



Gulf Regional
Early Childhood Services

2014 ANNUAL REPORT



A MESSAGE FROM THE *Executive Director*

Gulf Regional Early Childhood Services (GRECS) has long-recognized the importance of investing in the success of our youngest children. Since 1992, our agency has been at the forefront of providing early care and education services and programs.

In 2014, we saw unprecedented attention spotlighting the importance of early childhood education. The President, recognizing expanding access to high-quality early childhood education as “among the smartest investments that we can make,” has earmarked millions of dollars to increase early education funding.

GRECS is perfectly poised to build on this momentum. We work with our Federal, State, local, and private partners to maximize our resources to better serve our target population. Foundational, mission-driven, strategic and comprehensive planning by management staff and program leaders, is ongoing. This planning ensures successful integration across all services and activities, and includes the use of a variety of data sets and program evaluation measurements. The result? Programs are strengthened, services enhanced, and resources are maximized.

There has never been greater momentum than now for early education issues, and GRECS looks forward to its continued and proactive involvement in this noble crusade.

WENDY MCEARCHERN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

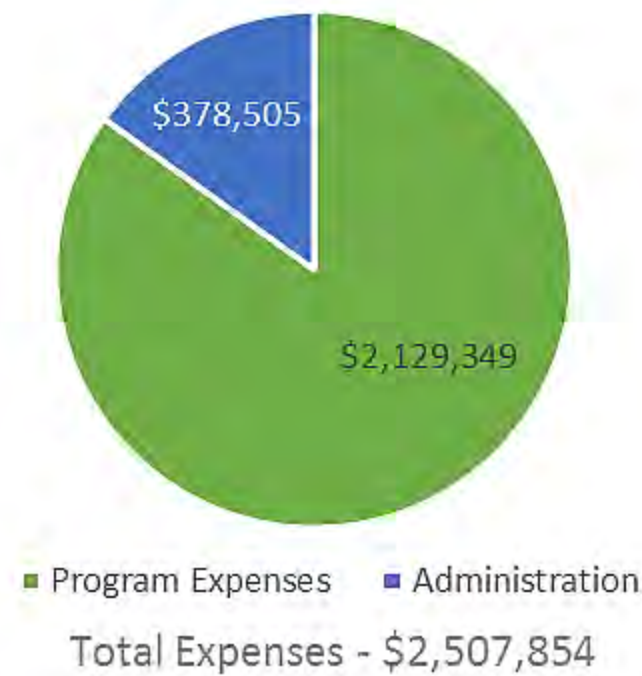
PROGRAMS & SERVICES

- Early Head Start - Comprehensive services for infants and toddlers of families who live in poverty
- Early Childhood Education (ECE) Professional Development Programs - Workshops and training events; Online and Web-based Courses with CEU credit; Quarterly Newsletters; Reproducible Resources for Parents and ECE Professionals
- Support Services for Alabama Pathways, a statewide career lattice
- The Resource Place - a lending library, teacher workroom and reusable resource materials
- Caring for the Caregiver programs to prevent the abuse and neglect of children
- Reading Is Fundamental Early Literacy Initiative
- Families In Transition - Short-term child care scholarships for families in crisis
- PNC Grow Up Great Grant - Promoting early math and science learning

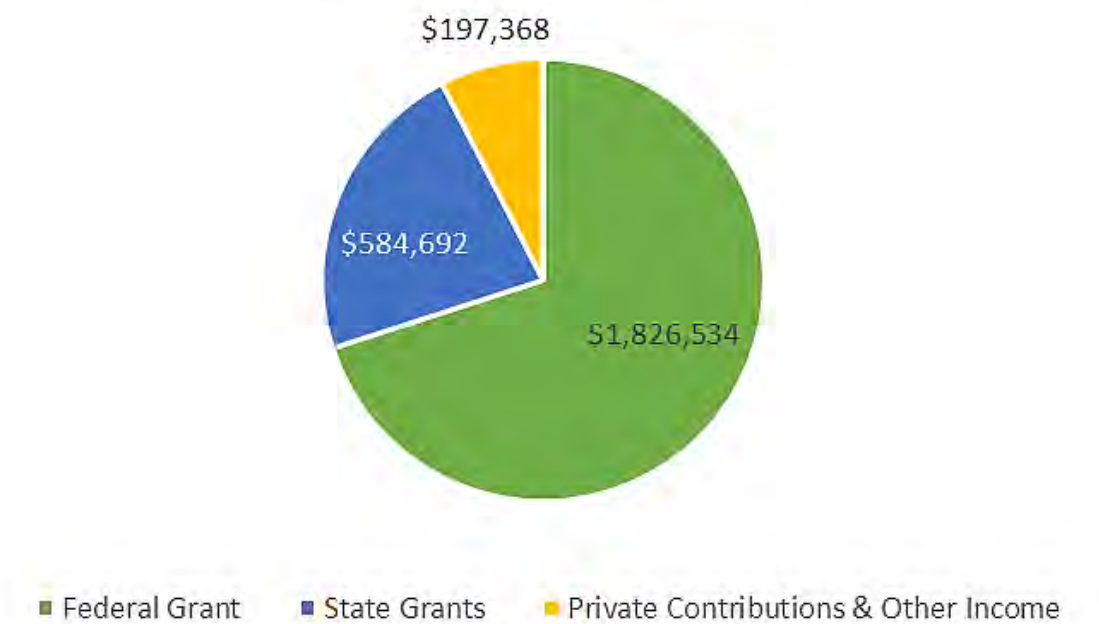


DEDICATED TO RESPONSIBLE SPENDING

2014 OPERATIONAL EXPENSES



2014 SOURCES OF FUNDING



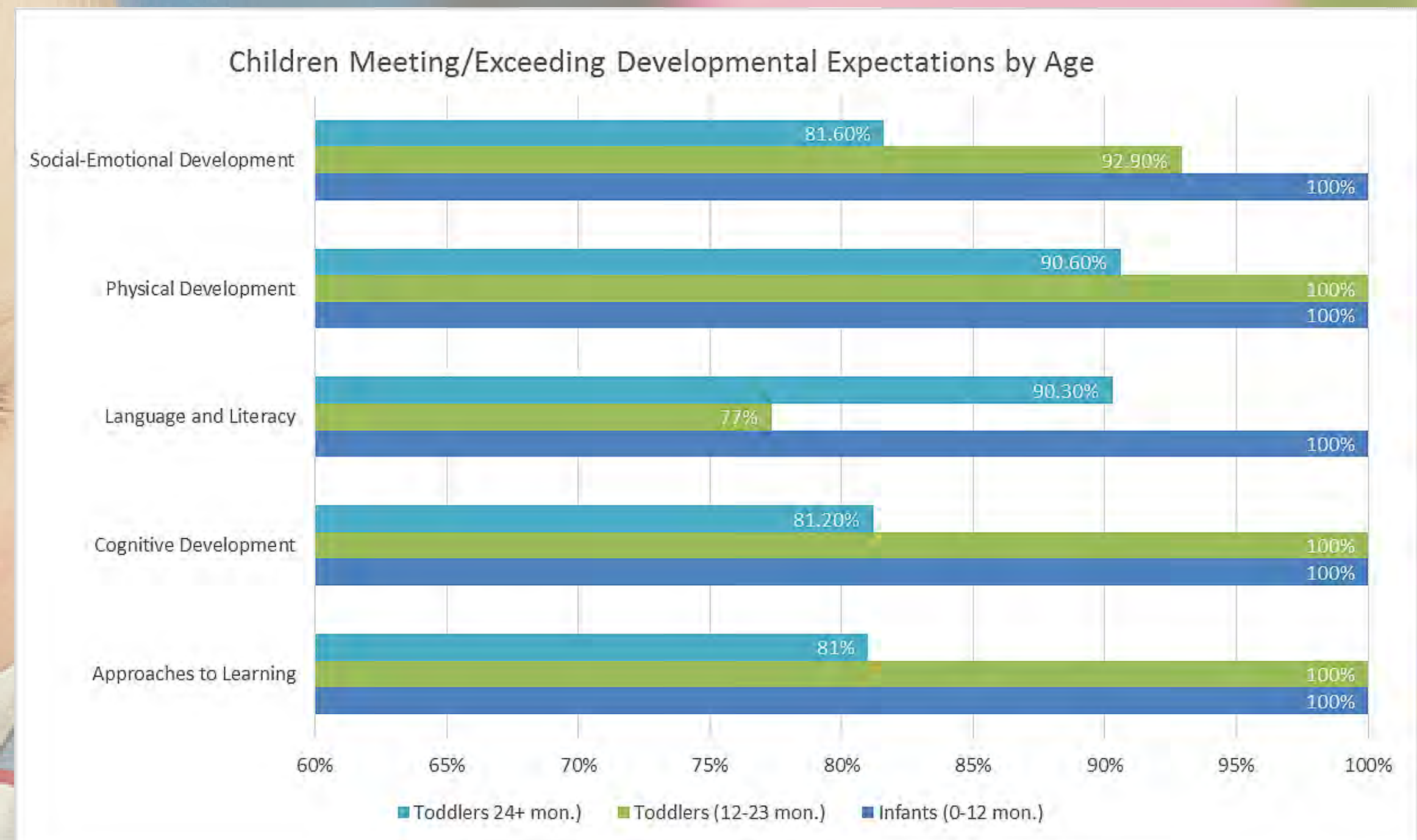
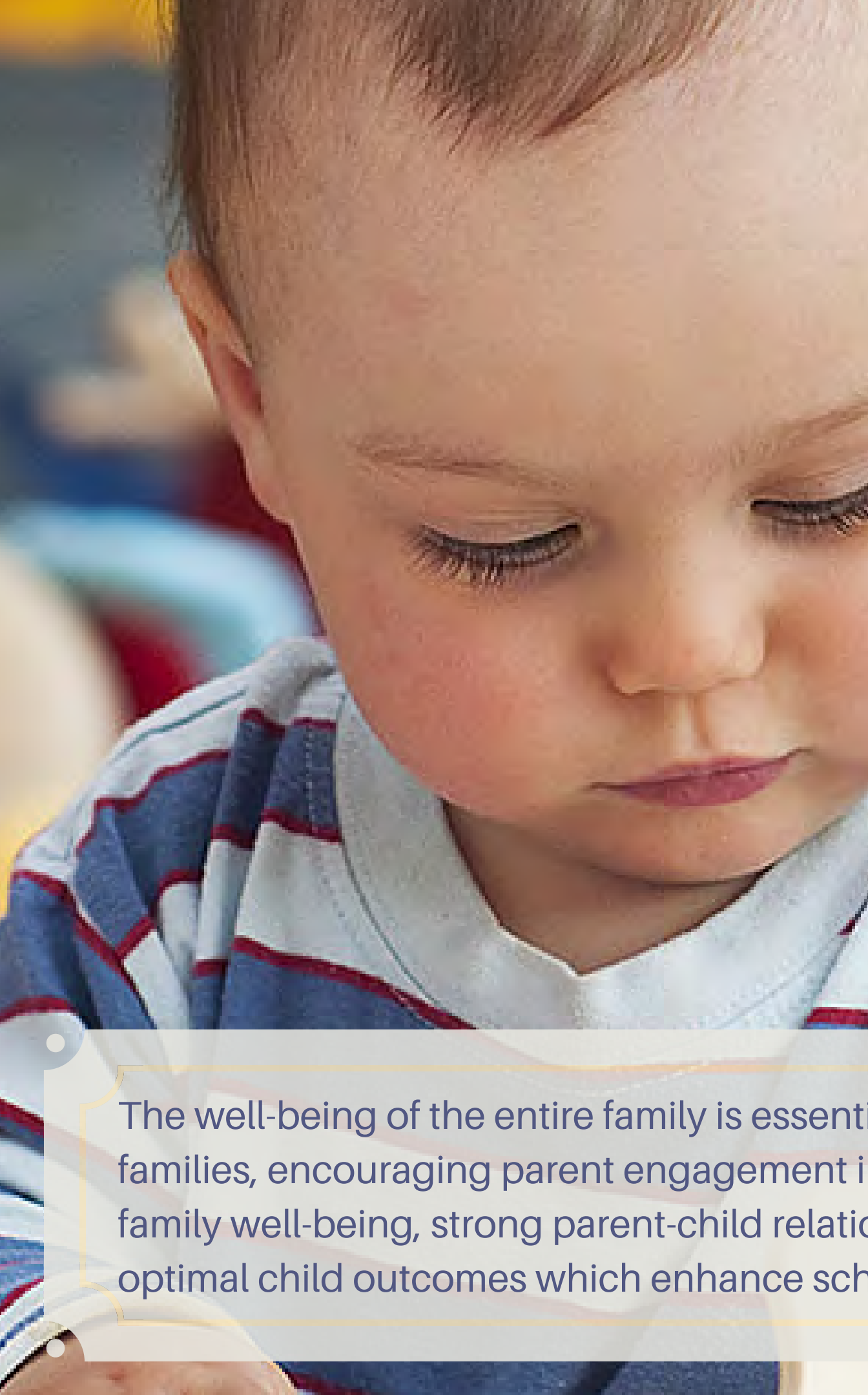
An annual A-133 financial audit was conducted by Smith, Dukes & Buckalew, L.L.P. in accordance with the Government Auditing Standards. The audit included all expenditures from Oct. 1, 2013 through Sept. 30, 2014 and indicates no findings or questioned costs.

EARLY HEAD START MOBILE

A growing body of research indicates that children's earliest experiences have profound impacts on brain development and child outcomes. The growth that takes place in these early years is tremendous and cannot be compared with any other age. Early Head Start Mobile partners with select child care programs in our area to provide children and families with increased access to high-quality early learning experiences. These partnerships support working families by providing a full-day program so that children have the healthy and enriching early experiences they need to realize their full potential.

- **Funded Enrollment - 96**
- **Average Monthly Enrollment - 96**
- **Number of Children Served - 130**
- **Number of Pregnant Women Served - 6**
- **Percentage of Eligible Children Served - 100%**
- **Number of Children with Disabilities Served - 20 (15%)**
- **Number of Foster Children - 5**
- **Number of Homeless Families - 7**
- **Children with Health/Dental Home - 100%**
- **Children with Health/Medical Insurance/Medicaid - 100%**
- **Children Receiving Health and Developmental Screenings - 100%**
- **Children Receiving Health Exams - 100%**
- **Children receiving Dental/Oral Exams - 100%**



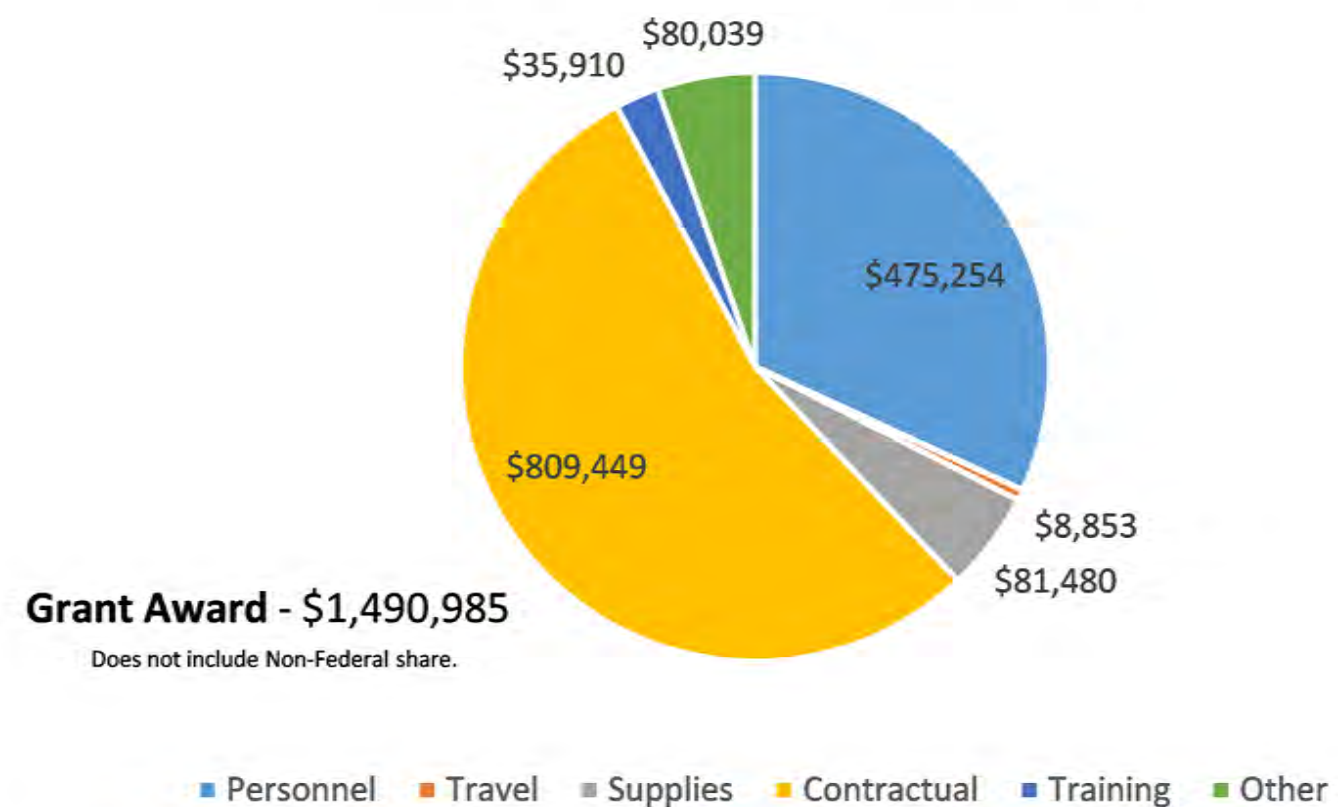


The well-being of the entire family is essential to the development of a child. We use a strength-based approach to work with families, encouraging parent engagement in all aspects of the program, building positive relationships with families that support family well-being, strong parent-child relationships and ongoing learning and development. Positive family outcomes support optimal child outcomes which enhance school readiness.

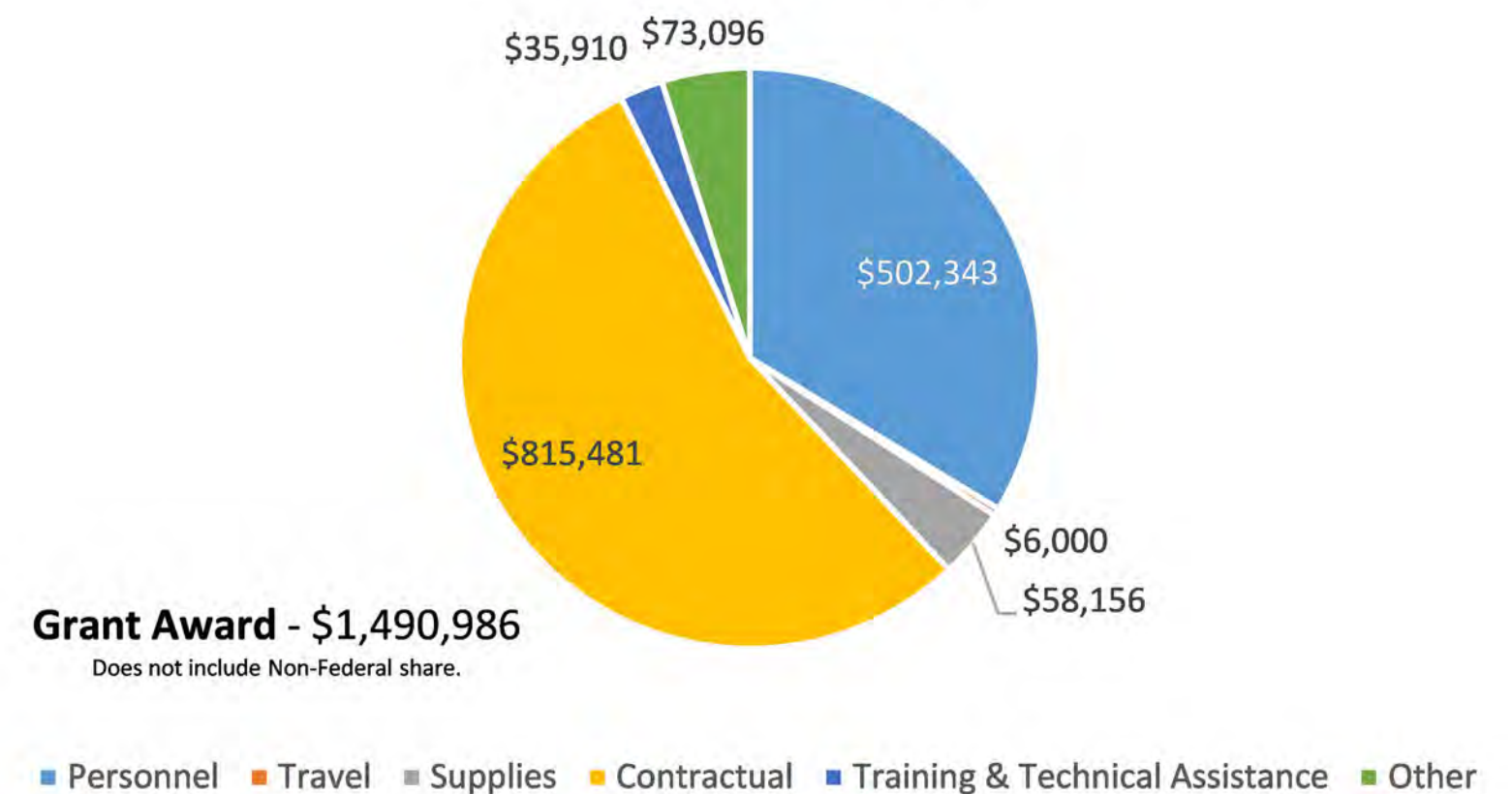
FEDERAL PROGRAM REVIEW

The Administration for Families and Children (ACF) conducted an on-site monitoring review of our Early Head Start program. As a result of the most recent review, the agency was designated as a program in good standing and had no findings of non-compliance with the Federal Head Start Performance Standards.

Early Head Start Financial Activities
January 1, 2014 - December 31, 2014



2015 Projected Budget





EARLY CARE & EDUCATION PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Research findings continue to demonstrate significant benefits to children when teacher-child interactions are supportive, organized, and cognitively stimulating. What this tells us is that it is critically important for early childhood teachers to have the knowledge and skills necessary to support young children's healthy growth and development.

GRECS remains committed to providing evidence-based training and professional development activities proven to result in improved teacher practices and positive outcomes for children. Our continuing training and education programs provide essential information that early care and education professionals need to improve their skills. These programs meet the highest standards for continuing education and training, earning our agency the distinction of being awarded Authorized Provider status by the International Association of Continuing Education and Training, the accrediting organization for Continuing Education and Training credit (CEU).

In addition to professional development events & activities, GRECS has created and continues to maintain a responsive website that includes resource pages, a copyright-free document library, calendar of events, partner information, and other resources for parents and educators. Consistent social media engagement with early childhood educators allows for topic-specific discussion and opportunities to network with others. Our online training programs give educators access to convenient, customized training and learning resources, and more importantly, improve classroom experiences for children.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

NUMBERS OF NOTE

- **Training Credit Hours Offered - 413**
- **Online Training Classes Completed - 556**
- **People That Attended Training Events - 3,883**
- **Training Sessions Offered - 179**
- **Items Loaned from Lending Library - 1,020**
- **Technical Assistance Visits On-Site in Early Learning Programs - 643**
- **Issues of "Early Learning News" Distributed - 4,423**
- **Copyright-Free Resources Distributed to Parents & Educators - 8,971**
- **Emails Sent to Subscribers of Monthly Newsletters - 12,314**





A MESSAGE OF *Thanks*

As GRECS commemorates more than 20 years of service to children, families and educators, we celebrate all of the people who worked to make 2014 a successful year!

2014 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Dr. Abigail Baxter, President

Mr. Eric Jefferson, Vice President

Mrs. Patricia Vanderpool, Secretary

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Dr. Katrina Trammell, M.D.

Mrs. Suzy Hardy

Mr. Frank Holderfield

Mr. Jim Smith (Emeritus)

SENIOR MANAGEMENT

Wendy McEarchern, Executive Director

Cheryl Gwin, Finance Director

Frida Schnitzler-Carrio, Comptroller

Kym Carroll, Early Head Start Director

Catherine Kreger, Director of Continuing Education and Training

FUNDERS

Alabama Department of Human Resources

Community Foundation of South Alabama

PNC Grow Up Great

United Way of Southwest Alabama

US Department of Health & Human Services - Head Start Bureau

Alabama Department of Child Abuse and Neglect

