

Early Childhood Mental Health Services

Boulder County Head Start (BCHS)'s Early Childhood Mental Health (ECMH) Consultation program began in the 2016–17 school year. Our consultation practices are grounded in proactive, relationship-based approaches that emphasize emotional safety, skill-building, and responsive support for children, families, and staff. These guiding principles are embraced and practiced by BCHS staff to create safe, supportive classroom and home environments.

Early Childhood Mental Health (ECMH) Consultation Program Strengths and Accomplishments

- Immediate and timely response to all requests for classroom and parent support
- Teachers and parents report ECMH consultation services are fundamental to BCHS' high-quality services
- High quality staff development training and support opportunities such as Circle of Security, Pyramid Plus, and individualized ECMH consultation with all classrooms
- Intimate Partner Violence and trauma-informed training for staff

31% of children received support through individualized teacher consultations

100% of teaching staff and classrooms received weekly observations, support, and consultation

6 families were referred to an outside mental health service

86% of staff demonstrated increased capacity for supporting children's behavioral and mental health

Our Story – Ben & Erika

It all started on Feb. 3, 2021, when we welcomed our beautiful baby girl, Adyldaide. Ady-May had the biggest blue eyes, the most contagious laugh, and a personality that nothing could dim. She was always singing and talking to us in her own little language.

One day, her pediatrician mentioned she might be on the spectrum. She was showing signs, even though she was still learning and growing quickly. As brand-new parents—and brand-new to the autism world—we had to set aside our pride and dive into learning everything we could.

At the same time, her speech just wasn't progressing, even with all her singing. A friend told us about Head Start, where her daughter had gotten help, so we reached out.

From the beginning, Head Start lifted a weight off our shoulders. They welcomed Ady with open arms, connected us with resources, and got us in touch with Child Find, who evaluated and diagnosed her. Soon we were coordinating with both BVSD and Head Start so she could attend both programs.

With that support, she finally received the care she needed. Head Start stayed in close communication with us as we learned her behaviors and her unique way of growing. By the end of the school year, she had progressed more than we ever imagined.

She's now in her second year of preschool and still spends part of every day with Head Start. We chose to keep her there because she loved the teachers and staff so much. Her social skills blossomed, and she made so many friends that we didn't want to disrupt her routine.

We recommend this incredible organization to everyone. Without Head Start, she wouldn't be thriving the way she is today. We are so proud of our Adyldaide and forever grateful for everyone who helped her become who she is.



Our Classes, Our Kids!

Boulder County Head Start (BCHS) is a comprehensive preschool program for children ages 3-5. Head Start prioritizes serving foster and homeless children, those living in families with low-wages, and children with disabilities. BCHS is designed to meet the individual needs of children through a partnership between program and parents. The school year runs from late August through Memorial Day.

- 3
- Boulder County Head Start locations:

Woodlands Children’s Center
2675 Mapleton Ave., Boulder – Capacity: 32 Children

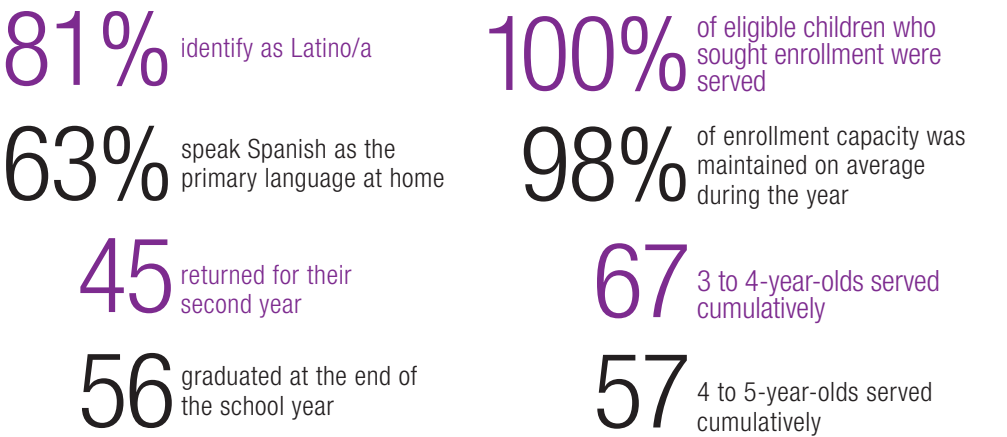
BCHS @ the Mapleton YMCA
2850 Mapleton Ave., Boulder – Capacity: 31 Children

BCHS @ the Dagny YMCA
2800 Dagny Way, Lafayette – Pandemic Capacity: 47 Children

Who We Serve

BCHS serves a diverse array of young children and families, including multilingual children. BCHS has a bilingual program focused on meeting the rapidly developing language skills of young children. All native Spanish-speaking children receive instruction in both their home language and in English. BCHS’s funded enrollment from the Office of Head Start was 110 children. BCHS served a total of 124 children during the 2024-2025 school year.

Enrollment Qualification	
Income at or below 100% of federal poverty line	27
Incomes between 101% and 130% of the federal poverty line	7
Public assistance programs	57
Foster care	1
Homeless	23
Other qualifying need	9
Total served during the school year	124



Serving Children with Disabilities

BCHS partners with families to access Boulder Valley School District’s Child Find services to evaluate and diagnose potential learning disabilities or developmental delays. When a child is identified as needing additional support, they attend BCHS for half of the day and BVSD for the other half in order to receive targeted therapeutic services in BVSD classrooms.

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children qualified for and received speech and language disability services

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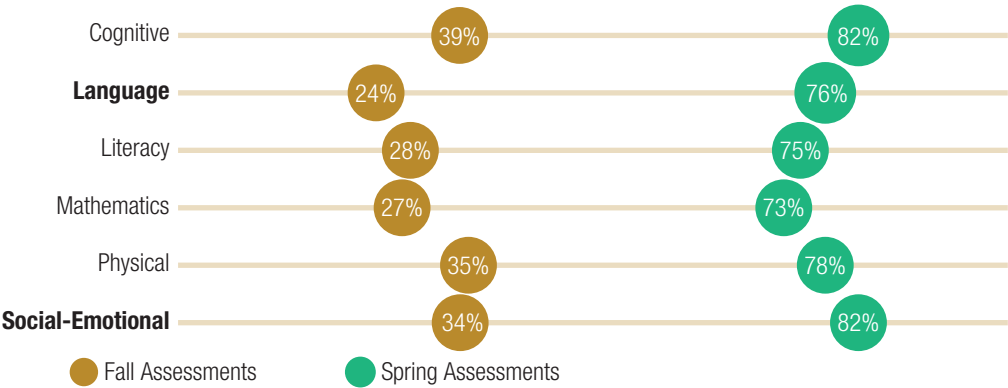
children’s disabilities were identified during the school year

Professional Education Standards

At Boulder County Head Start (BCHS), we are committed to educational excellence in service of our youngest residents. We monitor and track child development through ongoing assessments, family feedback, and classroom observations. To strengthen each child’s school readiness, we invest in staff professional development and partner with parents using research-based engagement practices.

Child Assessments

BCHS uses the Teaching Strategies GOLD Assessment system to assess student growth in all areas of development. BCHS children are assessed three times per school year meeting state and federal public preschool requirements.



Students made the most improvement in **Social Emotional** and **Language** development between Fall and Spring assessments.

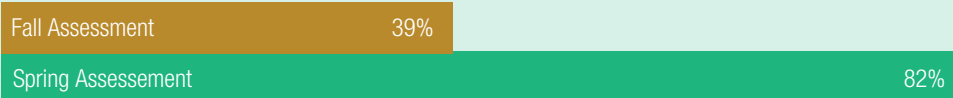
Preparing for Kindergarten

Our integrated services approach to supporting the whole child and family sets the foundation for lifelong parent-educator partnership. We believe this is the key to ensuring our schools are ready to meet each unique child and family on their lifelong journey of growth and development. BCHS provides annual school readiness activities and actively partners with local service providers in support of Head Start families preparing for kindergarten transition. Kindergarten readiness and transition activities included but were not limited to:

- Kindergarten open enrollment informational sessions
- Technology access and staff support to complete online kindergarten registration
- Kindergarten transition units in classrooms in May
- Kindergarten transition home visits with collaborative parent-teacher goal setting

82% of students graduated Head Start ready to meet the cognitive expectations of kindergarten.

The number of prekindergarten children who meet cognitive kindergarten-readiness expectations by the end of the school year increased by **43%**. Cognitive readiness goals include demonstrating positive approaches to learning, solving problems, and making connections.

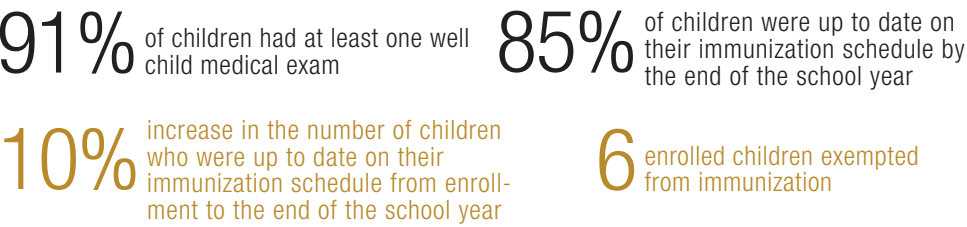


Children and Family Supports & Services

Boulder County Head Start staff work in partnership with families to access resources in Boulder County that address identified needs and enhance resiliency.

For Our Kids

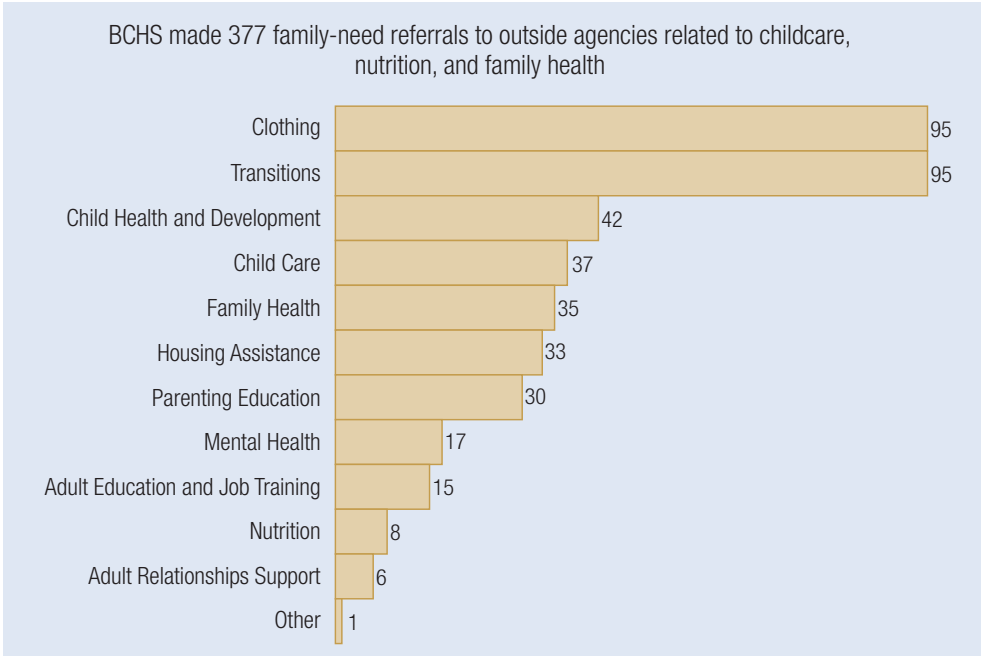
BCHS engages in parent medical service education and awareness, while also actively working with families and medical partners to reduce the barriers to medical services. We are proud to see that outreach, education, and support efforts have helped families with their children’s preventative health.



For Our Parents

Family Advocates build relationships with families through a personalized intake and application process. The process, updated in the 2022-2023 school year, begins when a family indicates interest in enrolling their preschool-aged child at BCBS. Each family participates in an intake session to determine basic eligibility. Any immediate family needs are also identified during intake. This is followed by an in-person parent and child enrollment visit to complete the application process and assess school readiness.

During the enrollment process, Family Advocates help families identify strengths and goals. These goals are revisited throughout the school year. As appropriate, staff make referrals to community resource partners for specialized services. The following chart demonstrates in-house and community partner referrals provided to families.



About Boulder County Head Start

The Head Start program began in 1965 during the Johnson administration as a federal summer program for children in poverty entering kindergarten. Services began in Boulder County in that inaugural year.

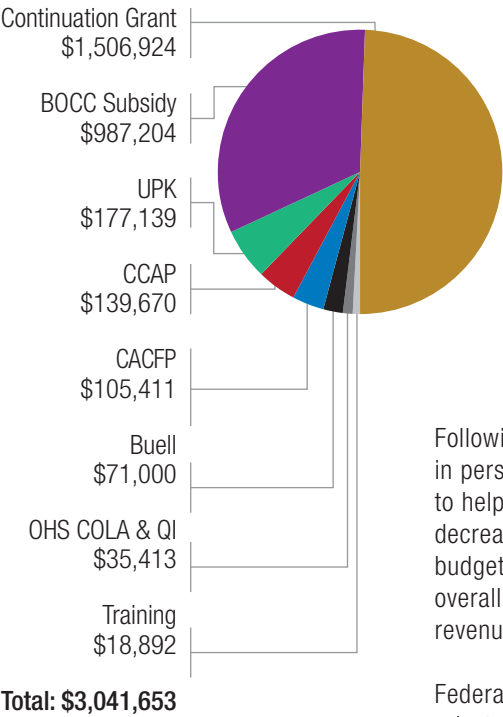
Over the years, the program has evolved to meet the needs of three-to-five-year-old children and their families living in poverty. The program has seen many changes over time, including shifting services from half-day (2.75 hours per day) to full working day (eight hours per day); adapting to changing population demographics from serving the Hmong community to the Latino/a community we largely serve today; serving increased rates of children with disabilities; and adopting new programming locations to best serve the community with the highest quality environments and facilities.

Boulder County Head Start Policy Council

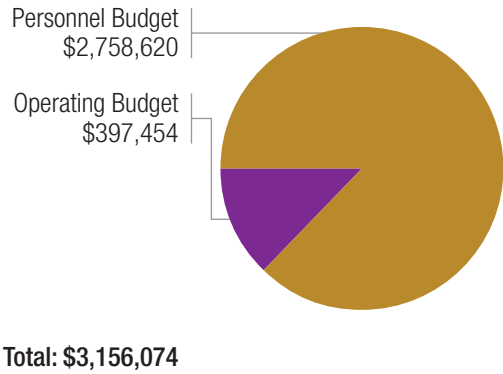
Boulder County Head Start’s Policy Council is a parent oversight board comprised of both current and former parents and community members. Parents are essential partners in educating young children and leading the Head Start program. BCHS wishes to thank all Policy Council for their dedication to our community’s children.

BCHS Revenue and Expenditures

Revenue



Expenses



Following the 2024 program year, intentional reductions in personnel and operating expenses were implemented to help balance the program budget. However, significant decreases in CCAP, UPK, and CCS revenue carried the budget shortfall into the 2025 program year. As a result, overall program expenses continued to exceed total revenues for the school year.

Federal, state, and local government dollars along with private foundation grants allow BCHS to continue providing the highest quality holistic educational services. BCHS received funding from the Office of Head Start, Boulder County Commissioners, USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program, Boulder County Housing and Human Services Childcare Assistance Program, Colorado’s Universal Preschool Program, and the Temple Hoyne Buell Foundation.