2024-2025 ANNUAL REPORT

MISSION

Partnering with families to help them solve life's problems. We do this by always finding a better way to provide accepting environments, diverse services, and proven results. YDI is a family and community-based agency that improves lives.

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YDI™

YOUTH DEVELOPMENT, INC.

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION & FAMILY DEVELOPMENT

ABOUT YDI

Youth Development Incorporated (YDI) founded in 1971, is a nationally recognized youth and family service organization in New Mexico. We provide preschool and child care, prenatal care, alternative education, job training, employment assistance, mental and behavioral health services, homeless assistance, emergency housing, mentoring, family development services, and supervised visitation.

In partnership with the Office of Head Start within the Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health, and Human Services, YDI operates 23 Head Start centers across Bernalillo, Taos, and Rio Arriba Counties. This partnership provides FREE HIGH- QUALITY early childhood education, family development services, and childcare for children ages 0-5 years old. The Head Start curriculum supports the physical, cognitive, social, and emotional development of young children and offers prenatal care and education for pregnant women.

This annual report is publicly available in print at YDI offices, on the YDI website at ydinm.org and through YDI social media channels.





MESSAGE FROM THE VICE PRESIDENT

Dear Parents, Guardians, Community Partners, Policy Makers, and Child Advocates:

This year has been one of tremendous progress, growth, and renewed commitment to our mission of empowering children and families through high-quality early education. Our successful completion of the Focus Area Two (FA2) review highlights the dedication, collaboration, and excellence of our staff, partners, and families. This achievement reflects not only compliance with federal standards but also our shared belief that every child deserves a strong foundation for lifelong learning and success.

We celebrated growth in family engagement and parent leadership. Our families continue to play an active role in decision-making, advocacy, and program development, demonstrating the strength of the Head Start model. From parent policy councils to family literacy and leadership workshops, we are building a community of advocates who are shaping a better future for their children.

As we look ahead, enrollment growth, staff development, and enhanced community partnerships remain key priorities. We will continue to focus on strengthening our educational outcomes, supporting staff wellness, and ensuring that every family feels valued, included, and supported. Together, we are not just meeting goals, we are transforming lives and creating brighter futures for New Mexico's children and families.



Debra L. Baca

Debra Baca, Vice President
Early Childhood Education & Family Development

POLICY COUNCIL

The Policy Council, composed of parents and community representatives, plays a pivotal role in shaping the direction and ensuring the success of YDI's Head Start program. Its main purpose is to give parents a strong and meaningful voice in shaping their child's Head Start education, learning, and growth.

The Council serves as an important connection between families, the community, and program leaders. Members take part in decisions that directly impact the education and well-being of Head Start children, helping ensure every child receives the best possible support and opportunities.

Meetings are held once a month in an open and welcoming space where collaboration, honesty, and accountability guide the work. When parents and community members take an active role, Policy Council members become trusted partners and resources for Head Start families who depend on the full range of services YDI provides.



FAMILIES SERVED

FAMILIES RECEIVING SERVICES

The total number of families served included 463 in Head Start and 419 in Early Head Start. The services provided were tailored to meet the evolving needs of each family. Families categorically eligible for public assistance were able to access our services, which included nutritious meals that contributed to a reduction in food insecurity.

Family engagement remains at the center of our mission, guiding how we partner with parents and caregivers to ensure they are healthy, confident, and equipped to support their children long after they transition out of our program. Throughout the year, we offered a wide range of services—from meeting urgent needs such as access to shelter and food, to providing opportunities that build long term leadership and advocacy skills, including training on how to communicate with lawmakers about policies that affect New Mexico families.

We are especially proud of the increased number of families who engaged with our supports related to substance misuse. While our staff have long approached this sensitive topic with care and consistency, families have historically been hesitant to accept information or services. This year marked a meaningful shift: in 2024–2025, 29 parents and caregivers chose to receive assistance addressing substance misuse—an important step toward strengthening family well being across our communities.

2024-2025 ENROLLMENT	HEAD START	EARLY HEAD START
Funded Enrollment	485	448 (July 2024 – Sept 2024) 398 (Oct 2024 – June 2025) **Change in Scope Enrollment Reduction
Total Cumulative Enrollment	511	526
Average monthly enrollment for July 2024 - June 2025	90%	88%

FAMILY SERVICES PROVIDED	HEAD START	EARLY HEAD START
Emergency/crisis intervention such as meeting immediate needs for food, clothing, or shelter	43	43
Housing assistance such as subsidies, utilities, repairs	54	61
Asset building services such as financial education, debt counseling	27	26
Mental health services	71	46
Substance misuse prevention	9	10
Substance misuse treatment	3	7
English as a Second Language (ESL) training	10	3
Assistance in enrolling into an education or job training program	22	21
Research-based parenting curriculum	24	156
Involvement in discussing their child's screening and assessment results and their child's progress	448	365
Supporting transitions between programs such as EHS to HS, HS to kindergarten	206	117
Education on preventive medical and oral health	100	108
Education on health and developmental consequences of tobacco product use	8	46
Education on nutrition	193	140
Education on postpartum care such as breastfeeding support	13	33
Education on relationships/marriage	16	12
Assistance to families of incarcerated individuals	0	0
Of these, the number of families who were counted in at least one of the services listed above	463	419

EDUCATION AND SCHOOL READINESS

CENTER BASED

The 2024–2025 program year marked the fifth year of implementation of the Creative Curriculum and its aligned assessment tool, Teaching Strategies GOLD. Our analysis of child outcome data shows overall positive progress, with particularly strong gains in Early Head Start (EHS) and notable improvements for children preparing to enter kindergarten.

At the beginning of the program year when overall development was analyzed, approximately 64% of Early Head Start children met or exceeded developmental expectations. By the end of the program year, the overall percentage of children who met or exceeded expectations rose to 74%. The most growth was demonstrated in Cognitive development (15%).

The overall percentage of Early Head Start children who began the program year meeting or exceeding expectations was within 2% of Head Start (EHS 64% vs HS 66%).

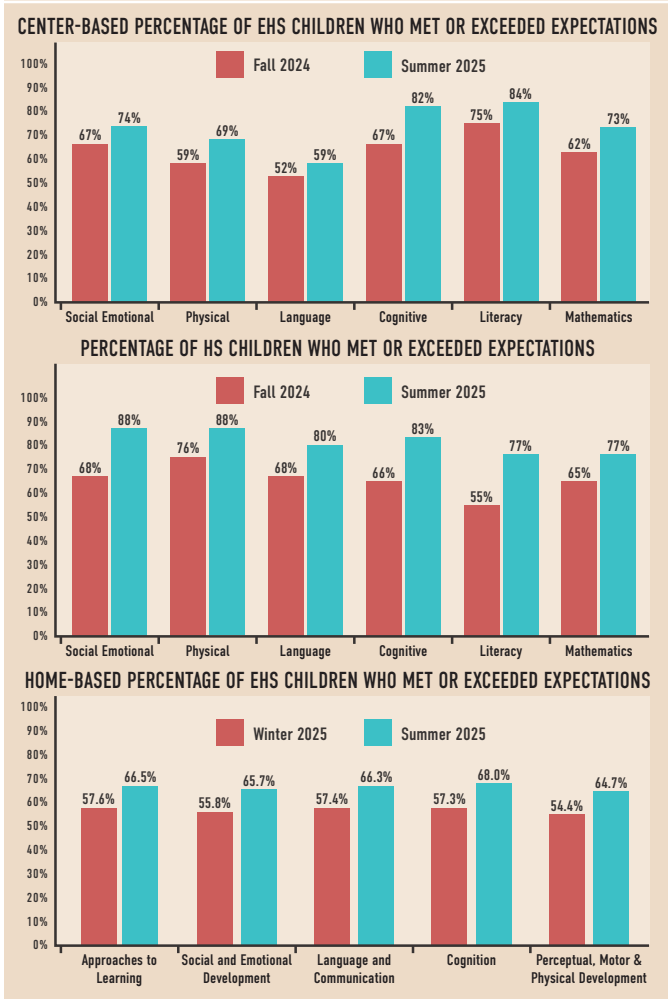
Our Head Start children's developmental growth was strong across all domains. On average, 16% more children met or exceeded expectations when beginning and end of program year data was analyzed. The greatest gains were obtained in social emotional and cognitive domains. For children entering kindergarten, social emotional skills (e.g., self-regulation) and cognitive skills (problem solving) are critical skills associated with positive kindergarten outcomes.

HOME BASED

In January 2025 EHS Home Based children transitioned from using the Teaching Strategies Gold assessment tool to the LAP B-K assessment tool. From January to early June, children ages 0–36 months enrolled showed steady developmental progress across all domains. The percentage of children demonstrating proficiency in more than 75 percent of skills increased in every area, including Approaches to Learning (from 25.68 percent to 36.76 percent) and Social and Emotional Development (from 21.6 percent to 33.8 percent)
Language and Communication showed strong gains as well, rising from 20.3 percent to 33.8 percent of children demonstrating high proficiency. Similar growth occurred in Cognition and Physical Development, reflecting improved problem-solving, communication, motor skills, and overall school readiness. Overall, the data demonstrates meaningful developmental growth supported through consistent home-based services.

These results are especially encouraging because of the short time that elapsed between data collection periods. Specifically, baseline child data was collected January 2025 and end of the program year data was collected June 2025.

PROGRAM YEAR 2024-2025 CHILD OUTCOMES SUMMARY



NUTRITION SERVICES

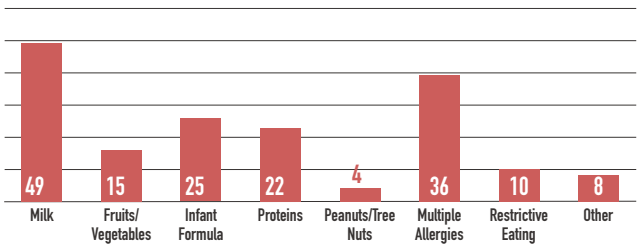
Children who participate in our nutrition program are well-nourished. This supports their academic achievement and social development while helping ensure fewer missed school days. Early access to nutritious foods also reduces the risk of chronic diseases later in life, such as diabetes and heart disease, Good nutrition sets the foundation for long-term success.

During the 2024-2025 school year, YDI served a total of 254,626 nutritious meals. This ensured children received essential vitamins and minerals which are critical for bone growth, brain development, and immune function. Participation in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) assisted YDI in funding meals that meet the USDA standards to help prevent malnutrition and obesity. Our team implemented 179 special diets to accommodate individual needs as well as addressed 284 nutritional concerns with the expertise of our consultant dietitian.

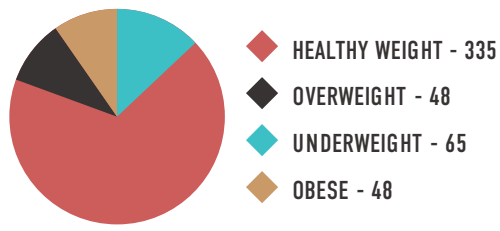
Families save on groceries when their child receives free breakfast, lunch, and an afternoon snack while at school. They also receive assistance accessing the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), and Women Infant and Children (WIC) program, along with other food assistance programs which reduces financial stress.

YDI partners with the University of New Mexico's Child Health Initiative for Lifelong Eating and Exercise (CHILE) Plus program, which provides lessons on healthy eating and physical activity. Additionally, New Mexico State University Cooperative Extension Service's Ideas for Cooking and Nutrition (ICAN) program teaches families how to prepare healthy meals, read nutrition labels, and make informed decisions. Newsletters, recipes, cooking workshops, and shared meals that strengthen bonds and build community are included.

SPECIAL DIETS



HEAD START WEIGHTS



MEALS SERVED	JULY 2024-JUNE 2025
Breakfast	86,623
Lunch	88,992
PM Snacks	79,011
TOTAL	**254,626**

HEALTH SERVICES

Ensuring the health and well-being of children is a cornerstone of the YDI Head Start mission, and comprehensive health and dental examinations are essential to achieving this goal. Screenings and exams provide critical opportunities to identify and address medical, developmental, and oral health concerns early, reducing barriers to learning and promoting school readiness. Preventive care not only supports children's physical growth and comfort but also minimizes the risk of issues that could lead to missed school days or hinder academic progress. By integrating health and dental services into its holistic approach, Head Start affirms that strong educational outcomes are inseparable from a foundation of good health, preparing children to enter the classroom ready to learn, thrive, and succeed.

Throughout the program year, YDI staff worked diligently to ensure all privately insured or Medicaid eligible enrolled children had health and dental homes, completed Head Start mandated screenings, and completed health and oral health determinations.

30 DAY MANDATE

The average percentage of children 6 weeks to 5 years old with medical insurance and a medical home is 99%. With few exceptions, medical insurance and medical homes were established within the mandate of 30 days of enrollment.

EVENT	COMPLETED ON OR BEFORE 30-DAY DEADLINE	COMPLETED AFTER THE 30-DAY DEADLINE
Medical Insurance	710 (99.4%)	4 (.6%)
Medical home	703 (98.5%)	11 (1.5%)

The program wide established dental home completion percentage was 91%. However, the percentage varied across age group. Specifically, 99.5% of Head Start children had a dental home within the 30-day timeline. Although 99.1% had an assigned dental home, about 4% of that group had a dental home identified after the Office of Head Start 30 day deadline. Our concern about dental homes is the approximately 5% of children who continued to lack a dental home at the end of the program year.

EVENT	COMPLETED ON OR BEFORE 30-DAY DEADLINE	COMPLETED AFTER THE 30-DAY DEADLINE
Dental home	646 (91%)	34 (4%)

45 DAY MANDATE

One hundred percent of our Early Head Start and Head Start children completed hearing and vision screenings on time. However, rates of timely completion varied across age groups. Specifically, 100% of Head Start children, visions and hearing were completed on or before the 45-day mandate. In contrast, Early Head Start percentage completion rates were lower (Hearing 88% and Vision 90%). Specifically an additional 37 (12%) hearing and 30 (9.8%) vision tests were completed after the 45-day mandate.

90 DAY MANDATE

The screenings and exams required on or before the 90th day of enrollment reflect a wide range of completion rates across Head Start and Early Head Start. Although screenings and exams completed after the 90-day mandate are critical to ensure our children receive the care they deserve, we continue to focus on timely completion of both health and oral determinations and screenings.

EVENT	COMPLETED ON OR BEFORE 90-DAY MANDATE	COMPLETED AFTER 90-DAY MANDATE	NOT COMPLETED
HS Health Determination	354 (89.6%)	23 (5.8%)	18 (4.6%)
EHS Health Determination	256 (83.9%)	38 (12.5%)	11 (3.6%)
HS Oral Health Determination	323 (81.8%)	51 (12.9%)	21 (5.3%)
EHS Oral Health Determination	211 (69.2%)	94 (30.8%)	0 (0%)
HS Blood Pressure	393 (99.5%	2 (.5%)	0 (0%)
EHS Blood Pressure	303 (99.3%)	1 (.3%)	1 (.3%)
HS Heights and Weights	393 (99.5%)	2 (.5%)	0 (0%)
EHS Heights and Weights	297 (97.4%)	8 (2.6%)	0 (0%)
HS Hematocrit	376 (95.2%)	19 (4.8%)	0 (0%)
EHS Hematocrit	225 (73.8%)	80 (26.2%)	0 (0%)
HS Lead Test	367 (92.7%)	28 (7.3%)	0 (0%)
EHS Lead Test	223 (73.1%)	53 (17.8%)	29 (9.5%)

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

At YDI, we prioritize the emotional well-being of every child through comprehensive mental health support embedded in our Head Start and Early Head Start programs. One of the key tools we use to assess children's social and emotional development is the Ages and Stages Questionnaire: Social Emotional-2 (ASQ:SE-2). Screenings are conducted within the first 45 days of each child's enrollment, allowing our educators to identify early signs of emotional or behavioral challenges. When concerns are noted, referrals are made for mental health consultations to ensure timely support.

Mental health consultants are essential to the success of our programs. Their work spans several critical areas:



- Classroom Observation and Consultation: Consultants observe classroom environments to ensure they are safe, inclusive, and culturally responsive. Their feedback helps educators create nurturing spaces where children can thrive.
- Teacher Support: Consultants collaborate with teachers to promote children's social-emotional growth, offering strategies to manage behaviors and foster resilience.
- Family and Staff Engagement: Consultants provide guidance to families and staff, helping them understand the importance of mental health and how to access services when needed.

YDI remains committed to integrating mental health services into every layer of our early childhood programs because when children feel emotionally secure, they are ready to learn, grow, and succeed.

SERVICES FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

Children with disabilities are supported and celebrated in our Head Start and Early Head Start programs. Our teachers create individualized learning plans for children with IEPs and IFSPs, ensuring every child's unique needs are met. Using the evidence-based Teaching Strategies GOLD curriculum, staff promote inclusion, growth, and a true sense of belonging so that every child can thrive.

Our services and resources are designed to foster stable family relationships, support children's physical and emotional well-being, and promote school readiness. To achieve this, we collaborate with outside agencies to address disability-related concerns.

At least 10% of enrolled children have disabilities and are eligible for services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Currently:

- 20.90% of Head Start children have an Individualized Education Program (IEP).
- 18.63% of Early Head Start children have an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP).

Our partnerships with the Local Educational Agency (LEA) and Early Intervention (EI) strengthen support for educational staff in both classrooms and home-based programs. These collaborations ensure that children's IEP and IFSP goals are met, providing comprehensive support for their growth and development.

2024-2025 HEAD START AND EARLY HEAD START REFERRALS

Program	CHILDREN SERVED IDEA	IDEA During 2024-2025 Year	Children Referred to IDEA	Children Evaluated	Eligible for Services	Not Eligible for Services
Head Start Center-Based	107	50	68	53	44	9
Early Head Start Center-Based & Home-Based	113	35	41	34	26	8

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

Abriendo Puertas | Opening Doors



Guided by the Office of Head Start Parent, Family, and Community Engagement Framework, YDI Head Start embraces family engagement as a pathway to positive and lasting change for children, families, and the communities we serve across Bernalillo, Rio Arriba, and Taos counties.

Family engagement is a collaborative, strengths-based process where early childhood professionals and families work together to build positive, goal-oriented relationships. It is a shared responsibility that values the unique roles and cultural strengths families bring. This includes expectant mothers, fathers, grandparents, and other caregivers.

Our approach emphasizes culturally and linguistically responsive practices that reflect the culture and traditions of families. By honoring traditions, languages, and family values, we create meaningful partnerships that support family well-being and strengthen the parent-child relationship, both central to a child's healthy development, school readiness, and lifelong success.

YDI Head Start implemented the Abriendo Puertas curriculum across Bernalillo, Rio Arriba, and Taos counties. Four parents completed the training series.

This nationally recognized program provided up to 10 interactive workshops designed specifically for Spanish-speaking parents. Abriendo Puertas is centered on the cultural values, strengths, and lived experiences of Hispanic parents. Created by Hispanic parents, for Hispanic parents, the curriculum integrates popular Spanish-language sayings, or "dichos," to spark reflection and dialogue in a safe and culturally affirming space.

The workshops cover a broad range of topics, including:

- Early childhood development and school readiness
- Children's physical, social, and emotional well-being
- Parenting styles and positive discipline strategies
- Family economic well-being
- Leadership and advocacy skills

EMPOWERING PARENTS AS LEADERS

Through Abriendo Puertas, parents are empowered as co-leaders and experts on their families. They collaborate to reflect on their cultural and familial backgrounds, share experiences, and rehearse strategies for effective parenting. This approach not only strengthens families but also deepens the connection between home and Head Start classrooms, ensuring children are supported both academically and emotionally.

MOBILE LIBRARY

The mobile library continues to bring the joy of reading to children and families at our Head Start centers. With two mobile libraries, children in Bernalillo, Rio Arriba, and Taos counties are able to enjoy a library experience without ever leaving their center. The collection offers a wide variety of age-appropriate books for children ages 0–5. Books are rotated regularly to keep the selection fresh and engaging.

The library space, filled with vibrant colors, provides a warm and welcoming environment where families can come together to focus on reading with their child. The shared story times not only spark, laughter, imagination, and conversation, they create lasting memories for everyone in the mobile library. Transportation Manager, Martha Sanchez, shares, "I especially enjoy seeing parents visit the library with their child, it makes for a much more meaningful experience."

Reading together lays the foundation for a lifelong love of learning and helps build strong traditions around literacy. YDI recognizes the importance of fostering literacy skills early in life and deeply values the vital role parents play as their child's first and most influential teacher.



Number of YDI Center Visits	Number of Children Who Used the Mobile Library
100	2077

EARLY HEAD START HOME VISIT

The Early Head Start (EHS) Home Visiting program supports pregnant women, infants, and toddlers (from pregnancy through age three) by providing direct individualized services in the family's home rather than in a center-based setting.

Home Visiting option utilizes the Partners for a Healthy Baby curriculum to offer research based educational and support services to pregnant women and families through regular visits in the home or community. Our program demonstrates the strong, trusting relationships families build with their home visitors and the value families place on the support they receive from our staff and program.



SERVICES INCLUDE:

- Weekly home visits by trained and qualified home visitor.
- Support for early childhood development (cognitive, emotional, social, and physical).
- Parenting guidance and coaching to strengthen parent-child relationships.
- Prenatal education and support for expectant mothers.
- Referrals for health, dental, nutrition, and mental health services.
- Activities and resources to promote family bonding and child development.
- Assistance with setting and achieving personal goals including education, employment, and housing.

2024-2025 OUTCOMES:

- A total of 35 families experiencing homelessness were enrolled and supported through home visiting services. By the end of the year, 10 of those families were able to secure safe and permanent housing.
- 39 pregnant women received prenatal and postpartum education, promoting healthy beginnings for both mothers and babies.
- 157 children enrolled, received individualized services, family case management, and developmentally appropriate activities.
- 69 children (44%) remained enrolled for two consecutive years, and
- 18 children (11%) participated for three years.

HOME VISITING - PARENTS AS TEACHERS

This year, our state-funded home visitation program was guided by the core principles of the Parents as Teachers (PAT) curriculum which recognizes parents as their child's first and most influential teachers. Through home visits, group connections, screenings and family-centered goal setting, we partnered with families to strengthen parent-child interactions, deepen understanding of child development, and support overall family well-being. Our commitment to building strong, confident caregivers shaped every aspect of our program, ensuring that families not only received meaningful support during the year; but also gained the knowledge and skills to nurture their children's growth for years to come.

The 114 families served by our home visitors received a range of services. The table below includes the list of services most frequently requested and addressed by home visitors.

Service	Referrals
Basic needs	282
Behavioral health services	46
Education	46
EI/FIT services	61
Family and social support services	123
Legal services	39
Nutrition	37
Parenting program/classes	25
Public assistance	62
Other	94

We are especially proud of the length of time families remain in the home visitation program. While a 2018 study (Implementation of Evidence-Based Early Childhood Home Visiting: Results from the Mother and Infant Home Visiting Program Evaluation. OPRE Report 2018-76A. Washington, DC: Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation, ACF, U.S. Department of HHS), completed of home visitation program reported a significant drop in retention 12 months after enrollment, YDI families remained enrolled for an average of 28 months. This is a strong indication that enrolled families value the support and education provided by the program.



NURSE FAMILY PARTNERSHIP



The YDI Nurse-Family Partnership (NFP) program, continues to provide evidence-based nurse home visiting services that support first-time, low-income parents across New Mexico. Through trusted relationships with registered nurses, families receive individualized guidance from early pregnancy through their child's second birthday, building a foundation for strong birth outcomes, healthy child development, and long-term family stability. FY25 was a year of meaningful growth for YDI's NFP program, marked by strategic expansion, strengthened capacity, and positive maternal and child health outcomes.

This year, YDI broadened its reach by launching the NFPx model, allowing the program to serve multiparous individuals and those enrolling at any point in pregnancy, expanding access for families who previously did not meet eligibility requirements. YDI also extended NFP services into Valencia County, increasing access for rural communities, and with support from state funding, including MIECHV, was able to enroll clients regardless of Medicaid coverage. NFP nurses completed 1,929 home visits with 192 clients enrolled, using both in-person and telehealth visits to meet families' needs and maintaining an average visit length of nearly an hour to support comprehensive assessments, relationship-building, and individualized coaching.

During FY25, YDI enrolled 90 new clients. Most were between 20 and 29 years old (64%), with 8% under age 19, and many lived with partners or family members, reflecting strong informal support networks. More than half were not employed at intake, underscoring the importance of NFP in fostering long-term stability and self-sufficiency. Nurses played a key role in supporting early prenatal care, 54% of clients received care in the first trimester, and provided crucial support around mental health, with 13% of clients reporting symptoms such as depression or anxiety. The trusting nurse-client relationship created opportunities for open conversations, early identification of needs, and supportive referrals.

Between July 2024 and June 2025, the program supported 60 births. Five infants (8.3%) were born preterm, a rate lower than the national average of approximately 10%, and five infants (8.3%) were born at low birthweight. Notably, no infants were born at very low birthweight, an important protective factor for long-term health. Breastfeeding initiation also remained exceptionally high, with 95% of clients initiating breastfeeding, but additional work is needed to support long term breastfeeding education. Together, these outcomes reflect the effectiveness of the NFP model in promoting healthy pregnancies and strong early development.

	YDI NFP 60 Births	National
Preterm Birth Rate	8.3%	10.4%[1]
Infant Mortality	0%	5.6%[1]
Initiated Breastfeeding	95%	86%[2]
Breastfed at 6 Months	46.4%	62%[2]

Throughout the year, nurses built trusted relationships that helped families navigate challenges, celebrate milestones, and set goals for long-term success. Looking ahead, YDI NFP will continue strengthening its impact by expanding outreach, enhancing nurse training, and using data-driven tools to guide program improvements. The program will also continue growing its NFPx capacity to better serve multiparous families and deepen partnerships with healthcare and community providers to ensure coordinated, accessible support for families across Central New Mexico.

[1] March of Dimes. 2025 March of Dimes Report Card for United States. PeriStats, March of Dimes Perinatal Data Center, 2025.

[2] Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. NIS-Child Data Results: Breastfeeding Data. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2025.

TEACHER APPRENTICE PROGRAM

YDI's Early Head Start Teacher Apprentice Program (TAP) has become a vital initiative to address workforce challenges by creating pathways to employment in early childhood education. The program has increased the number of trained early educators serving YDI families while providing participants with structured career opportunities. This effort reflects YDI's commitment to supporting entry level staff through professional development and immediate employment.

The TAP program provides hands-on experience, mentorship, and the skills needed to succeed as Early Head Start educators. Apprentices work under the guidance of a Center Director and a dedicated Child Development Associate Trainer to gain practical experience in classrooms with infants and toddlers. Apprentices must complete a 45-hour Early Care Entry Level Course within 30 days of employment, attend CDA training, compile a portfolio, and pass the CDA exam.

REQUIREMENTS:

- Must be 18 years of age or older
- Hold a high school diploma or equivalent (GED)
- Successfully pass all required background checks
- Demonstrate flexibility to travel as needed
- Show a commitment to professional growth and learning

YDI's program offers robust training and mentorship to support these candidates, fostering the development of skilled early educators and strengthening the future of early childhood education.



PROMISING PRACTICES



LENA Grow provides educators with coaching and data-driven feedback to improve the quality of classroom interactions. By increasing meaningful talk and conversational turns, teachers support children's language acquisition and social-emotional growth. Educators have embraced the program, consistently demonstrating a commitment to refining their practices. Notably, children who initially experienced fewer than 15 conversational turns per day nearly doubled their engagement by the end of the intervention—clear evidence of LENA Grow's impact on inclusive classroom communication.

In Spring 2025, YDI expanded its efforts by launching LENA Start for parents and caregivers of infants and toddlers. Offered in both English and Spanish, this 10-week virtual program is scheduled at times convenient for participants. Each week, families receive a book along with guidance on how to use it to increase back-and-forth exchanges and boost the number of words their child hears—especially for those enrolled in Early Head Start.

Program outcomes are promising. Data comparisons from the beginning to the end of the series show that parents significantly increased the frequency and quality of verbal interactions with their children. Furthermore, two-thirds of participants reported making positive changes in how they engage with their child as a direct result of the training.

Together, LENA Grow and LENA Start are creating a supportive ecosystem that strengthens early learning both in the classroom and at home. YDI remains committed to using innovative tools to ensure every child has the opportunity to thrive.

FATHER FIGURE ENGAGEMENT IN HEAD START

Fathers play a vital role in their children's growth and learning. Research shows that when fathers are actively involved, children perform better in school, develop stronger social skills, and have higher self-esteem. Father engagement supports Head Start's mission to promote the healthy development of the whole child—mind, body, and spirit.

Head Start encourages father involvement through family literacy nights, volunteer opportunities, home visits, and special events that celebrate and empower fathers as partners in learning. When fathers participate in classroom activities, attend parent meetings, or serve on Policy Councils, they send a powerful message to their children: education matters, and family matters.

At YDI Head Start, family engagement events consistently show a strong presence of fathers and father figures. Their participation strengthens family bonds, builds community, and helps ensure every child has the support, confidence, and foundation needed for lifelong success.



COMMUNITY HEALTH AND MENTAL HEALTH ADVISORY COMMITTEE



A Community Health and Mental Health Advisory Committee was established to strengthen collaboration and ensure alignment with Head Start Program Performance Standards. This committee brings together health professionals, mental health specialists, community partners, and family representatives to guide YDI's approach to promoting children's physical, mental, and emotional well-being.

In accordance with Head Start standards, the committee provides expertise in developing policies and procedures that support comprehensive health services, early identification of needs, and timely referrals for children and families. By integrating professional insight with family perspectives, YDI ensures that health and mental health practices are culturally responsive, trauma-informed, and accessible to all enrolled families.

The establishment of this advisory committee reinforces YDI's commitment to the Head Start mission of supporting the whole child. Through collaboration and continuous improvement, the committee helps YDI maintain high-quality services that foster healthy development, school readiness, and family wellness across all program sites.

PARENT ADVOCACY LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE

EMPOWERING FAMILIES AND BUILDING LEADERS

The New Mexico Head Start Association (NMHSA) proudly hosted its 17th Annual Parent Advocacy Leadership (PAL) Institute from March 11–18, 2025, bringing together 11 parents, leaders, and early childhood education experts for a week of learning, advocacy, and connection.

The Institute began with virtual sessions on March 11 and 13, offering valuable discussions on parent advocacy, federal funding impacts, and New Mexico's continued commitment to early childhood programs. The highlight of the week was an in-person session on March 16, featuring guest speakers such as Senator Michael Padilla, who shared insights into the legislative process and the importance of parent voices in shaping public policy.

Participants also engaged in a mock interview exercise, demonstrating how parents can effectively communicate with local lawmakers. The momentum continued at the Early Childhood Day at the Roundhouse on March 17, where families, educators, and policymakers came together to celebrate early learning through interactive activities, giveaways, and recognition of early childhood professionals. Senator Padilla further honored PAL participants by introducing them on the Senate floor, commending their dedication to advocacy.



The Institute concluded with a networking breakfast, the presentation of Advocacy Action Plans, and a Pinning Ceremony, marking each parent's transformation into a confident, empowered advocate for children and communities across New Mexico.

The 17th Annual PAL Institute once again demonstrated the power of collaboration, education, and family leadership in shaping a brighter future for young children.



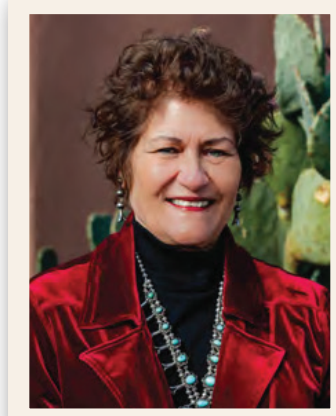
STATE AND REGIONAL LEADERSHIP

Youth Development, Inc. (YDI) continues to demonstrate strong leadership and advocacy at both the state and regional levels, reinforcing our commitment to excellence in early childhood education and Head Start programs.

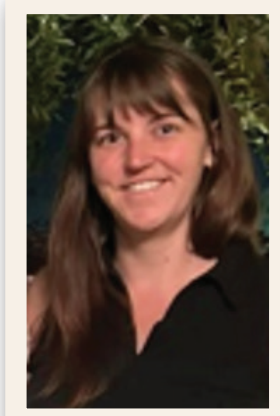
Debra Baca, Vice President of Early Childhood Education, represents New Mexico on the Region VI Head Start Association Board of Directors, which includes programs across several states in the Southwest. Through her service, Ms. Baca provides critical insight and advocacy on behalf of New Mexico's children and families. She works collaboratively with regional leaders to share best practices, influence policy development, and promote equitable access to quality early childhood education. Her leadership ensures that New Mexico's perspectives and successes are recognized and integrated into regional planning and initiatives.

Kathleen Barney, Senior Associate Director, serves as Secretary of the New Mexico Head Start Association (NMHSA). In this important role, Ms. Barney supports statewide collaboration among Head Start programs and contributes to the professional growth of early childhood educators. She plays an active role in advancing the mission of NMHSA to strengthen Head Start services and outcomes for children and families throughout New Mexico.

Their leadership and active participation reflect YDI's strong presence in shaping the direction of Head Start at both the state and regional levels. Through their dedicated service, YDI continues to champion quality, advocacy, and innovation in early childhood education.



Debra Baca



Kathleen Barney

LOOKING AHEAD

As New Mexico continues to lead the nation as the only state offering free early education and child care services, YDI is committed to staying at the forefront of innovation and quality. Extending program hours will help us remain competitive with other early learning providers while continuing to meet the unique needs of the children and families we serve.

YDI Head Start is excited to share plans to expand hours of operation across all 23 Head Start centers in Bernalillo, Rio Arriba, and Taos counties. This exciting step forward will allow us to better serve families by offering more time, flexibility, and access to the high-quality early learning experiences that define YDI Head Start.

"We know that families are balancing many responsibilities," shared Debra Baca, Vice President of Early Childhood Education at YDI. "By expanding our hours, we can give parents greater support and peace of mind, knowing their children are in a nurturing, safe, and engaging learning environments."

This initiative is about more than just time, it's about opportunity. Longer hours mean more time for learning, exploration, and connection. Our dedicated teachers and staff will have additional opportunities to deepen children's understanding through play-based learning, literacy, and social-emotional development activities.

YDI's leadership team will carefully plan this transition to ensure that expanded hours align with Head Start Program Performance Standards and the agency's mission to strengthen families and prepare children for lifelong success. With thoughtful preparation, strong partnerships, and a deep commitment to excellence, YDI Head Start is looking ahead to a future filled with even greater opportunities for children and families across New Mexico.



MONITORING REVIEW

On February 3 – 7, 2025, the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) conducted a Focus Area Two (FA2) monitoring review of Youth Development, Inc. Reviews of Head Start agencies are conducted under the authority of the Head Start Act to determine whether Head Start agencies meet regulatory requirements with respect to program, administrative, and financial management, based on the Head Start Program Performance Standards. The review consisted of 2 parts: CLASS observations and a weeklong on-site monitoring review.

The Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS®) is an observation instrument that assesses the quality of teacher-child interactions in center-based preschool classrooms. CLASS® is a nationally recognized tool used to evaluate the quality of teacher–child interactions in preschool classrooms. It focuses on three key areas that support children's learning and development:

- Emotional Support
- Classroom Organization and
- Instructional Support

The tool is comprised of 10 dimensions (i.e., indicators) and scored from 1 to 7. A score of 1 reflects poor quality. A score of 7 indicates high quality teacher-child engagement.

As part of the federal review, the Office of Head Start selected 22 YDI classrooms to be video recorded and scored by independent observers. We are proud to share that YDI's CLASS domain averages met the high-quality thresholds established by the Office of Head Start.

The second part of the monitoring review consisted of interviews with staff, parents, Policy Council and our Board of Directors. Twenty-one (21) classrooms were observed for health and safety, learning materials, classroom learning areas, teacher interactions, and playground equipment. The managers engaged in "data tours" each day, using our GoEngage database management system to track all services.

Domain	Quality Threshold	Competitive Threshold*	YDI Class Average
Emotional Support	6	5	6
Classroom Organization	6	5	6
Instructional Support	3	2.3	3

* Programs that score below Competitive Thresholds may be required to recompete for continued funding.



In summary, there were a total of 23 areas that were assessed and determined as: Compliant, Strong Practice, Area of Concern, or Area of Noncompliance/Deficiency. YDI did not have any cited deficiencies.

YDI was assessed in 6 major program areas: (1) Program Design & Management; (2) Education and Child Development Services; (3) Health; (4) Family and Community Engagement; (5) Fiscal Infrastructure, and (6) Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment, and Attendance (ERSEA).

Each program area included specific performance areas that were evaluated; there were a total of 23 performance areas that YDI was evaluated on. YDI received 3 Strong Practice distinctions in the following areas:

Program Design and Management: Specifically, the grant recipient offers staff members frequent opportunities to engage in team activities unrelated to professional development that foster safe and fun work environments.

ERSEA: The grant recipient customizes recruitment information to children and expectant families from among all of the demographic, cultural, and linguistic groups identified in the community assessment.

ERSEA: The grant recipient has an eligibility verification process to protect the program against fraudulent enrollment.

There were also 3 Areas of Concern noted in the Developmental Screenings, Staff Qualifications, and In-House screenings and 1 Area of Noncompliance cited in Child Health and Oral Health Status and Care – physicals and dentals.

FINANCIAL AUDIT

The agency financial audit report completed by SJT Group LLC for the 2023 and 2024 fiscal year revealed an "unmodified" auditor report for Federal Awards. The audit was approved by the YDI Board of Directors on April 17, 2025 and the YDI Policy Council on April 12, 2025.

HEAD START

Categories	2025 Budget Amount	2026 Proposed Budget Amount
Personnel	$10,053,129	$9,803,791
Fringe Benefits	$3,082,910	$3,357,998
Travel	$13,000	$13,000
Equipment	$ -0-	$ -0-
Supplies	$838,146	$524,488
Contractual	$899,722	$952,331
Other	$1,679,464	$1,914,763
Indirect	$1,871,999	$1,871,999
TOTAL BUDGET	**$18,438,370**	**$18,438,370**



YDI EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND FAMILY DEVELOPMENT DIVISION

Program	Budget	Funding Source
Head Start/Early Head Start	$18,438,370	U.S. Dept. of Health & Human Services – Admin. for Children & Families (ACF)
Head Start/Early Head Start One-Time funding	$167,060	U.S. Dept. of Health & Human Services – Admin. for Children & Families (ACF)
Pre-K	$1,411,528	N.M. Early Childhood Education & Care Department (ECECD)
ECECD Parents as Teachers Home Visitation	$593,032	N.M. Early Childhood Education & Care Department (ECECD)
Food Program (CACFP)	$712,950	N.M. Child Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)
Child Care Subsidies	$150,317	N.M. Early Childhood Education & Care Department (ECECD)
Nurse Family Partnership State	$400,091	N.M. Early Childhood Education & Care Department (ECECD)
Nurse Family Partnership Medicaid	$707,103	Medicaid Revenue
ECECD Systems Building (Home Visitation)	$100,000	N.M. Early Childhood Education & Care Department (ECECD)
LENA Start/LENA Grow	$248,165	W.K. Kellogg Foundation
Bernalillo County Home Visitation Work Group	$250,000	W.K. Kellogg Foundation
Capacity Resources for Enhancing Care, Excellence, and Resilience (CRECER)	$52,371	N.M. Early Childhood Education & Care Department (ECECD)
Oral Health- HS, EHS, Pre-K	$10,000	Albuquerque Community Foundation
Non-Federal Match **For fiscal year July 1, 2024-June 30, 2025	$4,693,043	Community/Parent Volunteer services *** Head Start receives their funds from the federal government, but 20% matching contributions must come from what is called non-federal share or in-kind contribution of time, resources, materials, and services. For example, every federal $1.00 spent, programs need to generate $0.25 of in-kind.
TOTAL	**$27,934,030**	