

**SOUTHERN MARYLAND
TRI-COUNTY COMMUNITY ACTION COMMITTEE, INC.**

HEAD START

ANNUAL REPORT

PROGRAM YEAR 2025 – 2026

Reaching Higher. Building Brighter Futures



Report Information

Program Year	2025 – 2026
Reporting Period	September 2025 – August 2026
Head Start Grant Number	03CH01253603
Executive Director / President & CEO	Michael Young
Program Director	Donna Montgomery
Governing Body Chair	Reverend Ernest Downs
Policy Council Chair	Thomasina Coates

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1. Executive Summary

During the 2025–2026 program year, SMTCCAC Head Start served 113 children and 105 families, with 51 funded Head Start slots and 58 Early Head Start/EHS-CCP slots. The program delivered services through six centers and community partnerships, providing families with access to early learning, health, nutrition, mental health, disability services, family support, and community resources.

Children's outcomes demonstrate meaningful developmental progress and strong areas of achievement. Cognitive development remained particularly strong, with 92% of children meeting expectations across all checkpoints and no children below expectations by spring. Mathematics demonstrated the most significant growth, with children exceeding expectations increasing from 4% in fall to 41% in spring, while children below expectations declined from 29% to 0%. Social-emotional development also showed substantial improvement, with children below expectations decreasing from 27% in fall to 0% in winter. Physical development reached 89% meeting expectations in winter, with no children below expectations. Language and literacy also demonstrated continued growth across the program year.

Health and wellness remained central to the program's whole-child approach. Most enrolled children had an established medical home (85.0%), dental home (77.0%), health insurance (85.0%), and up-to-date physical examinations (85.0%). The program also provided 16,325 meals during the 2025–2026 program year through Charles County Public Schools while following CACFP requirements and accommodating documented dietary needs. Family engagement remained a defining strength of SMTCCAC Head Start. Through family goal setting, individualized support, referrals, Policy Council participation, Parent Committees, leadership opportunities, and targeted initiatives, families were actively engaged as partners in program planning and decision-making. Signature initiatives included the Male Involvement Program, Diaper Distribution Program, and Period Poverty Program. During the year, the Diaper Distribution Program served 48 families and 54 children. Based on monthly distributions of approximately 100–150 diapers and three packs of wipes per child, the program provided an estimated 64,800–97,200 diapers and up to 1,944 packs of wipes during the year. The Period Poverty Program provided menstrual hygiene products to more than 70 females.

Looking ahead, SMTCCAC Head Start is positioned for strategic growth, expanded access, and deeper community impact. The program will continue strengthening partnerships, pursuing diversified funding, improving access for rural and working families, and exploring opportunities to expand services, including the potential reestablishment of Head Start services in Calvert County. Guided by a commitment to children first, family strengthening, access and inclusion, sustainable growth, and excellence and accountability, SMTCCAC remains focused on ensuring that children and families have the foundation and opportunities needed for lifelong success.

"Each one of us can make a difference. Together we make change." — Barbara Mikulski

2. Leadership Messages

Letter from the President & CEO

Dear Friends, Supporters, and Community Partners,

As we reflect on another successful year, I am proud to share the impact of SMTCCAC's Head Start, Early Head Start, and Early Head Start–Child Care Partnership programs. For nearly six decades, Head Start has served as a foundation of opportunity, helping children develop the skills, confidence, and support systems needed to succeed in school and life. This year, our programs provided comprehensive services to children and families throughout Calvert, Charles, and St. Mary's Counties, strengthening our communities one family at a time.

The accomplishments highlighted in this report reflect the power of collaboration. Our Board of Directors, Policy Council members, parents, staff, and community partners have worked together to ensure that every child has access to high-quality early learning experiences, health services, family support, and opportunities for growth. Their commitment to shared governance, accountability, and continuous improvement remains the driving force behind our success.

At SMTCCAC, we believe that when children thrive, communities thrive. By investing in early childhood education and family well-being, we are creating stronger foundations for future generations. The positive outcomes achieved this year demonstrate what is possible when organizations, families, and community stakeholders unite around a common purpose.

As we look toward the future, I invite our community partners, businesses, educators, healthcare providers, faith-based organizations, and civic leaders to continue joining us in this important work. Your support, advocacy, volunteerism, and collaboration help expand opportunities for children and families across Southern Maryland.

The future of our region will be shaped by the investments we make in children today. Every child who enters school prepared to learn, every parent who gains stability and confidence, and every partnership formed in support of families strengthens the fabric of our community. Together, we are not only addressing today's needs, ---we are creating opportunities that will benefit generations to come. Thank you for standing with us in this important work. We invite you to continue partnering with SMTCCAC as we build brighter futures, stronger families, and thriving communities across Southern Maryland.

With sincere appreciation,

Michael E. Young, MSW

President & CEO

Southern Maryland Tri-County Community Action Committee, Inc.

DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

"The strength of a community is measured by how well it supports its children and families. When we invest in young children today, we create stronger communities for tomorrow."

Dear Parents, Staff, Community Partners, Board Members, Policy Council Members, and Supporters,

As we reflect on another successful year, I am proud to share the accomplishments of the Southern Maryland Tri-County Community Action Committee (SMTCCAC) Head Start, Early Head Start, and Early Head Start Child Care Partnership Programs. Since 1967, our program has remained committed to promoting school readiness and strengthening families through comprehensive education, health, nutrition, and family engagement services.

This year, our children, families, staff, and community partners demonstrated remarkable resilience and dedication. Together, we celebrated developmental milestones, enhanced learning opportunities, strengthened family partnerships, and expanded community collaborations. These accomplishments reflect the collective efforts of our Board of Directors, Policy Council, volunteers, community partners, and families who share our commitment to helping children succeed.

Head Start is more than an early childhood program—it is an investment in the future. By supporting children's learning and empowering families, we help build stronger communities and create opportunities that positively impact generations to come.

I invite you to join us in continuing this important work. Whether through volunteering in classrooms, reading to children, supporting family engagement activities, participating in community events, serving on committees, or becoming a Policy Council member, your involvement helps create brighter futures for children and families throughout Southern Maryland.

Thank you for your continued support, partnership, and belief in the power of early childhood education. Together, we are opening doors, strengthening families, and building a foundation for lifelong success.

With gratitude,

Donna Montgomery

Director of Educational Services

Southern Maryland Tri-County Community Action Committee, Inc.

Head Start, Early Head Start, and Early Head Start Child Care Partnership Programs

3. About SMTCCAC Head Start



Southern Maryland Tri-County Community Action Committee, Inc. (SMTCCAC) was established in 1965 as a private non-profit corporation under the laws of the State of Maryland. The organization was founded by three dedicated individuals: Ray Shipley, Robert Hall, and George Higgs. In September of that same year, eighteen concerned citizens—six from Calvert County, six from Charles County, and six from St. Mary's County—were appointed as the Agency's first Board of Directors.

Two years later, in 1967, the SMTCCAC Head Start Program was established, beginning the provision of comprehensive services to low-income families. These services included educational support, nutritional assistance, family engagement initiatives, male involvement programs, and support for disabilities, health, and mental health needs.

The SMTCCAC Head Start Program continued to expand and seek new opportunities to serve the community. In September 2018, the Early Head Start Program was launched, enabling the program to offer comprehensive services to children under the age of three.

In September 2019, SMTCCAC Head Start introduced the Early Head Start Child Care Partnerships (EHS-CCP). These partnerships combine the strengths of childcare centers and Early Head Start programs to create high-quality learning environments for infants and toddlers from low-income families. This initiative allowed the agency to extend comprehensive services to additional layers of partnership funding.

OUR MISSION - Our mission is to promote school readiness by supporting eligible families in improving the social, emotional, and cognitive development of each child through educational, health, nutritional, and community services.

OUR VISION - Our vision is to enhance school readiness by fostering the social and cognitive development of children through the provision of educational, health, nutritional, social, and other essential services to enrolled children and their families.

4. Program Profile & Service Areas

Comprehensive Program Model

To meet the diverse and evolving needs of families throughout Southern Maryland, the Southern Maryland Tri-County Community Action Committee, Inc. (SMTCCAC) Head Start program delivers comprehensive services through three interconnected program models. Together, these models provide high-quality, developmentally appropriate services for children from birth through age five while supporting the health, stability, and well-being of the entire family.

Early Head Start | Birth to 3 Years

Early Head Start has a funded enrollment of 58. Services are delivered through center-based classrooms and community partnerships designed to provide nurturing, responsive, and developmentally supportive environments.

Services emphasize developmental screenings, individualized support, early learning experiences, and meaningful family engagement. Families also receive comprehensive support that promotes healthy development and strengthens their capacity to achieve their goals.

Head Start | Ages 3–5 Years

Head Start has a funded enrollment of **51**. Services are provided through center-based classrooms using Creative Curriculum and Teaching Strategies GOLD to support individualized learning and school readiness.

The program addresses all essential areas of child development, including cognitive development, language and literacy, social-emotional development, physical development, and approaches to learning. Instruction and assessment practices are designed to ensure that children enter kindergarten prepared to succeed.

Early Head Start–Child Care Partnerships

Through partnerships with licensed childcare providers, the Early Head Start–Child Care Partnership model expands access to comprehensive Early Head Start services within community-based childcare settings.

These partnerships increase access for eligible families while strengthening the quality of early childhood education and ensuring that children and families receive consistent, high-quality services within their communities.

Comprehensive Services

The whole-child, whole-family approach: SMTCCAC Head Start coordinates comprehensive services to address the whole child and support family well-being. Staff work collaboratively within health, nutrition, mental health, disabilities, family engagement, and community partners to identify needs, coordinate referrals, monitor progress, and connect families with appropriate resources. This integrated approach strengthens continuity of services and promotes children's health, development, school readiness, and overall success.

Education – Adina Cuadrado Pimental, Education Coordinator

Oversight of the Education component; this involves best practices for teaching strategies, appropriate curricula, ongoing children's assessments, individualized learning experiences, and inclusive classroom environments that support children's growth and school readiness.

Health & Nutrition – Dr. Raeleena Collington, Health & Safety Coordinator

Coordinates health and safety services, including screenings, referrals, assistance establishing medical and dental homes, nutritious meals and snacks, and ensures the program complies with USDA and CACFP requirements.

Family Services – Miya Raspberry, Family Services Coordinator

Oversight of the Parent, Family, Community Engagement Team, including enrollment into the program, family engagement, case management, family goal setting, referrals, and connections to community resources addressing housing, employment, education, emergency needs, and other areas that affect family stability.

Male Involvement – Russell Patterson, Male Involvement Coordinator/Case Manager. Instrumental for program-level coordination and oversight to strengthen the engagement of fathers, grandfathers, and other male caregivers.

Signature Family Engagement Initiatives

SMTCCAC uses findings from its annual community and family assessments to identify emerging needs and develop targeted initiatives that strengthen family engagement, promote self-sufficiency, and reduce barriers to family well-being.

- Male Involvement Program
- Diaper Distribution Program
- Period Poverty Program

A Whole-Child, Whole-Family Approach

SMTCCAC's integrated program model reflects the foundational principles of Head Start by addressing the developmental, educational, health, nutritional, and family needs of the children and families it serves.

By combining high-quality early learning with comprehensive health and nutrition services, individualized family support, and responsive community partnerships, SMTCCAC works to ensure that children are prepared for success in school and that families have access to the knowledge, resources, and support necessary to build long-term stability.

Profile Measure	Program-Year Result
Funded enrollment	109
Total children served	113
Total families served	105
Centers	6
Operating days	170 HS; 212 EHS; Year-Round EHS-CCP
Total staff	18
Volunteers / interns	2
Primary service area	Charles, and St. Mary's (Southern Maryland)

Program Reach

Head Start services are delivered throughout **Southern Maryland's three-county service area**, utilizing center-based classrooms and community partnerships to ensure that eligible children and families have access to high-quality early childhood education and comprehensive support services.

Through this network of centers and community partnerships, SMTCCAC is positioned to reach families across diverse communities, including rural, suburban, and military-connected populations. This geographic reach allows the program to respond to the unique needs of families throughout Southern Maryland while increasing access to comprehensive early childhood services and family supports.

The program's combination of center-based and partnership services creates a flexible service delivery system that meets families where they are. By leveraging community partnerships and strategically located centers, SMTCCAC strengthens

access to early learning, health and nutrition services, family support, and other resources essential to children's development and family well-being.

Locations

Brawner Center

6655 Weaver St, Indian Head, MD 20640

J. Woodall Center

10515 Theodore Green Blvd Suite #103 White Plains, MD 20695

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| * A Child’s Journey Center | 6310 Crain Hwy, La Plata, MD 20646 |
| * Inspiring Dreams Center | 11695 Doolittle Drive Waldorf, MD 20602 |
| * Little People Center | 21161 Lexwood Drive Suites A & B, Lexington Park, MD 20653 |
| * Visions & Dreams Center | 2200 Old Washington Road Waldorf, MD 20601 |

** Community partners*

5. Governance, Leadership & Oversight

The Policy Council/Shared Governance Team is a collaborative leadership body that provides consultation, deliberation, and shared decision-making on matters affecting the Head Start program. The team promotes meaningful engagement, transparency, accountability, and effective communication in decisions that impact children, families, staff, and program operations.

The Policy Council/Shared Governance structure is established in accordance with the Head Start Act and 45 CFR §1301.5, supporting parent engagement, accountability, and transparency in program governance and decision-making.

The Southern Maryland Tri-County Community Action Committee (SMTCCAC) Policy Council/Shared Governance Team includes representatives from the SMTCCAC Board of Directors, program staff, community members, and Parent Committees. Members bring diverse perspectives, experiences, and expertise that contribute to informed decision-making, effective oversight, and continuous program improvement.

Through ongoing collaboration and regular engagement, the team reviews program priorities, considers key programmatic issues, develops strategies, and participates in decisions that strengthen service delivery and outcomes. This shared governance model ensures that the perspectives of parents, families, staff, community representatives, and governing body members are incorporated into the planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of Head Start services.

Together, the Policy Council/Shared Governance Team supports the program’s commitment to high-quality services, family engagement, accountability, and positive outcomes for children and families, while contributing to the overall effectiveness, sustainability, and continuous improvement of SMTCCAC Head Start.

6. Education & Child Development

SMTCCAC Head Start is committed to providing developmentally appropriate, evidence-based learning experiences that promote school readiness and support the whole child. The program implements The Creative Curriculum and Teaching Strategies GOLD, an approved research-based resource, with fidelity and consistency across classrooms while allowing teachers to respond to each child's strengths, interests, developmental level, and individual learning needs.

Teaching is intentional and aligned with developmental goals, using purposeful interactions, questioning, modeling, guided learning, and hands-on experiences to strengthen children's language, thinking, problem-solving, social-emotional skills, and independence. Individual needs are addressed through differentiated and meaningful learning experiences.

Implementation fidelity is supported through ongoing monitoring, coaching, professional development, classroom observations, lesson planning, and child assessment data. These practices promote consistency, continuous improvement, and informed instructional decisions that support each child's growth and success.

Learning Environments



SMTCCAC Head Start provides safe, welcoming, engaging, and developmentally appropriate learning environments that promote children's development, school readiness, independence, and sense of belonging. Classrooms include intentionally selected materials and experiences that support cognitive, language, physical, social-emotional, and creative development through hands-on exploration, play, and individual and group learning.

Predictable yet flexible schedules, purposeful transitions, and positive teacher-child interactions promote meaningful learning, communication, problem-solving, and self-regulation. Staff create environments where every child feels valued, respected, and capable.

Families are recognized as children's first and most important teachers. The program engages families in their children's learning, values their cultural perspectives, and encourages learning to continue at home, strengthening connections among the classroom, family, and community.

Child Screening & Assessment

SMTCCAC Head Start follows a coordinated process for developmental screening, ongoing assessment, data analysis, and individualized planning to identify and address children’s needs as early as possible. Required developmental and health screenings, including the Ages & Stages Questionnaires, are completed within 45 calendar days of each child’s entry into the program. Results from these screenings, Teaching Strategies GOLD (TSG), and input from families and teachers guide decisions about appropriate supports, referrals, and follow-up services. Teachers use ongoing observations, work samples, classroom experiences, and approved assessment tools to monitor progress toward school readiness goals, recognize strengths, and respond to individual needs. Assessment data are aggregated and analyzed to identify trends, areas of concern, and opportunities to strengthen teaching and program practices.

Leadership and teaching teams use these data to guide instruction, lesson planning, professional development, family engagement, classroom supports, and program-level decisions. This data-driven approach to continuous improvement and intentional teaching keeps services responsive to children’s needs and promotes positive developmental and school readiness outcomes.

7. School Readiness & Child Outcomes

School Readiness involves the child and all family members in the household. The educational journey takes a village to ensure success. Parents are their children’s first teachers. Therefore, Head Start partners with families providing parental support and resources.

SMTCCAC Head Start monitors children’s progress across key developmental and school readiness domains using Teaching Strategies GOLD (TSG) assessment data collected at the fall, winter, and spring checkpoints. Aggregated checkpoint data are reviewed to identify strengths, measure growth over time, determine areas requiring continued support, and guide instruction and individualized learning experiences. When appropriate, results are also examined across relevant subgroups to help ensure that services are responsive to the needs of all children.

Three-Checkpoint Data Story

Teaching Strategies GOLD child outcome data are reviewed at the fall, winter, and spring checkpoints throughout the program year. Comparing results across these three checkpoints enables teachers and program leadership to monitor developmental progress, adjust teaching strategies, strengthen individualized supports, and promote continued growth toward school readiness goals. The table below presents Teaching Strategies GOLD results by developmental domain and checkpoint, with red indicating below expectations, blue indicating met expectations, and green indicating exceeded expectations.

Outcomes by Developmental Domain and Checkpoint (%)

Developmental Domain	Checkpoint	Below Expectations	Met Expectations	Exceeded Expectations
Social-Emotional	Fall	27%	68%	5%
Social-Emotional	Winter	0%	84%	16%
Physical	Fall	5%	79%	16%
Physical	Winter	0%	89%	11%
Language	Fall	16%	80%	4%

Developmental Domain	Checkpoint	Below Expectations	Met Expectations	Exceeded Expectations
Language	Winter	12%	80%	8%
Language	Spring	0%	84%	16%
Cognitive	Fall	4%	92%	4%
Cognitive	Winter	4%	92%	4%
Cognitive	Spring	0%	92%	8%
Literacy	Fall	25%	72%	4%
Literacy	Winter	4%	80%	16%
Literacy	Spring	4%	84%	12%
Mathematics	Fall	29%	67%	4%
Mathematics	Winter	20%	68%	12%
Mathematics	Spring	0%	59%	41%

These results inform intentional instruction, individualized supports, and ongoing program improvement to ensure children are prepared for successful transition to kindergarten and future learning.

Key Findings

Social-Emotional Development improved substantially, with children being below expectations decreasing from **27% in Fall to 0% in Winter**.

Physical Development showed strong outcomes, with **89% meeting expectations in Winter** and no children below expectations.

Language Development improved steadily, with children exceeding expectations increasing from **4% in Fall to 16% in Spring**.

Cognitive Development remained consistently strong, with **92% meeting expectations across all checkpoints** and no children below expectations by Spring.

Literacy Development demonstrated significant gains, reducing below-expectation performance from **25% in Fall to 4% by Winter and Spring**.

Mathematics showed the most dramatic growth, with children exceeding expectations increasing from **4% in Fall to 41% in Spring**, while those below expectations decreased from **29% to 0%**.

The table above presents Teaching Strategies GOLD results by developmental domain and checkpoint, with red indicating below expectations, blue indicating met expectations, and green indicating exceeded expectations.

Transition to Kindergarten

SMTCCAC Head Start Program is not just preparing children for school; we are building foundations for lifelong growth and development.

During the program year, 16 children were projected to enter kindergarten the Fall 2026. Transition planning focused on supporting children's school readiness and helping families navigate the move to their child's next educational setting. SMTCCAC Head Start remains committed to strengthening transition practices and partnerships with Charles County Public Schools to promote continuity of learning and successful kindergarten entry.

8. Health, Mental Health, Oral Health & Nutrition

the healthy foundation they need to thrive in school and in life.



SMTCCAC Head Start promotes the health, safety, and overall well-being of every child. The majority of children served are reported to be in good physical health, and most enrolled children have an established medical and dental home. Common health conditions identified among enrolled children include asthma and seasonal allergies. These conditions are supported through appropriate health plans, family communication, and coordination with healthcare providers to promote children's safe, healthy, and consistent participation in the program

Mental Health & Wellness

SMTCCAC Head Start promotes a culture of wellness for both children and staff. Wellness Wednesday is offered monthly through email communications featuring practical, relatable wellness topics and strategies that encourage staff to prioritize self-care, manage stress, and maintain overall well-being. These efforts support a healthy workforce and a positive environment for children and families.

Oral Health

The program prioritizes early identification, prevention, and treatment of oral health concerns through its partnership with the **Charles County Department of Health**. Dental screenings are conducted by a dentist at the beginning of the program year, allowing for early identification of oral health needs and timely referrals for follow-up care. Families receive information and resources to promote good oral hygiene, preventive care, and continued access to dental services.

Nutrition

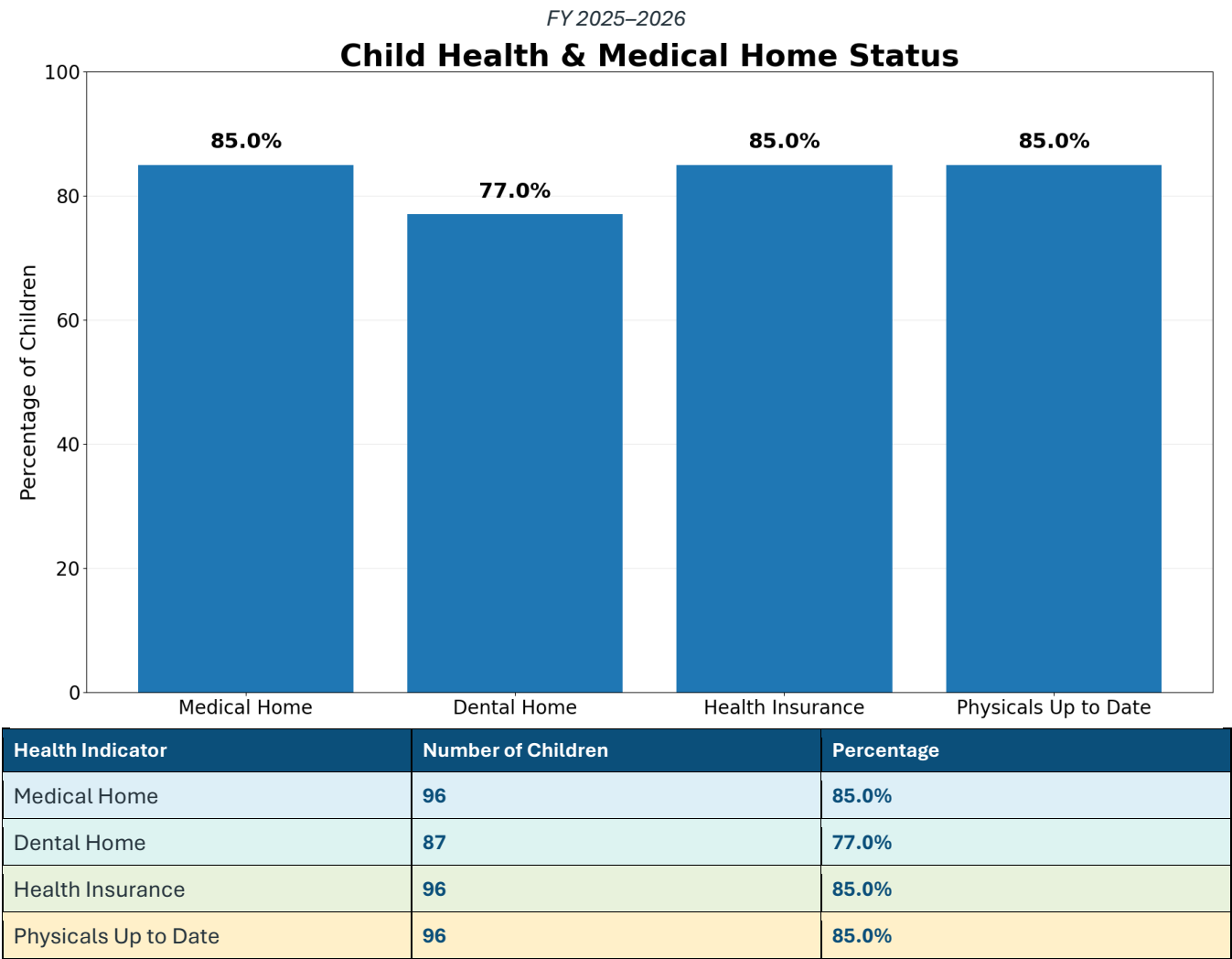
SMTCCAC Head Start provides nutritious meals and snacks that support children's growth, development, and readiness to learn. During the 2025–2026 program year, the program provided 16,325 meals to enrolled children. Meals were provided

through Charles County Public Schools and follow applicable CACFP requirements, including nutrition, meal pattern, and food safety standards.

The program accommodates documented special dietary needs and works with families to ensure appropriate nutrition support is provided. Through nutritious meals, safe food practices, and available resources, SMTCCAC Head Start promotes healthy eating habits and supports the overall well-being of children and families.

Health Outcomes Dashboard

Percentage of enrolled children meeting key health and preventive care indicators.



Findings: SMTCCAC Head Start demonstrates a strong commitment to ensuring children have access to essential healthcare and preventive services. The majority of enrolled children had an established medical home (85.0%), dental home (77.0%), health insurance coverage (85.0%), and up-to-date physical examinations (85.0%).

9. Disabilities & Inclusion

Children with Disabilities

The program is committed to ensuring children with disabilities receive timely, individualized services in accordance with IDEA and Head Start Program Performance Standards. During the program year, 2025 – 2026, 8 enrolled children (7.1% of 113 children served) had an IEP or IFSP at some point during the program year. Data reported in aggregate to protect confidentiality. This includes 5 Head Start children with IEPs and 3 Early Head Start children with IFSPs.

Identification & Referral

The developmental and health screenings, ongoing observations, assessments, and family input are used to identify potential developmental concerns. When concerns arise, staff work with families and coordinate referrals, evaluations, and eligibility determinations with LEAs and Part C providers. Families are informed of their rights, available resources, and each step of the evaluation and referral process.

Inclusive Practices

Children with disabilities participate fully in classroom learning and activities with their peers. Staff implement individualized accommodations, modifications, adaptive strategies, and specialized supports based on each child's needs and IEP/IFSP. Teachers collaborate with special education professionals, LEAs, Part C providers, and related-service professionals to ensure coordinated services that promote participation, independence, communication, social-emotional development, and school readiness.

Family Partnership

Families are essential partners in planning and decision-making. Parents participate in screenings, referrals, evaluations, IEP/IFSP development, service planning, progress monitoring, and transitions. Ongoing communication ensures family priorities, cultural considerations, and each child's strengths and needs are reflected in individualized services and support.

10. Parent, Family & Community Engagement

CONNECT FAMILIES TO RESOURCES THAT STRENGTHEN THEIR GOALS AND COMMUNITIES.



Parent & Family Engagement Framework

SMTCCAC Head Start recognizes families as essential partners in their children's learning, development, and success. The program implements a comprehensive parent and family engagement approach that promotes meaningful family participation, relationship-building, and shared decision-making. Families are provided with opportunities to engage in educational activities, program events, workshops, and activities that support children's school readiness and family well-being.

Family Partnership Process

Staff work with families to identify strengths, needs, and individual goals through an ongoing family partnership process. Families receive individualized support, referrals, and connections to community resources based on identified needs and priorities. Staff monitor progress with families, celebrate accomplishments, and adjust supports needed to help families achieve their goals and strengthen their capacity to advocate for themselves and their children.

Parent Leadership

By promoting meaningful parent leadership through the Policy Council, Parent Committees, volunteering, leadership development, and opportunities for parent voice; parents are encouraged to participate in program planning, decision-making, events, and activities that shape program services. These opportunities strengthen parent leadership, build confidence, and ensure that family perspectives and experiences inform continuous program improvement.

Signature Family Engagement Initiatives

Findings from the community and family assessments are used to identify emerging needs and develop targeted initiatives that strengthen family engagement, promote self-sufficiency, and reduce barriers to family well-being.

Male Involvement Program

The Male Involvement Program actively engages fathers, grandfathers, and other male role models in children's education and development. Through family-centered activities and the 24/7 Dads curriculum, participants are provided opportunities to strengthen parenting skills, build relationships, and become more actively involved in their children's lives.

Diaper Distribution Program

During FY 2025–2026, the Diaper Distribution Program served 48 families and 54 children. Participating children received approximately 100–150 diapers and three packs of wipes each month. Based on 12 months of participation, this represents an estimated 64,800–97,200 diapers and up to 1,944 packs of wipes. The initiative helps reduce financial stress while supporting children's health, hygiene, and overall well-being.

Period Poverty Program

During FY 2025–2026, the Period Poverty Program provided menstrual hygiene products to more than 70 females, helping reduce barriers to essential period products and supporting dignity, health, wellness, and family economic stability.

Family/Child Outcomes	FY24-25 Actual (reference)	FY25-26 Value
Head Start (ages 3-5) - Funded enrollment	51	51
Head Start (ages 3-5) - Children served	55	51
EHS / EHS-CCP (0-3 & pregnant mothers) - Funded enrollment	58	58
EHS / EHS-CCP (0-3 & pregnant mothers) - Children served	68	62
Total children served (all programs)	123	113
Total families served	117	105
Average monthly attendance rate (%)	85%	85%
Family Structure		
Metric	FY24-25 Actual (reference)	FY25-26 Value
Head Start families – Total	53	47
Head Start families - Two-parent	25	15
Head Start families - Single-parent	28	32
EHS/EHS-CCP families – Total	64	58
EHS/EHS-CCP families - Two-parent	14	9
EHS/EHS-CCP families - Single-parent	50	49
Parent Education Level		
Metric	FY24-25 Actual (reference)	FY25-26 Value
HS parents - Bachelor's or higher	4	1
HS parents - Associate's / some college	14	17
HS parents - High School / GED	18	29
EHS parents - Bachelor's or higher	9	2
EHS parents - Associate's / some college	13	14
EHS parents - High School / GED	36	42
Parent Employment		
Metric	FY24-25 Actual (reference)	FY25-26 Value
HS families – Employed	39	38
HS families – Unemployed	12	6
EHS families – Employed	48	55
EHS families – Unemployed	14	2
Race & Ethnicity - Head Start		
Metric	FY24-25 Actual (reference)	FY25-26 Value

Black/African American	49	40
White	3	4
Hispanic/Latino	1	1
Asian	0	0
American Indian/Alaska Native	0	1
Bi-Racial / Other	2	5
Race & Ethnicity - EHS / EHS-CCP		
Metric	FY24-25 Actual (reference)	FY25-26 Value
Black/African American	53	60
White	5	0
Hispanic/Latino	0	1
Multiracial / Multiethnic	0	1

Family Services (number of families)		
Metric	FY24-25 Actual (reference)	FY25-26 Value
Parent education	101	87
Employment support	3	1
Health education	11	54
Housing supports	80	3
Crisis support	1	32
Mental health services	1	3
Emergency/other supports	4	8

Male Involvement Program		
Metric	FY24-25 Actual (reference)	FY25-26 Value
Family assessments	52	43
Family goals set	51	44
Child experiences	32	19
Parenting education workshops	36	47

Diaper Distribution & Period Poverty		
Metric	FY24-25 Actual (reference)	FY25-26 Value
Diapers distributed	7,200	97,200

Wipes distributed	800	1,944
Children served (diaper program)	35	54
Period Poverty Program participants	35	70
Family Fun Day - families participating	26	18
Parent Appreciation Ceremony - families recognized	16	12
Head Start Graduation - children celebrated	8	16

11. Safety & Facilities

Safety Culture

SMTCCAC Head Start maintains a strong culture of safety through ongoing monitoring, active supervision, facility inspections, staff training, and established emergency preparedness procedures. Safety practices include routine facility and playground checks, emergency drills, sanitation and infection-prevention measures, and strategies designed to prevent accidents, injuries, and hazards. Staff are expected to identify and address potential risks promptly and maintain safe, supportive learning environments for all children. The program staff participates in Active Supervision Training annually.

Incident Reporting & Response

Safety incidents and concerns are documented, reviewed, and addressed in accordance with program policies and applicable requirements. Reportable incidents are monitored to identify trends and opportunities for improvement while protecting the confidentiality of children and staff. Corrective and preventive actions may include increased supervision, environmental modifications, staff coaching or training, policy review, and follow-up monitoring to reduce the likelihood of recurrence. SMTCCAC follows Office of Child Care and the Office of Head Start reporting procedures.

12. Fiscal Accountability & Financial Stewardship

Financial information is forthcoming and will be incorporated upon completion of the reporting process.

Focus Area 1 Review: From April 7, 2025, to April 9, 2025,

The Administration for Children and Families (ACF) conducted a Focus Area One (FA1) monitoring review of Southern Maryland Tri-County Community Action Committee, Inc. This report contains information about the grant recipient's performance and compliance with the requirements of the Head Start Program Performance Standards (HSPPS) or Public Law 110-134, Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007. The Office of Head Start (OHS) would like to thank your governing body, policy council, parents, and staff for their engagement in the review process. Based on the information gathered during this review, it has been determined that your program meets the requirements of all applicable HSPPS, laws, regulations, and policy requirements.

CLASS Review: April 2026

The Head Start Program Performance Standards (HSPPS) include thresholds for each CLASS® domain(s). These quality thresholds represent the expectations of the Office of Head Start (OHS) for the quality of the learning environment in every Head Start program.

SMTCCAC Head Start Program scored above the Quality Threshold in Emotional Support and Classroom Organization. Although the program scored slightly below in Instructional Support the score is above the Competitive Threshold.

CLASS Action Plan during In Service Week – August 2026, the education team received Training and Technical Support – CLASS and focus on Instructional Support.

Emotional Support:

- Quality Threshold 6.00; Program Score 6.21; Competitive Threshold 5.00

Classroom Organization:

- Quality Threshold 6.00; HS Score 60.6; Competitive Threshold 5.00

Instructional Support:

- Quality Threshold 3.00; Program 2.56; Competitive Threshold 2.30

The Education Team: Teachers and Assistant Director of Educational Services are CLASS Certified.

13. Partnerships & Collaboration



Strong partnerships and community collaboration are essential to the success and sustainability of SMTCCAC Head Start. Through collaboration with local agencies, schools, healthcare providers, businesses, funders, and community organizations, SMTCCAC Head Start expands access to resources, strengthens comprehensive services, and responds effectively to the needs of children and families.

These partnerships help reduce service gaps, increase referrals and connections to community resources, leverage funding and expertise, and provide coordinated support for families. Community partners contribute valuable knowledge, resources, and opportunities that enhance program quality and strengthen outcomes.

By working collaboratively with families and community stakeholders, SMTCCAC Head Start strengthens its ability to address emerging needs, promote family well-being, and create lasting impact for children and families throughout the service area.

Community Partners

- Charles County Children Aid
- MD Department of Human Services
- Kiwanis Club
- Charles County Public Schools
- Judy Center
- Lions Club
- Charles County Department of Health

14. Stories of Impact

Ms. Talia Harris's Head Start journey is a story of perseverance, growth, and leadership. As a dedicated Head Start parent, Talia became actively involved in the Parent Committee and Policy Council, where she grew into a strong voice and advocate for Head Start families. She has participated in program governance training and attended the MCAP Conference. This further notes her commitment to advocacy, growth, and continuous learning.

Even while facing personal health challenges, Ms. Harris remained committed to being present and supporting her child and the program. Her determination and involvement reflected the strength she brought to the Head Start community.

Alongside her growth as a parent leader, Ms. Harris proudly watched her child grow, learn, and complete Head Start. He is now prepared to begin an exciting new chapter as he enters kindergarten this fall.

Ms. Harris's family reminds us that Head Start supports more than a child's education. It creates opportunities for families to grow, find their voice, and become leaders within their community.

15. Goals, Challenges, Opportunities & Priorities

As SMTCCAC Head Start looks to the future, our strategic direction remains grounded in a clear commitment: ensuring that every child and family we serve has a strong Head Start in life, learning, and future success. Building on more than six decades of community service, the program continues to assess emerging needs, address operational challenges, and identify opportunities to strengthen access, quality, and sustainability.

Goals

Our primary goal is to provide high-quality, comprehensive Head Start and Early Head Start services that prepare children for success in school and beyond while strengthening the families and communities we serve.

Challenges

Like many early childhood programs serving rural and geographically dispersed communities, SMTCCAC Head Start continues to navigate challenges that affect access, enrollment, and service delivery.

- **Competition for Early Childhood Enrollment.**
Local public-school systems remain a significant competitor for eligible preschool-age children, particularly as school districts continue to expand publicly funded prekindergarten opportunities. The availability of these programs has affected Head Start enrollment.
- **Transportation and Geographic Access.**
The rural nature of our service area presents ongoing transportation challenges. Families may have limited access to reliable transportation, making consistent attendance difficult. Geographic distance and transportation availability can create barriers for families who otherwise qualify for and would benefit from Head Start services.
- **Service Hours and Family Needs.**
The traditional **8:30 a.m.–2:30 p.m.** service schedule does not always align with the employment, transportation, and family responsibilities of the populations we serve. As family circumstances and workforce patterns continue to evolve, the program must evaluate service delivery models that are responsive to the realities facing today's families while remaining aligned with program requirements.
- **Funding Environment.**
Limited funding for community-based early childhood programs, combined with increased availability of publicly funded prekindergarten through school districts, creates additional pressure on programs seeking to maintain and expand comprehensive Head Start services.

Opportunities

Despite these challenges, SMTCCAC recognizes significant opportunities for growth and innovation.

- **Expanded External Funding.**
The pursuit of foundation, corporate, philanthropic, and other grant opportunities presents an opportunity to diversify resources and strengthen services beyond traditional funding streams. Additional funding could support transportation solutions, family resources, program enhancements, staff development, technology, and other initiatives that directly benefit children and families.
- **Strategic Partnerships.**
Strengthening partnerships with school districts, community organizations, health and social service providers, businesses, funders, and other stakeholders can expand the network of resources available to families and create greater continuity of services.
- **Program Expansion.**
The potential reestablishment of Head Start services in **Calvert County** represents an important opportunity to expand the program's reach and reconnect with families who may benefit from comprehensive early childhood services.
- **Innovation in Service Delivery.**
The program has an opportunity to examine innovative approaches to transportation, family engagement, scheduling, recruitment, and community-based service delivery that better respond to the needs of rural and working families.

Priorities

SMTCCAC Head Start remains focused on five core priorities:

1. **Children First** – Ensure that every child receives high-quality early learning experiences and comprehensive services that establish a strong foundation for lifelong learning and development.
2. **Family Strengthening** – Partner with families as essential contributors to their children's success and connect them with resources that promote stability, self-sufficiency, and well-being.
3. **Access and Inclusion** – Identify and reduce barriers that prevent eligible children and families from accessing and fully participating in Head Start services.
4. **Sustainable Growth** – Pursue strategic funding, partnerships, and organizational development opportunities that support responsible program expansion and long-term sustainability.
5. **Excellence and Accountability** – Maintain a culture of continuous improvement, fiscal responsibility, regulatory compliance, transparency, and measurable outcomes.

16. Looking Ahead



As we look to the future, the Southern Maryland Tri-County Community Action Committee (SMTCCAC) Head Start Program remains committed to building upon more than six decades of service to children and families. Since 1965, the organization has been a trusted community resource, providing comprehensive early childhood education and family support services to families throughout Southern Maryland.

Our vision for the future is one of strategic growth, expanded access, and strengthened community impact. SMTCCAC will continue to explore opportunities to extend Head Start and Early Head Start services to families who remain underserved or have limited access to high-quality early childhood education.

A key priority in our long-term growth strategy is the re-establishment and expansion of Head Start services in Calvert County. Returning to Calvert County would allow the program to reconnect with families and community partners while expanding access to comprehensive early childhood services within the Southern Maryland region.

Over time, SMTCCAC envisions growing into a larger, regional Head Start program serving approximately 500 children and their families. This growth will be approached thoughtfully and responsibly, with an emphasis on maintaining program quality, strengthening infrastructure, developing a highly qualified workforce, expanding community partnerships, and ensuring that services remain responsive to the needs of children and families.

As we move forward, our growth will be guided by the same commitment that has defined SMTCCAC since 1965: creating opportunities, strengthening families, and helping children build a strong foundation for lifelong success. Through strategic planning, community collaboration, and continued investment in quality services, SMTCCAC looks forward to expanding its reach and deepening its impact across Southern Maryland.

17. Acknowledgements

SMTCCAC's success is driven by the collective commitment of its staff, leadership, Governing Body, Policy Council, families, and community partners. Together, they provide leadership, oversight, collaboration, and resources necessary to deliver high-quality services and achieve positive outcomes for children and families.

The Policy Council/Shared Governance Team includes representatives from the SMTCCAC Board of Directors, program staff, community members, and Parent Committee members. Through shared decision-making and collaboration, the team helps establish priorities, address program needs, and support continuous program improvement.

Community partners, funders, volunteers, and service providers further strengthen SMTCCAC's impact by providing resources, expertise, and connections that support children and families. Together, these stakeholders form a strong network dedicated to advancing SMTCCAC's mission and improving outcomes for the community.