

# Rutland County Head Start

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Community Care Network  
**Rutland Community Programs**  
thriving community, empowered lives.



## **Annual Report to the Public 2021**

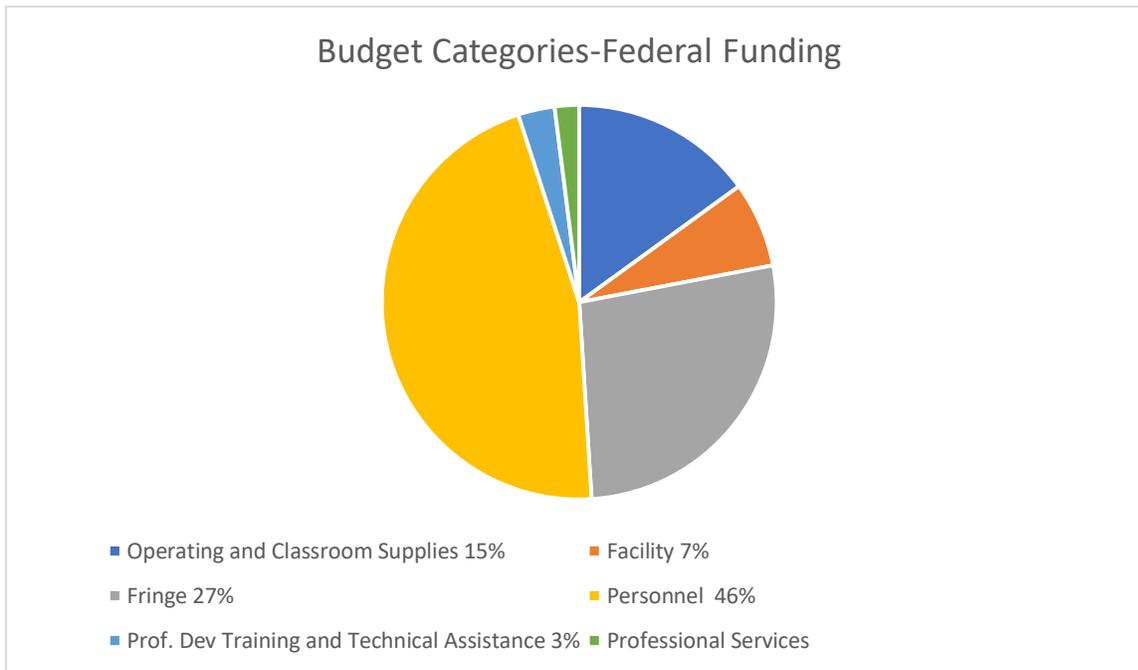
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Pursuant to the Improving *Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007*, Head Start grantees must make available to the public an annual report that discloses certain information. The following is the 2020-2021 program year report for Rutland Community Programs, Inc. (Rutland County Head Start).

### **Funding**

The federal grant period for Rutland County Head Start is January 1 through December 31, although the program year runs September through May. For calendar year 2020, Rutland Community Programs was awarded \$1,625,459 in Head Start grant funds from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. This award included a (1.92%) cost of living adjustment (COLA) for staff, and Quality Improvement funds totaling an additional award of of \$87,153.00

## **Budgeted expenditures grant (calendar) year 2020**



### **Total number of children and families served**

For the 2020-2021 program year, Rutland County Head Start served 87 families and 94 children (cumulative-includes families and children who left the program during the year). Federal funded child enrollment is 117.

### **Enrollment**

Family structure: Of the 87% of families that were enrolled, 50% were two-parent families and 47% were single-parent families. There were 7 foster children.

Income levels: At the time of registration, 35 children were from families with incomes below 100% of the federal poverty level and 21 were the recipients of public assistance- TANF (Reach-up) or SSI. Five children were categorically eligible as homeless and five children were categorically eligible as being in foster care. 20 children were enrolled with an income of between 100-130% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines (FPG). 9 children were enrolled as over-income enrollees, above the 130% of the FPG's.

Homelessness: There were 7 families that experiences homelessness during the enrollment year, with 7 children at some point during the program year; all families acquired housing during the 2020-2021 program year?

### **Results of most recent federal review and financial audit**

Rutland County Head Start underwent a Focus Area Two Monitoring Visit in Oct 2018. A letter from the Administration for Children and Families date December 14<sup>th</sup>, 2018 cited no area of non-compliance or suggestions for improvement. One comment included in the report indicated,

“The management/organizational structure provides effective management and oversight of all program areas”. The fiscal year 2021 financial audit produced no findings.

### **Percentage of enrolled children that received medical and dental exams**

At the end of the 2020-2021 program year, 85% of children were up-to-date on a schedule of age-appropriate preventive and primary health care according to Vermont’s EPSDT schedule for well child care; of these, 7% were diagnosed with a chronic condition requiring medical treatment. Ninety seven percent (97%) of children were determined by a health care professional to be up-to-date on all immunizations appropriate for their age, or met Vermont guidelines for an exemption from immunizations). Two percent (2%) of children were determined by a health care professional to have received all immunizations possible at this time, but who have not received all immunizations appropriate for their age. At the end of the program year, 81% of children had a continuous, accessible dental care. One percent (1%) of the children was diagnosed as needing dental treatment and had an appointment scheduled after the end of the program year. In Rutland City the only pediatric dentist retired during the program year. Due to the global health pandemic dental offices were booking appointments out due to them being shut down for patient care. Our program tooth tutor, a dental hygienist provided fluoride treatment to 10% of children with parent permission.

### **Information about family engagement activities**

Families are provided with a variety of opportunities to be involved in their child’s preschool experience. Parents participate in a minimum of two teacher home visits, two parent/teacher conferences and three family services visits. Parents are provided with volunteer opportunities in the classroom, on field trips, on projects at home, and participate in staff hiring interviews. Parent Committee meetings are held at each site. The meetings provide parents with opportunities to give input into their classroom curriculum, plan field trips and to participate in parent trainings. Parents participate in a shared governance approach for the program through Policy Council meetings.

During the 2020-2021 school year families/caregivers were not allowed in the Head Start facilities for an extended time due to the global pandemic. Families/caregivers would sign their child in and out and then exit the building. Parent meetings, home visits, parent/teacher conferences, Policy Council and trainings were all held remotely through zoom. In the summer of 2021 we were able to welcome families to the playground for ice cream event for the end of year celebration.88% of families attended.

### **Program Quality Ratings**

Rutland County Head Start was re-accredited for a period of five years (2019-2024) by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). The program has also been awarded, and maintained, 5 STARS (the highest level) by the Vermont Child Development Division through its SStep Ahead Recognition System, Vermont’s quality recognition system for child care, preschool, and after-school programs.

## **Early Learning and Kindergarten Readiness**

Rutland County Head Start uses The Creative Curriculum as its focal curriculum. The Creative Curriculum addresses goals in the Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Outcomes Framework and serves as a guide for staff in the provision of materials and activities to support children's goals. The Creative Curriculum for Preschool meets all of the standards put forth for effective early childhood curricula by the National Association for the Education of Young Children and the National Association of Early Childhood Specialists in State Departments of Education.

Rutland County Head Start's School Readiness Goals were developed by a team of Lead Teachers and Administrators, with input from parents. The following resources were referenced in this development: Vermont Head Start Association School Readiness Goals; Vermont Early Learning Standards; Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Outcomes Framework; Curriculum for Preschool; and Teaching Strategies GOLD. Family Engagement goals have also been incorporated into the School Readiness Goals.

The overarching School Readiness Goals of the program are;

- Physical Health and Development- Children will develop early health habits to support physical well-being, use of their bodies, muscle control, appropriate nutrition, exercise, hygiene and safety practices.
- Literacy-Language Development- Children will increase their language and communication skills by engaging in experiences that require them to effectively express their ideas and feelings, listen and understand others. Children will understand basic concepts about books or other media, the alphabet, and letter-sound relationships.
- Social-Emotional Development- Children will develop the skills necessary to foster secure attachments with adults, maintain healthy relationships, regulate behavior and emotions, and develop a healthy concept of personal identity. Children will participate fully in learning experiences and form positive relationships with teachers and peers.
- Approaches to Learning- Children will develop a sense of wonder, a willingness to participate, persistence in their efforts, and the ability to connect past learning to new situations.
- Cognitive/General Knowledge- Children will develop mathematical thinking skills to logically solve problems and make connections in the world around them. Children will expand their curiosity and motivation to learn by asking questions, making observations and building on natural experiences.

### **Child Assessment System**

The program uses Teaching Strategies GOLD as the assessment system. Children are assessed at three checkpoints during the program year. Ongoing assessment is integral for curriculum and instruction. Through data analysis and outcomes evaluation, program improvement plans are developed accordingly to achieve school readiness goals.

## **Key Findings from Child Assessment Data**

The 2020-2021 school readiness summary report is available on our website. Some highlights from Widely Held Expectations report for the overall program population (ages 3-5) include:

- The program has increased the percentage of children meeting or exceeding all ten (10) School Readiness Objectives.
- The greatest area of strength is Physical Development, with 58% of children meeting or exceeding expectations.

### **Overall Population**

<b>Area</b>	<b>Meeting/Exceeding Expectations</b>		<b>Change</b>
	<b>Fall 2020</b>	<b>Spring 2021</b>	
Social-Emotional	37.29%	47%	9.71% increase
Physical	40.67%	58%	17.33% increase
Language	47.45%	56%	8.55% increase
Cognitive	28.81%	51%	22.19 % increase
Literacy	20.34%	44%	23.66% increase
Mathematics	23.73%	35%	11.27% increase

### **Children Going to Kindergarten**

<b>Area</b>	<b>Meeting/Exceeding Expectations</b>		<b>Change</b>
	<b>Fall 2020</b>	<b>Spring 2021</b>	
Social-Emotional	20.29%	43.21%	22.92% increase
Physical	28.99%	45.68%	16.69% increase
Language	21.74%	37.04%	15.30% increase
Cognitive	15.94%	41.98%	26.04% increase
Literacy	5.8%	17.28%	11.48% increase
Mathematics	7.25%	20.99%	13.75% increase

### **Individualized Learning Opportunities**

Rutland County Head Start utilizes an individualized observation and planning process for each child. In partnership, staff and families assess the child's development and identify areas for growth across all domains of learning. Information is obtained through interviews with parents, observations of the child, and formal evaluative protocols (ASQ3), Teaching Strategies GOLD and, if applicable, information from a child's Individualized Education Program. Information collected from these sources is then used to provide for individualized experiences and services for children and families.

## **Collaborations**

Rutland County Head Start works with all of the school districts in Rutland County to enhance the transition procedure for children entering kindergarten. Head Start and public-school teachers and administrators share child portfolios and review the child's preschool experience. Rutland County Head Start gives each child going to kindergarten a book about going to kindergarten, the opportunity to engage in kindergarten preparation nights and classrooms watch an intro to kindergarten video, in an effort to help deepen their understanding of this important life transition. *Off to Kindergarten* family training was provided for kindergarten families, facilitated by a kindergarten teacher and Head Start staff. Rutland County Head Start children receive a book about kindergarten, and classrooms and parents watch a video narrated by the Rutland City Public Pre-K Teacher Leader of kindergarten classroom and what a typical day will look like.

For more information about Rutland County Head Start please visit [www.rchscn.org](http://www.rchscn.org).