this group, 71 were 3 years old, 115 were 4 years old, and 9 were 5 years old but not ready to start kindergarten. 49 children were identified with special needs and individual services meeting their needs were provided in conjunction with each area school district. Services include home visits, centers at area schools, and nutritious breakfasts, snacks or lunches. Also provided are medical screenings done with each county's Nursing Service, oral health screenings, and follow-up work. Head Start is the payer if the child is not covered by MA, MN Care, or other insurance.

Northwest's Early Head Start program provided EHS services to 119 children, 0-3 years old, in all four of our counties. 35 were 0-12 months, 34 were 1-2 years, and 50 were 2-3 years old. 16 children had identified special needs and received coordinated services with Nursing Services, schools and other service providers. All traditional services were supplied to these children and families in the same fashion as with 3-5 Head Start. Additionally, 2 pregnant women were provided EHS services that included pre-natal referrals and support.

Funding for these programs consisted of federal HS/EHS funds of \$1,732,581 for services listed earlier including wages and benefits for the teachers, paraprofessional, family services staff and costs for administrative support. Both programs maintained full enrollment throughout the year. Centerbase attendance has averaged 90%. Other additional funding includes \$291,550 in an ARRA Early Head Start Expansion grant for 20 additional EHS enrollees in the Warroad and Roseau areas. All children and families received the same services regardless of funding source.

A yearly Training and Technical Assistance plan has been developed in conjunction with a Self Assessment that involved surveys from staff, parents and community members. Federal funding provided \$33,533 for the additional training and technical assistance for Head Start and Early Head Start staff.

With a larger waiting list of eligible 0-3 year olds than 3-5 years old in our service area, we continued to see the need for the expanded Early Head Start program.

Through staff discussion as well as Policy Council discussions, the decision was made to again request focusing Minnesota Head Start funding for Early Head Start. We, then, following our Community Assessment, provided Early Head Start services to additional infants and toddlers in the Warroad area. We served 21 children and families with funding from Minnesota. Note: these 21 children are included in the 92 listed above. Services were uniform across all EHS areas regardless of funding. Minnesota funds used for this program were \$200,412.

Our most recent federal HS/EHS monitoring visit was October 25 – 30, 2009. Three areas needed improvement: professional development plans, initial TB screenings and an Early Childhood Consultant to the Governing Board. Corrective action was implemented and a follow-up desk review had no findings or potential areas of non-compliance. Our most recent financial audit was completed in September, 2011 by Brady, Martz Accounting Services. There were no findings and it was a clean audit.

Our health-related services are well-received. 96% of our HS children and 98% of our EHS children have received an oral health screening. 100% of our HS children and 97% of our EHS children received a health screening. Percentages less than 100% are due to families being in the program a very short time before moving and completion of the screenings.

Parents are encouraged to volunteer in HS classrooms as well as having parent meetings throughout the years. Additionally, 4 conferences are held with each family. In Early Head Start, a weekly Home Visit is done with each enrolled child and a parent. Also, a Buddy Group get-together is held for all EHS families and their members twice each month in local area. Activities are provided for the children and parent information and education is shared.

Highlights of the year include building on a Literacy Curriculum called Words Work done in conjunction with the Minnesota Community Foundation and the St. Paul Foundation. Private foundation grants were received to greatly enhance literacy materials in each classroom. Head Start also continued using a classroom observation tool called CLASS which is designed to provide uniformity through excellence in classroom observations. Federal monitoring reviews will be incorporating the CLASS as well.

We also continued a very useful program that addresses the lack of oral health services for young children. A specially trained dental hygienist called a Collaborative Practice Dental Hygienist provides the Head Start and Early Head Start children an oral health screening. Referrals are made to area dentists.

We continued our involvement in a project to aggregate child outcome data statewide using the Teaching Strategies Gold online. Data reports do not involve

identifying any participant. The intent of the program is to document child growth success as well as point to areas for improvement. The results will also help refine our efforts for transitions to kindergarten.

During each school year, meetings are held with kindergarten teachers in each school district to review expectations and discuss transition experiences. Each child going to kindergarten is presented with a backpack with school supplies as a part of the transition program.