



2018-2019  
Head Start  
Annual Report



Children's  
FRIEND

2



# Dear Friends

Dear Friends,

In January of 1964, President Lyndon B. Johnson declared a "War on Poverty" in his State of the Union speech. As a result, in May of 1965, the President created Head Start, a comprehensive child development program designed to meet the social-emotional, cognitive, health, and physical needs of disadvantaged preschool-aged children. This groundbreaking program was established to break the cycle of poverty and be culturally responsive to those communities served.

This year, Children's Friend celebrates ten years of providing our Head Start program to help our youngest and most vulnerable preschoolers develop and grow in nurturing and high-quality learning environments. In reflecting upon our Head Start program for the past decade, we are proud of our achievements. In partnership with parents and families, we help children build the skills they need to succeed in kindergarten. We help strengthen parents and families.

Stories of success for our children, parents, and families are celebrated in our 2018-2019 Head Start Annual Report. These stories show that with a little bit of help, children can thrive and families can become advocates and overcome seemingly insurmountable obstacles. It is these individual stories that remind us all of the incredible impact we can have through Head Start.

Along with a decade of providing Head Start, Children's Friend has been fortunate to also work with pregnant women, infants, toddlers,



parents, families, and licensed child care providers through our Early Head Start and our Early Head Start-Child Care Partnerships programs. The success of these programs is also featured in our 2018-2019 Head Start Annual Report.

Looking ahead, we are excited for the next ten years of all of our Head Start programs at Children's Friend. The support and involvement of our Children's Friend community make it possible for us to continue our efforts to provide at-risk children with the tools they need to succeed in life. Thank you for supporting the work of Children's Friend to ensure that children have the best possible start in life.

Sincerely,

*Dana Mullen*  
Dana Mullen  
Chief of Programs



4



**Family-Centered:**

Discovering child and family needs and working with families to best meet them. Providing opportunities for families to be meaningfully engaged in the design of services. Being committed to serving families of diverse cultures and lifestyles in a non-biased and non-judgmental way.

**Seamless:**

Coordinating and integrating our services to ensure that families receive the support they need, regardless of point of entry to the agency. When our families face challenges outside our expertise, we partner with other high-quality organizations.

**Outcome-Driven:**

Thoughtfully measuring the impact and effectiveness of our services. Engaging in ongoing learning and innovation to ensure we are offering effective services to children and families. Consistently identifying what we can improve, doing what we can do best, and measuring our self against national benchmarks.

**Advocates:**

Taking a leadership role in educating policymakers and the public on the needs of the youngest and most vulnerable children, even when it means taking risks for the benefit of children.

**Stewards:**

Taking responsibility for growing and sustaining our human and financial capital. Demonstrating respect and cultural sensitivity for our community, staff, and Board.



**About Children's Friend**

Children's Friend, a non-profit organization founded in 1834, is Rhode Island's oldest child-serving organization, and a leading provider of child welfare, family support, mental health, and child development services.

**Our Mission**

Children's Friend is the innovative leader in improving the well-being and healthy development of Rhode Island's most vulnerable young children.

**Our Strategic Priority**

Too many of the youngest and most vulnerable children in Rhode Island are experiencing devastating outcomes, including death, as a result of abuse and neglect. As stewards of the resources entrusted to us, Children's Friend is realigning itself to proactively respond to this crisis.

*Children's Friend is a member of the Child Welfare League of America and is accredited by the Council on Accreditation.*





## Meet Helen

Dear Friends,

Please allow me to introduce myself. My name is Helen Lincoln, and I have been a Head Start parent for four years. For the last two years, I have been an active member of the Head Start Policy Council.

My children had an amazing experience in the Head Start program. The program taught them how to share and socialize. The program has helped my oldest child with some behavioral challenges. Since he was enrolled in the program, he has changed so much in a positive and favorable way.

Through my involvement in the Parent Committee and the Policy Council, my life has changed for the better. As an involved parent in my children's education, I am thankful for the wonderful support system here at Children's Friend. I have been able to grow both as a mother, and as a parent, which has made an amazing impact in my everyday life and interpersonal relationships.

I have always been a very shy and nervous person. Being involved with the Head Start Policy Council has gently pushed me to come out of my comfort zone, especially when I am called upon to speak to groups of people. I now feel more comfortable around other professionals and with other people in general. I have attended training seminars and have learned how to manage situations that may arise concerning my children. Head Start has enabled me to grow professionally and has given me the confidence to develop skills to be successful in life.

Today, I am so proud to say that I am the Chair of the Policy Council at Children's Friend. In this vital role, I am representing fellow



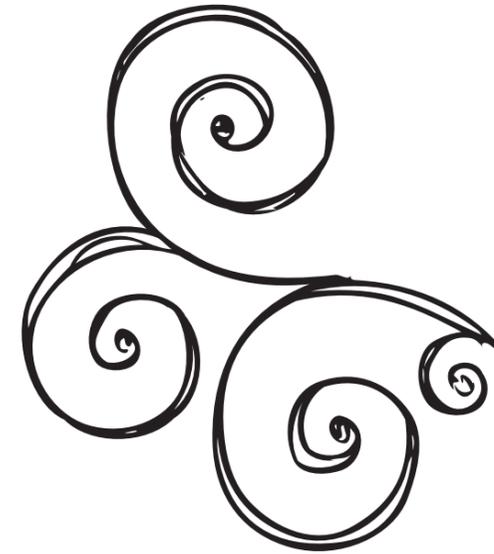
parents and my community as we address children's needs both inside and outside of the classroom. I am very grateful for this opportunity to participate in these programs, which help to shape our children's education.

In closing, I would like to thank my fellow Policy Council members and all those individuals who served as my mentors by helping me to believe in myself and not give up in life even when faced with difficult circumstances. From the bottom of my heart, thank you so much for all your support and kindness.

Sincerely,

*Helen Lincoln*

Helen Lincoln  
Chair of the Policy Council at  
Children's Friend





8



# Meet Avel

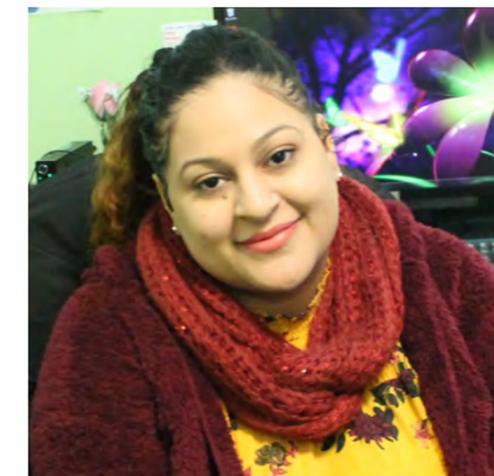


In 2013, Avel enrolled her two oldest children, Yaniel and Yanielis in the Head Start program at Children's Friend. They loved their teacher, who they still refer to as their "favorite teacher of all-time."

For Avel, Head Start provided her children with a strong educational foundation at an early age. Yaniel and Yanielis were learning the letters of the alphabet and how to count. They were beginning to have structure for the first time in their lives. Yaniel and Yanielis were taught the importance of following rules within the classroom. The children now had a schedule to follow in the morning in preparation for their day at preschool, a place to learn through play. Avel knew that the Head Start program would most certainly help her children experience a smooth transition into kindergarten.

In 2014, suddenly Avel's world was turned upside down. "I was scared and desperate. I felt like I lost control of everything," she said. Now a single mom with three young children, Avel had to deal with financial hardships. She began to panic, not knowing how she was going to pay the mounting grocery and utility bills. With the holiday season fast approaching, she began to worry that there would not be enough money to buy presents for her three children.

She discussed her situation with her Family Advocate at Children's Friend, who reassured Avel that her family would indeed enjoy a joyous holiday season after all. Her Family Advocate told Avel about the



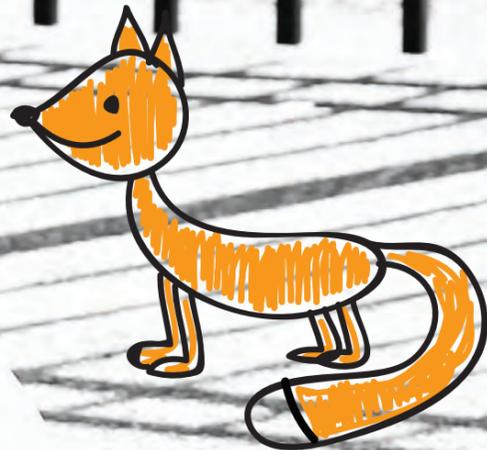
*Spirit of Giving* Holiday Drive at Children's Friend, which helps families in need with providing warm clothing, books, and a few toys during the holiday season. Avel was very happy to hear this great news. She remembers having so many cherished memories of opening presents when she was young and wanted her children to experience those same feelings.

"There were tears in my eyes when I opened the door and saw my [Family Advocate] standing there with a giant Christmas tree on our doorstep." Avel adds, "I was overwhelmed and couldn't believe we were receiving so many toys and games." She remembers how excited her children were when they opened their presents on Christmas Eve, a family tradition from her own childhood. "They were jumping up and down with wrapping paper flying in the air," Avel said. Her youngest son, Yandel, not able to control his excitement, screamed, "Mommy, Santa came!"

Avel enrolled Yandel in the Early Head Start program in 2015. She witnessed first-hand how Head Start helped Yaniel and Yanielis and wanted Yandel to be better prepared for Head Start. It was at that time when Avel became interested in the Head Start Policy Council. She wanted to play a more active role in her child's first learning experience. Serving as a member from 2013 to 2015, Avel cherished her time on the Policy Council and soon began to realize how valuable a parent's input can be in improving a child's way of learning.

In the summer of 2019, wanting her family to have a better life, Avel applied for the open position of Bilingual Receptionist at Children's Friend. She was hired and began her employment soon after. Avel politely answers phones and greets visitors with a big smile because, as she states, "I am the first voice, and the first face, that people hear and see from a Children's Friend employee."



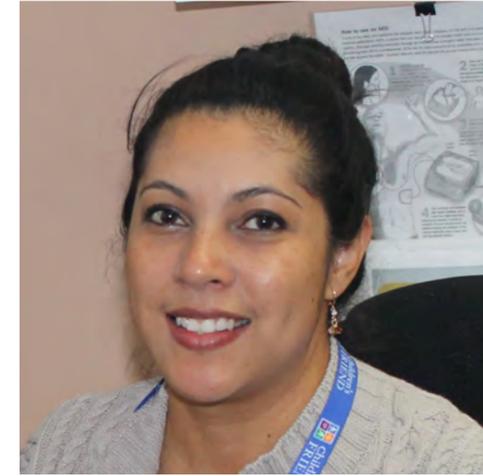


## Meet Sorhenis

Sorhenis Lee first became aware of Children's Friend in the spring of 2016. In the fall of that year, her son, Aaron, enrolled in Head Start program. After orientation, she attended the first Parent Committee meeting and immediately became involved by volunteering in the classroom and as a receptionist at the school's front desk. She states, "We all have busy lives but this was a wonderful opportunity for me to understand what Head Start was all about and how I can help in my son's first experience with learning in a classroom setting."

During her first Parent Committee meeting, Sorhenis was invited to attend a Policy Council meeting. Sorhenis was so impressed with the Head Start Policy Council that she continued to attend the monthly meetings. She enjoyed learning about the program and soon discovered how important it is for parents to get involved in their child's education at an early age. Sorhenis said, "Being on the Policy Council, I learned how to support my son by creating routines that will help him reach his full potential inside and outside the classroom."

Volunteering and attending meetings just was not enough for Sorhenis – she wanted to have a more meaningful role as a member of the Policy Council. Studying finance in college and working for two banking institutions, Sorhenis felt very comfortable with financial statements. She was elected to serve a two-year term as the Treasurer. The following year, she was a co-chair responsible for mentoring new officers and later served an additional two years as a community representative.



When asked what she likes best about her new position at Children's Friend, Sorhenis Lee responded, "It gives me great pleasure knowing that I am helping our parents to get more involved in their children's education. When I connect with them, they feel helped, loved, and welcomed."

As a parent, member of the Parent Committee, and Treasurer of the Policy Council, Sorhenis soon began to appreciate the philosophy and mission of Children's Friend, an agency that genuinely cares about the health and well-being of vulnerable young children. The Head Start program provided Aaron with an excellent preschool education in a safe and high-quality environment. As she states, "Head Start has helped to bring out the best in my son who continues to excel in school, year after year, thanks to Children's Friend."

She decided to apply for a job posted on the Children's Friend website. After being interviewed by members of the Policy Council, she was offered the position of Family Engagement Specialist. In her new role, her primary responsibility is to serve as the liaison between the parents and the agency. She supports teachers in the classroom and provides information to parents about available educational resources and upcoming seminars.

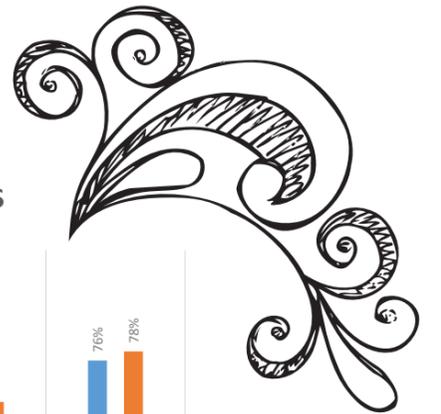


## School Readiness

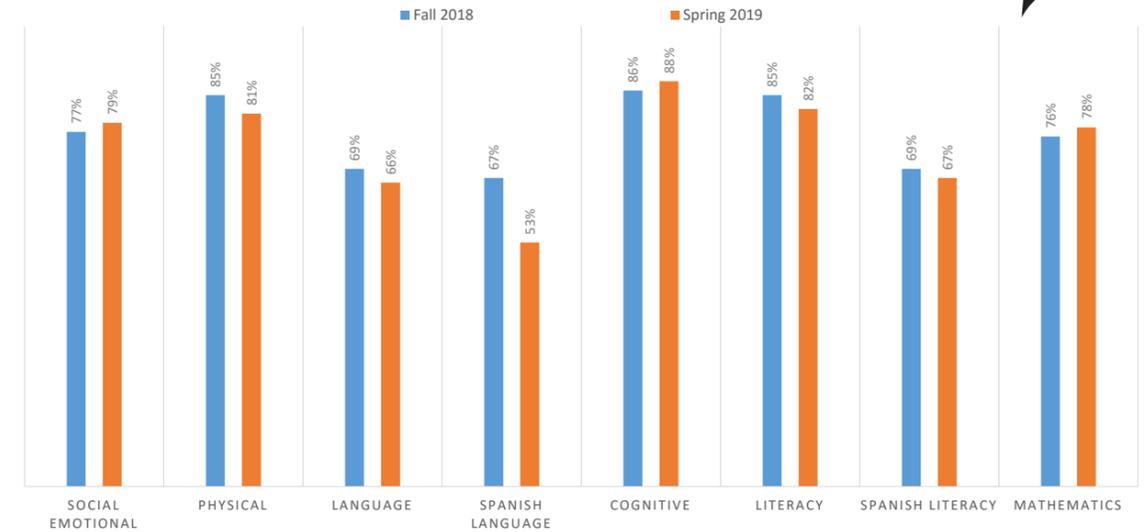
Each year, we seek to improve School Readiness outcomes for the children in our Head Start, Early Head Start (center- and home-based), and Early Head Start–Child Care Partnerships programs

We use the Teachings Strategies GOLD (TSG)® to develop curricula and track child outcomes. TSG® is a birth to kindergarten assessment system that assesses school readiness on a per-student level. It is completed three times throughout the school year and provides individualized assessment and feedback to teachers and parents to help identify children’s strengths and challenges, and to track student progress. It is also used to assess program efficacy and improvement on a classroom-, center-, and agency-level.

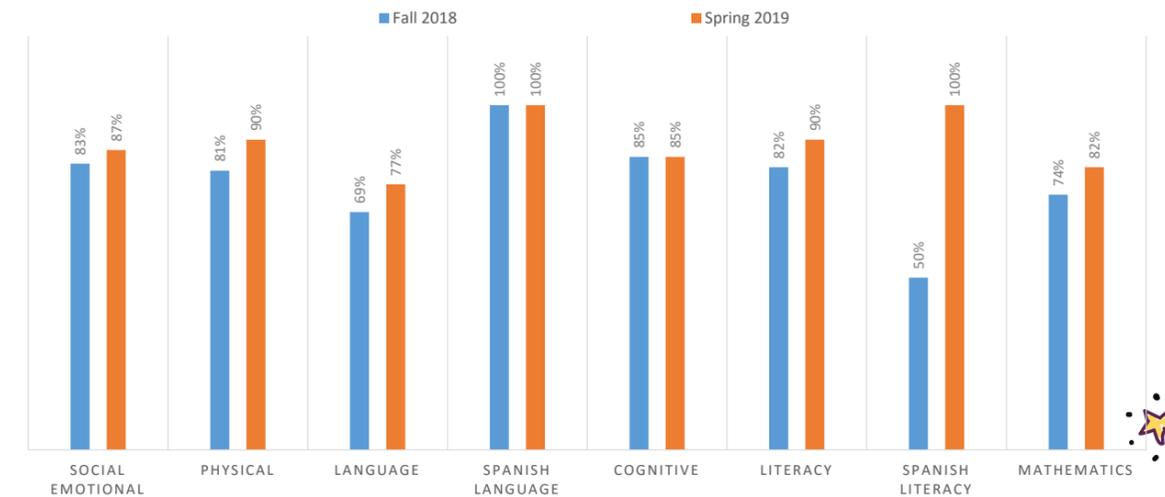
The following graphs show the percentages of children who were meeting/exceeding expectations in the developmental areas of social-emotional, physical, language, cognition, literacy, and mathematics from the fall 2018 to spring 2019. We also track progress of language and literacy for children for whom Spanish is their primary or home language.



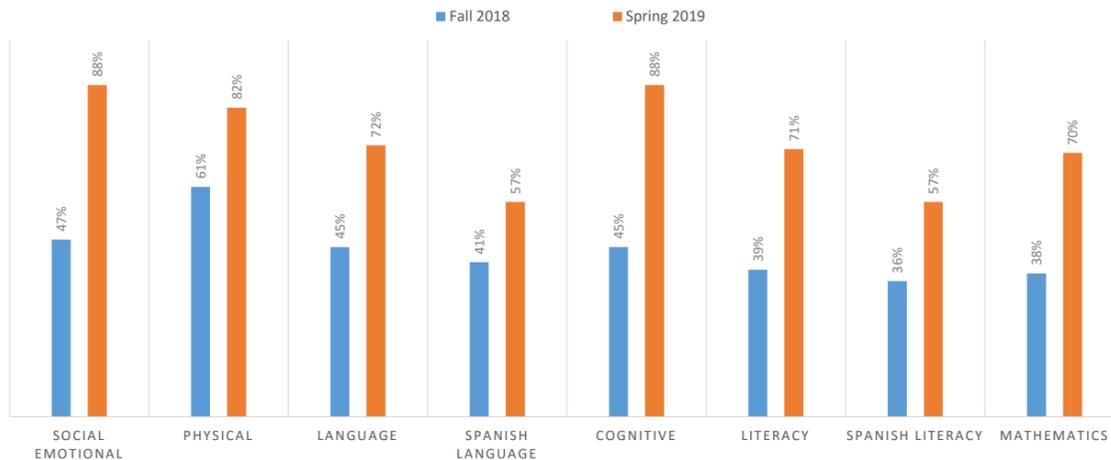
**EARLY HEAD START HOME-BASED CHILDREN WHO ARE MEETING/EXCEEDING EXPECTATIONS**



**EARLY HEAD START-CHILD CARE PARTNERSHIPS CHILDREN WHO ARE MEETING/EXCEEDING EXPECTATIONS**



**HEAD START AND EARLY HEAD START CENTER-BASED CHILDREN WHO ARE MEETING/EXCEEDING EXPECTATIONS**





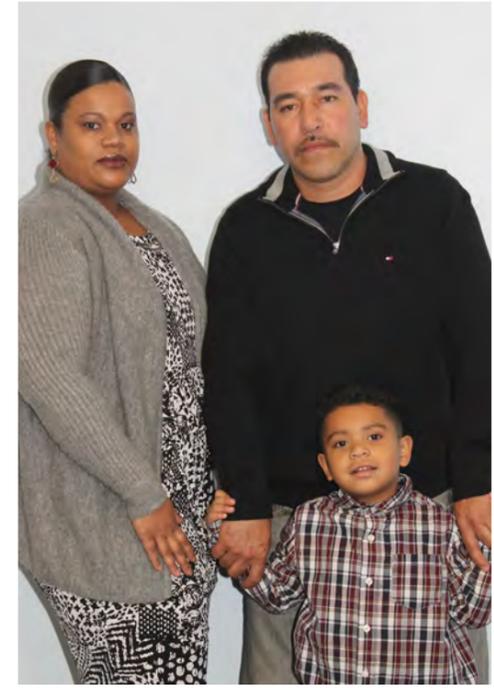
# Meet Miguel

In September of 2018, Yocasta and Miguel Castro, Sr. enrolled their son, Miguel, Jr., in the Head Start program at Children's Friend. Miguel enjoyed his first learning experience in a classroom setting and soon began to develop friendships with his classmates.

However, Miguel's teachers soon began to observe some behavioral issues that were putting Miguel's safety and the safety of others in the classroom at risk. A meeting was held, including Miguel's parents, his teaching team, and the Supervisor of Mental Health & Disabilities, to discuss an appropriate course of action to help Miguel adjust to a classroom environment.

"Yocasta and Miguel's father are team players and were always open to suggestions concerning their son's needs," said the Supervisor of Mental Health & Disabilities. When told about Miguel's behavior in the classroom, his mom was not surprised and stated, "Miguel does not listen to me and often runs away when we go to the supermarket or the mall. Yocasta added, "He doesn't follow my instructions, especially when I ask him to clean-up after playing with his toys." Together, the parents and the Supervisor of Mental Health & Disabilities agreed that enrolling Miguel in an outside community-based program that could provide more intensive supports in a classroom setting would be best.

After Miguel completed the outside community-based program, he returned to the Head Start program. Miguel transitioned into a Head Start classroom that has



additional supports integrated into the daily routines and activities, beyond the traditional Head Start classrooms. With these extra supports, Children's Friend can better support children with disabilities and special needs.

Miguel was making noticeable progress but still struggled. For a few months, his behavior continued to escalate. The team met again and decided Miguel would benefit from returning to the outside community-based program.

When Head Start began a new school year in September, Miguel was so excited to return to the classroom to be with his friends. Thanks to a particular seat he uses, he has more of a sense of his space. This allows him to sit for longer periods of time on a

rug during educational "circle time." He also enjoys molding therapy putty, which helps him to remain calm.

Commenting on the remarkable progress that he has made, the Supervisor of Mental Health & Disabilities states, "Miguel has made great strides in the time he has been with us. He has benefited not only from external referrals, but also internally with his teaching team. His team understand his special needs and respond to him so he can have a successful experience in Head Start."

Yocasta Castro has also witnessed an amazing transformation in her son's behavior and cannot believe how much he has improved academically. She declares, "Miguel is now able to write his name, count to 20, and say his ABC's." Smiling, Yocasta adds, "Now, he even pretends to read."



# Parent Engagement

So many parents and families are involved in our programs. Here are some of the fun ways we played and learned together.

- A total of 29 adults and 33 children attended the Early Head Start celebration event for our "Play and Grow" groups at Capron Park Zoo in Attleboro. In addition to visiting the zoo, the children had an opportunity to play and get their faces painted. The children also received summer beach pails and balls.
- The Rhode Island annual Head Start "Ready-Set-Kindergarten" conference is sponsored every year and families of children heading to kindergarten were invited to attend. Local school districts were invited to come and explain to families what to expect once their child transitions from Head Start to kindergarten.
- Health Fairs were scheduled at several Head Start centers. Parents had opportunities to interact with vendors, receive information related to various health topics, and to learn and enroll in programs like WIC.
- Multiple summer field trips were scheduled for all centers, providing opportunities for families to visit water parks, zoos, playgrounds, and the beach with their children.
- Early Head Start hosted a "Celebrating Our Senses" family event on May 19th. Children enjoyed playing in goop, water and sand tables, painting with ice, and experiencing different scents from herbs, fruits, and spices.





## Meet Johnelle...

Johnelle is a smart and adorable two year old.

When Johnelle turned one year old, her parents, Yiraida and John, enrolled her in Early Head Start. The Family Advocate visits the family weekly and, together with the parents, reviews lessons from an evidence-based curriculum entitled, *Growing Great Kids*. She also provides Johnelle's parents with ideas for family activities that they can do together with their daughter.

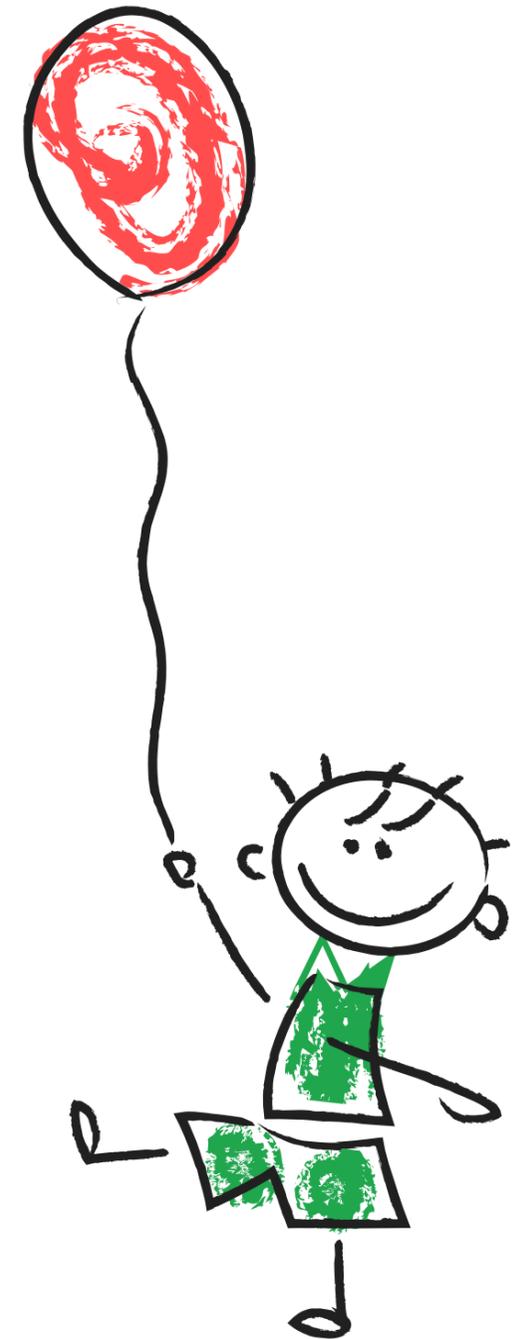
Johnelle is making wonderful progress. She already recognizes every letter of the alphabet and can count to ten. She can identify shapes and can sound out certain words. Johnelle's Family Advocate is amazed at Johnelle's language and cognitive skills.

On one particular Early Head Start home visit, she observed Johnelle reading her favorite book, *Chicka Chicka Boom Boom*. "I couldn't believe my eyes," the Family Advocate said. "She was reading a book all by herself." parents with ideas for family activities that they can do together with their daughter.

Yiraida and John also participate in socialization groups for parents at one of the Children's Friend sites. Occasionally, the Family Advocate accompanies the family on field trips to locations such as the Providence Children's Museum and the library.



On a trip to the Roger Williams Park Zoo, the Family Advocate saw that Johnelle recognized many of the animals from the books that her mom and dad read to her. Everyone was amazed. Yiraida and John have been grateful to have Johnelle in the Early Head Start program and credits her Family Advocate for her daughter's remarkable progress.



# 20

# Let's Do the Numbers...

Children's Friend provided essential services to many of Rhode Island's most vulnerable children through our Head Start, Early Head Start, and Early Head Start-Child Care Partnerships programs. Cumulatively, 1,491 children received services from our Head Start, Early Head Start, and Early Head Start-Child Care Partnerships programs.

### Early Head Start

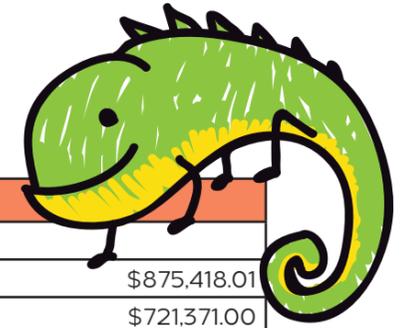
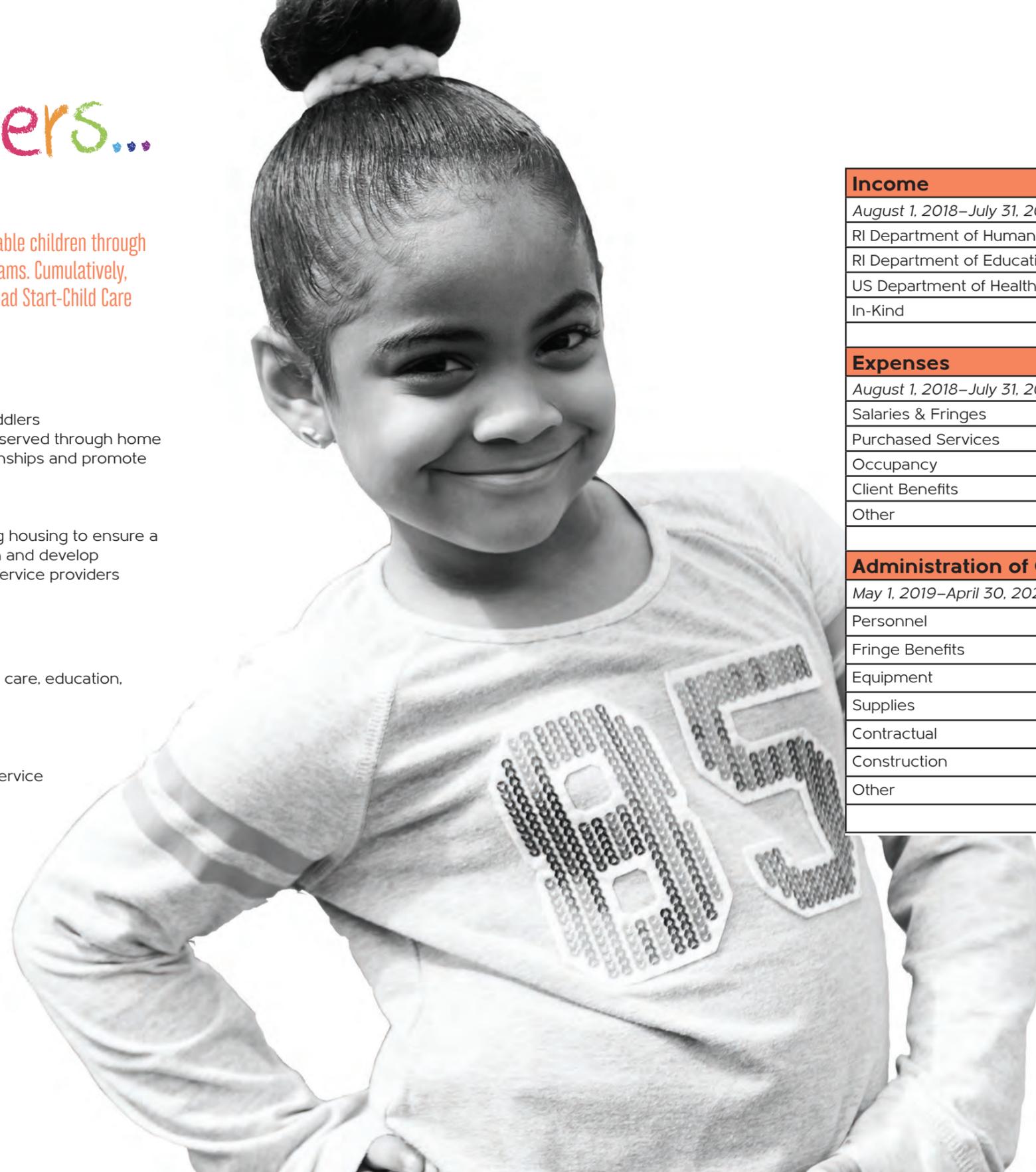
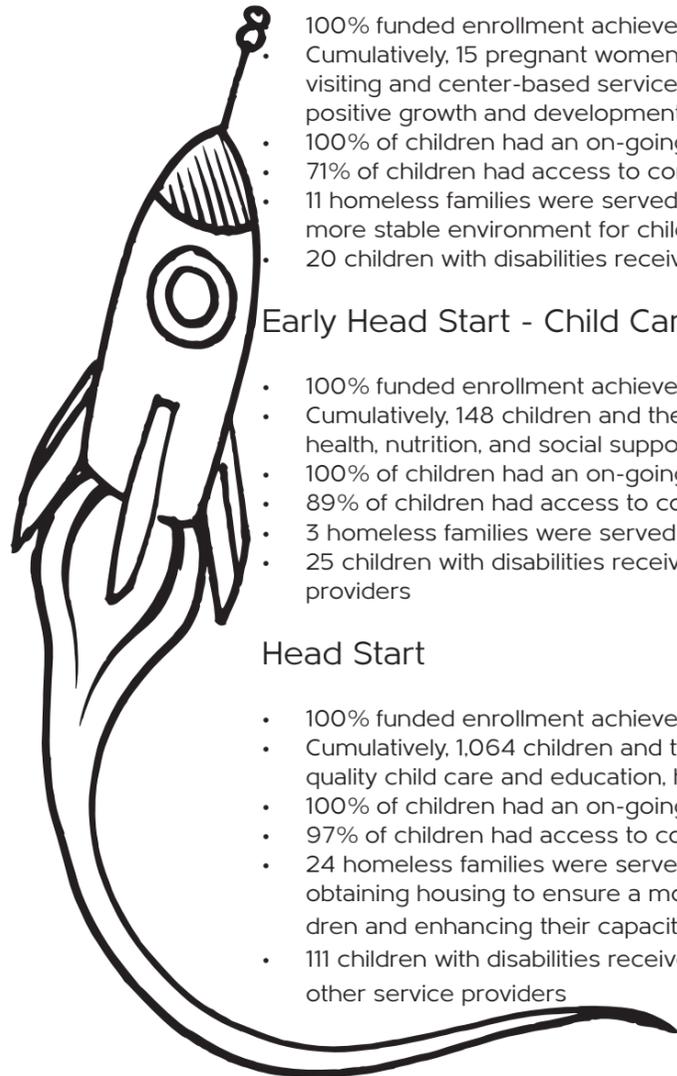
- 100% funded enrollment achieved for 176 pregnant women, infants and toddlers
- Cumulatively, 15 pregnant women and 264 children and their families were served through home visiting and center-based services that support positive parent-child relationships and promote positive growth and development in children
- 100% of children had an on-going source of accessible health care
- 71% of children had access to comprehensive dental care
- 11 homeless families were served and four families were helped in obtaining housing to ensure a more stable environment for children and enhancing their capacity to learn and develop
- 20 children with disabilities received services and coordination with other service providers

### Early Head Start - Child Care Partnerships

- 100% funded enrollment achieved for 100 children
- Cumulatively, 148 children and their families were provided with quality child care, education, health, nutrition, and social supports
- 100% of children had an on-going source of accessible health care
- 89% of children had access to comprehensive dental care
- 3 homeless families were served
- 25 children with disabilities received services and coordination with other service providers

### Head Start

- 100% funded enrollment achieved, or 915 children
- Cumulatively, 1,064 children and their families were provided with quality child care and education, health, nutrition, and social supports
- 100% of children had an on-going source of accessible health care
- 97% of children had access to comprehensive dental care
- 24 homeless families were served and 13 families were helped in obtaining housing to ensure a more stable environment for children and enhancing their capacity to learn and develop
- 111 children with disabilities received services and coordination with other service providers



Income	
<i>August 1, 2018–July 31, 2019</i>	
RI Department of Human Services	\$875,418.01
RI Department of Education	\$721,371.00
US Department of Health and Human Services	\$19,032,766.37
In-Kind	\$3,741,171.99
Expenses	
<i>August 1, 2018–July 31, 2019</i>	
Salaries & Fringes	\$10,966,362.94
Purchased Services	\$1,735,909.90
Occupancy	\$5,964,501.12
Client Benefits	\$872,356.21
Other	\$4,831,597.20
Administration of Children and Family Budget	
<i>May 1, 2019–April 30, 2020</i>	
Personnel	\$7,910,974.00
Fringe Benefits	\$3,322,934.00
Equipment	\$0.00
Supplies	\$232,581.00
Contractual	\$1,157,201.00
Construction	\$2,858,181.00
Other	\$1,685,393.00



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FRIEND

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Advocates

