

Semi-Annual Program Performance Report

Agency Name: Southwestern Minnesota Opportunity Council Head Start

Grant # 05CH4114-47

Date: October 2012-March 2013

Describe accomplishments and positive developments that had a significant impact on the Head Start program during the reporting period.

Mental Health

1. The 2012 – 2013 school year has seen numerous changes in services delivery, one being the consultant contract between SMOC Head Start and Greater Minnesota Mental Health. The contract bought us time each week, to use several Mental Health Professionals for observations with children that need help with their social/emotional development.

Having professional consultants has helped...

...with concerns and trainings on Mental Health issues.

...with expertise when dealing with sibling rivalry, parenting skills, abuse, routines, good and bad touches, and suggestions for appropriate services for the families we serve.

...with over 60 observations between the classrooms and home visits.

...the classroom teachers develop social/emotional support for the children in their classrooms and helped stress the importance of the Second Step Curriculum.

...with recommendations and assessments for further mental health referrals.

...with questions from the Leadership team concerning ideas to help families.

...with staff/teacher personal, mental health concerns.

...scoring ASQ: SE assessments.

...with talking to parents one on one about concerns with their children.

...provide high quality trainings for staff and parents

Disabilities

2. Each school district has been very helpful and open to working with children on IEP's in the classrooms and on home visits. ECSE teachers have been available to give their expertise on handling developmental challenges for Head start children. When the Disabilities Coordinator asks for new ideas for teachers, the school districts give input in a timely manner. They listen to concerns and take those concerns under advisement when making and developing goals for the children's IEP. Each school district that is on SPED FORMS, a website that gives access to the IEP's, has granted access to the Disabilities Coordinator, who then can get copies of the IEP and give them to the Head Start teachers. The program now has 24 children on IEP's.

Health

3. Held 1st of 2 Health Advisory Committee Meetings for the year, with 11 committee members and Head Start staff available.
4. Participated in Child Plus Users Group in St Cloud focusing on data entry and creating a consistent entry process.
5. We are completing year 1 of a 3 year Health Literacy project. Our first year saw a 91% completion rate of participation. We will again work with our staff and provide 64 families this opportunity during year 2.
6. We work closely with the MN Extension participated in Nobles County Nutrition Nights , providing families with individualized Nutrition assessments and education.
7. Attended two day "2012 Got Your Shots?" conference in Mankato
8. Attended meeting in Murray County With speaker Dr. Amos Deinard regarding fluoride varnishing

Parent Family Community Engagement

9. Family Nights:

Each of our 12 teachers provides 7 family night events/parent meetings for their families to participate in throughout the school year. Mental Health and Nutrition Nights are offered for all 12 classes. Each Mental

Health Night provides family access to an Early Childhood Mental Health counselor that gives a generalized presentation directed to families with young children as well as a question and answer time for parents. Parents are also able to talk with this person one-on-one before or after to have additional questions answered if needed. Nutrition Night provides families with access to our Community Nutrition Educators (CNE's). They help teach families how to make nutritious snacks and meals, and volunteer in Head Start classrooms to provide nutrition education. CNE's also offered cooking classes to Head Start families in select counties.

Many teachers also opted to have a First Aid Family Night or a Winter Survival Family Night this year. Elayne Murray-Rothbarth, a certified Red Cross Instructor, gave a presentations and did a live demonstration on what to put in a winter survival kit and how to use the materials, choking and how to help a choking victim and discussed ways to prevent choking, first aid procedures and created first aid kits to take home.

This year all classrooms provided a Dad's event, highlighting a special activity that dads could really get involved in with their whole family. We advocated for several families during the school year. Home visitors helped families apply for medical insurance and assisted families when applying for energy assistance and section 8 housing. We were able to locate assistance from community groups such as Volunteers in Mercy, Love, Inc.

10. We have a partnership with the Pipestone and Worthington School Districts to help with their Kindergarten Round-up, and be a presence at Round-up for Head Start children that will be transitioning to Kindergarten the following school year. We stress the importance of attending Kindergarten Round-up with families in all of our service area and ensure all school districts have the names of our students that will be attending their district.
11. We distributed information about Tax Preparation to all families. The information came from *You Claim It!* providing useful information on how to file income taxes.

Education

14. We have 3 School Readiness Coaches that are reliable in the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS). This will help increase the quality of classroom interactions, and show areas of needed professional development for classroom staff.
15. The Family Support Coordinator, Education Coordinator, and Mental Health and Disabilities Coordinator began cross training and working as School Readiness Coaches. They each supervise 3-5 teachers and serve as coaches to those teachers as well. They meet with their teachers on a monthly basis to conduct observations and discuss any teacher, child, or family concerns. As they have shared supervisory duties, they have trained each other in duties they each carry out so that they can more effectively coach staff, and are able to help and hold each other accountable for their jobs.
16. School Readiness Coaches conduct Individual Quarterly FOCUS meetings with each teacher. They discuss each child and their family individually to better track family strengths and concerns, follow up needed on referrals, and any other concerns the family, teacher, or coach have.
17. The Family Support Coordinator, Education Coordinator, and Mental Health and Disabilities Coordinator all became part of the MN Head Start Association's Quality Assessment Group. They attended 2 meetings and gained knowledge about appropriate use of data relating to School Readiness Goals, how to be an effective coach, and new initiatives in the coaching and School Readiness areas.
18. We continued to work with Brenda Hall from STG International on School Readiness Goals, CLASS, the Parent, Family, and Community Engagement Framework, and professional development and coaching techniques.
19. We collaborated with other Early Childhood programs to host the Kid's 1st Conference. We had 15 teachers and aids, 3 coordinators and the Head Start Director attend this event in January.

Transportation

20. All buses passed annual inspection with MN State Patrol DOT and were found in compliance with the regulations for transporting children.

ERSEA

21. The end of Month enrollment reports were submitted. We maintained FULL enrollment throughout the reporting period. We maintained waiting lists for all counties.
22. Classroom attendance was 91% in the combination and 92% in the home-based classes.
23. Home visit attendance was achieved at 90%. All teachers maintained quality services to families.

List significant goals and objectives established for the reporting period which were not met and state:

As the Director, I believe we accomplished the goals that were set for this year, and even more. I have had an incredible year of learning and the program has had a year of adjustments, with the new leadership. I inherited a very strong program and believe the changes have only increased the effectiveness of these services. I have been working with my Grantee Specialist Gwen Shavaliere to increase my knowledge and understanding of the Head Start Performance Standards, the Head Start Act, Program Monitoring systems, and ERSEA processes and data entry in ChildPlus. With Gwen's help I looked at our organizational structure, job descriptions and responsibilities of the various positions to realign and create a more efficiently functioning program. I learned how to use the tools on ECLKC to find answers and clarification for Standards that I may not understand completely. I participated in my first Self-Assessment and found it to be invaluable and energizing because we are so strong in many areas. As a Leadership Team we have been involved in team building activities, looking at our Policies and Procedures while evaluating if they are the best fit for the program at this time and revising as needed. I have had the opportunity to work with our families on the Policy Council, both those who are more seasoned and newer members, making decisions for the betterment of the program for the children and our communities.

I have also had the opportunity to work with Brenda Hall, our TTA Early Childhood Education Specialist. I have had a crash course on SR Goals, PFCE Framework, integration and documentation of services. I have been involved in two School Readiness calls, numerous trainings and many conversations with my Leadership Team and feel as though we have a program that is designed to support our families and provide our children the learning opportunities that will prepare them for success in Kindergarten and beyond.

List funded and actual enrollment on the last day of the reporting period by program option (or the last day of classes if the program is not in session). If the Head Start program is under-enrolled, describe any problems, delays, or adverse conditions which prevented the agency from achieving and maintaining full enrollment, as well as plans to address this issue.

Program Option	Funded Enrollment	Actual Enrollment	# of Drops
Combination (October 2012 – March 2013)	106	106	5
Home-Based (October 2012 – March 2013)	86	86	3
TOTAL: (Oct – March)	192	192	8

Describe any unexpected cost overruns or savings during this reporting period and their implications for program operations.

We experienced cost savings due to the reevaluation of staffing and the restructuring of our administrative team.