Denver Great Kids
Head Start

2011 - 2012 ANNUAL REPORT
October 2012

**Denver Great Kids Head Start** continues to be an integral part of the City’s early care and education landscape, both as the funder of Head Start delegate and vendor agencies, and as an innovator of programs and interventions designed to support parents in fulfilling their role as their child’s primary educator. We are making deliberate efforts and investments to prepare young children for success in school and in life. Our collective work supports Mayor Hancock’s vision, which is “to deliver a world class city where everyone matters.”

During this past year, we have placed a much greater emphasis on school readiness and have established a grantee-wide School Readiness Team to assist us in our programming efforts. We continue to invest in teacher training and credentialing and, as a result, have seen progress in children’s learning across all child development domains. Our results meet and, in many instances, exceed state and national outcome measures. Our recent Head Start monitoring visit affirmed that our measures related to teacher-child interaction are also high. Not resting on these accomplishments, we are determined to make even greater strides in these areas in the months ahead.

As we move into our sixteenth year, we can feel proud of the legacy that has been created by Denver Great Kids Head Start. Our emphasis on parental involvement and high quality, comprehensive child and family development services is embedded in all aspects of our programming. We continue to serve as a boundary spanner, leveraging higher education and foundation resources to augment the services of the City and County of Denver on behalf of Head Start children and families.

On behalf of the Office of Children’s Affairs, I am proud to present to our governing body, Policy Council, delegate agencies, partners and the citizens of Denver, the 2011-2012 Denver Great Kids Head Start Annual Report.

Sincerely,

Al Martinez, Ph.D.
Denver Great Kids Head Start Director
**PROGRAM OVERVIEW**

Denver Great Kids Head Start (DGKHS) is a program of the Office of Children’s Affairs (OCA) with a governing board comprised of elected and statutory representatives including the Mayor, City Council, Auditor, Career Services Authority, and Manager of Finance. The objective of the Office of Children’s Affairs is to deliver a city where children, youth and their families have the opportunity to succeed.

DGKHS is dedicated to providing and advocating for quality early childhood education and services to eligible Denver 3-5 year olds through a holistic approach of developmentally appropriate, family centered, and culturally relevant services to promote school readiness and strong, healthy families.

DGKHS operates through a grantee/delegate agency model. In 2011 - 2012, DGKHS was funded to serve 1,153 children through contractual arrangements with six agencies: Catholic Charities, Clayton Early Learning, Denver Public Schools, Family Star Montessori, Mile High Montessori Early Learning Centers, and Volunteers of America.

Parents play an integral role in all aspects of DGKHS operations and participate in shared governance with the governing body through the Head Start Policy Council. Twelve parents are elected to the DGKHS Policy Council annually (two per delegate agency). They are joined by nine community representatives (five of whom are nominated by the Mayor and four of whom are nominated by the City Council). All community representatives are then elected by the entire Policy Council.

**Program Performance Indicators:**
- Provided comprehensive services to 1,440 children and families in 55 classrooms.
- Provided services to the eligible children who need them most, with 96% of DGKHS children meeting the Federal Poverty Income Guidelines.
- Achieved an average monthly enrollment of 99% (as a percentage of funded enrollment, including vacancies less than 30 days old).
- Achieved an average monthly attendance of 88% across all delegate agencies.
- Achieved a rate of 99% of children enrolled in DGKHS with health insurance and a medical home. (According to the U.S. Census Bureau – American Community Survey – 2011, 9.7% of children in Denver are uninsured.)
- Across DGKHS, 2,295 individuals provided volunteer services to the Head Start program.
- An average of 362 hours per month of mental health consultation was provided across all delegate classrooms, including technical support, family supports, as well as universal and targeted interventions.

**Program Highlights:**
- The 5 By 5 Project provides Denver Head Start and Early Head Start children and their families with year-round access to 15 cultural venues in the metro Denver area and on-site

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1 Funded enrollment is 1,153 children. An additional 287 children enrolled but did not remain in the program during the program year. However, 1,353 families accessed some type of Head Start services during the program year.
educational opportunities at no cost. As a key partner in school readiness, the 5 By 5 Project continues to challenge the Head Start program to understand how play, hands-on activities, and new environments inspire children to learn. Through this award winning program, DGKHS

DGKHS partnered with the Rocky Mountain Research Center at the University of Colorado to obtain a one million dollar grant from The Colorado Health Foundation to develop and implement a program called the Culture of Wellness in Preschools over a three year period (2011 - 2014).

DGKHS received a second grant in the amount of $443,038.00 from The Colorado Health Foundation to train staff and parents how to promote positive social and emotional development.

**SCHOOL READINESS**

Denver Great Kids Head Start has worked closely with community partners and parents to develop a roadmap for school readiness to prepare children for kindergarten. This workgroup has become the DGKHS School Readiness Team and has defined school readiness as:

“That state of early development that supports an individual child to engage and benefit from a quality early learning experience in Head Start as a result of family nurturing and interactions with others. This is measured when the Head Start child has reached certain levels of social and emotional development, cognition, and general knowledge, language development, physical well-being, and motor development.”

A young child’s earliest years carry endless promise. Research demonstrates that it is a time when a child’s mind literally shapes itself from the stimulation of each new experience. Therefore, the DGKHS school readiness team established five goals around which to focus program efforts and resources. The goals include the demonstration of anticipated competencies in the areas health and physical development, social and emotional development, approaches to learning, language and literacy, and cognition.
Reading opens the door to endless possibilities for children.

As we challenge ourselves to create the highest quality early learning environments that stimulate children’s development and prepare them for school, the state child outcomes assessment instrument, Teaching Strategies GOLD, results show that DGKHS children are performing and improving as evidenced in our analysis of 2011 - 2012 outcomes data.

During the 2011 - 2012 program year, all children enrolled in DGKHS made substantial progress in the essential areas of learning and development. Gains were demonstrated at each interval of assessment from fall to winter and winter to spring across all domains. For example, the average gain across all domains for children four years of age was 35%, with the largest gain among this age group being 50% in literacy. This is significant because the majority of these four year olds transitioned to kindergarten at the end of the program year.

DGKHS continues to work more intentionally and consistently with delegate agencies to implement researched-based emergent language methods in classrooms, such as scaffolding conversations, creating readable text, word walls, dialogic reading, and interactive writing. Further, the program continues to use all available school readiness data to shape DGKHS programming efforts.

Transition:

DGKHS, in partnership with Clayton Early Learning and Denver Public Schools, developed and provided all families with a monthly newsletter with information on kindergarten readiness and the school choice process, including critical registration dates. This important information assisted families in making informed and timely decisions for their children.
In 2011 - 2012 program year, 598 children transitioned from DGKHS to kindergarten. Each four and five-year-old child that transitioned received a back pack of school supplies to support them as they continue on the road to school success.

**Teacher Qualifications:**

DGKHS continued to make progress on increasing the number of teacher and teacher assistants who meet the credentialing requirements of Section 648 A of the *Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007*. The program recognizes that staff qualifications and skills strongly correlate with overall quality of classroom instruction and that investments in teacher credentialing improve child outcomes.

To support these efforts, DGKHS invested additional resources in tuition assistance for teacher and teacher assistant education through a collaboration with the Community College of Denver and the University of Northern Colorado (UNC). In addition to tuition assistance, DGKHS funded a part-time Professional Development Coach to mentor and support staff as they navigate the higher education system to ensure timely completion of programs.

**Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS):**

The CLASS is a new assessment tool used by the Office of Head Start to evaluate classrooms by measuring teacher-child interactions. Thirty-nine of the 55 DGKHS classrooms were reviewed during the Federal on-site Head Start Review using the CLASS protocol. The CLASS evaluates three main areas: Educational Support, Classroom Organization, and Instructional Support. The scores from the CLASS are depicted by range (low range of 1 - 2; middle range of 3 - 4; to the high range of 6 - 7).

As indicated in the CLASS chart, DGKHS scored in the lower High Range, above both the national and regional averages in Educational Support and Classroom Organization and in the lower Middle Range for Educational Support. A greater emphasis is being placed on coaching and increased teacher training activities which will improve the Instructional Support scores.

![Head Start children actively learning and sharing](image)
FAMILY SERVICES

Parent, Family, and Community Engagement:
A large body of research indicates the importance of parenting for children’s development and school readiness, especially in the early years. Being prepared for school has been linked to particular home environments and practices that support literacy development.2 Denver Great Kids Head Start recognizes that a parent is a child’s most important teacher. Viewed as a partner in their child’s growth and development, parents are encouraged to volunteer in the classrooms, serve on policy committees, and help shape program operations by being part of the delegate and/or Grantee Policy Council. In addition, parents are provided numerous opportunities to be involved in other key functions such as curriculum development, program planning and goal setting, and self-assessment.

DGKHS provides support to parents in a multitude of ways, ranging from crisis intervention, to adult education programs, to job-seeking assistance. Families work with the family service staff to set benchmarks unique to their own personal goals and aspirations and identify realistic strategies for achieving these goals.

During the 2011 - 2012 program year, DGKHS’s family service staff worked with 1,353 families providing a combination of direct services, referrals for direct services or increased training opportunities. Of these, 996 (73%) received at least one service offered to Head Start families. Parenting education and health education were the most popular services provided. A significant percentage received emergency services such as clothing, food, or shelter. Of the 115 homeless families enrolled in the program, 25 acquired housing during the year as the result of Family Services staff assistance.

Parents also furthered their own education by enrolling in GED or college programs. English as a Second Language classes were among other services provided by DGKHS. The above chart depicts an increase over time in the goal-setting process with Head Start staff.

Health:
Because good health and nutrition are important for learning, Denver Great Kids Head Start focuses on children’s health. As required, all enrolled children have timely physical and dental

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2 Raikes, et al., 2006; Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998

Parent engaged in a child’s learning
exams and basic health screenings, including hearing, vision, health and nutrition; and follow-up referrals to medical and outside services if necessary. This information is tracked by DGKHS and reported annually in the Head Start Program Information Report (PIR). The PIR chart provides an overview of required key health indicators that DGKHS achieved within its delivery of health services. Children who are in good or excellent health have better mastery of the skills needed to succeed in school and make better transitions to kindergarten.3

Staff works with families to ensure follow-up health or dental services are received in cases where health or dental needs are identified during the screening process. During the year DGKHS has continued to provide Motivational Interviewing training to Head Start staff to promote parent follow-through. Motivational Interviewing is a research-based approach to modifying behavior in a non-threatening way and has been shown to improve outcomes in parent/patient follow-up. DGKHS has adopted and incorporated this approach in its training since 2009.

Children enrolled in Head Start for more than 45 days achieved a 96% success rate for completed medical exams and an 88% rate for completed dental exams. As the result of our health screenings, 95% (219) of children who were diagnosed with a chronic condition requiring follow-up treatment received it. Further, 85% (140) of children who were diagnosed as needing follow-up dental treatment received it.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PIR Performance Indicator</th>
<th>Number at Beginning of Enrollment Year</th>
<th>Percentage at Beginning of Enrollment Year</th>
<th>Number at End of Enrollment Year</th>
<th>Percentage at End of Enrollment Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percentage (%) of children with health insurance</td>
<td>1,398</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>1,428</td>
<td>99%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage (%) of children with a medical home</td>
<td>1,409</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>1,436</td>
<td>99%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage (%) of children with up-to-date immunizations, all possible immunizations to date, or exempt</td>
<td>1,398</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>1,422</td>
<td>98%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage (%) of children with a dental home</td>
<td>1,186</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>1,372</td>
<td>95%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Disabilities:

In the area of Disabilities, Denver Great Kids Head Start provided fully inclusive and trans-disciplinary special education services to 210 children and their families during the 2011 - 2012 program year. Of these children, 127 were identified and referred as needing special education and related services during the program year. Parents also benefited from these early intervention services and received training and coaching around how to advocate for their children and support them in the home.

Research from Hebbeler (2009) and others including the Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University has shown that early intervention services are critical to long-term positive outcomes.

To ensure seamless transition and interagency coordination, Memoranda of Understanding have been developed with both Denver Options and Denver Public Schools.

Further, through a contract with Denver Health and Hospitals Authority (DHHA), one of the oldest and largest community health centers in the United States, an average of 362 hours of mental health consultation and intervention services were provided to DGKHS children and their families. The emphasis of these services is on building a solid foundation of social and emotional support in the classroom and in the home.

Denver Great Kids Head Start was very fortunate to have the review team identify numerous strengths including the following:

- The fact that the Head Start program is housed within City government allows numerous opportunities for program enhancements such as facilities improvements through City bond financing.
- The 5 By 5 Project was identified as an innovative approach to school readiness for providing opportunities for Head Start children, families and staff to attend 15 cultural venues in the Denver community free of charge. By design, this Project connects Head Start classrooms to the cultural venues and a myriad of learning opportunities for Head Start children.
- DGKHS partnered with the Center for Disease Prevention at the University of Colorado in securing a one million dollar grant for a three year project period to develop and implement wellness activities and obesity prevention activities for Head Start children, parents and staff.
- DGKHS was awarded a two-year grant from The Colorado Health Foundation in the amount of $443,208.00 to enhance its mental health training and service delivery model.
- DGKHS has forged a long-term relationship with the Denver Health and Hospitals Authority to ensure that high quality medical, dental, and mental health services and support are provided to Head Start children.
- DGKHS has successfully implemented the Head Start Family and Community Engagement Framework across delegate agencies and has collaborated with the Brazelton Touchpoints Center for staff and family training.

Triennial Head Start Review Performance

All Head Start Programs are reviewed every three years by the Office of Head Start. Denver Great Kids Head Start was reviewed from April 1, 2012 - April 6, 2012. No program deficiencies were identified during the review. However, a single non-compliance was identified related to the contents of the 2011 Annual Report. The full review report can be viewed at www.denvergov.org/education.
Head Start is federally funded through the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), Administration for Children and Families (ACF), and Office of Head Start (OHS). The table below outlines the funds received by the Office of Children's Affairs, Denver Great Kids Head Start for program year 2011 - 2012. In addition, the budget forecast for the 2012 - 2013 program year is included.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Financial Report - Denver Great Kids Head Start Program</th>
<th>2011-12 Award</th>
<th>2011-12 Expended</th>
<th>2012-13 Award (Budget Forecast)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CITY OFFICE BUDGET</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Personnel</td>
<td>633,702.86</td>
<td>633,702.86</td>
<td>644,538.00</td>
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<td>Fringe Benefits</td>
<td>192,875.00</td>
<td>152,366.59</td>
<td>221,221.00</td>
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<td>Supplies</td>
<td>25,327.69</td>
<td>21,375.47</td>
<td>5,000.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>213,460.45</td>
<td>245,387.12</td>
<td>230,756.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Center for Hearing/Speech/Lang.</td>
<td>13,200.00</td>
<td>13,200.00</td>
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<td>Denver Health</td>
<td>404,836.00</td>
<td>404,836.00</td>
<td>404,836.50</td>
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<td>Nutrition Consultants</td>
<td>55,781.00</td>
<td>55,781.00</td>
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<td>Sewall Child Development</td>
<td>303,474.00</td>
<td>303,444.00</td>
<td>303,470.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clayton Early Learning</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>20,500.00</td>
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<td>Total City Budget</td>
<td>1,842,657.00</td>
<td>1,830,093.04</td>
<td>1,899,262.00</td>
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<td>CONTRACTUAL (DELEGATES)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Catholic Charities</td>
<td>1,459,538.00</td>
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<td>Clayton Family Futures</td>
<td>1,388,244.00</td>
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<td>1,413,116.00</td>
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<td>Denver Public Schools</td>
<td>1,632,226.00</td>
<td>1,632,226.00</td>
<td>1,695,388.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Family Star</td>
<td>205,925.00</td>
<td>205,925.00</td>
<td>211,606.00</td>
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<td>Mile High Montessori</td>
<td>1,622,342.00</td>
<td>1,622,342.00</td>
<td>1,643,911.00</td>
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<td>Volunteers of America</td>
<td>469,321.00</td>
<td>469,321.00</td>
<td>479,931.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Delegates</td>
<td>6,777,596.00</td>
<td>6,777,596.00</td>
<td>6,926,452.00</td>
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<td>Federal Share</td>
<td>8,620,253.00</td>
<td>8,607,689.04</td>
<td>8,825,714.00</td>
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<td>Non-Federal Share (In-Kind)</td>
<td>2,155,063.00</td>
<td>2,155,063.00</td>
<td>2,206,429.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Head Start Grant Award</td>
<td>10,775,316.00</td>
<td>10,762,752.04</td>
<td>11,032,143.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>NON-HEAD START GRANTS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Development Block Grant</td>
<td>30,000.00</td>
<td>18,000.00</td>
<td>30,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mile High United Way</td>
<td>5,000.00</td>
<td>5,000.00</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>Colorado Health Foundation</td>
<td>223,230.00</td>
<td>223,230.00</td>
<td>250,000.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>University of Colorado</td>
<td>52,904.00</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>52,904.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Non-Head Start Grants</td>
<td>311,134.00</td>
<td>246,230.00</td>
<td>332,904.00</td>
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</table>

The most recent Annual Financial Audit for the period ending December 2011 did not reveal any deficiencies or material weaknesses in the City’s oversight of the Federal Head Start grant. Please refer to the City’s most recent completed audit and combined Annual Financial Reports which can be found at: www.denvergov.org/controller.
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