



LENOX HILL NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSE
SINCE 1894

Head Start Public Annual Report

Lenox Hill Neighborhood House
Early Childhood Center

September 2023



Introduction

Lenox Hill Neighborhood House is a 129-year-old settlement house widely recognized as one of New York's premier human services providers. Founded in 1894 as a kindergarten for immigrant children, the Neighborhood House now serves thousands of individuals and families in need each year through a wide array of effective and integrated services—social, educational, legal, housing, health, mental health, nutritional and fitness. We are committed to achieving an ongoing, organizational culture of excellence—programmatically, operationally and fiscally—and to being the best nonprofit in New York.



The Neighborhood House serves 16,000 clients each year who range in age from 3 to 103, represent dozens of races, ethnicities and countries of origin and live, work, go to school or access services on the East Side from 14th Street to 143rd Street. They include indigent families and the working-poor who live in the East Side's housing projects and tenements or who travel to the Upper East Side to work in low-wage jobs such as cashiers, housekeepers, nannies and laborers; 11,000 older adults; and hundreds of mentally ill homeless and formerly homeless adults. We have five locations between 54th and 102nd Streets, including our Head Start program on East 70th Street, and offer programs at dozens of East Side locations and deliver services to thousands of homebound clients in their own homes. Our mission is to help people gain the skills they need to strengthen themselves and their community.

The Neighborhood House's award-winning and nationally recognized Early Childhood Center (ECC) is a model Head Start program and lab school for innovations designed to erase the school readiness gap for the children we serve, as well as to advance the field of early childhood education. We work to offer the best possible educational, developmental and social services to our Head Start children and their families. Moreover, we seek to provide the best facilities, partnerships, and resources in support of the health and growth of these families. The Neighborhood House ECC is accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), achieving outstanding ratings in all review categories as part of our 2019 reaccreditation.

The children and families supported by the ECC represent some of the most vulnerable groups in New York City. This past year the program maintained full capacity throughout the entire school year. We continue an online classroom presence (Google Classroom) so that if classrooms needed to serve students remotely due to Covid-19 or any other emergency, the transition to remote offerings would be quickly available and easily utilized. We offer numerous workshops and group work for families to connect with the program and with their classroom community. Social workers routinely contacted each family in person, by phone and by Zoom to identify and address concerns regarding education, mental health, physical health, interpersonal relationships, financial status, or legal needs. Our social workers also provide support groups and psycho-educational groups for families throughout the school year. The ECC administrators and child psychologist are involved, as are other staff at the Neighborhood House in different program areas who can assist in their area of expertise. We connect families to many resources. These include meals, food distribution, health care, legal support, employment, benefits, medicine, and other vital resources, while continuing to provide education and support for all ECC children and their families.



The following 2023 Public Annual Report is compiled and distributed in accordance with the Head Start Act, Section 644(a)(2).

Federal Head Start Funds Received from the federal Administration for Children and Families, as well as State and City Funds Received and Used as part of the Required Non-Federal Match

| | Fiscal Year 2023 Actual | Fiscal Year 2024 Proposed |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| Federal Head Start Funds | \$1,960,749 | \$2,109,286 |
| Child and Adult Care Food Program | \$207,877 | \$205,000 |
| Non-Federal Universal Pre-K Funds | \$476,932 | \$490,187 |
| Total: | \$2,645,558 | \$2,804,473 |

In addition, generous contributions from private philanthropic supporters are essential to the development and implementation of our exceptional enrichment programming and the creation of our state-of-the-art facilities.

Federal Head Start Program Expenditures for 2023 and Proposed Head Start Budget for 2024

| | Fiscal Year 2022 Proposed | Fiscal Year 2023 Actual | Fiscal Year 2024 Proposed |
|------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| Personnel | \$1,591,406 | \$1,526,757 | \$1,698,939 |
| Fringe Benefits | \$605,286 | \$604,621 | \$642,264 |
| Travel | \$0 | \$0 | \$0 |
| Supplies | \$13,212 | \$29,761 | \$21,292 |
| Contractual | \$0 | \$652 | \$0 |
| Other | \$227,777 | \$275,890 | \$236,978 |
| Food and Food Services | \$182,677 | \$207,877 | \$205,000 |
| Total: | \$2,620,358 | \$2,645,558 | \$2,804,473 |

Children and Families Served and Average Monthly Enrollment

The ECC is a center-based Head Start program. Our Head Start funded enrollment is 141 students. We also are funded through NYC Department of Education, which limits us to a total of 132 due to class size restrictions in the three-year-old classes. We maintain full enrollment of 132 in compliance with both programs.

Head Start Monthly Enrollment, 2022-2023

| September | October | November | December | January | February | March | April | May | June | July | August |
|-----------|---------|----------|----------|---------|----------|-------|-------|-----|------|------|--------|
| 132 | 132 | 132 | 132 | 132 | 132 | 132 | 132 | 132 | 132 | 132 | 132 |

*The Head Start program is only in session for the first week of August.

Most Recent Financial Audits

The most recent audit of the consolidated financial statements of Lenox Hill Neighborhood House, Inc., and Affiliates, which comprise the consolidated statements of financial position as of June 30, 2021 and 2022, and the related consolidated statements of activities, functional expenses and cash flows for the years then ended, and the related notes to the consolidated financial statements, was undertaken by Marks Paneth LLP. Marks Paneth issued an unqualified opinion that the consolidated financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of Lenox Hill Neighborhood House, Inc. and Affiliates as of June 30, 2021 and 2022, and the changes in its net assets and its cash flows for the years then ended in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America. A copy of the independent audit and the consolidated financial statements are available upon request or on our website at www.lenoxhill.org. The audit of Lenox Hill Neighborhood House was performed in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards*, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States (“GAS”), the Single Audit Act Amendments of 1996, and the provisions of Title 2 U.S. *Code of Federal Regulations* (“CFR”) Part 200, *Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards* (“Uniform Guidance”).

Among our 132 cumulative students in the 2022 - 2023 academic year, primary eligibility for the Head Start program was:

Primary Eligibility for Head Start

| | |
|---|------|
| Income below the Federal Poverty Threshold | 58% |
| Qualified Recipient of Public Assistance | 20% |
| Foster Children | 0.8% |
| Homeless | 3% |
| Income Between 100% and 130% of the Federal Poverty Threshold | 20% |

Demographics of the Neighborhood House Head Start Program

Our families live, work or go to school on the East Side of Manhattan, between 14th and 143rd Streets, with the majority of families coming from East Harlem. Children are three- or four-years-old when they enter the program. Selected demographics are below.

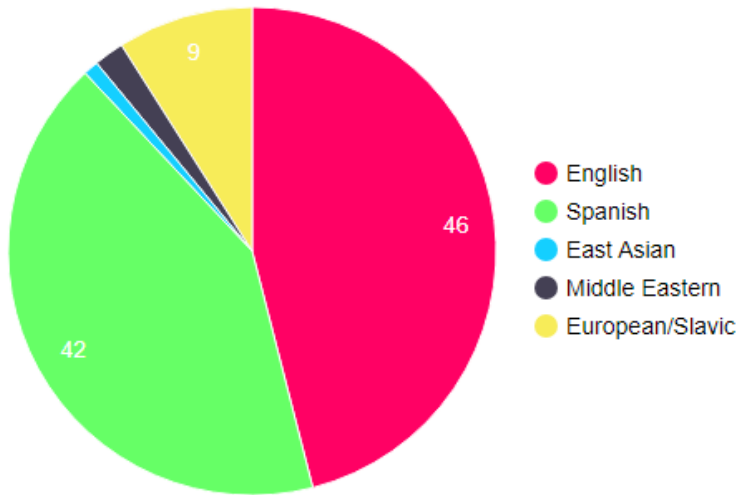
Race

| | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| American Indian or Alaska Native .76% | Black or African American 15% |
| White 13% | Biracial or Multiracial 20% |
| Unspecified 49% | Asian 3% |

Primary Language

English 46% Spanish 42%
 East Asian .75% European and Slavic 9%
 Middle Eastern 2.3%

Languages in ECC Families



Health Services for Children and Families

The health of our students is integral to their development. To foster improved health and wellbeing of our students, our Head Start staff work quickly to identify and resolve any barriers to medical or dental care access that our families may be experiencing. Through the course of each year, we link families disconnected from the health care system to continuous sources of accessible medical and dental treatment, promote timely immunization, strengthen the use of preventive medical services, and encourage families to provide their children with a complete professional dental examination.

Medical and Dental Health Care Utilization by School Year’s End 2021-2022

| | |
|--|------|
| Children with a Medical Home | 100% |
| Up to Date Well Child Primary and Preventative Medical Care | 100% |
| Up to Date/All Possible Immunizations | 100% |
| Children with a Dental Home | 100% |
| Number of Children Diagnosed as Needing Dental Treatment | 4% |
| Students who Received Preventative Dental Care after Diagnosis | 100% |

Parent Involvement Activities

Parental involvement in the Head Start program is essential to programmatic success. The ECC has a variety of avenues for parental involvement in our program and for parents to provide input on unmet needs. Our goal is that all

families participate in parent activities and events throughout the school year. Over the course of the 2022-2023 academic year, our average participation rate in weekly workshops was high. ECC offered family workshops midday via Zoom when the timing was most easily accommodated by parents. This worked exceptionally well for our families. 100% of our parents participated in some type of workshop, support group, or information session. Some examples of parent involvement programs and activities include:

- Home visits
- Policy Council, Classroom Meetings, and committee participation
- School Readiness/Family Engagement Committee
- Workshops on health, separation, toileting, self-care, resiliency, and mindfulness
- Health Workshops and Healthy City Kids workshop series
- Education related events including – transitioning, Gifted and Talented Application Workshops, Kindergarten Application workshop, developmental expectations, Turning 5 Workshop
- ESOL classes, Tennant Rights Workshops, Culinary Arts classes
- School Pride events including curriculum day, seasonal celebrations and end of the year family day



In addition to these workshops and activities, the Neighborhood House has a robust program of supportive services that we provide to all our families. Our staff strongly believes that a safe, stable and healthy family environment is integral to positive child development. We assess both the parents’ and the children’s strengths and needs throughout the year with the Family Needs Assessment to connect our families with any services or resources that they may require. Last year, 100% of our Head Start families took advantage of one or more of the supportive services—ranging from crisis intervention and legal assistance to health education and parenting courses—that were available at the Neighborhood House or through one of our community partners.

In surveying the families, we came to the conclusion that some workshops and education topics are best held via Zoom. Zoom offers an opportunity for parents to join midday when they might be at work or obligated to care for other children or members of their households during the day. The social work team provided parents with the opportunity to attend support groups monthly (offered in both English and Spanish) that focused on different topics including self-care, health and safety, boundary setting, race and diversity and parenting techniques.

| Family Services Program | Families Served |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|
| Adult Education | 24 |
| Domestic Violence Services | 1 |
| Emergency/Crisis Intervention | 125 |
| ESL Training | 18 |
| Health Education | 128 |
| Housing Assistance | 14 |
| Mental Health Services | 12 |
| Parenting Education | 132 |
| Psycho-Education | 128 |
| Relationship/Marriage Education | 22 |
| Short-Term Crisis Intervention | 110 |

Recent Federal Reviews

The ECC is 100% compliant on all federal reviews. The Federal Administration for Children & Families, Office of Head Start, undertook a Focus Area 2 Review of the Neighborhood House's ECC in July of 2022. The Focus Area 2 (FA2) review is an opportunity for recipients to demonstrate their effectiveness in implementing a high-quality program to promote positive outcomes and school readiness for children and their families. It is designed so the Office Head Start has a better understanding of each recipient's performance and to determine if programs are meeting the requirements of the Head Start Program Performance Standards (HSPPS), Uniform Guidance, and the Head Start Act. The program excelled in each area with no areas of non-compliance.

Integrated School Readiness-Family Engagement Model



One of the ECC's goals is to erase the school readiness gap for the three- and four-year-old children we serve and to help families create a healthy and supportive environment in which their children can thrive. With a long and rich history of providing services to young children and their families, our core philosophy is that we must help clients holistically, providing individualized services to address the full range of strengths and needs of very low-income children and families. For these reasons, we emphasize Family Services as much as educational development. We integrate entire families into our program by assessing the parents' strengths and needs, as well as the children's, to connect children and families with the appropriate supportive services, both within the Neighborhood House and with community partners. All families participate in a detailed intake process (e.g., family dynamics, health, the child's educational background) to assess family strengths and needs. We work with families to develop Individualized Family Partnership Agreements (IFPAs). IFPAs are tailored to each family's individual needs and establish specific goals for parent involvement. IFPAs are modified periodically to include changing needs. The Neighborhood House has two full-time Licensed Social Workers; one works with the three-year-old students and their families, and one with four-year-old students and their families. Specialized work includes:

- *Special Needs:* The Neighborhood House prioritizes children with special needs, and in the last school year close to a third of our students have been evaluated or qualified for special education services. Children with special needs receive supplementary IEP services both within their inclusive classrooms and in our resource rooms. Our Social Workers also provide parental support and education to ensure that children's needs are met appropriately outside of the classroom.
- *Health:* The Early Childhood Center offers health workshops, internal and community referrals for health insurance and other health care needs, free health screenings (e.g., vision, hearing, blood pressure and dental) and information on immunizations, allergies and proper health and safety practices for parents. These resources educate and engage parents to help improve the health of their children and families.

- *Transitions:* Social Workers help parents create educational plans that meet the family’s needs as their child readies for kindergarten. Parents are informed about their children’s educational rights and options through group work, individual meetings, school tours and open houses. In January, the ECC hosted a panel of alumni parents to speak about their experiences with their children transitioning to kindergarten. The panel members answered current ECC parents’ questions about how to choose a school and how to ease into the transition. Additionally, social workers met individually with each family that was transitioning out of the program to provide them with the tools and strategies to make the transition smoother and more manageable.
- *Parent, Family and Community Engagement:* Social Workers help parents meet a wide range of goals by connecting parents to comprehensive services, both on-site and through partnerships with other community organizations, including financial, educational, legal, literacy, language, parenting, mental health—essentially everything that can help families to thrive and to create a stable and supportive environment for their children to grow and learn.

Because the Neighborhood House is a settlement house, the programmatic and organizational resources the Family Services team is able to connect children and families to go far beyond core components and include many others such as legal services, comprehensive benefit screening and enrollment, ESOL classes, nutrition consultation and education, visual and performing arts, physical fitness and swimming lessons, financial literacy classes, referrals to workforce development providers, free MetroCards for our most challenged families, assistance in applying for emergency financial support. This year NYU offered a dental education session for parents and in each classroom for students. In addition to NYU Dentistry offering Dental Screenings, we offered blood pressure screenings through Weill Cornell Pediatrics, vision screenings through Helen Keller International and made several referrals to medical supports for our families. This year NYU offered a dental education session for parents and a session in each classroom for students via Zoom since they were unable to offer screenings in person, due to the pandemic. We also partnered with Weill Cornell to offer a parent workshop on Asthma identification and care.



Efforts to Prepare Children for Kindergarten

The ECC works with qualifying low-income children and their families to provide students with an educational, developmental, and social foundation that will place them on par with or ahead of their peers when they enter kindergarten and which should position students to reap long-term benefits in academic achievement and in life.

Our ECC program utilizes the Early Childhood Creative Curriculum in its classrooms. The curriculum is organized around 38 inter-connected developmental and learning objectives which seek to prepare early learners for kindergarten. This curriculum is focused on multiple aspects of child development and, in turn, aims to provide our students with a solid foundation in language, math, art, and science while simultaneously increasing confidence, fostering creativity, encouraging critical thinking, and strengthening social skills. Our staff augments this curriculum with the Teaching Strategies GOLD support program. This assessment program is directly aligned with the Creative Curriculum and allows for classroom teaching to be tailored towards the progress of individual learners.

Creative Curriculum Developmental Objectives for Early Learners

| | |
|------------------------------|---|
| Socio-Emotional | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regulates own Emotions and Behaviors • Establishes and Sustains Positive Relationships • Participates Cooperatively and Constructively in Group Situations |
| Physical | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates Traveling Skills • Demonstrates Balancing Skills • Demonstrates Gross-Motor Manipulative Skills • Demonstrates Fine-Motor Strength and Coordination |
| Language | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listens to and Understands Increasingly Complex Language • Uses Language to Express Thoughts and Needs • Uses Appropriate Conversational and Other Communication Skills |
| Cognitive | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates Positive Approaches to Learning • Remembers and Connects Experiences • Uses Classification Skills • Uses Symbols and Images to Represent Something Not Present |
| Literacy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates Phonological Awareness • Demonstrates Knowledge of the Alphabet • Demonstrates Knowledge of Print and Its Uses • Comprehends and Responds to Books and Other Texts • Demonstrates Emergent Writing Skills |
| Mathematics | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses Number Concepts and Operations • Explores and Describes Spatial Relationships and Shapes • Compares and Measures • Demonstrates Knowledge of Patterns |
| Science and Technology | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses Scientific Inquiry Skills • Demonstrates Knowledge of the Characteristics of Living Things • Demonstrates Knowledge of the Physical Properties of Objects and Materials • Demonstrates Knowledge of Earth's Environment • Uses Tools and Other Technology to Perform Tasks |
| Social Studies | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates Knowledge About Self • Shows Basic Understanding of People and How They Live • Explores Change Related to Familiar People or Places • Demonstrates Simple Geographic Knowledge |
| The Arts | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explores the Visual Arts • Explores Musical Concepts and Expression • Explores Dance and Movement Concepts • Explores Drama Through Actions and Language |
| English Language Acquisition | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates Progress in Listening to and Understanding English • Demonstrates Progress in Speaking English |

Program Improvement

Our Head Start program is in a period of remarkable advancement with ambitious and talented lead staff who have built a model program. We are not content to merely maintain that but continuously push to find new ways to

improve. Decades of research in linguistics, psychology, and neuroscience have established that early language and literacy abilities predict reading outcomes and are further linked to future academic success. The National Head Start Association's Performance Standards explicitly champion a "Planned Language Approach" in classrooms nationwide that encourages teachers to focus on key areas of early literacy development, such as phonological awareness, alphabet knowledge, and early writing. For the past four years, the ECC has partnered with Dr. Carolyn Strom, Clinical Assistant Professor of Early Childhood Literacy and Innovation at the NYU Steinhardt School of Culture, Education and Human Development, to implement Letterland. Letterland is based in recent literacy and neuroscience research and has proven highly effective in early studies.

Letterland promotes a developmentally appropriate alphabets program to ensure that children leave pre-k with firm knowledge of how letters, sounds, and print work; implementation of routine phonological awareness activities (based on rhyming, alliteration, syllable structure, individual sound awareness) to ensure that students leave pre-k with a richer understanding of the sound structure of spoken language; and the implementation of digital tools that offers young children the opportunities to build basic literacy skills at their own pace and compose multimodal stories with the assistance of an adult. This year we are adding Letterland Handwriting. In Letterland Handwriting, abstract shapes are linked to child friendly characters that the children love and quickly get to know. Skill development will include the movement pathway so correct formation of letters begins in preschool.

The ECC has always ensured the health and well-being of the children we serve through in-depth staff training in health, wellness and nutrition. We have expanded our training and resources to our staff and families and we are implementing a trauma-informed approach across all our programs and services. All staff have been trained in ACES, which provides them a strong understanding of Adverse Childhood Experiences. Preventing adverse childhood experiences, understanding them, and offering support to those with them will help children and their families thrive. The children and families supported by the ECC represent some of the most vulnerable groups in New York City, and it is the goal of the ECC to continuously innovate new ways to support them.

This year our social workers will be offering social emotional lessons in the classrooms to increase the emotional wellbeing of our students using the 2nd Step Curriculum. Particularly in the aftermath of Covid-19, the skills that the social emotional curriculum will provide to our students will help them develop stronger skills for school and life.

The new school year has begun with full enrollment. This past spring, we made a strong outreach to the homeless shelters located in our catchment area serving asylum seeking families. These families are so impressive with their bravery and efforts to acclimate to New York. They need many supports and our program is perfectly suited to offer them comprehensive services.

We continue to be sensitive, proactive and flexible in our response to the Covid-19 pandemic, the increase in RSV, pneumonia and other respiratory ailments. The ECC has maintained many safety protocols to keep our children safe. Our protocols include:

- Optional masking for all students and staff (masks provided as needed)
- Increased and improved ventilation systems
- Increased handwashing, sanitizing and cleaning

- Heavy duty classroom sanitizing
- Strict illness policies and procedures
- All Early Childhood Center Staff vaccinated

We continue to share our knowledge and influence the field through policy and program innovations; to directly lead the field through partnerships with and assistance to a wide range of nonprofit and governmental entities (e.g., the National Head Start Association, the NYC Department of Education (DOE), NYU Steinhardt, etc.); to operate a teacher training site for hundreds of graduate and undergraduate students of education; to serve as an incubator and pilot partner for innovative program components and technology; to present and participate in national conferences; and to collaborate with leading academics in the field. We strive to be a vanguard program that advances the field of early childhood education while fostering an environment where our low-income children and their families can thrive.