

Tulare County Child Care Educational Program

The Tulare County Child Care Educational Program, under the umbrella of the Tulare County Office of Education, coordinates child care and child development services to low income families in Tulare County.

TCCCEP operates a number of programs:

Head Start—A federally-funded program of child care educational centers including Migrant Head Start, Early Head Start and a home-based program that offer school readiness services including education, health, nutrition, special needs, parent involvement and social services.

State Preschool—Provides child development programs in state-funded preschool classrooms.

Resource & Referral—Provides many services, including referrals for any parent needing child care, a library where child care providers can check out toys, equipment and books; and an alternative payment program that pays child care costs for qualifying families. R&R also operates the county Centralized Eligibility List (CEL).

Other Services—The majority of children served are 3- to 5-year-olds. The program also services children from birth to 14 years. There are services for pregnant mothers, migrant families and children with disabilities. Head Start is the largest mainstreamer of children with disabilities.

Highlights of 2008-09

■ The Head Start Program incorporated themes and focus walls into the curriculum to improve literacy achievement and to better prepare children for kindergarten. The program began using Houghton Mifflin preschool curriculum in some classrooms and as the budget allows will eventually use H-M in all 43 classrooms. Since the structured H-M curriculum is used in all but three school districts in Tulare County, having the preschools also use it makes for a smooth transition into kindergarten.

■ The Tulare County Child Care Planning Council, which works in conjunction with the Resource & Referral department, released statistics on child care needs: One third of the children in the county live in poverty. Nearly 10,000 children need subsidized child care. To achieve this, the county would need to increase subsidized child care by nearly 50%.

■ A Migrant/Seasonal Head Start preschooler in the Washington Center in Lindsay, Alejandra Cortez-Andrade, was chosen by the California Head Start Association to represent California as the 25 millionth child served by Head Start.

■ The program was chosen to participate in the CRADLE Project (Cultural Responsiveness and Dual Language Educa-



Children at the Senaida Garcia Center

tion) to support Early Head Start children's acquisition of their home language. This resulted in the Richgrove Center working with the adjacent Richgrove State Preschool and school district for the joint preparation of preschool children entering the Richgrove Elementary School.

■ The program received a grant for seven kid-sized computers donated by PACER, which worked with IMB and Little Tikes to create a design helpful to children with special needs.

■ Isabel Valenzuela, family partnership specialist, was named Support Staff of the Year by the California Head Start Association at its annual conference in San Diego.

■ TCCCEP helped co-host the bi-annual California Migrant/Seasonal Head Start Conference in Visalia in April. Speakers included Yvette Sanchez Fuentes, then director of the National MSHS Association (now national Head Start director), and Guadalupe Cuesta, director of the National MSHS Collaboration Office.

Our Program

Tulare County Child Care Educational Program operates 43 child development centers and has one of the largest Home Based programs in the country, serving 692 children.

Enrollment & Services

Head Start is a national program that provides services to low income preschool children and their families.

	Head Start	Early Head Start	Migrant/ Seasonal Head Start	State Preschool	Resource & Referral
Children served	2,046	306	110	952	5,129
Families served	1,933	300	99	950	2,343
Over income	6%	2%	5%		
Average monthly enrollment	99.81%	100.45%	99.43%		
Medical exam complete	91%	86%	84%	The program also serves 24 children through a grant with the Tule Indian Tribal Council (See page 3)	
Dental exam complete	96%	97%	98% (3 & older), 92% (2 & under)		
Children with disabilities	11.95%	13%	7.14%		

Early Head Start includes pregnant women and children age 0-3

Migrant and Seasonal Head Start works with families who derive at least 50% of their income from agriculture.

In order to offer full-day services, TCCCEP combines Head Start (federal) funding with state preschool funding. Centers funded entirely by state funds do not require medical, dental and special needs services.

Resource & Referral (R&R) receives state funding to pay child care costs for low income families who are working or going to school.

Head Start is the largest mainstreamer of children with special needs in the country. Consistently 10% of enrolled children are those with disabilities.

Educational Achievements

TCCCEP is working diligently to help staff attain the new Head Start educational requirements: All teachers must have an A.A. degree by 2011. Fifty percent of teachers nationwide must have a B.A. by 2013. All teacher assistants must have a California Child Development Permit by 2013.

Number of teachers	110
Teachers with permits	110
Teachers with A.A.s	55
Teachers with B.A.s	18
Teachers with M.A.s	1
Teachers attending universities	8
Number of teacher assistants	204
T.A.s with permits	97
T.A.s with A.A.s	41
T.A.s with B.A.s	4
T.A with M.A.s	1

Incentives to help staff meet educational requirements:

- Class and book reimbursement
- English and math tutors
- Math workshops to help pass math requirements for AA degrees
- Educational advising in-house
- Pay for new and renewal of permits
- Core child development classes taught on site at no cost (ARRA funds)
- Information sessions with universities

Tulare County has 41,108 children under the age of 5. Of this number, 12,332 (30%) live in households with income below the poverty level. TCCCEP serves 2,462 (20% of poverty households) in the Head Start Program.



20 staff earned A.A. or B.B. degrees in 2009

Family health service worker certificates

To meet Head Start's suggestion to train family service staff on competency goals and indicators, TCCCEP's family health service workers began a four-part training through the Center for Community Futures and Cal State East Bay to complete a 12-unit certificate on family development. That program will be completed in 2010 through ARRA funds.

Successes & Partnerships

I Am Moving, I Am Learning—In 2007, TCCCEP began an IMIL project to add more fun-filled physical activity to the school day. Staff learned that in addition to the importance of aerobic exercise, the movement helps children with pre-writing skills. Games dealing with “over,” “under,” “beside” and “crossing the midline” help children understand the sequence of letters and words.

LIFT—After staff attended a Steps to Success training, TCCCEP began a mentor coach program in 2006. Called LIFT (Literacy Involved Facilitator Training), the program began as a collaboration with TCOE’s Educational Resource Services where mentors were trained to work with protégés to improve literacy in the classroom. The program is now facilitated by Child Care staff. At the end of its third year in 2009, the program had trained 24 mentors who had worked with 30 protégés. Benefits go far beyond improved literacy for children. Participants gain self confidence, improved communication skills and a belief that the program cares about their success.

Reflective Practice—A number of supervisors have learned how to incorporate “reflective practice” into their management style. It has to do with the supervisor listening attentively and then encouraging the employee to reflect on the problem and come up with solutions. Staff meet monthly to practice the process which supports mutual learning and on-going skill development.

Reading is Fundamental—Through the local Read for Life organization, eight centers receive enough new books for each child to receive three each year. The books are distributed



Children have fun exercising with I Am Moving, I Am Learning.

during literacy activities (centers hold book fairs, pretend to have children check out books from the library or ask parents or community helpers to read to the children) so children relate books with having fun.

First 5 Tulare County—First 5, funded through a state tobacco tax, offers mini grants to county child care centers to buy equipment and toys through Lakeshore Learning Materials. Five centers received \$10,000 each in 2008 and another five received \$10,000 each in 2009. Twelve centers have been funded for \$5,000 each in 2010.

Tribal Council classroom at Tule Center—The Tule Center, located on the Tule River Tribal Council land, has been able to operate a second classroom with funding from the Tribal Council, California Rural Indian Health Board, Tribal TANF and TCOE Child Care.

Second Step—Children are responding to the Second Step behavior curriculum which comes with big photo cards and real life lessons and puppets so children can learn how to express their feelings in an acceptable way.

DRDP-R survey—TCCCEP was one of 15 California Head Start programs that participated in a survey using results from the Desired Results Development Profile-Revised (DRDP-R). The study showed that children in Head Start were 7% to 19% ahead in various developmental levels than a comparison group of children of the same age.

Dual Language—The program believes that children learn best in their native language, which transitions into better English acquisition.



Teacher Paul Zito uses Impulsive Puppy puppet, which is part of the Second Step kit to help children understand emotions.

Our Mission

We are a culturally diverse program of caring professionals dedicated to serving families in Tulare County. We work in partnership with families and the community to offer quality child care and development services.

Funding

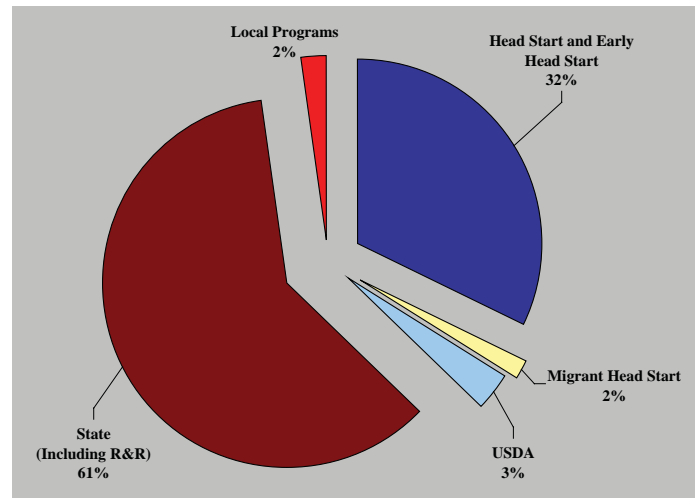
Head Start & Early Head Start	2009-2010 Budget	2008-2009 Expenditures
Salaries	7,732,362	7,917,203
Benefits	4,980,438	4,625,691
Supplies	404,616	280,471
Travel/Conferences	33,930	145,376
Operations/Leases/Repairs	2,400,701	1,641,887
Contractual	310,247	123,664
Indirect	1,042,154	1,075,456
ARRA funds	1,074,478	
Program Improvement funds	187,043	
TOTAL	18,165,969	15,809,747

Migrant Head Start	2009-2010 Budget	2008-2009 Expenditures
Salaries	381,402	449,589
Benefits	294,797	263,564
Supplies	46,579	22,052
Travel/Conferences	10,774	23,896
Operations/Leases/Repairs	95,799	54,647
Contractual	17,527	3,129
Indirect	56,563	57,830
ARRA funds	45,932	
TOTAL	949,373	874,708

State Preschool & General Child Care	2009-2010 Budget	2008-2009 Expenditures
Salaries	2,646,962	2,582,168
Benefits	1,872,401	1,722,809
Supplies	281,776	321,490
Travel/Conferences	33,987	19,210
Operations/Leases/Repairs	2,947,336	2,718,197
Contractual	123,772	14,581
Indirect	522,954	531,984
Program support	61,776	61,776
TOTAL	8,490,964	7,972,214
Plus parent fee revenues	46,880	61,666

Local programs (Farmersville, Alpaugh & Tule centers)	2009-2010 Budget	2008-2009 Expenditures
Salaries	461,057	448,123
Benefits	303,207	268,405
Supplies	42,525	57,002
Travel/Conferences	4,500	5,264
Operations/Leases/Repairs	249,550	204,664
Contractual	13,649	893
Indirect	70,125	70,952
TOTAL	1,144,613	1,055,304
Plus parent fee revenues	6,334	4,543

Resource & Referral program (State)	2009-2010 Budget	2008-2009 Expenditures
Salaries	502,242	621,794
Benefits	308,265	338,593
Supplies	58,200	37,597
Travel/Conferences	33,069	23,972
Operations/Leases/Repairs	2,867,531	2,462,841
Contractual	17,273,541	16,906,034
Indirect	1,380,273	1,470,083
TOTAL	22,423,121	21,860,914
Plus parent fee revenues	366,320	376,750



Tulare County Child Care Budget 2008-09

Federal	Amount
Head Start & EHS	\$15.8 million
Migrant Head Start	874,708
USDA	1.6 million
State (including Resource & Referral)	29.8 million
Local	1.1 million
TOTAL	49.2 million

(TCCCEP blends federal, state and local funding in order to run full-day programs.)

Federal review

TCCCEP underwent a triennial Regional Head Start and Early Head Start federal review by the Office of Head Start in May 2008. The program received a "blue certificate." Child Care had only one finding, and it was resolved before the end of the review. The only higher award is a gold certificate which is presented to programs that have no findings during the review.

The last Migrant/Seasonal Head Start federal review was held in June 2007. The reviewers gave the program high marks and had only two potential findings, a Program Policy Council (PPC) term limit and up-to-date medical exams. Procedures were put into place to ensure compliance. In the future, TCCCEP will have combined federal reviews. The next one is scheduled for spring 2010.

Financial audit

There were two audit findings during the federal review. One dealt with inventory listings, which were found to be correct or were corrected. The other finding was missing documentation showing staff tried to access other sources to pay for medical and dental costs. Staff received additional training on the policy and procedures.

Parent engagement



Parent Engagement is a very important part of Head Start. Parents are encouraged to volunteer in the classroom, do home activities with their children and be part of the parent committees at each site. The chairperson of each parent committee make up the Program Policy Committee (PPC) which governs TCCCEP along with the Tulare County Board of Education.

Pictured are two parents at the North Visalia #2 Center which has a large yard and lots of trees. They volunteered to mow, weed and rake leaves. Asked why he volunteered, one parent said, "They do a lot for us."

Children with special needs

Providing a learning environment for children with special needs and behavior issues is a hallmark of Head Start.

Pictured is Andrew Johnson, who has albinism, which means he doesn't have pigment in his eyes, skin and hair to protect him from light. He must wear glasses, a cap and stay in the shade.

He also has limited vision and seizures. The lights are kept low in the classroom and windows are shaded. Teaching staff use an alphabet and numbers that are twice the normal size.

The center has found that with just a few adjustments, Andrew fits right into the environment and the other children accept him wholeheartedly.



Looking to 2010...

Stimulus funding

In 2009-10, TCCCEP will receive \$1.12 million in stimulus monies from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act to improve salaries, encourage expansion and education, and provide funds for repairs and upgrades. Projects include:

1.84% COLA (Cost of living increase)	\$314,922
Stipends for staff who attend college	218,183
Increase pay scale for teachers	60,133
Math competency workshops	3,000
Family health service worker certificate program	54,842
Supervisory academy	10,751
Child development classes	22,705
Inclusion consultant	4,951
Classroom quality improvements	43,524
Hire 6 new family health service workers	118,865
Hire 2 compliance staff	59,329
Home Visiting PITC Way training	16,233
Substitutes	3,602
Benefits	98,567
Administrative costs	40,859
Indirect costs	49,942

TCCCEP partnered with Porterville College to offer the child development classes and with Fresno Pacific University to offer the math workshops.

2 new centers

The program will open two new centers in spring 2010. A center for 20 children in Earlimart is funded through Migrant/Seasonal Head Start expansion funds. Two toddler classrooms at the La Sierra Center in Visalia are funded through Early Head Start stimulus monies. A preschool classroom will also be relocated to the center.

Reorganization

The program has contemplated reorganization for many years, spurred by Head Start to flatten the organizational chart and streamline operations. As of July 2009, the 43 centers along with the Home Based offices were divided into five regions, each overseen by a regional supervisor. There are also five new compliance specialists and a supervisor in charge of monitoring and evaluating the program.

Dental clinics—Using funding from First 5 Tulare County, Family Health Care Network, a private non-profit community based organization, will screen and put sealants on the teeth on almost all 3,400 children in fall 2010.