



The Head Start Innovation Fund: Building A Strong Foundation For Children

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Head Start Innovation Fund (HSIF), launched in 2013, is a collaborative effort to improve the quality of Head Start and Early Head Start services and outcomes for children and families in Detroit and the surrounding tri-county area. For the past five years, 10 funding partners, coordinated by the Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan (CFSEM), have invested slightly more than \$11 million in grants and other supports to Head Start agencies.¹ The first grants were awarded in 2014 to four Detroit Head Start agencies—Matrix Human Services, New St. Paul Tabernacle (New St. Paul), Starfish Family Services (Starfish Detroit), and United Children and Family—with a focus on getting program doors open and families enrolled. In 2017, HSIF began a new three-year funding cycle, providing an initial \$1.5 million to nine Head Start agencies. The grantees included the four Detroit programs as well as five Head Start agencies just outside Detroit in Wayne, Macomb, and Oakland counties (tri-county area). Tri-county grantees included the Guidance Center, Macomb Community Action Agency, Oakland Livingston Human Service Agency (OLHSA), Starfish Family Services (Starfish Western Wayne), and Wayne Metropolitan Community Action Agency (Wayne Metro).

Funding partners launched HSIF in response to a significant shift in Detroit’s Head Start program administration. Beginning in the 1960s, the City of Detroit had served as a Head Start grantee and managed programs operating in the city. In 2013, this changed. The City of Detroit ended its role as a key grantee. Former delegates of the city of Detroit needed to compete for new federal Head Start grants. In early 2014, the Office of Head Start awarded Head Start grants to the four Detroit agencies.

Although positive in many ways, the change in Head Start program administration also created several challenges. Families now had a choice of Head Start providers in Detroit but were uncertain about how to access the services and enroll their children. Second, the new grants provided more funding, dramatically increasing the number of Early Head Start and Head Start enrollment slots available across the city. By the 2015–2016 school year, hundreds of enrollment slots remained open (CFSEM 2018). Moreover, Detroit grantees faced challenges in recruiting and retaining enough qualified Head Start and Early Head Start teachers to staff newly funded classrooms.

To address these challenges, support quality, and increase parent engagement, HSIF focused its funding on four main priorities identified by Head Start agency leaders: (1) increasing program enrollment, (2) recruiting and retaining qualified teachers and assistant teachers, (3) supporting classroom quality, and (4) increasing parent engagement.

¹ HSIF funding partners are the Colina Foundation, Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan, Max M. and Marjorie S. Fisher Foundation, The Jewish Fund, McGregor Fund, PNC Foundation, W.K. Kellogg Foundation, The Kresge Foundation, Skillman Foundation, and Ralph C. Wilson Jr. Foundation.

HSIF evaluation

In fall 2017, CFSEM hired Mathematica to conduct an evaluation of the HSIF. To guide the evaluation, the team worked with CFSEM and the grantees to articulate a theory of change and create a logic model depicting HSIF's main activities and desired outcomes (Figure 1.1). The team collected data from multiple sources to describe the activities; assess progress on short-term and intermediate outcomes, retrospectively when feasible; and identify key successes and challenges of the initiative (see box). Appendix A provides more information about data collection and analysis methods. The evaluation team used four main data sources, described in more detail in Appendix A:

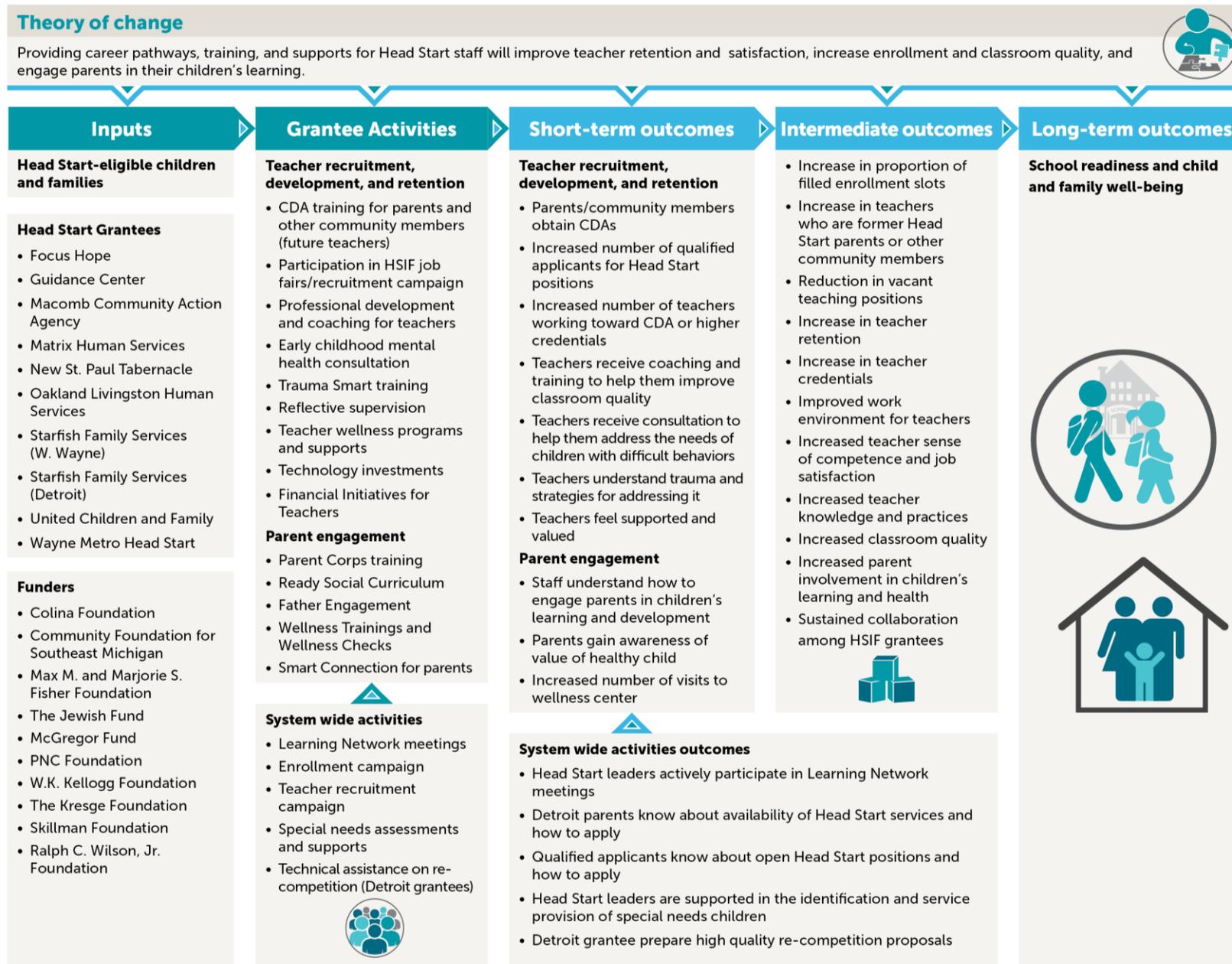
- **Teacher survey.** From October 2018 to January 2019, the evaluation team conducted a web-based survey of a representative sample of teachers and assistant teachers in all 10 HSIF grantees. The survey included questions about teacher characteristics; receipt of supervision, training, and other HSIF-funded supports; and experiences working in the Head Start agencies. The overall survey response rate was 71 percent.
- **Interviews with grantee directors.** In November 2018, the evaluation team conducted a 90-minute, in-person interview with each grantee director. Other grantee program leaders, such as those staff tasked with implementing key aspects of the grants, joined most of these interviews.
- **Focus groups with teachers and other staff.** At three grantee sites, the evaluation team conducted focus groups with teachers and other staff providing direct services to children and families. The evaluation team interviewed a total of 28 staff across the three focus groups; each focus group lasted about an hour.
- **Program Information Report (PIR) data.** All Head Start programs report annual program information annually to the Office of Head Start. The evaluation team used data from 2014 to 2018 to examine program enrollment and teacher turnover over time.



Key research questions

1. What steps has HSIF taken to increase enrollment? Have grantees been able to increase the proportion of filled Head Start enrollment over time?
2. What steps has HSIF taken to recruit and retain qualified teachers? Has teacher turnover in HSIF grantees decreased over time?
3. What steps has HSIF taken to help teachers obtain credentials? What proportion of teachers and assistant teachers have Child Development Associate (CDA) credentials or associate's, bachelor's, or higher degrees?
4. What kind of supervision and other supports were offered to HSIF grantee staff? How satisfied were teachers and assistant teachers with these supports and the work environment?
5. What steps did HSIF take to improve classroom quality?
6. What strategies did HSIF develop to engage parents? How satisfied were grantee staff with those strategies?
7. What steps did HSIF take to promote shared learning among grantees? How satisfied were grantees with these activities?

Figure 1.1. Theory of change and logic model for HSIF



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2. RECRUITING AND ENROLLING FAMILIES

The Office of Head Start requires grantees to maintain full enrollment in their programs and an active waiting list. Twice a year, the Office of Head Start identifies grantees with less than full enrollment for at least four consecutive months. Grantees have 12 months to implement an improvement plan and achieve full enrollment. If, after 12 months, a grantee is still operating at 97 percent or less of funded enrollment, the agency can be designated as “chronically under enrolled” and at risk of having its grants reduced (Administration for Children and Families 2018). This chapter describes HSIF-funded activities designed to help the new Detroit Head Start agencies recruit and enroll families and reports the enrollment trends for both Detroit and tri-county grantees.

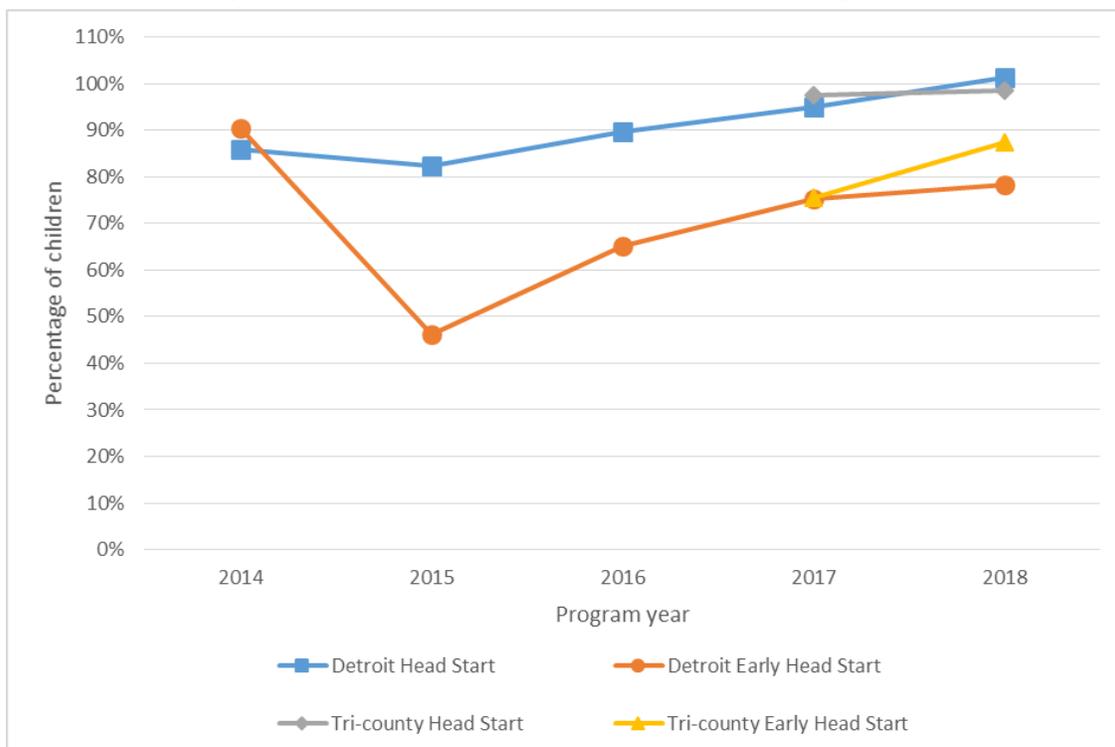
Over the past five years, HSIF supported extensive outreach efforts to recruit and enroll eligible Head Start families and children. After the Office of Head Start awarded new Head Start grants in Detroit, HSIF funded EarlyWorks, a consultant, to create a unified brand for Detroit Head Start. The consultant created a brand, including a recognizable logo for the website and branded documents, as well as resources to help parents find and apply to Head Start programs in their neighborhoods. After conducting listening sessions with staff and parents, in 2015, EarlyWorks created a Detroit Head Start Facebook page and DetroitHeadStart.com, a website where families can search for Head Start centers in their neighborhood, learn about Head Start programs and resources, and complete an application form. During interviews, Detroit-based grantee directors praised the website as an important recruiting tool that helps families identify Head Start programs close to where they live or work. In addition to centralized branding efforts, individual grantees raised community awareness by holding annual community events; posting on social media; and distributing fliers, pamphlets, and other advertisements. Grantees also established referral relationships with community partners, including the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) and schools, and created staff positions that focused on recruitment.

Since 2014, enrollment in Head Start programs has increased steadily. According to PIR data, after a small dip in enrollment in 2015, Head Start enrollment increased each year. From 2015 to 2018, across all four Detroit programs, yearly average enrollment rose from 86 percent to 100 percent (Figure 2.1). Tri-county grantees also achieved more than 97 percent enrollment, on average, over the same time period. Although grantees made steady progress, maintaining full enrollment continued to be a challenge. Most programs enrolled more than 100 percent of families and children required to fill funded Head Start enrollment slots because a significant proportion of enrolled families left the program during the year and were replaced with new families. In interviews, directors attributed the loss of enrolled families to high levels of family mobility. In addition, Detroit directors perceived Michigan’s Great Start Readiness Program (GSRP), a state-funded preschool option, as a competitor. GSRP aimed to serve the same families and may have contributed to under enrollment in Head Start. Tri-county directors reported that under enrollment was a new challenge for them and attributed it in part to families’ confusion regarding the difference between Head Start and GSRP. Research shows that Head Start agencies often perceive public pre-kindergarten programs as competitors, and that Head

Start programs operating new public pre-kindergarten programs sometimes adapt by increasing enrollment of younger children (Bassok 2012).

Both Detroit and tri-county grantees struggled with achieving full enrollment in Early Head Start. Enrollment increased over time in both programs, but according to PIR data, in 2018 Detroit grantees reached 80 percent of funded enrollment and tri-county grantees achieved 90 percent, well below full enrollment. Similar to Head Start, grantees directors named family mobility as a challenge for maintaining full enrollment in Early Head Start. In addition, high teacher turnover in Early Head Start made it hard for programs to keep classrooms open (see Chapter 3 for more details). Two program directors reported that their programs lacked suitable facilities for operating the planned number of Early Head Start classrooms. As a result of this problem, one program director received approval from the Office of Head Start to reduce its funded enrollment and grant amount for Early Head Start. At the time of the interviews, another grantee director reported requesting a reduction in its Head Start grant to account for the loss of a delegate agency.

Figure 2.1. Percentage of enrollment slots filled, by year and program type



Source: 2014–2018 Program Information Reports, annual report of grantee-level data.

Note: Includes reports from all nine Head Start grantees during the years in which they received HSIF funding. Enrollment can exceed 100 percent when a program serves more children than funded to enroll.

3. RECRUITING AND RETAINING QUALIFIED TEACHERS

Head Start programs must recruit and retain qualified teachers to operate centers at funded enrollment levels and provide high quality services. However, early childhood education (ECE) is demanding work and compensation is often low, making teacher recruitment and retention challenging. According to HSIF grantees, few college-educated individuals with ECE degrees are entering the field in Detroit, making demand for these candidates high. Teacher retention is also a challenge. Recent studies of nationally representative samples of Head Start and Early Head Start grantees report annual teacher turnover rates of 17 and 15 percent, respectively (Alamillo et al. 2018; Vogel et al. 2015). HSIF grantees cite low compensation, difficult work, an aging workforce, and challenging student behavior as key reasons for staff turnover in their programs. In response to needs identified by Head Start agency leaders, the HSIF funded efforts to increase teacher recruitment and retention. This chapter details those efforts and describes teachers' education and credentials at the end of 2018.

Teacher recruitment

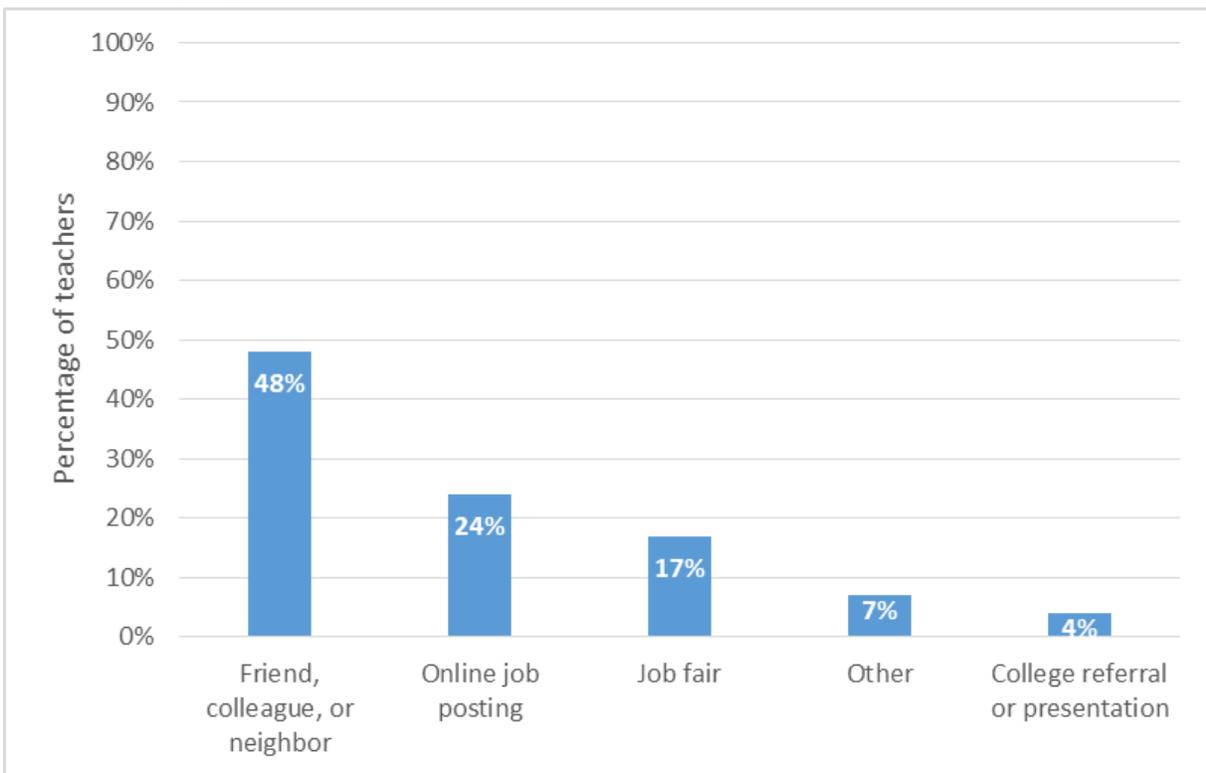
In 2016, HSIF funded EarlyWorks, a consulting firm, to develop strategies for recruiting qualified teachers to work in Detroit-based Head Start programs. As a first step, EarlyWorks consulted with stakeholders such as teachers, early education students, institutions of higher education, Head Start program leaders, and human resource managers to better understand the challenge of recruiting Head Start teachers in Detroit and to identify new recruiting strategies. After publishing a report on the findings in 2016, EarlyWorks launched a “Detroit Head Start Talent” campaign to fill open positions and to bring qualified teachers into the field (EarlyWorks 2016). This talent campaign aimed to coordinate teacher recruitment efforts across the four Detroit Head Start agencies and make it easier for job seekers to identify and apply for Head Start opportunities.

As noted in Chapter 3, EarlyWorks launched a social media campaign on behalf of the HSIF to brand Detroit Head Start and increase awareness of it among Detroit residents. For the talent campaign, EarlyWorks created a teacher recruitment section on the DetroitHeadStart.com website to advertise and recruit applicants for open positions across the four agencies. The “work with us” tab of the website offers a rich set of resources about Head Start careers. In addition to job postings for the Detroit Head Start agencies and job fair listings, the website includes testimonials from current Head Start teachers, a “how to” guide for job seekers who seek to enter the field, information about “What Makes a Great Head Start Educator,” and a set of frequently asked questions. The website also allows interested jobseekers to schedule a Head Start classroom visit, join a Head Start community on Facebook, and take a survey.

In addition to the website, EarlyWorks organized and advertised a series of Head Start job fairs in Detroit, on behalf of the HSIF. The job fairs, held in both the program year and summer, brought together local partners, in addition to the Head Start programs. According to EarlyWorks, that the first job fair identified 54 qualified applicants. These jobs fairs attracted more job seekers than individual agencies could attract on their own and allowed them to apply for positions at several agencies on the same day.

HSIF grantees recruited teachers through word of mouth, job postings, job fairs, and outreach to community colleges. In their interviews, four directors reported conducting presentations to community college students about the early childhood field to attract students to Head Start job opportunities. According to the teacher survey, nearly half of Head Start staff heard about their position from a friend, colleague, or neighbor; almost a quarter saw an online advertisement, on websites such as Indeed.com or ZipRecruiter.com; and 17 percent learned of the position at a job fair (Figure 3.1). Others reported seeing posted signs or learning about the positions while volunteering at the program.

Figure 3.1. How current teachers and assistant teachers learned about teaching positions at Head Start programs



Source: HSIF teacher survey conducted October 2018–January 2019.

Note: The sample size is 270. Statistics are weighted to represent all teachers and assistant teachers involved in HSIF-funded activities.

Head Start agencies recruited and trained Head Start parents and community members to become teachers. On the teacher survey, 51 percent of teachers and 42 percent of assistant teachers reported being current or former Head Start parents. According to the survey, all of the HSIF grantees reported employing at least one former or current Head Start parent. Four programs used HSIF funds to create training programs for Head Start parents and other community members to “grow their own talent” by helping participants earn the Child Development Associate (CDA) credential required to work in a Head Start classroom. Typically, training for the CDA required participants to volunteer in Head Start classrooms and attend training sessions delivered by a consultant hired by the grantee or courses at a local community college.

On the teacher survey, 61 percent of teaching staff with a CDA reported obtaining it since 2014, when HSIF began. Each of the grantees that implemented a CDA program reported hiring staff through its CDA credentialing program. At the time of data collection, in fall 2018, HSIF grantee directors noted that they hired at least ten staff members from the pool of graduates from their CDA programs. For example, Wayne Metro hired seven trainees from its Leap to Teach program as assistant teachers (see box).

Teacher retention and turnover

All grantee directors cited teacher turnover as an ongoing challenge. One director said, “We are always hiring. We have hired close to 25 teachers this year alone. We are currently on boarding staff every two weeks.” In addition, according to the teacher survey, 67 percent of teachers think that frequent staff turnover is a challenge for their program. In interviews, program directors said that turnover resulted from a combination of challenging work and low compensation. To address these challenges, grantees designed innovative programming to retain teachers and reduce turnover. To promote teacher well-being, some grantees used HSIF funds to provide teaching staff with personal and financial wellness programs.



Wayne Metro’s Head Start Leap to Teach program

Wayne Metro developed Leap to Teach to fill assistant teacher vacancies by “growing their own” talent. Leap to Teach supported a cohort of “teacher apprentices” in obtaining CDAs over a six-month period. During this period, apprentices completed 480 volunteer hours by assisting in the Head Start classroom four days a week. They also attended CDA classes two days per week at Wayne County Community College or Baker College. Wayne Metro paired each apprentice with a “mentor-teacher,” selected based on HighScope curriculum certification and Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) scores, to provide coaching in the classroom. Apprentices and mentor-teachers received a stipend to support their participation.

The first cohort of apprentices, launched in 2017, included 10 former and current Head Start parents and 2 other community members. Nine apprentices completed the coursework and classroom hours required to obtain the CDA, and Wayne Metro hired seven of them as assistant teachers.

Five grantees used HSIF funds to offer personal wellness activities to teaching staff.

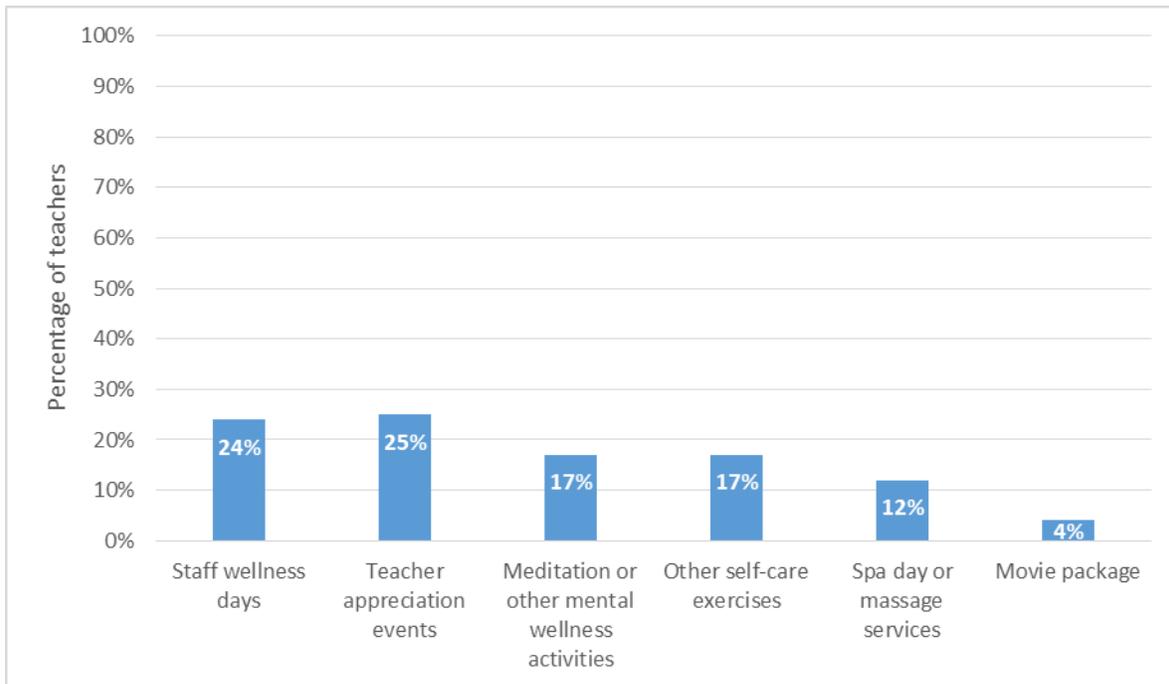
The teacher survey showed that 39 percent of teaching staff across all grantees participated in personal wellness activities, such as staff wellness days, teacher appreciation events, meditation, and other self-care activities (Figure 3.2; see box). Survey responses demonstrated that 78 percent of teachers felt the personal wellness activities were helpful to their overall sense of well-being. This survey finding was echoed in a focus group, where one teacher said the wellness events were a “good time to get together and de-stress. It was something to look forward to.”



Personal wellness activities

Center directors at Starfish Western Wayne designed staff wellness activities tailored to the needs and interests of their teachers. Activities included a self-care and wellness conference, a family picnic, yoga, meditation, cardio drumming, painting, visiting an arcade, attending an interactive play, and other outings.

Figure 3.2. Teacher participation in personal wellness activities



Source: HSIF teacher survey conducted October 2018–January 2019.

Note: The sample size ranged from 116 to 128. Statistics are weighted to represent all teachers and assistant teachers involved in HSIF-funded activities.

Three grantees used HSIF funds to provide financial wellness supports for teachers.

Teacher survey data showed about one-third of all teachers and assistant teachers participated in financial wellness activities. For example, the grantees offered financial management, financial coaching or counseling, or matched savings programs (Figure 3.3). These activities included seminars for teachers on budgeting, improving credit scores, managing debt, and planning for retirement. Among the teachers who

participated, close to two-thirds reported that the activities helped them manage money or meet financial goals (see box). One grantee, Wayne Metro, offered teachers a matched savings program, in which teachers agreed to save \$30 per month for 10 months. The program matched the \$300, yielding a total of \$600 at the end of the savings period. One teacher explained how the matched savings program “encourages you to save [...and] makes you realize how rewarding it is to save.”

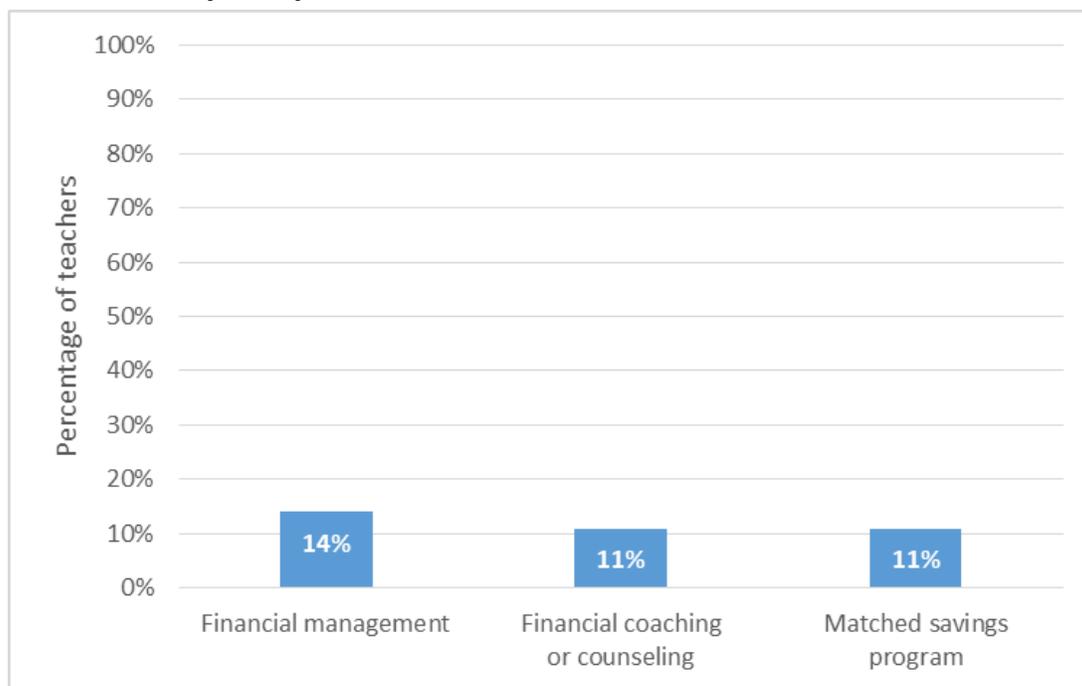


Financial wellness activities

“It makes you look at your finances differently, or just look at them in general... It makes you more accountable with your money... While it was a little hard to talk to a stranger about money at first, [I was able to] learn more about credit.”

—Focus group participant

Figure 3.3. Teacher participation in financial wellness activities

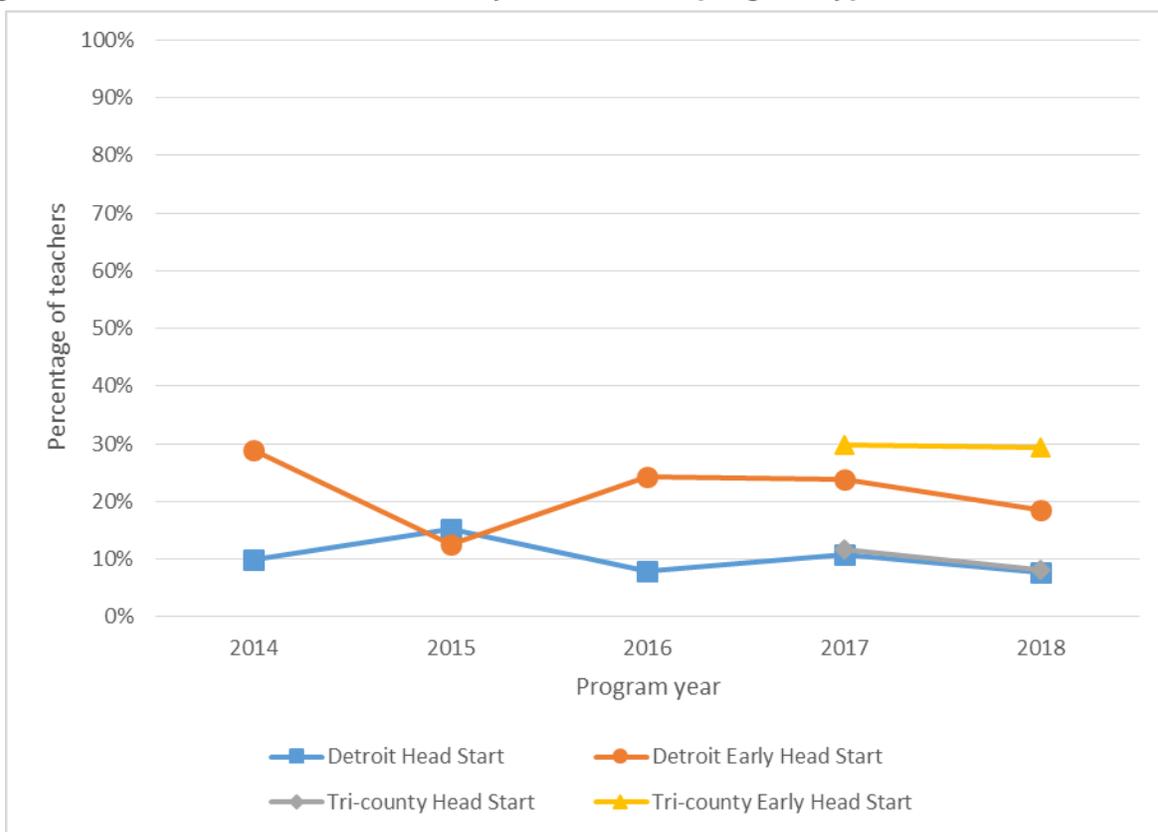


Source: HSIF teacher survey conducted October 2018–January 2019.

Note: The sample size ranged from 41 to 46. Statistics are weighted to represent all teachers and assistant teachers involved in HSIF-funded activities.

Annual turnover of Head Start teachers at HSIF grantees was lower than the national average, but turnover among Early Head Start teachers was higher. The nationally representative Head Start Family and Child Experiences Survey 2014 found an average teacher turnover rate of 17 percent (Alamillo et al. 2018). In contrast, based on PIR data, 2018 Head Start teacher turnover was about 8 percent in both Detroit and tri-county grantees (Figure 3.4). A survey of a nationally representative sample of Early Head Start programs found an annual teacher turnover rate of 15 percent (Vogel et al. 2015). Annual turnover among Early Head Start teachers in 2018 was 19 percent for Detroit grantees and 29 percent for tri-county grantees. According to one grantee director, high teacher turnover and subsequent teacher vacancies prevented the program from opening seven Early Head Start classrooms, negatively affecting enrollment.

Figure 3.4. Annual teacher turnover, by location and program type



Source: 2014–2018 PIR, an annual report of grantee-level data.

Note: Includes reports from all nine Head Start grantees during the years in which they received HSIF funding. In 2014, Head Start data were only available for three of the four grantees. In 2014, Early Head Start data were only available for two of the four grantees.

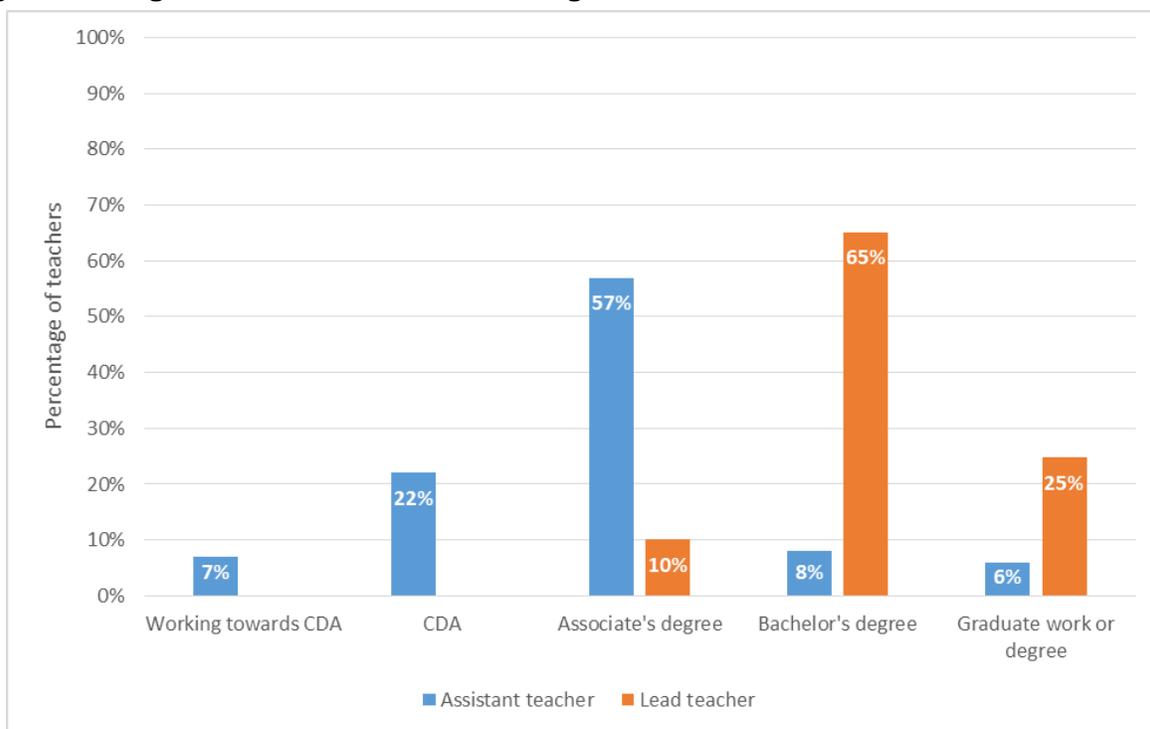
Teacher credentials

Teacher education and experience are positively associated with classroom quality (Moiduddin et al. 2012). The Head Start Program Performance Standards (HSPPS) require that Head Start teachers have at least an associate’s degree in child development, an associate’s degree in early childhood education, or equivalent coursework (Administration for Children and Families 2016).

In addition, at least 50 percent of Head Start teachers nationwide must have at least a bachelor’s degree. The performance standards also indicate that Head Start assistant teachers must have at least a CDA credential, be enrolled in a two- or four-year degree program, or complete a CDA credential program within two years of hire. Early Head Start teachers must have at least a CDA credential and training or equivalent coursework in early childhood development with a focus on infant and toddler development. The rest of this section describes the credentials of teachers and assistant teachers working in HSIF grantees.

HSIF Head Start teachers and assistant teachers had levels of education that met or exceeded Head Start requirements. According to the survey data, 90 percent of Head Start teachers had at least a bachelor’s degree (Figure 3.5). This finding is higher than a nationally representative study of Head Start programs, which found that 76 percent of Head Start preschool teachers had at least a bachelor’s degree (Alamillo et al. 2018). More than 70 percent of assistant teachers had at least an associate’s degree, and 22 percent had a CDA credential. An additional 7 percent of the assistant teachers were pursuing their CDA at the time of survey administration. Although differences were small, a larger proportion of teachers from Detroit grantees had at least some graduate work, compared to teachers from Tri-County grantees (not shown). In addition, many Head Start teachers had prior teaching experience. More than 40 percent of the teaching staff reported working at another Head Start program before working at their current location. Teachers had worked an average of 5.5 years at their current program.

Figure 3.5. Highest level of education among Head Start lead and assistant teachers

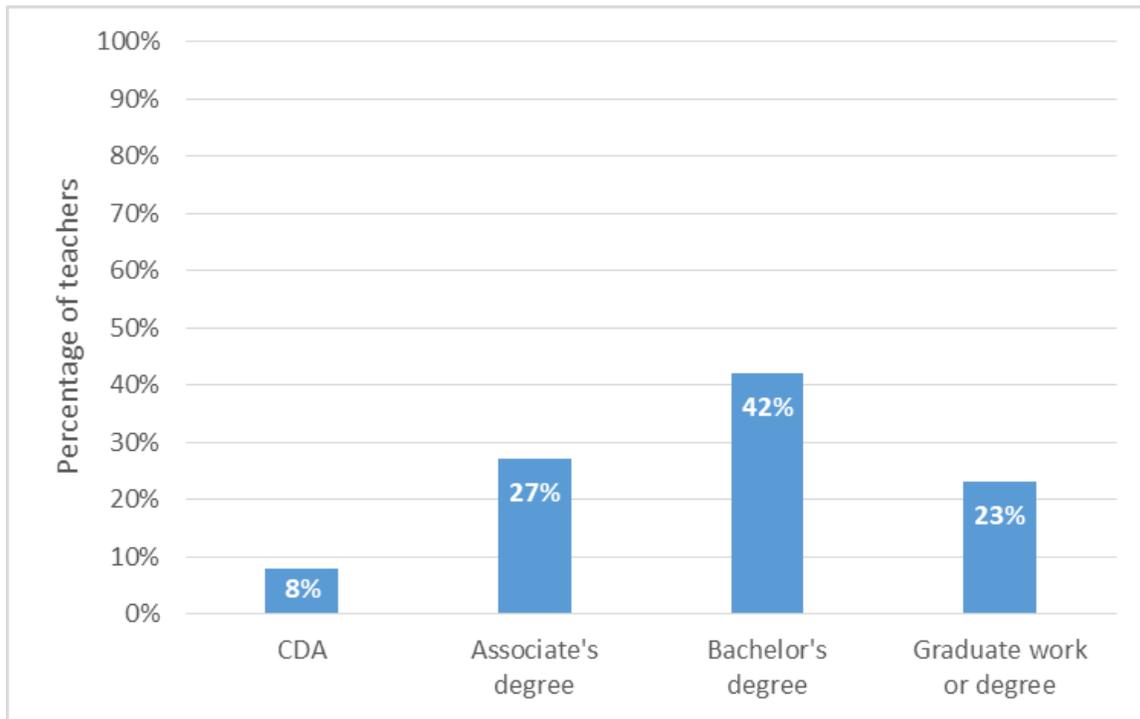


Source: HSIF teacher survey conducted October 2018–January 2019.

Note: The sample size ranged from 100 to 109. Statistics are weighted to represent all teachers and assistant teachers involved in HSIF-funded activities.

Early Head Start teachers also met or exceeded the credential requirements. Sixty-five percent of Early Head Start teachers had at least a bachelor’s degree, and 27 percent had an associate’s degree (Figure 3.6). In total, 92 percent of the surveyed staff had obtained their associate’s degree or higher and 8 percent obtained their CDA (Figure 3.6). These findings are higher than those in a study of a nationally representative sample of Early Head Start programs. That study found that 85 percent of Early Head Start teachers had at least an associate’s degree (Vogel et al. 2015). Forty-four percent of Early Head Start teachers reported working in a Head Start program prior to their current position and on average worked at their current employer for about four years.

Figure 3.6. Highest level of education among Early Head Start teachers



Source: HSIF teacher survey conducted October 2018–January 2019.

Note: The sample size is 62. Statistics are weighted to represent all teachers and assistant teachers involved in HSIF-funded activities.

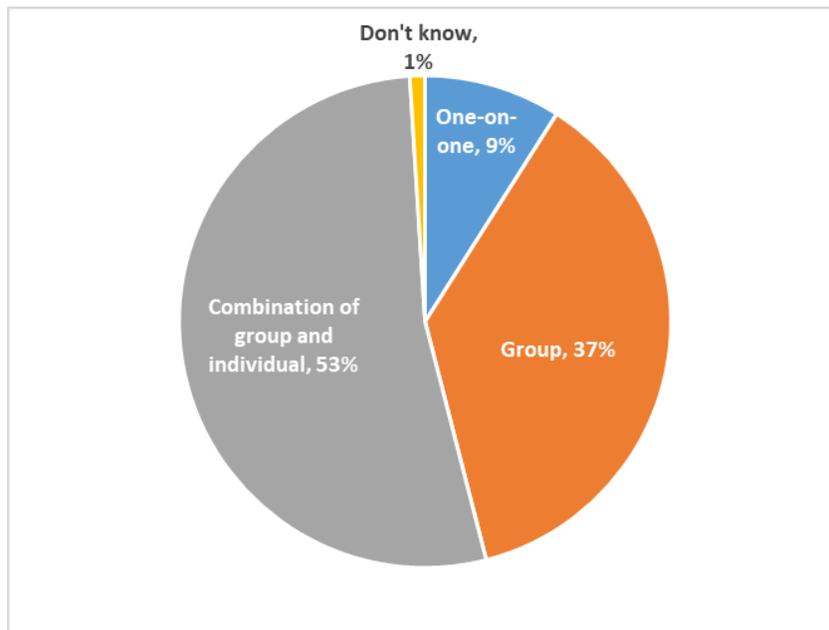
4. TEACHER SUPERVISION AND SATISFACTION WITH THE WORK ENVIRONMENT

Support from supervisors is essential to help teachers deliver quality early education services in the classroom and support a positive work environment. Head Start teachers also need training and professional development to ensure that they have the skills and competencies necessary for providing high quality education and care. In addition, teacher job satisfaction is positively associated with classroom quality (Aikens et al. 2010). This chapter describes the supervision and training that HSIF grantees provide to teachers and teacher satisfaction with working in the Head Start agencies.

Supervision

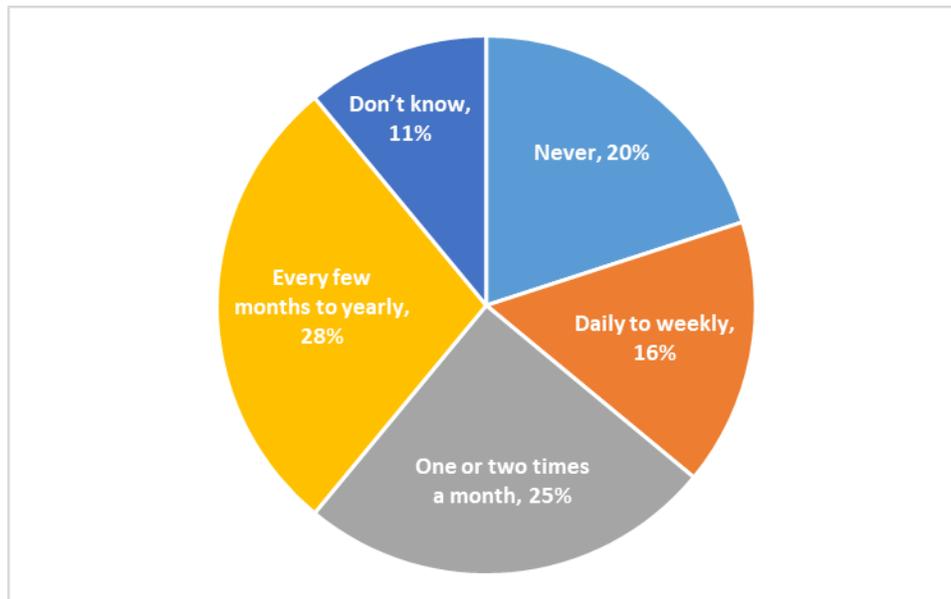
On the survey, nearly all teachers reported having a supervisor. Most teachers reported meeting with their supervisor in a mix of group settings and one-on-one meetings (Figure 4.1). More than 41 percent reported meeting for supervision at least monthly (Figure 4.2). Another 28 percent of the teachers met with their supervisors every few months to annually, but 20 percent reported never having supervision meetings. In interviews, grantee directors shared that some supervisors provided guidance and feedback to teachers in the classroom, but others focused on administrative duties such as monitoring compliance with timesheets. In some programs, because of time constraints and limited staff capacity, supervisors prioritized providing support to teachers most in need and could not provide regular support to all teachers.

Figure 4.1. Percentage of teachers receiving supervision, by meeting type



Source: HSIF teacher survey conducted October 2018–January 2019.

Note: The sample size is 258. Statistics are weighted to represent all teachers and assistant teachers involved in HSIF-funded activities.

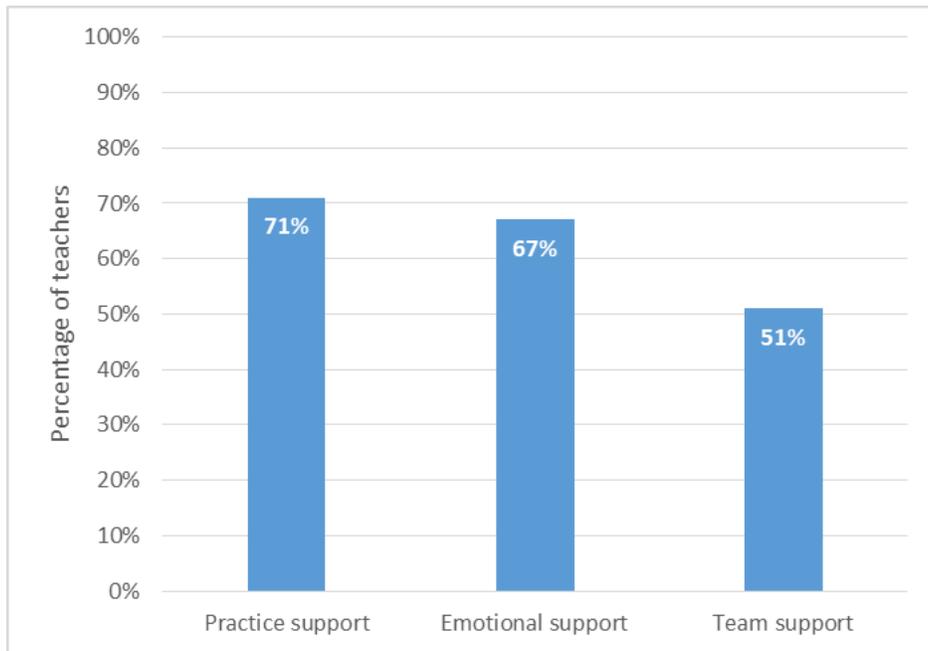
Figure 4.2. Percentage of teachers receiving supervision, by frequency

Source: HSIF teacher survey conducted October 2018–January 2019.

Note: The sample size is 256. Statistics are weighted to represent all teachers and assistant teachers involved in HSIF-funded activities.

Most teachers were satisfied with the supervision they received. More than 70 percent of teachers reported satisfaction with the practice support they receive from their supervisor, who provided content expertise and helped teachers work effectively with children, solve problems, and complete difficult tasks (Figure 4.3). Nearly two-thirds of teachers approved of the emotional support provided by their supervisor. For example, teachers agreed that supervisors provided emotional support in difficult situations, encouraged staff to balance the demands of the job with their personal lives, and cared about them as people. About half of teachers reported satisfaction with their supervisor’s team support, such as encouraging experienced teachers to spend time mentoring new teachers or encouraging teachers to help each other with work problems.

Figure 4.3. Teacher satisfaction with supervision



Source: HSIF teacher survey conducted October 2018–January 2019.

Note: The sample size ranged from 238 to 249. Statistics are weighted to represent all teachers and assistant teachers involved in HSIF-funded activities.

To enhance support for teachers, two grantees used HSIF funds to provide reflective supervision. Reflective supervision is a relationship-based approach to supporting teachers that involves collaboration and reflection on the teacher’s experiences, thoughts, and feelings about her work with children in the classroom (Zero to Three 2016). The Guidance Center and Starfish Detroit implemented reflective supervision to enhance teachers’ learning and support their emotional well-being.

For example, in 2017, the Guidance Center implemented its Circle of Care initiative to support teachers in classrooms with large numbers of children with Individual Education Programs (IEPs) or challenging behaviors. Through this initiative, an infant mental health therapist provided two hours per week of reflective supervision to each individual teacher as well as two hours of monthly group reflective supervision. The infant mental health therapist observed teachers in the classroom and then reflected with teachers about the observations. Often, the therapist worked with teachers to explore the underlying reasons behind children’s behavior and identify strategies teachers could



Teachers’ experiences with Circle of Care

“It is a stress reliever; it’s an opportunity to let stresses out and laugh about scenarios.”

“I learned that if you are not mentally ready to deal with these children, [it affects] how you present yourself to the children.”

“[The counselor] taught me about how to [take time to] breathe, especially when putting out fires.”

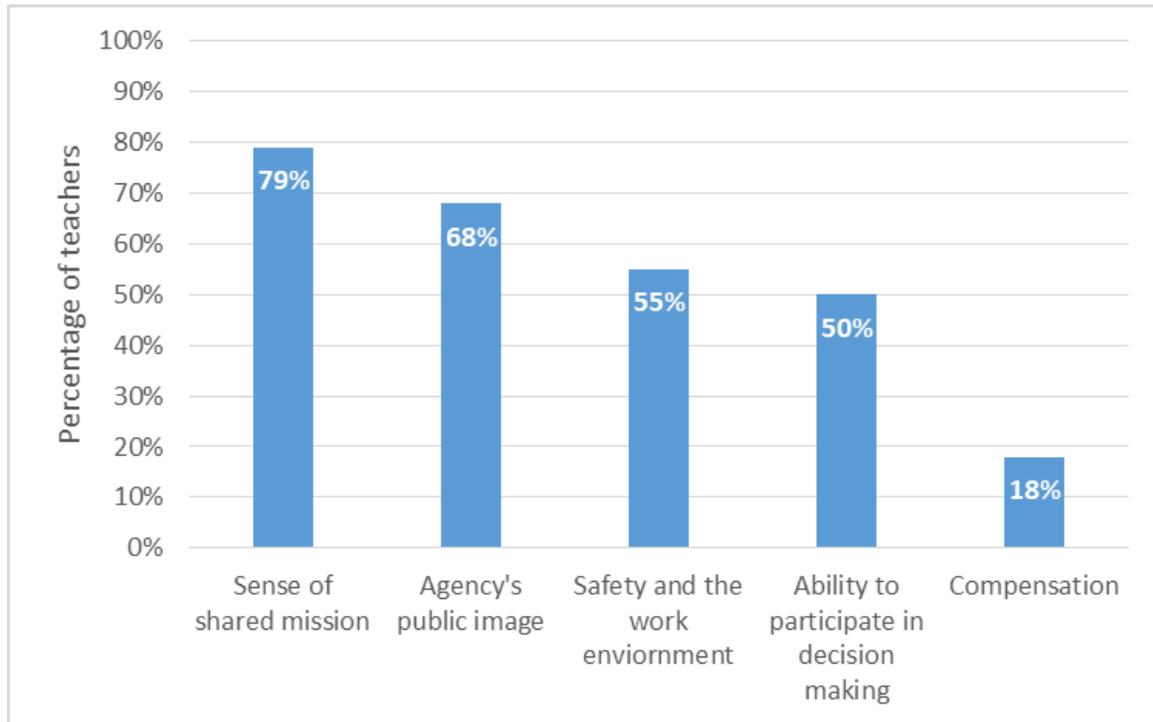
—Focus group participants

use to improve their interactions with children. According to focus group participants, the mental health therapist offered practical strategies in a nonthreatening way, and support was tailored to the unique needs of each classroom. Fourteen teachers participated in the first year, and six additional teachers participated in the second year.

Satisfaction with the work environment

Teachers surveyed reported a strong sense of a shared mission and pride in their Head Start agency’s public image. For example, 79 percent of teachers indicated that their work aligns with the Head Start agency’s mission, and they feel good about the agency’s work with children and families (Figure 4.4). Almost 70 percent of teachers felt pride in their agency’s public image and relationships with other community resource providers. These positive views have been associated with staff retention in child welfare organizations (Dickenson and Painter 2009). Slightly more than half of the teachers were satisfied with the physical work environment and the agency’s commitment to their personal safety. Half of teachers felt they were able to participate in agency decisions, such as having input into policies that govern their work and feeling that their professional opinions were respected. Only 18 percent of the teachers expressed satisfaction with their compensation, taking into account their responsibilities, education, and training.

Figure 4.4. Teacher satisfaction with the Head Start agency



Source: HSIF teacher survey conducted October 2018–January 2019.

Note: The sample size ranged from 242 to 264. Statistics are weighted to represent all teachers and assistant teachers involved in HSIF-funded activities.

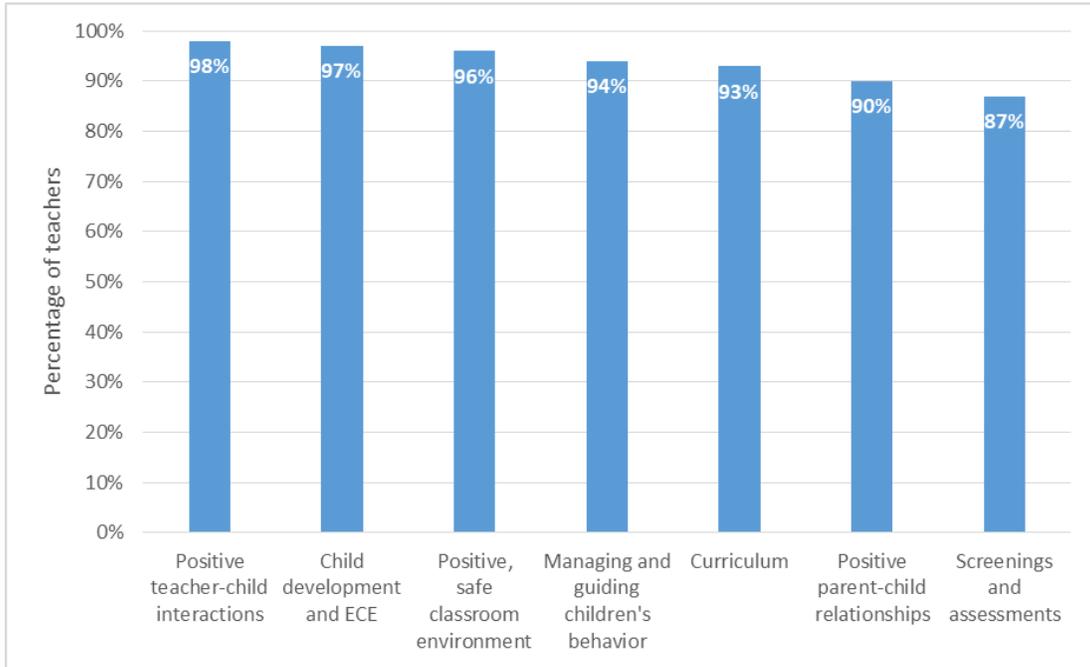
5. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND SUPPORTS FOR CLASSROOM QUALITY

The quality of ECE provided to young children supports positive developmental outcomes (Burchinal 2018; National Institute of Child Health and Development 2000). The Office of Head Start places a strong emphasis on classroom quality improvement, requiring programs to provide professional development to staff and use data for ongoing quality improvement. The Head Start Program Performance Standards (HSPPS) emphasize the provision of professional development that is tailored to teachers' specific needs, such as coaching (Administration for Children and Families 2016). This chapter describes the training and coaching that HSIF grantees provided to teachers and the HSIF-funded technology upgrades used to support classroom quality.

Training

Almost all grantees used HSIF funds to provide teacher training. Especially during the first two grant years, three of the four Detroit grantees used HSIF grant funds to train teachers on using the HighScope curriculum and HighScope's Program Quality Assessment tool (HighScope Educational Research Foundation 2019). Survey data showed nearly all teachers participated in training in the past year. At least 90 percent of teachers received training on teacher-child interactions, child development, the classroom environment, behavior management, curriculum, and parent-child relationships (Figure 5.1). Another 87 percent participated in training on conducting and using information from screenings and assessments. Nearly three-quarters of teachers expressed that the trainings from the past year were "very helpful" or "extremely helpful" in guiding their work. However, some teachers experienced challenges with participating in training and managing their workload. More than half of teachers surveyed felt their workload and related pressures hindered their participation in training, and one-third of teachers said the trainings took too much time away from service delivery.

Figure 5.1. Percentage of teachers who reported receiving training in the past year, by topic



Source: HSIF teacher survey conducted October 2018–January 2019.

Note: The sample size ranged from 252 to 261. Statistics are weighted to represent all teachers and assistant teachers involved in HSIF-funded activities.

Two of the four Detroit grantees, New St. Paul and United Children and Family, used HSIF funds to train teachers on the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS-PreK; Pianta et al. 2008). The Office of Head Start uses the CLASS to monitor the quality of Head Start classrooms to determine which grantees must compete for their grants under the Head Start Designation Renewal System (Administration for Children and Families 2016). During the first two grant years, two Detroit grantees used HSIF funds to train teachers on the CLASS domains (emotional support, classroom organization, and instructional support) and how each domain is measured. As motivation, one grantee provided incentives to teachers whose classroom scored highest on the CLASS. At another program, two education specialists became certified CLASS observers.



HSIF-funded training

“Quality trainings were the biggest benefit of the fund. [They] helped support our mission and goals.”

—Grantee director

Three grantees used HSIF funds to train program staff about trauma using the TraumaSmart® curriculum. To educate adults about trauma and how it can affect children’s behavior, Macomb Community Action Agency, OLHSA, and Starfish Western Wayne provided TraumaSmart training to all staff, including teachers (Crittenton Children’s Center 2007; Holmes et al. 2015). The three grantees provided teachers and all staff 20 hours of TraumaSmart training. The HSIF also funded opportunities for mental health therapists from

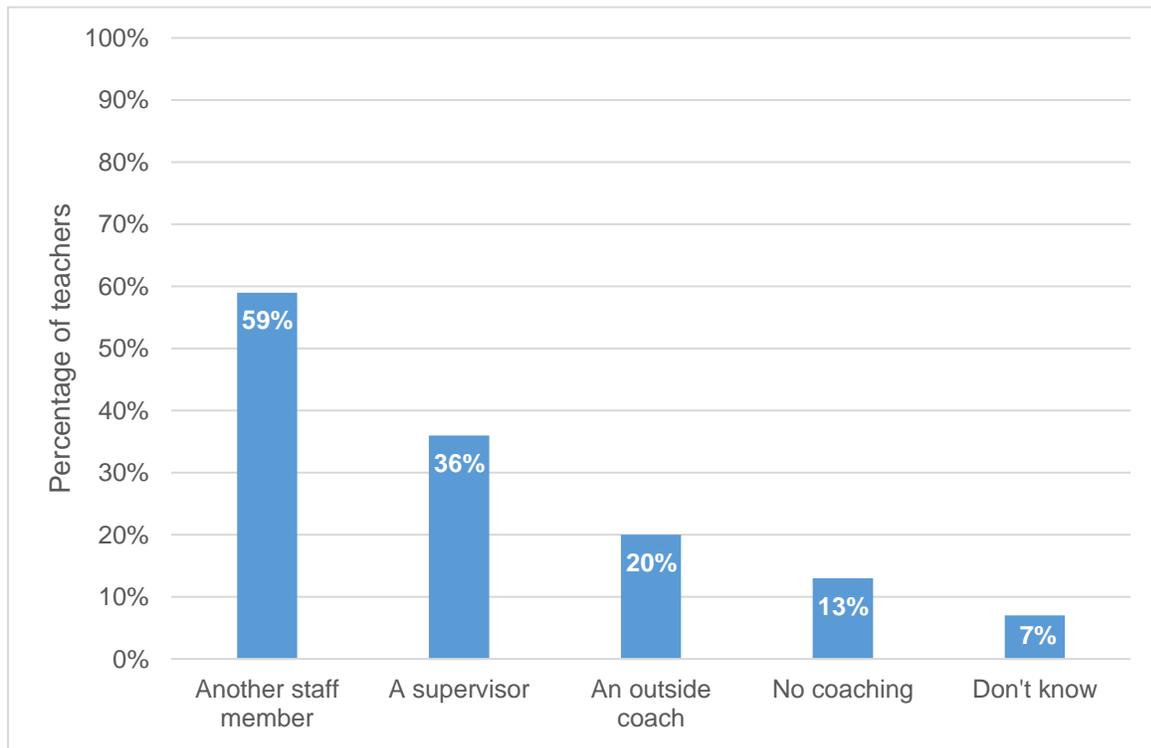
these agencies to become trained experts in the curriculum in order to provide TraumaSmart training to other staff. The training equipped teachers to identify children experiencing trauma and, as one director noted, “In some cases, the training helped teachers acknowledge their own trauma. Shortly after training staff, the three programs offered TraumaSmart training for parents, called Smart Connections (see Chapter 6 for more details).

According to grantee directors, TraumaSmart supported a cultural shift in their programs toward understanding and responding to children’s challenging behaviors in the context of trauma. As teachers gained a more complete understanding of trauma and the lived experiences of enrolled children, they responded more compassionately to children in the classroom. One grantee director described that they still see behavior problems and “teachers fill in the same number of behavior reports, [but] the reports now are seen through a trauma lens [that] focuses on a child’s strengths as opposed to his or her deficits.”

Coaching

On the teacher survey, 80 percent of teachers reported receiving coaching to support their work with children in the classroom. Thirty six percent received coaching from a supervisor, 59 percent from another staff member, and 20 percent from a coach outside of the organization (Figure 5.2). Of those who received coaching, nearly 70 percent met with the coach at least monthly, and 83 percent were observed in the classroom by a coach or supervisor over the past year. Four grantees used HSIF funds to hire outside coaches to support implementation of the classroom curriculum and provide feedback to teachers. One of these grantees, Starfish Detroit, provided intensive coaching for 27 classrooms. Coaches visited these classrooms at least twice per month to provide coaching and ongoing support. The coaches worked one on one with the teaching staff to establish goals and then worked to help teachers achieve those goals. In interviews, grantee directors said that the additional coaching supports were helpful for providing feedback, training, and other support to teachers.

Figure 5.2. Source of coaching



Source: HSIF teacher survey conducted October 2018–January 2019.

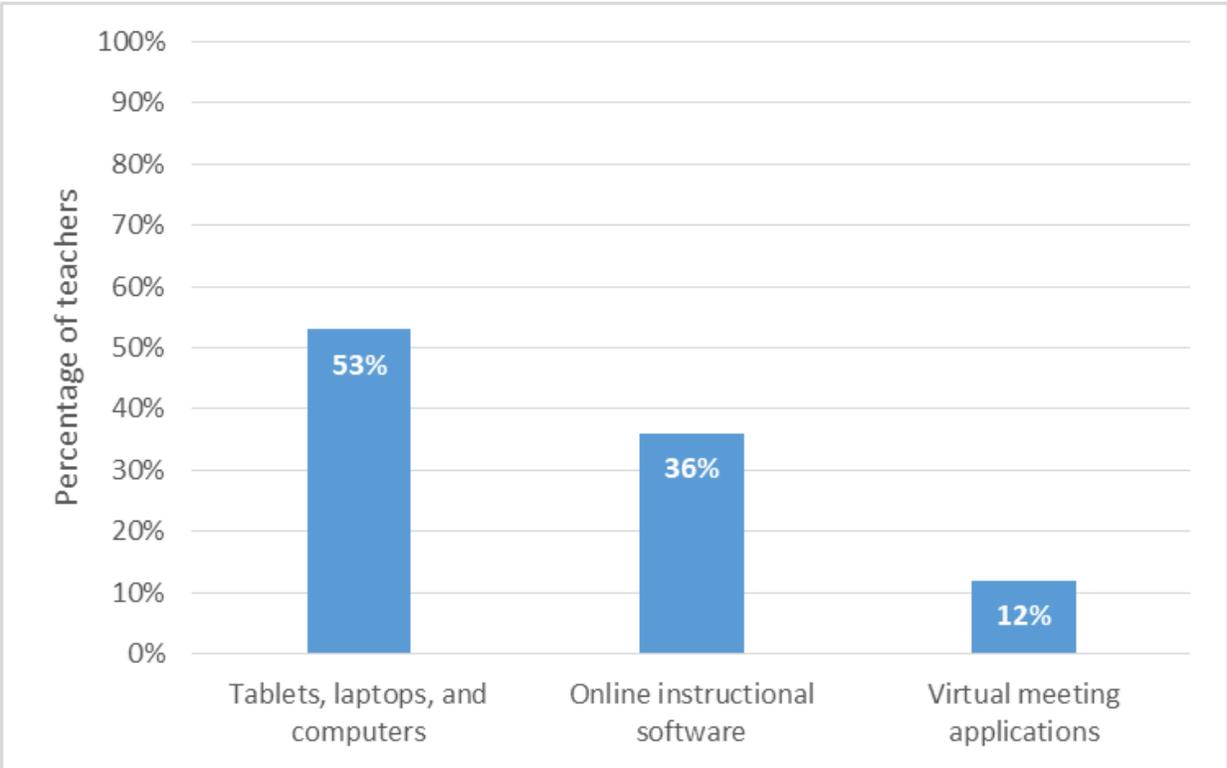
Note: The sample size is 269. Because the question asked respondents to check all that apply, responses add to more than 100 percent. Statistics are weighted to represent all teachers and assistant teachers involved in HSIF-funded activities.

Technology

Five grantees used HSIF funds to upgrade their technology to support classroom quality.

For example, four grantees purchased new technology to reduce the paperwork burden on teachers, increase the quality of data collected, facilitate CDA coursework and other professional development activities, and increase children’s access to technology. A fifth grantee, Matrix Human Services, used HSIF funds to create an online professional development platform in which staff could track their participation in training and other professional development activities. According to the teacher survey, 57 percent of teachers used new technology in the two years, including tablets and laptops, online instructional software, and virtual meeting applications (Figure 5.3). The tablets and laptops in particular allowed educational specialists, supervisors, and coaches to take quick notes and record observations for later sessions with teacher to provide feedback. More than 60 percent of teachers that used the new technology reported that it was “very helpful” or “extremely helpful” in doing their work. Grantee directors identified two challenges with upgrading their technology. First, in some instances, teachers needed more training than originally planned to use the technology efficiently. Second, connectivity problems with regard to tablets and computers in some program locations made access to the Internet difficult.

Figure 5.3. Percentage of teachers who reported using new technology, by type



Source: HSIF teacher survey conducted October 2018–January 2019.

Note: The sample size is 168. Statistics are weighted to represent all teachers and assistant teachers involved in HSIF-funded activities.

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6. ENCOURAGING PARENT ENGAGEMENT

Recognizing that parents are their children's first teachers, the HSPPS require programs to develop strategies for engaging parents in children's learning, collaborate with them to identify strengths and needs, and provide opportunities to be involved in program activities (Administration for Children and Families 2016). All HSIF grantees focused on parent and family engagement. On the survey, 86 percent of teachers reported receiving training in the past year on parent and family engagement, and 55 percent said they used new parent engagement strategies in the past two years. This chapter describes HSIF-funded activities implemented by six grantees to promote parent and family engagement.

Three grantees offered parent training on trauma using the Smart Connections curriculum, the parent training component of TraumaSmart (Crittenton Children's Center, 2007; Holmes et al 2015). As a complement to staff training (described in Chapter 5), Macomb Community Action Agency, Starfish Western Wayne, and OLHSA provided training on Smart Connections to educate parents about trauma and trauma-informed care. These workshops aimed to teach skills for addressing trauma at home and to connect and align teacher strategies used in the classroom with what is happening at home. Macomb offered nine sessions over three months and made attendance a requirement for parent members of the Head Start Policy Council, the parent governing body for Head Start grantees. OLHSA offered four different parent groups that met weekly for six weeks, and Starfish Western Wayne held monthly meetings with parents in several locations. Across the three agencies, the Smart Connections sessions were led by coaches, a family support worker, and the Assistant Director of Mental Health and Disabilities. According to grantee directors' interviews, the attendance at the workshops sessions varied across the different locations. Leadership attributed the variation to the different times the parent workshops were offered. Some of the groups were quite dynamic, and parents regularly attended the majority of the sessions; other groups were less consistent in terms of parent participation. During interviews, grantee directors said they were actively soliciting feedback from parents about scheduling to facilitate their participation.

Starfish Detroit implemented ParentCorps, a parent engagement program developed by researchers at New York University (NYU). Starfish Detroit trained teachers on the ParentCorps model (Brotman et al. 2016) and then engaged parents through weekly sessions. Teacher training in the initial phase of implementation focused on evidence-based practices for strengthening home-school connections and promoting social, emotional, and behavioral regulation skills. Through the training, Starfish Detroit also aimed to motivate program staff to engage parents. During the 2017–2018 program year, Starfish Detroit piloted the parenting training component of ParentCorps. Three staff received training at NYU and then implemented the parent training in weekly, two-hour sessions over 14 weeks that took place at Focus Hope, a Starfish Detroit delegate.

United Children and Family implemented a father engagement initiative to provide fathers with extra support to connect with their children. Some fathers had difficulty accessing their children because of custody issues, and some were reconnecting with their children after reentering the community following incarceration. The program's male

engagement specialist, a former Head Start parent, worked intensively with a cohort of 10 fathers. He met individually with the fathers to identify goals and establish a plan to improve their careers, financial situations, and relationships with family members. The specialist's goal was to speak with fathers to address factors that negatively affected their life, family, and community. At the time of the program director interview, the specialist was actively working with four fathers to support their engagement with their children and their communities. The program aimed to work with more fathers because the need for these services in the community was high, but they found that the time required to build trust with them limited the number of fathers the program could serve.

New St. Paul implemented ReadyRosie, a web-based parenting training program delivered through a smart phone application. After consultation with parents, New St. Paul selected ReadyRosie, an evidence-informed parenting curriculum that fit well with parents' busy schedules (ReadyRosie 2019). The curriculum includes a library of brief videos in English and Spanish and mobile technology to allow parents to access the curriculum from any location. It also includes interactive workshops for parents. Through the ReadyRosie app, parents could participate in up to six two- to three-minute trainings per week. According to the grantee director, an advantage of ReadyRosie is its accessibility to parents. Initially, supervisory staff had to work with teachers and parents to help them learn and become comfortable with the app. The director said her team "worked with center supervisors to make sure that staff and parents were comfortable [and] could utilize the system." The technology enabled program staff to track parents' use of the app and completion of trainings. To incentivize use, New St. Paul rewarded those parents that completed the most ReadyRosie trainings at a parent banquet.

7. SYSTEM-WIDE SUPPORTS FOR DETROIT GRANTEES

In addition to providing annual grants to Head Start agencies, HSIF made several investments to promote system-wide learning and collaboration. Chapters 2 and 3 describe HSIF-funded efforts by EarlyWorks to create a common brand and website for the Detroit Head Start grantees, tools to facilitate family recruitment, and job fairs and other activities to attract qualified candidates for teaching positions at Head Start agencies. This chapter discusses the HSIF learning network, coordination with Detroit Public Schools for children with suspected disabilities or delays, and technical assistance to help Detroit grantees prepare for re-competition for their Head Start grants.

In 2014, HSIF began convening HSIF learning network meetings and invited all grantee directors to attend. From 2014 to 2017, network meetings were held on a monthly basis for two to three hours. HSIF hired an external facilitator to lead the meetings, which included time for grantees to share best practices and discuss challenges they faced as well as time for training and information sharing on topics such as teacher recruitment and retention, parent engagement, and other topics of interest to the directors. In 2018, meetings were held less frequently at the request of the directors, and suspended for a time while Detroit grantees worked on preparing for re-competition of their federal Head Start grants.

During interviews, most grantee directors said they appreciated these meetings as an opportunity to share experiences and learn. One director said the meetings “were a huge benefit to us in that evidence-based programming and best practices were shared.” The Detroit grantees, in particular, valued the time to meet together and share information. Even during the re-competition period, the Detroit grantees decided to continue meeting on a regular basis.

In 2018, HSIF funded an initiative to foster coordination between Detroit grantees and the Detroit Public Schools to facilitate the assessment of children with suspected disabilities or developmental delays. The grant funded the Detroit Public Schools Community District (DPS) to increase the capacity of its Resource Coordinating Team and Parent and Community Engagement Teams to provide developmental assessments and early intervention services to Head Start children and families. Through this grant, HSIF aimed to facilitate getting needed assessments completed more quickly and increase families’ subsequent access to early intervention services following the assessments. Under an interagency agreement between the DPS and the Head Start agencies, DPS is the service provider responsible for delivering early intervention services for Head Start and Early Head Start children in Detroit.

At the time of the interviews, grantee directors reported that they had not yet seen a reduction in the amount of time it took families to receive a formal evaluation or an increase in access to early intervention services. Grantee directors explained that in some cases, DPS staff or families did not attend key meetings despite supports provided by the Head Start agency, which slowed down the process. Moreover, grantees reported that DPS struggled with insufficient resources for addressing families’ needs for early intervention services.

HSIF funded the Policy Equity Group (PEG) to provide technical assistance to Detroit grantees in preparing competitive grant applications to renew their funding. Under the Head Start Designation Renewal System, Head Start agencies that do not meet specific benchmarks for program quality and management must compete for renewal of their grants (Administration for Children and Families 2016). Although the Detroit grantees made substantial process toward stabilizing Head Start services in Detroit, in early 2018 the Office of Head Start notified the agencies that they needed to compete for their 2019 grant renewals.

The PEG team provided a range of supports to Detroit grantees, including group and individual consulting with the Head Start agencies on their grant applications. They conducted two community meetings for the Detroit grantees. The first meeting included the former Director of the Office of Head Start and national and local experts in early childhood facilities, the *Classroom Assessment Scoring System*, and the early childhood workforce. The second meeting was co-hosted by the federal Office of Head Start and included federal and regional Head Start administrators, experts in early childhood facilities and the workforce, and representatives from the Mayor's office, the Detroit Public School Community District and the Detroit Department of Health. In addition, PEG conducted a Detroit-wide community needs assessment for all four agencies that focused specifically on the data required for the Head Start application. PEG also conducted a HSIF workforce survey to assess Head Start teacher retention rates and salaries, how teachers learned about their jobs, supports teacher received, and the challenges teachers face. Finally, PEG prepared a Head Start briefing for the Detroit Mayor's office on the history of Head Start in Detroit and opportunities for city involvement in the program. During interviews, grantee directors described staff at PEG as knowledgeable and accessible and said they provided a useful sounding board for grantees during the re-competition process.

8. CONCLUSIONS

Funding partners came together in 2013 to launch HSIF, initially to help stabilize Detroit's Head Start program after the City of Detroit relinquished its grant. HSIF provided vital support to four new Detroit grantees as they launched birth-to-five programming across the city. Over the past five years, HSIF has continued supporting grantees as they sought innovative solutions to critical challenges including achieving full enrollment, recruiting and retaining qualified teachers, responding to the needs of children experiencing trauma, and engaging parents in their children's early learning. In 2017, HSIF expanded its reach to include five grantees operating Head Start programs in the tri-county region just outside of Detroit. In many ways, staff, families, and children in those programs face challenges similar to those experienced in Detroit. This chapter summarizes key overarching findings from the HSIF evaluation and suggested next steps as HSIF moves forward into the future.

Early support for core program functions helped to rebuild Head Start programming after the City of Detroit ended its program. HSIF provided vital support to the new Detroit grantees as they began operations in 2014, helping them publicize their services to Detroit parents and recruit qualified teachers to fill new positions. For example, EarlyWorks launched the "Head Start Talent" campaign on behalf of the HSIF, creating a teacher recruitment section on the DetroitHeadStart.com website to recruit applicants for positions across the four agencies and organizing job fairs. The website also enable families to search for Head Start centers in their neighborhoods, learn about the Head Start program, and complete an online application. Over time, Head Start enrollment has steadily increased and staff turnover has stabilized. Moreover, due in part to supports funded by HSIF, Detroit's Head Start workforce exceeds the Office of Head Start's requirements for education and credentials. Additionally, with support from HSIF, both Detroit and tri-county grantees have provided substantial professional development, including training, coaching, and credentialing, to support teachers in their work with children and families.

HSIF funds helped Head Start agencies equip teachers and parents to better respond to children's trauma and support their early learning. Trauma caused by poverty and other adverse childhood experiences affects many children enrolled in Head Start. Because trauma can negatively affect children's health and early learning, HSIF grantees developed a range of strategies to help teachers and parents learn about trauma and how to support children who have experienced trauma. Grantees trained teachers and parents using curricula such as TraumaSmart and its parent education component, Smart Connections. According to grantee directors, TraumaSmart training has supported a cultural shift in their programs toward understanding and responding to children's challenging behaviors in the context of trauma. Another grantee hired a mental health specialist to provide reflective supervision to teachers in classrooms in which high proportions of children had challenging behaviors. An infant mental health therapist observed classrooms and worked with teachers to reflect on teaching practices, explore the underlying reasons behind children's behavior, and identify strategies for improving their interactions with children. Also, to further help parents engage in their children's early learning, one grantee implemented ParentCorps, a parent engagement program developed by researchers at New York

University. Another deployed a parent engagement app called ReadyRosie, and a third worked intensively to re-engage fathers in the lives of their children.

Grantees provided substantial professional development to teachers, but steady turnover limited its effectiveness. During the first two grant years, most Detroit grantees used HSIF funds to provide teacher training on core topics such as curriculum, child assessments, and classroom quality measures. On the teacher survey, almost all teachers reported receiving training on child development and ECE. A high proportion of teachers reported that the training was very or extremely help for guiding their work. However, half of teachers reported that their workload hindered participation in training, and one-third said that training took too much time away from service delivery. In addition to training, 80 percent of teachers reported receiving coaching from a supervisor, other staff member, or outside coach to support their work with children in the classroom. Of those that received coaching, most met with the coach at least monthly. However, according to directors, teacher turnover created challenges for maintaining a highly trained staff because experienced teachers leave and new teachers must be trained. Grantees must invest continuously in training and professional development to continue building the skills of existing teachers and to train a substantial number of new teachers each year.

Meeting funded enrollment targets for Early Head Start remained an ongoing challenge. In part, this challenge reflects difficulties associated with serving a mobile population in which a significant proportion of enrolled families do not stay in the program for the full program year. However, structural problems also made reaching full enrollment difficult. A few programs reported that they lacked adequate facilities to open the planned number of Early Head Start classrooms. Additionally, several reported that high Early Head Start teacher turnover and vacancies prevented programs from keeping infant-toddler classrooms open.

Looking ahead

HSIF continues to support the four Detroit and five tri-county Head Start grantees in 2019. Nearly all grantees have been funded to implement recruitment and retention strategies, including the use of recruitment consultants, teacher recognition programs, new teacher mentoring, and CDA training programs for Head Start parents and community members. Several grantees will use the funds to continue developing promising strategies in the areas of early childhood mental health consultation, trauma-informed approaches, and parent engagement. In response to the 2018 re-competition, Detroit grantees received funds to support professional development and classroom quality. Planned activities include training on the CLASS, support for conducting child assessments, curriculum training, and expanded teacher coaching.

The evaluation's key findings suggest several possible areas of focus as HSIF continues to support grantees' quality improvement efforts and address ongoing challenges with teacher turnover and program enrollment. As described throughout this report, HSIF grantees have implemented and tested a wide range of potential solutions to address various program challenges—from reflective supervision and coaching to improve classroom practice to CDA and apprentice programs to equip parents and community members to work in Head Start programs. HSIF could facilitate opportunities for grantees to share successes and lessons learned

from these experiences with each other and consider rapid cycle testing and further development of promising strategies to build knowledge and capacity for continuous improvement among the grantees. Below, we discuss possible areas of focus and next steps.

Develop and test strategies for increasing enrollment in Early Head Start. The evaluation findings showed that Early Head Start enrollment was well below funded levels in both Detroit and tri-country programs. To some extent, high Early Head Start teacher turnover and vacancies prevented programs from opening Early Head Start classrooms, and lack of suitable classrooms for infants and toddlers have contributed to low enrollment in some programs. HSIF could consider several steps to develop solutions:

- Convene a Learning Collaborative meeting on Early Head Start enrollment to identify key drivers of low enrollment and brainstorm about action steps that HSIF and grantees can take to address the drivers. HSIF could support selected grantees to pilot test the strategies identified, collect data on how well the strategies worked, and report back to the Learning Collaborative lessons learned.
- Consider funding system-wide supports aimed at increasing Early Head Start enrollment, such as an Early Head Start-focused Talent initiative to reduce teacher vacancies, technical assistance and resources to adapt facilities for use as infant-toddler classrooms, or an outreach campaign to recruit and enroll families.

Continue investing in professional development strategies that are intensive and tailored to teachers' specific needs. The HSPPS emphasize the importance of tailored approaches, including a focus on coaching (Administration for Children and Families 2016). Research suggests that the intensity of professional development is important for changing teacher practices (IOM and NRC 2015; Mattera et al. 2013; U.S. Department of Education 2010). Moreover, the individual who delivers the professional development—such as a supervisor, coach, or mentor—may influence teachers' trust in or openness to the professional development process (Lloyd and Modlin 2012). Although the majority of teachers reported meeting with supervisors and receiving coaching, the intensity and content of these interactions varied. Research also suggests that supportive supervision and professional development may support teacher retention (Gernetzke et al. 201, Huang and Cao 2010, and Wells 2015). Possible next steps include:

- Continue funding grantees to hire coaches who can develop trusting relationships with teachers and support them to improve their work with children in the classroom. Invite grantees using coaching strategies to share their experiences and lessons learned during a Learning Collaborative meeting so that others can learn from their experiences.
- Consider expanding the use of reflective supervision, especially for teachers working with children with challenging behaviors. For example, HSIF could invite grantees using reflective supervision to share their experience in the Learning Collaborative, invite a reflective supervision practitioner to lead workshop for grantee leaders, or fund training and coaching on reflective supervision for supervisory staff at other grantees.

Continue developing and refining teacher recruitment strategies. The evaluation findings suggest that teacher recruitment continues to be a major challenge, particularly in Early Head Start. Grantee directors reported that few college-educated individuals with ECE degrees are entering the field in Detroit, making the demand for candidates high. Potential next steps include:

- Continue developing and refining CDA programs for current Head Start parents and community members interested in becoming Head Start assistant teachers and Early Head Start teachers. Four grantees used this strategy in 2018 and five plan to implement a CDA program in 2019 as strategy for bringing qualified community members into the Head Start workforce. HSIF could support these efforts by convening a Learning Community meeting to share CDA program models and lessons learned from these efforts. HSIF could support grantees to “manualized,” or document implementation procedures to facilitate replication of the most promising models. HSIF could also consider support a HSIF-wide effort to develop a CDA “training academy” for parents and community members, with internships or apprenticeships with participating Head Start agencies.
- Building on the Talent Campaign developed by EarlyWorks to coordinate teacher recruitment efforts across HSIF grantees. In 2019, three grantees are hiring consultants to support recruiting efforts and generate interest in a teaching career in Head Start. HSIF could convene these grantees, along with EarlyWorks, to discuss common strategies, challenges, and lessons learned from these efforts. HSIF could also consider funding rapid cycles tests of the most promising strategies to help refine the strategies and identify the strategies that are most effective.

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Appendix A. Data and Methods

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This appendix summarizes the data sources and data collection and analysis methods the evaluation team used for this report.

Data sources and collection methods

In addition to reviewing HSIF grant proposals and other program documents, the researchers used four main data sources.

Teacher survey. From October 2018 through January 2019, the evaluation team conducted a web-based survey of a representative sample of teachers and assistant teachers in all 10 HSIF grantees. The survey included questions about teacher characteristics; receipt of supervision, training, and other HSIF-funded supports; and experiences working in the Head Start agencies. Researchers selected a sample of 396 teachers for the survey and received 279 responses, for a response rate of 71 percent. Response rates ranged from 21 to 100 percent across grantees, and seven grantees met our target response rate of 75 percent or higher.

At the time of the survey, grantees reported operating from 2 to 27 centers engaged in HSIF-funded activities. To maximize efficiency and reduce burden on teachers, statisticians sampled six centers from grantees that had more than six centers. For five grantees that reported six or fewer centers, all of the centers and teachers were included in the survey and there was no need for sampling. For the five grantees with more than six centers, statisticians selected a systematic sample² of the centers. To create the sample frame, the evaluation team asked all grantees to provide a list of all centers engaged in activities funded by HSIF, along with a count of teachers and assistant teachers in each center and an indicator for whether the center provided Early Head Start services. The researchers selected the sample of centers to be representative of all the grantee's centers with respect to whether the center offered Early Head Start or not and to center size (the total number of teachers). After selecting the center sample, the evaluation team worked closely with grantee directors to obtain a list of names and email addresses for all teachers and assistant teachers in these centers.

An email invitation to participate in the survey was sent to each sampled teacher, along with a personalized hyperlink to the survey. The evaluation team sent out these invitations on a rolling basis in October and November 2018 as the evaluation team finalized the teacher sample for each grantee. The team also sent email reminders at regular intervals to teachers who had not completed the survey, and the team enlisted grantee and center directors to encourage teachers to complete it. Table A.1 presents the demographic characteristics of the survey respondents.

² This is the sampling method where we select every n^{th} case after a random start.

Table A.1. Staff characteristics of Head Start and Early Head Start teachers and assistant teachers who responded to the survey

Characteristic	Percentage of teachers
Job title	
Teacher	60
Assistant teacher	40
Type of program	
Early Head Start: Infant and toddler (children birth to age 3)	23
Head Start: Preschool (children age 3 to kindergarten entry)	77
Location	
Detroit programs	49
Tri-county programs	51
Head Start parent status	
Current Head Start parent	4
Former Head Start parent	34
Neither current nor former Head Start parent	62
Gender	
Female	98
Male	1
Age	
19–29 years old	17
30–39 years old	23
40–49 years old	25
50–59 years old	27
60+ years old	8
Teachers receiving government assistance ^a	17
Race and ethnicity	
American Indian or Alaska Native	1
Asian	4
Black or African American	47
White	29
Hispanic	5
Middle Eastern	3
Didn't report or don't know	11

Note: Sample size is 276 survey respondents.

^aGovernment assistance includes financial or in-kind assistance for disabilities, housing assistance, free/reduced-price lunch for children, or food stamps.

Interviews with grantee directors. In November 2018, two members of the evaluation team conducted 10 90-minute, in-person interviews each grantee director. In all but one interview, other key staff who oversaw HSIF-funded activities also participated in the interview at the invitation of the director. A total of 10 grantee directors and 13 other key staff participated in the interviews.

Focus groups with teachers and other direct staff. In November 2018, two members of the evaluation team conducted three one-hour focus groups with 28 teaching staff and others directly providing services to children and families at three HSIF grantees. The evaluation team selected

focus group participants to discuss experiences and opinions from staff implementing a diverse set of HSIF-funded activities. One focus group discussed financial wellness supports offered to teachers as well as their experiences with a CDA credentialing program. A second focus group discussed experiences implementing TraumaSmart, and a third focus group discussed HSIF-funded activities to support teachers in addressing the needs of children with special needs and managing challenging classroom behaviors.

Program Information Report (PIR) data. The PIR is a report that Head Start grantees must submit annually to the Office of Head Start within the Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, as a condition of their funding to operate Head Start and Early Head Start programs. In 2014, Head Start data were missing for one grantee and two Early Head Start grantees. With these exceptions, the evaluation team obtained PIR data for the remaining HSIF-funded Head Start programs for five program years, 2014 through 2018.

Analysis methods

The evaluation team conducted a series of descriptive analyses of the quantitative and qualitative data collected.

Teacher survey. The evaluation team analyzed the teacher survey data using standard descriptive methods, such as computing frequencies and means. Next, the team applied weights to make the set of responding teachers better represent the population of teachers across the 10 HSIF grantees. The weights account for both differential selection probabilities and response patterns. Statisticians first accounted for the probability of selection of the centers, creating a center sampling weight. For the five grantees in which all centers were included, the evaluation team set the weight to 1. For the other five grantees in which six centers were randomly selected, the weight ranged from 1.5 (where the team sampled 6 out of 9) to 4.5 (where the team sampled 6 out of 27). Because all teachers were selected within these sampled centers, statisticians did not need to account for teacher selection in the weights and so applied the center sampling weight to each teacher in the center.

Next, the evaluation team adjusted the sampling weight to account for nonresponse among the teachers in the sampled centers. Within each grantee, the evaluation team weighted up the responding teachers to account for the nonresponding teachers. This adjustment ranged from 1 (for a grantee in which all teachers responded) to 5.2 (for a grantee in which only 9 of 47 teachers responded), and the resulting weight (sampling weight adjusted for nonresponse) ranged from 1 to 7.8. Researchers made one final adjustment so that the sums of the weights among responding teachers within each grantee summed to the total number of teachers across all centers, as reported by each grantee at the time of center sampling, for a total of 786. The final weights ranged from 1 to 10.9.

The evaluation team used two standardized scales in the survey, one on satisfaction with a supervisor and another on satisfaction with the Head Start agency (Dickenson and Painter 2009). The evaluation team followed the author's guidelines to create scale scores and computed a

Cronbach's alpha coefficient for each scale to ensure they met accepted standards for reliability of at least .70 (Nunnally and Bernstein 1994).

PIR data. The evaluation team used PIR data to assess program enrollment and teacher turnover at HSIF-funded Head Start agencies from program years 2014 through 2018. For the purposes of PIR reporting, the Head Start program reports information gathered over a 12-month period. The start and end dates of reporting vary, but most programs follow the school year and data must be submitted by August 31. The PIR data contain reports for each grantee, or by delegate agency if a grantee has delegates. To compute annual program enrollment, the evaluation team took each grantee or delegate's reported total program enrollment and subtracted the number of children that exited the program before the end of the program year. The evaluation team then used annual program enrollment and annual funded enrollment to compute the percentage of funded enrollment slots filled during the year. Next, the researchers averaged this value for all delegates within a grantee for grantees with delegates. To compute annual teacher turnover, the researchers counted the total number of teachers and subtracted the number of staff that left the program during the program year. Next, the evaluation team averaged this value for all delegates within a grantee for grantees with delegates.

Director interview and focus group data. To analyze the qualitative data collected during interviews and focus groups, the evaluation team first created detailed field notes, and then coded the data to reduce it into a manageable number of topics and identify key themes (Coffey and Atkinson 1996; Ritchie and Spencer 2002).

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