



Ready Start Morehouse Blueprint

In order for young children and their families to reach their greatest potential, they must have knowledge of and access to quality cross-sector resources. The community can make the biggest impact by working together to create an equitable system to address ALL needs of ALL children. Parents, educators, health care providers, and community resources should strive to create a shared vision and approach to work as an innovative, collaborative, and cohesive unit to elevate services for all children. These efforts combined with policy and funding movement will advance the needle toward improved outcomes for young children in Morehouse parish.

-Julie Emory, ECCS Director Children's Coalition for Northeast Louisiana

[1/30/2023]

Introduction

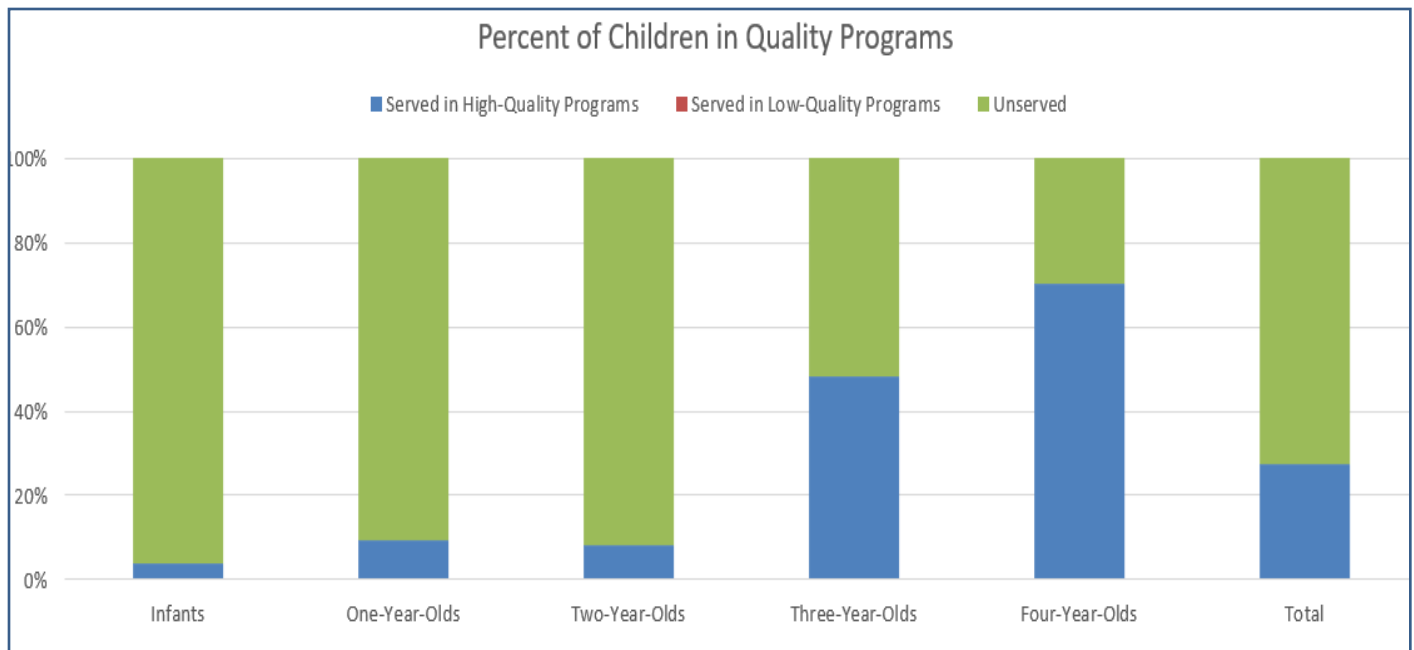
Ready Start Morehouse is a community coalition comprised of publicly funded early care and education programs including childcare, Head Start and school system programs committed to creating and implementing a bold local vision for early childhood. We are driven by the unique needs of the community to improve access to quality early care and education for our communities' youngest learners. The future of Morehouse Parish is dependent on the success of its children. Together we have an opportunity to transform the future of our parish in one generation. As a community we have a shared responsibility to support the workforce of today while preparing the workforce of tomorrow.

According to the Early Childhood Risk and Reach Winter 2016; 32% of children in Morehouse parish entering Kindergarten in in Fall 2015 scored *Intensive Intervention* on the DIBELS which is a pre-literacy assessment used to determine risk for literacy outcomes. Too many children in our community are arriving at school without the readiness skills they need to be successful. By increasing access to quality early care and education we can ensure that more children arrive at school ready to start.

Research on early brain development indicates that 90% of brain development occurs by age four. That means that if we are waiting to provide quality early care and education until age four when most children arrive at preschool, we have missed the most critical period of human development.

Morehouse parish has critical gaps in access to quality early care and education for our communities' youngest learners. In 2020-2021 only 8% of Infant and Toddlers had access to quality early care and education programs. Investing in Infants and Toddlers is key to the success of our community today and tomorrow.

Access to Quality Early Childhood Morehouse Parish by Age Group 2021 – 2022



It's easier and less expensive to provide access to quality early care and education right from the start. Doing so ensures that our youngest learners have brain building experiences that prepare them for school and lifelong success.

-Amy Clancy, Director of Early Childhood Children's Coalition for Northeast Louisiana

Guiding Statements

Statement: More Opportunities Reaching Early Learners

Purpose: Provide access to quality early care and education for children and families by increasing program support and community engagement.

Strategic Plan

Goal 1: Improve quality of the early care and education opportunities for all early childhood programs in the network, all programs are proficient or higher on 2021-2022 performance profile. (Goal Met 2020-2021 & 2021-2022 all sites proficient or higher.)

Strategies:

- Ready Start Coach for all programs (CLASS, Curriculum, GOLD)
- MMCI coaching for all Pre-K classrooms
- MMCI coaching for all I/T classrooms
- All ECE classrooms with Tier 1 Curricula Curriculum for all classrooms and sites
- Professional development training ((Frog Street Differentiated Instruction, Frog Street Making Center Time Intentional, Frog Street Classroom Strategies)
- Regularly scheduled training is offered to PreK teachers during professional development days during the school calendar.
- Teacher wish list
- Explore possibilities of annual bonuses for high performing teachers (high proficient/excellent)

Resources:

Existing

- Ready Start Coach certified MMCI PreK & I/T, Pre-K and I/T Train the Trainer. Teacher wish list for school PreK classrooms.

Needed

- Explore possibilities (SRTC, funding from donors, businesses) for annual bonuses for high performing teachers (high proficient/excellent)

Performance Metrics: CLASS Scores/Performance Profiles – all programs proficient or higher on 2021-2022 performance profile

Annual Progress Update:

- 2019-2020: Six out of the seven sites in the network received a Performance Profile rating of Proficient or Higher for the 2019-2020 school year. Applied to LDE for Classroom Resources and Materials grant for all ECE classrooms, Center Improvement Grant was provided to Type 3 childcare centers by Children's Coalition via SRTC Child Care Grants program.
- 2020-2021: All early childhood sites have received performance profile ratings of proficient or higher for the year 2020-2021. The Children's Coalition provided transition backpacks to children attending

summer PreK programs to assist with transitions to a new classroom. These backpacks included manipulative materials to aid in summer learning.

- 2022-2023: All early childhood sites have received performance profile ratings of proficient or higher for the year 2021-2022. Five sites were rated as high proficient and two sites were rated proficient. In fall 2022 Morehouse Parish PreK teachers submitted a teacher wish list. The wish list purchased items for classrooms to support high quality education. Early Childhood Specialist provided CLASS training to PreK teachers in September 2022. Early Childhood Specialist has scheduled Frog Street trainings for October and November 2022. Early Childhood Specialist provided MMCI Pre-K in Fall 2022. Infant/Toddler MMCI is scheduled for Spring 2023. CLASS Incentive Stipends for high performing child care teachers who score Proficient or higher on Fall and/or Spring CLASS observations in the 22-23 school year. (Proficient Teacher - \$100, High Proficient Teacher - \$200, Excellent Teacher - \$300)

Goal 2: Increase access to early care and education opportunities for Infants and Toddlers, Birth to age three enrollments has increased by 100 children by 2025.

Strategies:

- Evaluate availability of current I/T slots by age and location with Monthly child count.
- Identify potential sites to add additional seats.
- Request PDG funding for B-3 seats.
- Explore EHS funding options if needed.
- Local Fundraising targeting businesses - SRTC funds raised in parish are invested into increasing access to seats for B-3.
- Provide supports for eligible CACFP providers transitioning to become licensed Family Child Care Provider.
- Child Care Recovery Stipends

Resources:

Existing

- Community partnerships with Parents As Teachers, Early Steps and Morehouse Healthy Communities
- 5 Type III Child Care Centers, 1 Family Child Care Provider, MCIO Head Start, Charter and Parish Public PreK classrooms
- Community Supply Building Access and Expansion Coordinator

Needed

- Funding for B to 3 seats. The barrier to serving in-need Infants, Toddlers and Threes in Morehouse parish is not the availability of spots in childcare centers, but the funding for the spots that already exist. Little Ones and Little Angels both have open space to serve more children in their centers.

Performance Metrics: Increased B-3 enrollment by 100 children by 2025

Annual Progress Update:

- 2018-2019: Kids 1st Morehouse community partners have already laid the foundation for community education. Community partners are already knowledgeable of early child development. Additionally,

Parents as Teachers, Early Steps and Morehouse Healthy Communities are on board and already working with families and the community. Within the network we currently have four child care centers who serve B to 3 age group. Based on the available data from the 2018-2019 school year, the Prep Center has a High Proficient rating, ECEC certified teachers and utilizes the following Tier 1 curriculum: DIG for Pre-K 4, Frog Street Threes and Frog Street Infant and Toddler. Little Angels Daycare has a High Proficient rating, ECAC certified teachers and utilizes Frog Street Tier 1 curriculum across the center. Little Ones Daycare has a Proficient rating and ECAC certified teachers and utilizes Frog Street Tier 1 curriculum across the center. Our House Child Care Center has an Approaching Proficient rating and ECAC certified teachers and utilizes Frog Street Tier 1 curriculum across the center.

- 2019-2020: Applied for and awarded Birth to Three seats for the 2020-2021 school year implementation started July of 2020.
- 2020-2021 school year, Ready Start Morehouse was awarded a total of 20 PDG Birth to 3 seats to be placed at two sites that met the qualifications to be eligible for the seats. Those sites are Little Angels and Little Ones. As of January 27th, 2021, 19 of the 20 PDG seats are filled.
- 2021-2022: Ready Start Morehouse was awarded a total of 38 Birth to 3 seats to be placed at Little One's Daycare and Little Angels Daycare. These sites continued to meet the qualifications to be eligible for the seats. As of December 7th, 2021, 28 out of 38 seats are filled. Community Supply Building Access and Expansion Coordinator launched survey to inquire about child care needs with families and businesses. Community Supply Building Access and Expansion Coordinator worked with Children's First Finance to complete CSBAE Strategic Plan that outlines the child care needs in Ready Start Morehouse.
- 2022-2023: Ready Start Morehouse was allocated a total of 34 seats to be placed at Little One's Daycare and Little Angels Daycare. These sites continued to meet the qualifications to be eligible for the seats. As of November 16th 2022, 30 of 34 seats have been filled. Seats have been filled but also fluctuate due to enrollments changing. CSBAE Coordinator held an informational meeting with eligible CACFP providers to gauge interest in transitioning to a become a licensed Family Child Care Center. One CACFP provider is working to become a licensed Family Child Care Center. One Type III child care center that is currently open is also working with the CSBAE to open two new classrooms. Child Care Recovery Stipend payments for eligible Type III Child Care Centers to assist with operating costs. The funds will be dispensed one time per quarter.

Goal 3: Increase parent and community awareness of their ECE options when choosing a program for their children.

Strategies:

- Marketing Campaign - TV ads, radio PSAs, digital ads, social media, posters, flyers, postcards, explore other types of media such as digital billboards
- Share Choosing Quality Child Care checklist
- Coordinated Enrollment Community Event
- Network folders shared with local sites to share with new families

Resources:

Existing

- Templates already exist for flyers and posters. Met with marketing team to create a new more informative TV ad.

- Community Supply Building Access and Expansion Coordinator Needed

- Update flyers and posters.
- Survey parents on experience following Coordinated Enrollment.

Performance Metrics: survey data

Annual Progress Update:

- 2020-2021 Held a virtual parent Q & A via Zoom prior to early childhood roundup week. Shared early childhood program “spotlights” in the weeks leading up to early childhood roundup. The marketing campaign included improved TV ads, radio PSAs, digital ads, social media, posters, flyers, postcards.
- 2021-2022: Shared early childhood program “spotlights” in the weeks leading up to early childhood roundup. The marketing campaign included TV ads, radio PSAs, digital ads, social media, posters, flyers, postcards. Families were surveyed in June 2022 on the experience of Coordinated Enrollment. Results stated that most families were aware of their early childhood options through friends & family or through the director/administrator of a site. Results were mixed because a small number of providers that also participated in the survey. Early Childhood Guide commercial and webpage was created.
- 2022-2023: Continued marketing campaign for Early Childhood Guide. Birth to Three flyers were updated in summer of 2022. Marketing materials are being updated to include Family Child Care Providers that have opted into Academic Approval and 2023-2024 Round Up dates. Early childhood program “spotlights” will be shared in the weeks leading up to early childhood roundup. The marketing campaign included TV ads, radio PSAs, digital ads, social media, posters, flyers, postcards. CSBAE Coordinator is scheduling a time to speak with the Bastrop Lion’s Club to bring awareness to early childhood happening in Morehouse Parish. Coordinated Enrollment Community Event is scheduled with anticipated larger event and after Early Childhood Round Up to reach more families. Director of Early Childhood, Ready Start Coordinator and CSBAE Coordinator are working together to build marketing materials around the importance of awareness of early care and education.

Goal 4: Increase referrals to early intervention for children aged Birth to Three years old with follow up by 10% by the end of the 2022-2023 school year.

Strategies:

- Conduct developmental screenings/ASQ-3 for Infants and Toddlers enrolled in Type III childcare centers and FCC Providers. Referral to Early Steps as needed based on screenings completed.
- Training on how to conduct ASQ-3
- Training on Early Steps referral process
- Training on Red Flags for developmental delays and how to refer out for intervention services.

Resources:

Existing

- Early Steps
- Developmental Screening Coordinator

- Next Steps handout to share with families

Needed

- Trainings as listed above.

Performance Metrics: We will know this goal is met when we increase referrals for children aged Birth to Three years old by 10%.

Annual Progress Update:

- 2020-2021: Type 3 childcare centers received a set of the ASQ-3 master copy. The teachers were also provided with training on implementation of the ASQ-3 and the Early Steps Referral process. Of the reported 69 completed ASQ-3, one child was referred to Early Steps. During the 2020-2021 year, 127 ASQ-3 screenings were completed.
- 2021-2022: Ready Start Network Coordinator, statewide Pediatric Developmental Health Coordinator, and Child Care Resource & Referral Coach began collaborating to create policies for implementing the ASQ-3 and improve the quality of screenings completed. The timeline anticipated for training and implementing the screenings will be April and May 2022. Training was held in each parish in April and May 2022.
- 2022-2023: Developmental Screening Initiative Coordinator began work in July 2022. Developmental Screening Initiative Coordinator is actively promoting the ASQ-3 at various events within the community. Providers receive support as they request on-site training or if directors/teachers attend one of the monthly training courses offered on the topic of developmental health, screenings, or milestones.

Goal 5: Community network and programs partners will hold at least 2 family engagements events annually.

Strategies:

- Parent Focus Group held in January 2022
- Developmental Play Kits distributed to Morehouse Parish Library.
- Collaborate with local businesses to install little free libraries or become a Reach Out & Read site.
- Annual Coordinated Enrollment Community Event
- Past Family Engagement Events at Program Partner sites: Graduation ceremonies, make & take activities, cookout, Spring Fling, fall even like Trunk or Treat, Open House
- Family Engagement Event Incentive

Resources:

Existing

- Desire to create activities that will engage families throughout the parish.
- Family Engagement Event Incentive

Needed

- Calendar of community events happening throughout the parish
- Community events to partner with
- Resources to assist in implementing events at program partner sites

- Community partnerships to build little libraries, developmental corners and distribute developmental play kits

Performance Metrics: We will know this goal is met when community network and program partners hold at least 2 family engagement events annually in Morehouse parish.

Annual Progress Update:

- 2021-2022: Parent Focus group held in January 2022. Developmental Play kits were distributed at The Morehouse Parish Library main branch. Program partners collaborated in June 2022 on potential ways to engage families with different activities or events at their sites.
- 2022-2023: Development play kits continue to be distributed to community partners. Children's Coalition purchased big book kits for the Morehouse Parish Library. The kits are available for families to check out and will assist with making developmentally appropriate materials available for children aged birth to five. The Morehouse Parish is installing a little free library in fall 2022 at a rural branch. Family Engagement Event Incentive released in November 2022 to assist eligible providers with a stipend for materials purchased for Family Engagement Events.

2 out of 3 children ages birth to five in Louisiana have both parents or their single parent in the workforce. Increased access to reliable, quality early care and education is necessary to ensure our economy thrives today & tomorrow. Louisiana Policy Institute for Children