

Rutland County Head Start



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



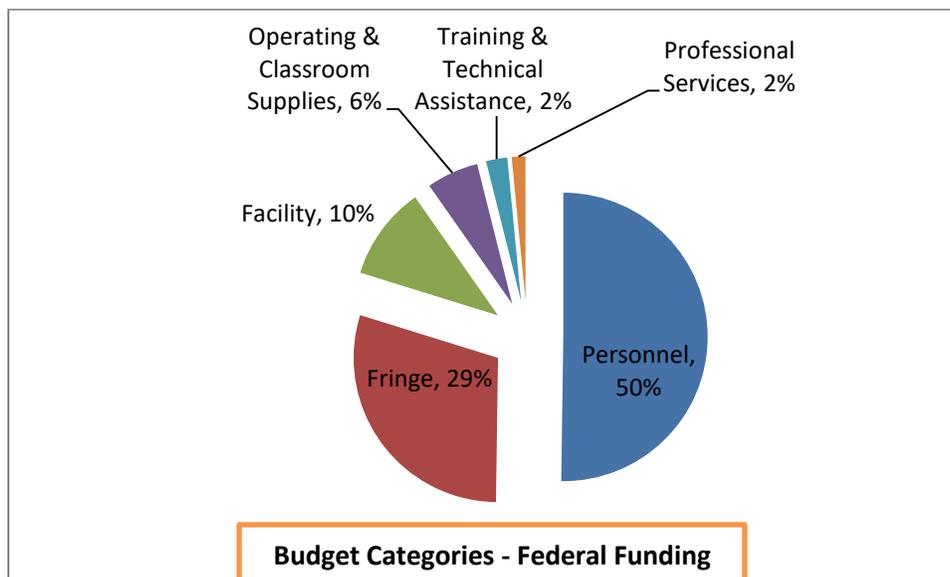
Annual Report to the Public 2019

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 2018-2019 program year report for Rutland Community Programs (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 2018, Rutland Community Programs was awarded \$1,283,306 in Head Start grant funds from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. This award included a \$32,069 (2.5%) cost of living adjustment (COLA) for staff.

Budgeted expenditures grant (calendar) year 2018



Total number of children and families served

For the 2018-2019 program year, Rutland County Head Start served 125 families and 138 children (cumulative - includes families and children who left the program during the year). Federal funded child enrollment is 117.

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Enrollment

Family structure: Of the 125 families that were enrolled, 44% were two-parent families and 56% were single-parent families. There were 7 foster children.

Income levels: At the time of registration, 34 children were from families with incomes below 100% of the federal poverty level and 56 were the recipients of public assistance - TANF (Reach-Up) or SSI. Eleven children were from over-income families.

Homelessness: There were 18 families that experienced homelessness during the enrollment year, with 18 children at some point during the program year; 9 families acquired housing during the 2018-2019 program year.

Results of most recent federal review and financial audit

Rutland County Head Start underwent a Focus Area Two Monitoring Visit in October 2018. A letter from the Administration for Children and Families dated December 14, 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 2018 financial audit produced no findings.

Percentage of enrolled children that received medical and dental exams

At the end of the 2018-2019 program year, 100% 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, 5% were diagnosed with a chronic condition requiring medical treatment. One-hundred percent (100%) 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 (opted not to have their child receive HEP A and/or influenza vaccines). By the end of the program year, 80% of all children had an ongoing source of continuous, accessible dental care provided by a dentist and 89% of these received preventive dental care since the prior report.

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. Through a grant from the Vermont Child Development Division, RCHS has implemented the Strengthening Families Framework from the Center for the Study of Social Policy. Strengthening Families is a research-based, cost-effective strategy to increase family strengths, enhance child development and reduce child abuse and neglect; it focuses on building five Protective Factors that also promotes healthy outcomes.

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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 STep 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; National Association for the Education of Young Children Standards and Criteria; Creative Curriculum for Preschool; and Teaching Strategies GOLD. Family Engagement goals have also been incorporated into the School Readiness goals.

The School Readiness Goals 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.

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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 2018-2019 school readiness summary report is available on our web site. Some highlights from *Widely Held Expectations* reports 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 areas of strength are *follows directions*, with 86% of our children meeting or exceeding expectations, and *makes connections*, with 84% of our children meeting or exceeding expectations.

Overall Population

Area	Meeting / Exceeding Expectations		Change
	Fall 2018	Spring 2019	
Social-Emotional	38.09%	65.45%	+27.36%
Physical	60.47%	83.64%	+23.17%
Language	48.84%	78.18%	+29.34%
Cognitive	34.88%	67.26%	+32.38%
Literacy	29.27%	58.18%	+28.91%
Mathematics	26.83%	60.00%	+33.17%

Children Going to Kindergarten

Area	Meeting / Exceeding Expectations		Change
	Fall 2018	Spring 2019	
Social-Emotional	43.48%	72.42%	+28.94%
Physical	61.40%	89.65%	+28.25%
Language	47.83%	86.21%	+38.38%
Cognitive	34.87%	72.42%	+37.55%
Literacy	30.43%	69.96%	+39.53%
Mathematics	26.09%	63.60%	+37.51%

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.

Rutland County Head Start works with all seven school districts in Rutland County to enhance the transition procedure for children entering kindergarten. This includes coordinating visits to

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the child's new school accompanied by their preschool teacher, and visits by the school to the child's Head Start classroom. Head Start teachers meet with public school teachers and administrators to exchange child portfolios and discuss the child's preschool experience. Rutland County Head Start gives each child going to kindergarten a book about kindergarten, and classrooms watch a video narrated by children in a kindergarten classroom.

For more information about Rutland County Head Start, visit www.rchscn.org.

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