



Annual Report - Program Year 2008-2009

Northwest Community Action provided comprehensive Head Start services to 191 children and their families in our four county service area. Of this group, 69 were 3 years old, 113 were 4 years old, and 9 were 5 years old but not ready to start kindergarten. 38 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, dental 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 90 children, 0-3 years old, in all four of our counties. 15 were 0-12 months, 32 were 1-2 years, and 33 were 2-3 years old. 14 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, 4 pregnant women were provided EHS services that included pre-natal referrals and support.

Funding for these programs consisted of federal HS/EHS funds of \$1,681,926 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 92.5%. Funding for the current year has remained the same. Other funding has been \$24,889 for additional training and technical assistance for Head Start and \$12,447 for Early Head Start.

With a larger waiting list of eligible 0-3 year olds than 3-5 years old in our service area, we continued to move some of those Head Start slots to our Early Head Start program. Through staff discussion as well as Policy Council discussions, the decision was made to again request re-focusing some Minnesota Head Start funding from Head Start to 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 \$200,866.

Our most recent federal HS/EHS monitoring visit was May 2007. Two areas needed improvement, enrollment and nutrition. Corrective action was implemented and a follow-up review had no findings or potential areas of non-compliance. Our most recent financial audit was completed in September, 2009 by Brady, Martz Accounting Services. There were no findings and it was a clean audit.

Our health-related services are well-received. 94% of our HS children and 98% of our EHS children have an oral health screening. 98% of our HS children and 97% of our EHS children receive a health screening. Occasionally, an enrolled child relocates prior to receiving the screenings so our percentage received is slightly under 100% due to that move.

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 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 being selected and trained for a new national Head Start program called "I Am Moving, I Am Learning". This program seeks to reduce childhood obesity through education, nutrition and movement for children as well as their parents.

Other highlights include being part of a \$500,000 grant to renovate part of the Warroad school for Early Childhood classrooms. We also helped pilot a newly approved program that addresses the lack of oral health services for young children. This program permits a specially trained dental hygienist called a Collaborative Practice Dental Hygienist to provide the Head Start required oral health services. Referrals are made to area dentists.

We also became a pilot for a new project to aggregate child outcome data statewide using the Creative Curriculum 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.

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.