



ASTOR
SERVICES FOR CHILDREN & FAMILIES

**Early Childhood
Programs**

HEAD START
ANNUAL REPORT TO PUBLIC
2012-2013



Astor Head Start and Early Head Start

Astor Early Childhood Program provides comprehensive services to pregnant mothers, infants, toddlers and preschool children and their families in Dutchess County, New York. Services are offered from sites in Poughkeepsie, Beacon, Wappingers Falls (Mt. Alvernia), Millbrook, Pine Plains, Red Hook, Millerton, and Wingdale. Both Early Head Start (EHS) and Head Start (HS) offer home-based and center-based program opportunities. During the fiscal year 2012-2013, Astor offered programming county-wide, serving approximately half of the income-eligible children and families in the county. Funding for the program comes from the Federal Office of Head Start and the New York State Education Department.

Astor's Federal Report Card/External Audits

The EHS/HS Programs were audited in April/May 2013 by a team of reviewers. The program had one area of non-compliance: PART 74- Financial and Program Management 74.21 (b) (3). Our mental health system and services are noted as an area of strength. A copy of our Agency's most recent independent audit can be found on our website (www.astorservices.org) and is an attachment to this report.





Efforts to Prepare Children for Kindergarten

Our Head Start Program works in partnership with public schools, parents and parent/teacher organizations to support the successful transition of children and families into a new educational setting. This partnership strives to maintain open communication, cooperation and coordination of efforts to streamline the process.

To prepare and facilitate the smooth process from Head Start to Kindergarten, we plan the following activities:

- Notification to parents of the dates of their school district's Kindergarten registration to make sure they understand the importance of taking their child to district activities.
- Provide Kindergarten transition workshops for parents on what to expect from the public school experience.
- Plan special events for Kindergarten teachers to visit the classrooms and begin to prepare for our children.
- Offer our facilities to district personnel to provide opportunities for meetings with parents of all our children, including those with special needs.
- Tracking of annual review appointments and arranging for special education staff to participate in the development of the child's IEP, when the child is involved with the CPSE.
- A Kindergarten checklist is completed by the classroom teacher for the parent and the school district.
- A letter of agreement is signed annually between the Head Start and each school district (LEA) in our local community to facilitate the process of successful transition.

To prepare children for school readiness during the preschool years, our Head Start Program utilizes the High Scope curriculum approach to early childhood education. This curriculum is research-based and was developed over 40 years ago.

During the 2011-2012 school year, our staff, families and community partners worked together to develop school readiness goals for children ages birth to five. These goals reflect an alignment of the NYS Universal Prekindergarten Program (UPK) Standards, the Early Learning Standards and the Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework. Specific goals were set in the following areas of development: social, emotional, language and literacy, English language acquisition, approaches to learning, cognition, and general knowledge, health/physical well-being, and motor development. Ongoing assessment is conducted 3-4 times per year using valid and reliable curriculum tools.




Astor Takes Pride in Parent Engagement

Astor views parents as the primary educators of their children and we welcome and encourage involvement in every aspect of the EHS and HS Programs. From volunteering in the classrooms and offices to riding the bus to setting policy, Astor's Early Childhood Program staff know the program is only as effective as the family engagement. Astor's parent engagement opportunities include parenting classes which are available at every site.

Children are more successful in school and life when parents are engaged in their education. Astor Early Childhood Program develops a variety of activities with parents to encourage and support parents to become engaged in their child's education and success.

Opportunities include:

- Policy Council
- Parent Committee Meetings
- Classroom Volunteers
- Parent Trainings
- Parent Curriculum Suggestions
- Parent/Teacher Conferences
- Home Visits
- Take-Home Activities
- Lending Library
- Education Advisory Committee
- Literacy Advisory Committee
- Center Level Committee
- Personnel Committee



Program Highlights

Astor's Early Childhood Program embraces the diversity of children, their families, and the program staff in many ways. We encourage families to contribute to our understanding of diversity by sharing their cultures with all of us at the centers. For the young children in our program, this understanding often develops through sensory experiences and through interactions. Activities that have been meaningful to them include making foods from families' cultures, listening and dancing to unfamiliar music, and hearing stories in other languages read or told by family members. Our centers provide children's books with stories from many different countries and cultural perspectives.

At the Mt. Alvernia Center this spring, parents were asked to have their children come to the center wearing something representing the family's culture. At the Beacon Center, a father shared a video of Vietnamese dancing/singing with the classroom. At the Poughkeepsie Center, a father and son wore robes (Dashiki) with specific colors that denoted the tribe in Kenya where the father's family is from.

Most important of all, the children develop friendships and have positive experiences with each other as they are becoming aware of their differences in language and skin color. As staff members, we strive to model and support caring and respectful interactions. We hope to develop cultural sensitivity in our youngest children and to also put this sensitivity into practice amongst ourselves as adults.

But, we always have more to learn. On March 1st, our Northern Centers participated in a cultural-diversity training developed by the Office of Head Start (OHS).

Staff reviewed ten multicultural principles such as "Culturally relevant and diverse programming examines and challenges institutional and personal biases" (Principle 9). Each principle/chapter gives examples of family perspectives and activities to develop awareness and sensitivity.

Head Start Program
2012-2013 Service Area Statistics

Astor operated Early Head Start and Head Start Programs at the following Dutchess County locations: Beacon, Millerton, Wappingers Falls (Mt. Alvernia), Pine Plains, Poughkeepsie, Wingdale, Red Hook and Millbrook.

	HS	EHS
Total # children served	482	265
Total # families served	453	222
% of children completing medical exams	99	97
% of children completing dental exams	87	71*
Average Monthly Enrollment	452	197
Percent of Capacity	100%	100%

* Number reflects all EHS children, including those under two years of age

ASTOR EARLY CHILDHOOD SOURCES OF REVENUE

Program Name	Budget FY14	% of Total Budget		Actual @ 6/30/13	% of Total Budget
HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START GRANT	\$ 6,262,601	71.43%		\$ 6,338,257	71.34%
TUITION REVENUE	\$ 1,615,492	18.43%		\$ 1,548,745	17.43%
UPK CONTRACTS	\$ 95,760	1.09%		\$ 103,460	1.16%
NYS FOOD PROGRAM	\$ 370,830	4.23%		\$ 354,982	4.00%
ARTICLE 611-619 GRANT	\$ 86,500	0.99%		\$ 105,708	1.19%
MEDICAID REVENUE	\$ 109,900	1.25%		\$ 122,666	1.38%
GRANTS FROM ORGANIZATIONS	\$ 90,000	1.03%		\$ 197,333	2.22%
EVALUATIONS	\$ 72,175	0.82%		\$ 61,466	0.69%
OTHER MISCELLANEOUS SOURCES	\$ 63,600	0.73%		\$ 52,278	0.59%
TOTAL EARLY CHILDHOOD	\$ 8,766,858	100.00%		\$ 8,884,895	100.00%

Astor Early Childhood FY14 Budget vs FY13 Spending

Program Name	BUDGET FY13			ACTUAL @ 6/30/12			
	% of Rev.	Revenue	Expense	Surplus (Deficit)	Revenue	Expense	Surplus (Deficit)
HEAD START/ EARLY HEAD START	76.4%	6,697,031	6,890,454	(193,423)	6,745,517	6,990,726	(245,209)
SPECIAL CLASS / INTEGRATED SETTING	9.5%	830,383	858,130	(27,747)	765,176	776,176	(11,771)
BEHAVIORAL SPECIAL CLASS	5.9%	514,882	535,746	(20,864)	517,594	590,365	(72,771)
POUGHKEEPSIE DT - PRESCHOOL	3.1%	270,227	298,590	(28,363)	265,975	308,873	(42,898)
UNITED WAY- ECP	1.0%	90,000	92,929	(2,929)	197,333	230,961	(33,628)
OMH - PDT PRESCHOOL	1.3%	109,900	99,081	10,819	122,666	131,576	(8,910)
UNIVERSAL PRE-K	1.1%	95,760	96,562	(802)	103,460	121,676	(18,216)
EVALUATIONS - UPSTATE	0.8%	72,175	55,034	17,141	61,466	50,550	10,916
TITLE I - PDT PRESCHOOL	0.5%	48,000	48,124	(124)	18,229	21,826	(2,572)
TITLE I - PRESCHOOL (99-457)	0.4%	38,500	38,634	(134)	29,750	31,826	(3,597)
TOTAL EARLY CHILDHOOD	100.0%	8,766,858	9,002,286	(235,428)	8,884,895	9,317,638	(432,743)

**Year to Date July 2012 to June 2013 Results vs. Budget and Prior Year -
Early Childhood Programs - Dutchess County**

