



www.educarecentralmaine.org

2011 / 2012 Annual Report

Ensuring school readiness for children birth to age five.

Table of Contents

| | |
|--|-----|
| What is Educare Central Maine..... | 2-4 |
| Research and Results..... | 5-7 |
| CLASS Data | 9 |
| Family Story | 10 |
| Parent Involvement..... | 11 |
| 2012 Family Survey Summary..... | 12 |
| Staff Qualifications and Development | 13 |
| Collaboration Highlights 2011-2012..... | 15 |
| Nutrition..... | 16 |
| I Am Moving, I Am Learning | 16 |
| Statistical Information..... | 17 |
| Statement of Revenues & Expenditures | 18 |
| KVCAP Board of Directors | 19 |



What is Educare Central Maine?

Educare is a Place.

Educare Central Maine (ECM) is a state-of-the-art early learning center located in Waterville, Maine. ECM is connected to the George J. Mitchell Elementary School (GJMS). Together the partners focus on a continuum of quality early learning experiences from birth through grade 3. The partnership with GJMS offers a natural transition between educational homes for the young learners, their parents, and maximizes staff resources and expertise.

ECM is Certified as a LEED "Green" facility. It is designed to support each young child's unique social, emotional and cognitive development. The design of an early learning environment is critical to supporting teacher:child and parent:child interactions. ECM's facility design is based upon research that highlights the relationship between high quality learning facilities and improved child and family outcomes. In essence, the way that the building is designed enhances the learning of each child. Adjacent to the classrooms are learning spaces and hallways that provides ample space and layout to be used for year-round indoor small and gross-motor development.

ECM functions as a high quality early care and education demonstration site for the State of Maine. Like all states with Educare facilities, ECM serves as a demonstration site for the highest quality teaching and instruction and a model for excellence in space design elements. The goal is not to construct a new center in every Maine community, but rather to replicate elements of its best practices across the state, regardless of learning environment.

ECM is the most rural Educare center in the nation and provides the Educare Learning Network critical information to aid in rural program development across the country.

Educare is a Program.

Educare Central Maine *serves 200 mostly low-income children* from birth to age 5. Service is designed to prepare children to enter kindergarten engaged, healthy and socially/emotionally ready to succeed. Parent input, education and needed supports to help their children succeed in education and life are key program components. Parent partnerships are critical to sustainability of long-term child and family outcomes.

Children and families enrolled at ECM receive an array of early childhood development, health, nutrition and family support services. Among other features of quality child care settings, the program includes the following:

- Low child/staff ratios to ensure trusting and secure relationships improve the quality of care, and support the child's developing identity.
- Literacy development; the foundation for school readiness.
- Infant mental health services, which promote healthy emotional development in infants and toddlers.
- Nutritious meals and nutrition consultation.
- Primary care, mental and oral health services for infants, children, and families, including sick and well-baby care.
- Extensive staff training and development programs at the on-site training center.

Educare is a Partnership.

Educare Central Maine is a formal partnership between Waterville Public Schools, KVCAP Early/Head Start, the William and Joan Alford

Educare is a Partnership (continued).

Foundation and the Buffett Early Childhood Fund. It is governed through shared leadership among and between these four primary entities which strive to:

- ..Ensure meaningful collaboration and decision-making between the school district, Early/Head Start, and private philanthropy community that is committed to long-term support, quality assurances and ongoing evaluation;
- ..Provide assistance to replication opportunities in partnership with the state and emerging Educare community partnerships; and
- ..Support and promote a vision to better prepare disadvantaged children to succeed in school and in life.

Quality Staffing: In order to meet the nationally-recognized Educare model requirements for quality, lead classroom teachers hold bachelor degrees and receive coach/mentoring support from a master level teacher.

Family and Parent Support: Family support staff conduct a full range of activities with families, adapting to the schedules and life setting of parents. The family support staff has a specific and intentional role in supporting the parent:child relationship and the parent's role in their child's school and educational experiences, the development of relationships with community providers who can assist families in receiving necessary supports, and connecting families to those supports.

Link to Higher Education Degree Programs: ECM is designed to serve as a state-of-the-art professional development and resource center for child care professionals, as well as a teaching lab for students seeking a degree in early childhood. It provides multiple opportunities for parents and staff, college students and practitioners to observe and participate in high quality service and innovations in practice.



Educare is a Partnership (continued).

Child academic, social/emotional achievement and family engagement are driven by an interdisciplinary teacher and family support model that is strengthened by ongoing assessment and evaluation. Teachers actively engage in observation, reflection, shared intentional planning, and receive feedback from master teachers.

Program evaluation is conducted by the University of Southern Maine's Muskie School of Public Service and Frank Porter Graham. Program components, professional development supports and implementation activities are guided by evaluation findings.

Educare is a Platform for Change.

Science and research clearly reveals what is needed to promote school readiness for children in poverty. Yet, public policies and funding priorities often lag behind. In states across the country, Educare centers are helping to strengthen public investments in high-quality, research-based programs.

Educare is a **platform for long-term policy change**, offering a tangible way to show policy makers and other opinion leaders the kind of early learning environment all children deserve, but specifically for children at risk of school failure. Educare shows compelling evidence of what can happen when you raise quality standards across birth-to-five programs and push for policy and system changes to ensure that public dollars are targeted.

The Educare model is designed to bring **to bear the best research and evaluation for short and long-term quality assurance**, serve as a state and regional replication model program for meeting the highest level of quality programming to children and families, and inspire local, state, and national leaders to change policy based on positive child and family outcomes.



Research and Results

Literacy Skills. Children who begin school with prior knowledge and skills in a variety of language and literacy areas are more likely to become successful readers in elementary school. This is significant because children who struggle as readers at the end of first grade are usually still poor readers at the end of 4th grade. Reading problems can be prevented through early detection and immediate intervention. There is a strong relationship between vocabulary and reading comprehension. Educare's child assessments in the areas of vocabulary, phonological awareness and alphabet knowledge (letter and beginning sounds), rhyming, and concept of the words in text reveal:

Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test. This test measures English with a mean score of 100 considered a "good score."
ECM: 106

Classrooms of high quality. Quality early childhood programs have been linked to immediate, positive developmental outcomes, as well as long-term positive academic performance. The Classroom Assessment Scoring Scale (CLASS) (score range is 0-7) is used to measure classroom quality. ECM rates at 6.45 in Emotional Support; 5.8 in Classroom Organization; and 3.7 in Instructional Practices. These scores are on par with or above all other national Educare averages.

School Readiness. School readiness skills of young children are assessed in six subscales of the Bracken School Readiness Assessment: colors, letters, numbers/counting, sizes, comparisons and shapes. The range that is termed "average" is 86-114, with 100 being the mean score. **ECM:** 94.41.





Research and Results

Results from a longitudinal study of Educare sites around the country indicate that earlier is better. Children living in poverty who enter Educare programs at age 1 do not experience an achievement gap upon kindergarten entry and are on par with children from other socio-economic groups.

Educare Central Maine collects data and conducts comprehensive child assessments for children in full-day, full year programming. Focus areas are social-emotional development, language and literacy skills, and math. The process is designed to describe and document the progress of the children and families, as well as inform program improvement efforts, individualize practices to the needs of the children and families and to satisfy accountability requirements set by funding agencies.

In conjunction with the Educare Learning Network, ECM incorporates the latest findings from academic research and lessons learned from the day-to-day experiences with young children, families and staff.

Local evaluation and program directors from each Educare school are partners in decision-making about the evaluation design. A technical work group of experts provides advice and links with the latest science in a variety of domains that impact early care and education work. Local evaluators collect data at their site, using research based, well-known assessments, observations, and interview techniques. Frank Porter Graham processes and summarizes data across sites and ensures that high standards for training and reliability of data collection are maintained.

Research and Results



Continuity of service. Continuity of care in the early years of life is an essential component of effective, quality early care and education. Often children and families experience numerous adult caregivers before the child enters kindergarten. Lack of care continuity disrupts child development and studies have found that multiple and changeable caregivers for infants and toddlers is associated with lower intelligence scores, poorer social relationships and more insecure attachment with mothers. Trust and relationship building are critical for both the children and their parents during the early learning years.


Resiliency. Resilience is important because it is the human capacity to face, overcome and be strengthened by or even transformed by the adversities of life. Children from low-income families need to become resilient to overcome the adversities they face. They cannot do it alone. A child's ability to form positive responses to adverse childhood experiences depends upon the quantity and quality of protective factors. How parents and other caregivers respond to situations, and how they help a child to respond, separates those adults who promote resilience in their children from those who destroy resilience or send confusing messages that both promote and inhibit resilience. Educare staff is trained to promote resiliency in children and families. High protective factors equate to lower behavior concerns.

ECM Protective Factors: 54.8 (scale is 28-72).

Behavioral Concerns: 51.83 (scale is 28-72). A score of 60 or greater indicates that a child is exhibiting an unusually high amount of troubling behaviors.

Parent engagement. Parent engagement in their child's learning is intricately linked to a child's school readiness. Research shows that greater parent involvement in a child's learning positively affects the child's school performance, including higher academic achievement. Simple interaction, such as reading to children, leads to greater reading knowledge and skills. Parent involvement outside of home, such as participation in literacy events and/or classroom activities relates to their reading, general knowledge, and mathematics knowledge and skills.

ECM: Seventy-eight percent (78%) of parents read to their child every day. **All parents** participate in other program activities.

A photograph of five young children standing behind a chain-link fence, looking out towards a grassy area with trees and a building in the background. Two children are crouching on the left, and three are standing on the right. A maroon text box is overlaid on the upper right portion of the image.

**Children leave Educare
prepared for kindergarten,
excited about learning,
confident in their own abilities,
and ready to succeed.**

CLASS Data

The **Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS)** is utilized in all preschool settings to measure teacher:child interaction. It is organized by three domains and ten dimensions.

CLASS Domains

Emotional Support

Considers the efforts of teachers to support children's social and emotional functioning in a classroom

Classroom Organization

Includes classroom processes related to organization and management of child behavior, time, attention.

Instructional Support

Includes how teachers support cognitive development and language skills.

CLASS Dimensions

Climate
(Positive/Negative)

Behavior Guidance

Quality of Feedback

Productivity

Language Modeling

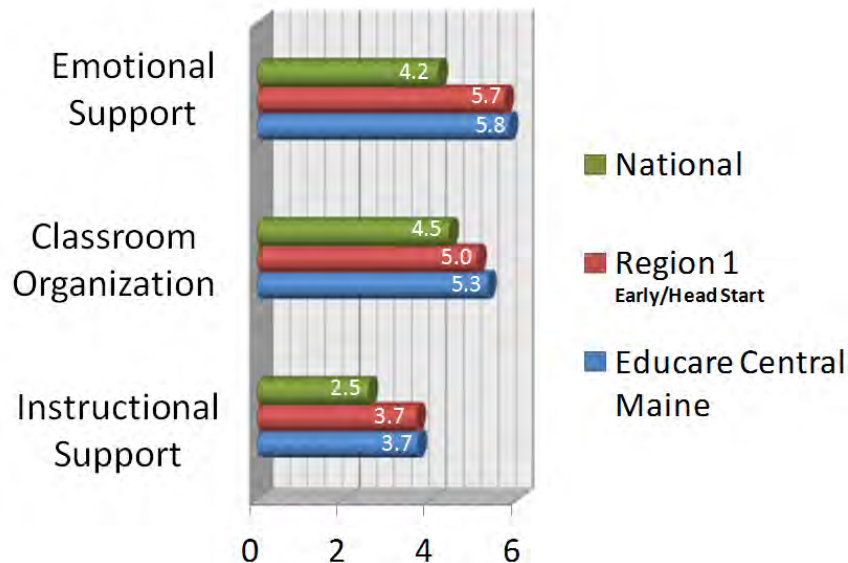
Teacher Sensitivity

Concept Development

Instructional Learning
Formats

Regard for Child Perspective

Average CLASS Scores



¹ Region I OHS: Looking Back at FY '11, December 2011. Slides 43 - 45.

² CLASS Program Data—KVCAP, 2011-2012.



A parent's story...

I had two years of college left. I was almost done. Yet, I had two children to take care of. If it were not for Educare, I would still be working a part-time minimum wage job and going to school part-time. Where would that leave me? Where would that leave my children? How would our lives look if we didn't have this great opportunity for my family?

I am now a recent college graduate with my Bachelors degree in Mental Health and Human Services because Educare Central Maine gave me the opportunity to be able to keep going and finish. They even gave me the opportunity to have my internship at their facility and of course I wasn't going to give that up! Educare isn't only for child-care. It's for families - to learn, to grow, and to reach a higher potential in all of our lives.

If it wasn't for Educare, I would still be struggling in my life. I would be juggling my kids, school, work, and my personal life. I was able to get my life back together, because that is very important when you have children. Kids need structure. They need to know what to expect. They need stability. They need people who can care for them and provide a wonderful environment to be able to play, learn, grow and to feel safe in. Educare provides all of this for my children when they are not in my care. My kids love everyone that is part of Educare - their teachers, friends, other staff and even parents! I am thankful to Educare for giving me and my family this great opportunity for my family to thrive. Without them, my life would be completely different!

Alyza

Parent, Educare Central Maine





Educare advocates for families, works within the community to help resolve issues, and more importantly, empowers the families to help themselves.

Parent Engagement

is a cornerstone of service delivery. Parent involvement opportunities include decision making, program planning and evaluation, Policy Council, parent committees, training and networking opportunities, comprehensive health services for their children, and curriculum planning. Over 200 parents volunteered their services to ECM this year and/or participated in goal setting, home visits, planning, training or direct participation in their child's classroom or family childcare home. ECM promotes the involvement of the whole family and coordinates specific activities to encourage male involvement.

Parent Enrichment

A variety of education, social connection, and service opportunities were offered to families. Some of the highlights include: Conscious Discipline training, Fathers United Now, Head Start Goes to Augusta, relationship building workshops, career counseling services, and cooking classes.

Parent:Child Activities and Events

In order to support parents in their important role as children's first and best educators, family events and activities are offered throughout the year. A favorite event for most families is an annual art show that honors children's creativity and emerging artistic skill. Other highlights include literacy and math nights, family meal times, field trips and fall festivals.

Policy Council: Shared Decision Making

The Policy Council is a group of parents who work with program administrators and the Board of Directors to guide all areas of services. The Council, comprised by the majority of parents, provides the opportunity to participate in policy and decision making arenas of the program such as annual budgets, program planning, operations, personnel and policies and procedures.

2012 Family Survey Summary

The family survey is an important component in the self assessment process as it gives management and staff a glimpse into parents' perceptions of the program. Overall, the results revealed that parents feel ECM is providing excellent customer service and children and families are receiving comprehensive, quality services.

- 100% of families report good relationships with staff, feel they work to assist families in finding solutions, and are respectful of families.
- 91% of families report they have learned new ideas about parenting through the program.
- 100% of parents feel that the program provides nutritious meals and snacks and works with the family to meet their child's nutritional needs.
- Affordable family activities, health insurance, job hunting/keeping and dental care were the areas identified that present the most identified challenges.
- 100% of all families feel welcome at the program and are invited to participate in program planning and decision making.
- 100 % of families feel comfortable letting staff know about concerns and work together to find a solution that works for both.
- Over 98% of families report being well informed about the program mission, philosophy, rules and expectations, and emergency procedures.

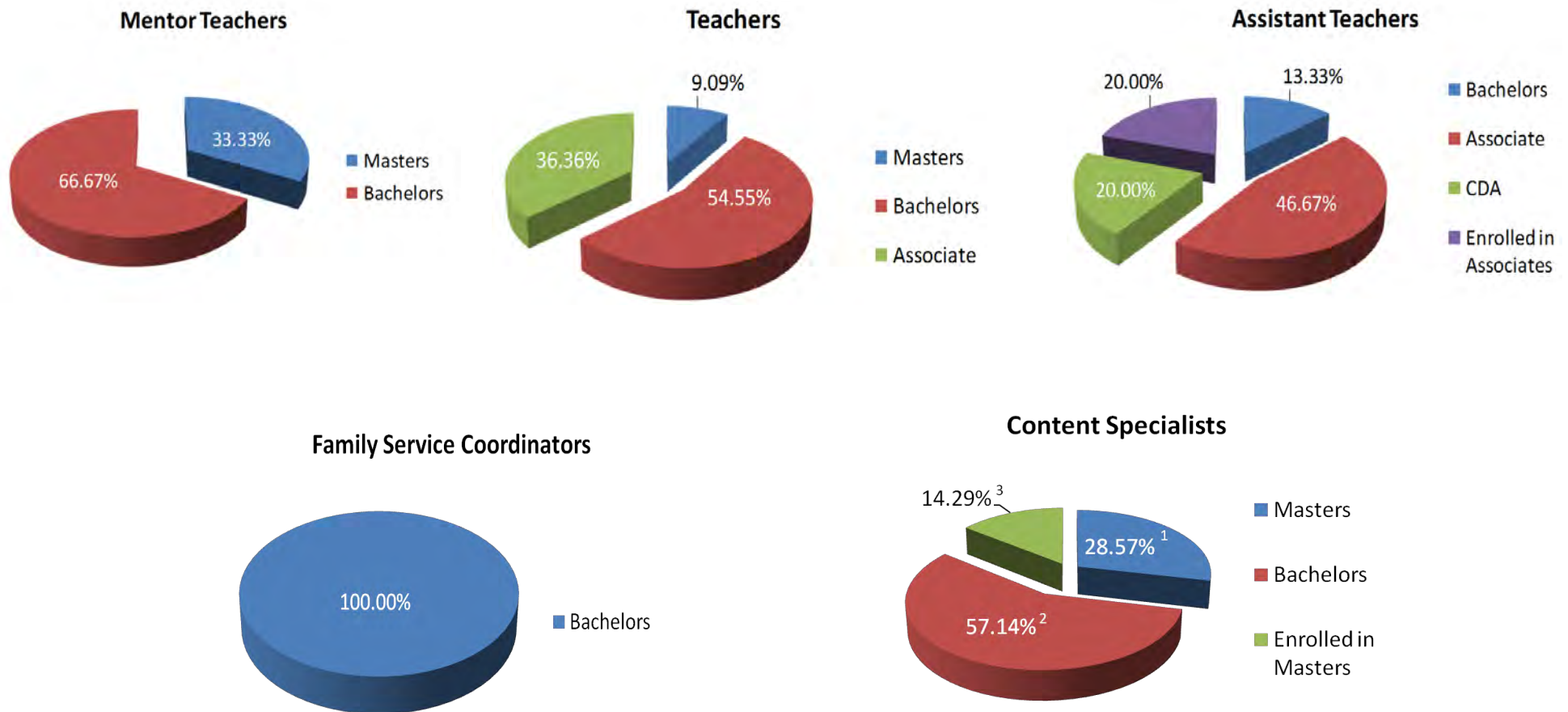


Over 95% of
parents feel comfortable
recommending the
Educare Central Maine
to others.

Staff Qualifications & Development



Professional Development is a major focus within ECM. All preschool classrooms have a teacher with a bachelor's degree. Staff discuss professional development needs during his/her orientation period, and reviews/revises this plan ongoing and as part of his/her annual evaluation process.



* Degree information as of December 31, 2012

- 1 Family Service Manager; Region I Manager/Education Content Lead
- 2 Health & Nutrition Manager; Region II Manager; Region III Manager/Mental Health Content Lead; Region IV Manager/Disabilities Content Lead & Infant/Toddler Specialist
- 3 Director of Operations



“Together, we make the difference.”

Collaboration

Highlights for 2011-2012



- ♦ Mid-Maine Homeless Shelter refers parents with young children for services while parents receive support and parent education.
- ♦ Waterville Public Library, Colby College Museum of Art, and area artists with whom ECM staff partner to bring parents and children ongoing and expanded exposure to quality literacy and art experiences.
- ♦ Maine Early Childhood Philanthropy group to promote statewide Shared Services to bring economies of scale and purchasing power to providers.
- ♦ ECM partners with local leaders from the public school system to explore common systems improvement planning and strategies such as piloting a common school-readiness (kindergarten screening) in order to demonstrate the value of how collecting “apples-to-apples” data can effectively inform targeted early childhood learning and development needs at the local and statewide levels.

- ♦ Higher Education partners, who utilize ECM’s Learning Center, classroom observation alcoves and the entire facility to maximize quality instruction to college students enrolled in early childhood or educational degrees. Partners include: higher education administration, faculty and student/parents from KVCC and University of Maine at Farmington; Colby and Thomas College faculty.

Statewide ECM Collaborations Include:

- ♦ Harold Alfond Foundation:
 - ♦ To offer Tuition Scholarship for low-income and slightly above low-income parents, who are working and/or are enrolled in educational programs to move towards improved family stability.
 - ♦ Promoting and assisting Educare parents to enroll their children in the HAF College for ME Scholarship program. <http://www.500forbaby.org>
- ♦ Leading the Common Kindergarten Screening Pilot with five school districts in Maine to identify common purpose, implementation, data-collection and value of an evidence-based common screening process for school-readiness.
- ♦ Leading the implementation for the Maine Early Learning Investment Group (MELIG), strategic plan to elevate early education quality instruction and childhood development, parent engagement, and evaluation practices statewide. <http://www.melig.org>
- ♦ Managing the statewide Maine Shared Services Alliance in partnership with the Early Funders Group (A Maine Foundation Collaboration) to bring economies of scale, efficiencies, purchasing power, and professional development opportunities to early care providers.

Nutrition

Meals and snacks are provided to meet the nutritional needs of young children and support the child's physical health and well being. Meal times and nutrition activities are planned that foster a positive learning environment, supports child development and promotes school readiness. There are many opportunities for families to join a variety of activities that promote nutrition education and provide nutritious meals and snacks helping families establish good eating habits, including cooking classes, nutrition displays and activities promoting locally grown foods and farmer's markets.

I Am Moving, I Am Learning

I Am Moving, I Am Learning (IMIL) is a proactive approach for addressing childhood obesity in children. IMIL seeks to increase daily moderate to vigorous physical activity, improve the quality of movement activities intentionally planned and facilitated by adults, and promote healthy food choices every day.

Choosy is a role model who encourages healthy decision making and wants to help prevent childhood obesity. Choosy assists parents, teachers, and health professionals by supplying consistent health messages and recognizes that preferences for food and physical activity are "learned" from others early in life. Choosy also helps grown ups to intentionally facilitate movement and nutrition experiences of young children so that healthy preferences are reinforced early and often. Choosy's name is tied to his behavior, and his message is simple: *Be Choosy Be Healthy.*



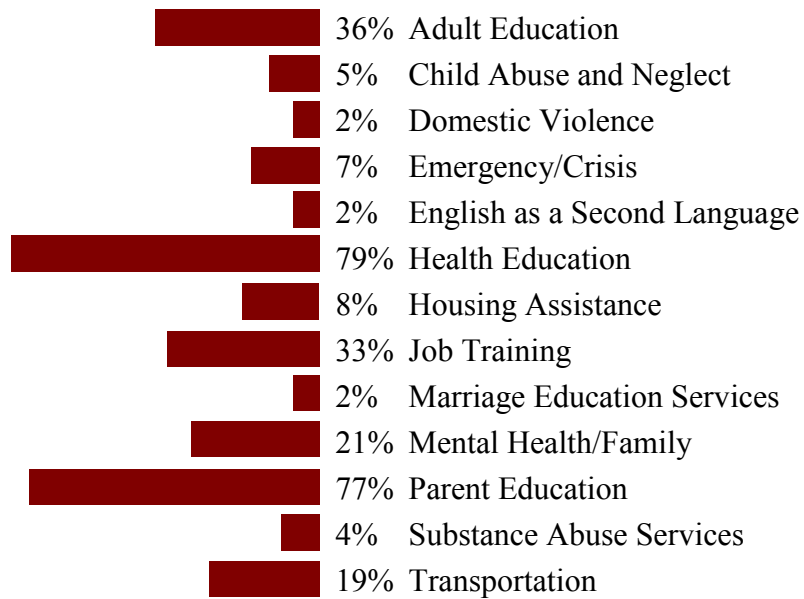
Statistical Information

Enrollment

ECM enrollment provides services to 210 children; of which 170 were preschool age (3-5) and 40 were infants and toddlers (0-3). One hundred twenty five (125) children were enrolled in Head Start; 34 in Early Head Start.

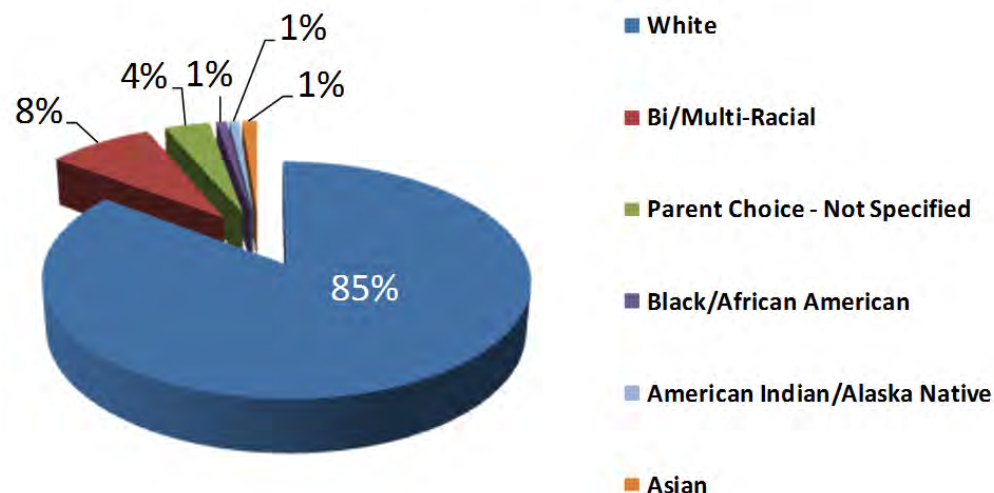
Family Services

Educare Central Maine assists parents in their efforts to improve the quality of life for themselves and their children. The following services/referrals were made for families in 2011-2012:



Ethnicity/Race

% Enrolled by Race



Educare Central Maine Statement of Revenues & Expenditures 10/1/2011 - 9/30/2012



**Educare Central Maine
partners with parents
in developing
their child into
a healthy,
well-adjusted,
productive adult.**

| Revenue | |
|---|--------------------|
| Grants and contracts | \$1,428,877 |
| Program revenue | \$1,480,585 |
| Other revenue (HAF Scholarship, Bingham Tufts, NMTC Interest, etc) | \$337,161 |
| Total Revenue | \$3,246,623 |
| Expenses: | |
| Personnel | \$1,730,332 |
| Payroll Taxes & Employee Benefits | \$538,703 |
| Staff Development | \$20,902 |
| Travel | \$16,169 |
| Office Costs | \$20,354 |
| Telecommunications | \$3,514 |
| Contract Services | \$31,279 |
| Materials & Supplies | \$138,491 |
| Indirect/Administration | \$397,979 |
| Other | 14,745 |
| Facilities - Administration | \$251,859 |
| Facilities - Other | \$118,261 |
| Total Expenses | \$3,282,588 |
| Net Revenue over Expenditures | (\$35,965) |



Board of Directors

Laurie Lachance, Chairperson
President, Thomas College

Eric Haley, Secretary
Superintendent, AOS #92

Kathryn Colfer
*Director of Child & Family Services/
Educare Central Maine*

Bill Alfond
President, William and Joan Alfond Foundation

Michael Burke
Vice President, Buffett Early Learning Fund

