



EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS
ANNUAL REPORT 2020

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MID-IOWA COMMUNITY ACTION, INC. (MICA)



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There is an interactive version of the Early Childhood Programs Annual Report on our website, www.micaonline.org/ecp.

Note: MICA and the agency's Early Childhood Programs operate on a number of different fiscal and program years. For example, MICA's fiscal year begins October 1 and ends September 30, while Head Start's fiscal year begins December 1 and ends November 30. The Early Head Start and Head Start program year typically begins in late August and ends in late August. For the purposes of this report, all information will be reported as of the most recent fiscal or program year that applies.



Our Communities

According to the U.S. Census American Community Survey, nearly one in six children under the age of five in MICA's five-county core service area live in poverty. Research has shown that these children are more likely to start their education at a development level behind that of their peers - a gap that tends to grow throughout a child's education.

MICA offers Head Start (HS), for children 3-5 years old, and Early Head Start (EHS), for pregnant women and children 0-3 years old. These programs combine age-appropriate learning, social interaction, health screenings, nutrition education, strong parental engagement, and family development to provide children with a rich learning environment.

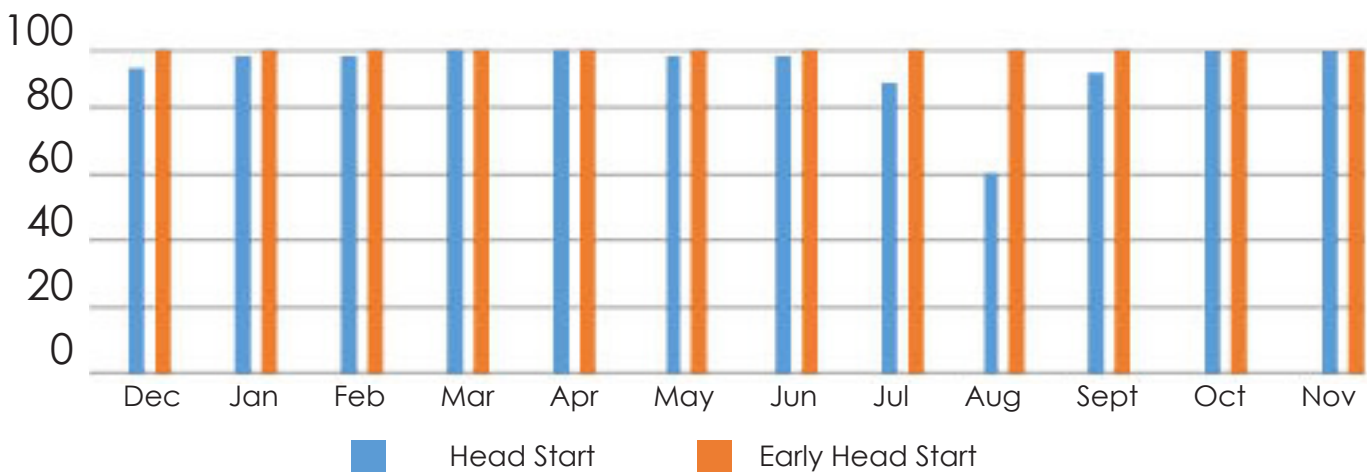
More detailed information about the communities we serve can be found in the agency's community assessment, available online at www.micaonline.org.

The Children We Serve

In 2019, MICA's Early Childhood Programs were funded to serve, at most, 284 children (208 in HS and 76 in EHS). Several HS classrooms operated on a program year with a summer break. Therefore, HS enrollment fell below capacity during the summer months, as noted in the graph.

Not only did hundreds of children receive a quality early childhood education, but their parents also received information and support, creating a strong and stable family environment. The need for early childhood services in MICA's core counties is great with 1,830 children eligible for the opportunities offered by EHS and HS.

ECP Monthly Enrollment Expressed as a Percentage of Available Capacity: Dec 2018 to Nov 2019





Providing the Foundation for a Strong Start

HS and EHS provide the groundwork for a child's life-long educational success. Its immediate impact can be seen in preparing children for their entry into kindergarten. HS and EHS children are assessed three to four times per program year. The number of assessments is determined based on the total months of programming. The programs assess children using the Teaching Strategies GOLD child assessment system.

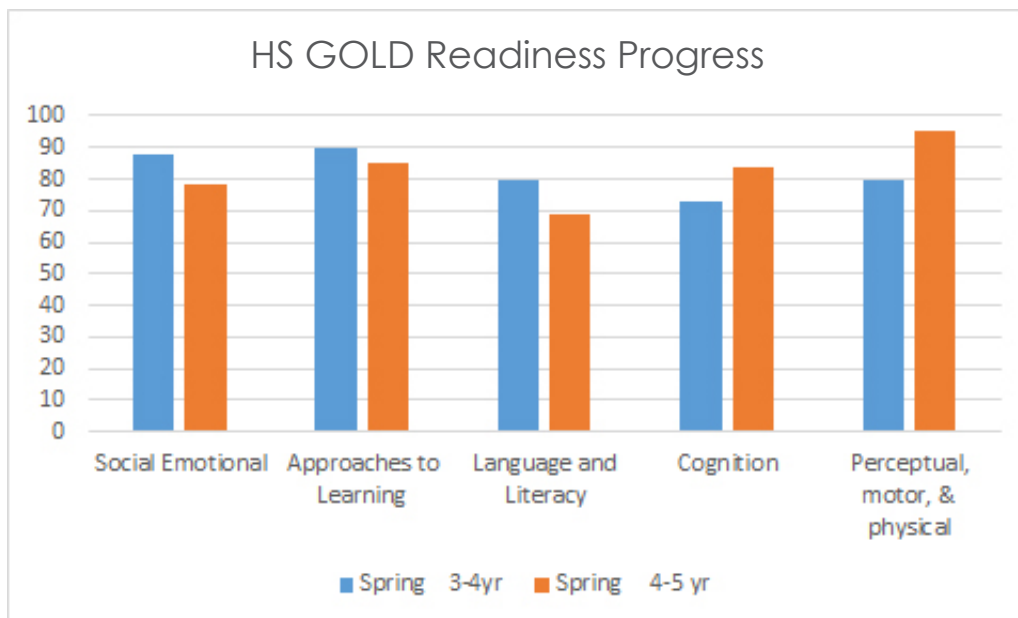
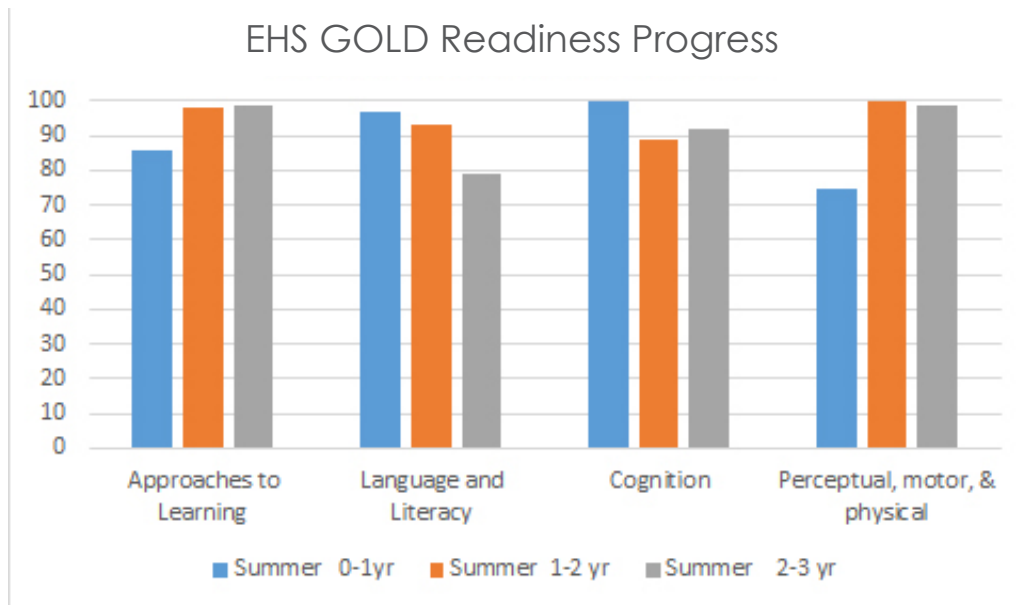
Children's learning and development are assessed in language and literacy, physical health and development, social and emotional development, approaches to learning and cognition, and general knowledge.

The charts on the following page reflect the number of children meeting or exceeding expectations on the GOLD assessment in these domains as of Summer 2019.

The program also recognizes the role of health, dental, and mental health care in the development of healthy children. During the 2018-2019 program year, 100% of EHS children had an ongoing, accessible source of health care. Of EHS children, 97% were up-to-date on immunizations and 98% were enrolled in some form of health insurance. Pregnant women enrolled in EHS all received prenatal care. 100% of children completed dental exams. Head Start children also received appropriate medical treatment (98%), immunizations (98%), and were enrolled in some form of health insurance (99%).

Teaching Assessment GOLD Results

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Parental Involvement

Perhaps no element is as critical to a child's success as parent engagement. We believe parents are a child's most important teachers. Parents participate in home visits and conferences, set educational goals, read to their child, and engage in educational activities with their child at home. Parents are supported in understanding their child's development and what they can do to nurture that development.

Through regularly scheduled Policy Council and Parent Committee meetings, parents help shape MICA's Early Childhood Programs. Parent Committees give all parents opportunities to be involved in their child's education and allow parents a shared, meaningful role in the decision-making process.

Parent engagement topics in 2019 included:

- Oral Health
- Visiting the Library
- Making Healthy Transitions
- Effective Discipline
- Mental Health - Stress Reduction
- Mental Health - Temperament
- Nutrition - Food Budgeting
- Nutrition - Healthy Meals/Snacks
- Nutrition - Physical Fitness
- Safety - First Aid
- Safety - Fire Safety
- Safety - Outdoor Family Fun

- Safety - Bus/Pedestrian Safety
- Going to the doctor
- Conscious Discipline
- Gold
- Classroom structure
- Attendance
- Summer Learning
- Health-personal hygiene, head lice
- Advocacy, Opening Doors
- Conscious Discipline – focusing on transitions