

HEAD START ANNUAL REPORT 2019



22025 Governors Highway

Richton Park, IL 60471

(708) 747-3000

**First Step Annual Report 2019**

**First Step Child Care Center – Partner Agency**

**Program Name: First Step Child Care Center, Inc.**

**Address: 22025 Governors Highway Richton Park, IL 60471**

**Phone Number: (708)747-3000**

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**Head Start Director Name: Laura Foster**

**Head Start Director Email: lfoster@fs3c.com**

**Agency Web Site Address firststepofrichtonpark.com**

**Agency Type: For-Profit**

## Agency Description:

## First Step Child Care Center is a for-profit center that provides a program which involves the development of the whole child, through carefully designed experiences that tap into the child’s natural curiosity and developmental readiness.

## Since 1999, First Step Child Care Center in Richton Park, IL has been providing an environment that is safe and nurturing to the children in its care from ages 6 weeks right up to 5 years. At First Step Child Care Center each child’s learning experience reflects the results of rigorous research in child development as well as an awareness of what constitutes best practices in early childhood education. All children are eligible to apply if they are enrolled in the daycare center.

## In April of 2015 First Step added a federally-funded Head Start program for 14 preschool children and by the end of the 2016-2017 program year this program expanded to include 33 children 3-5 years of age. Today, the program offers services to 80 Head Start children and 24 Early Head Start children. Head Start/Early Head Start advances the principles that First Step holds dear and provides a framework for supporting the wellbeing of the whole family.

## First Step Child Care Center knows that every child’s emotional well-being is vitally important. Our warm, loving staff provides a stable environment in which children thrive.

## Community Areas Served

* Crete
* Park Forest
* Richton Park
* Matteson
* Steger
* University Park
* Chicago Heights

# Overall Grantee Budget 2019

## Total Public and Private Funds received: $1,020,806.22

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Source** | **Public** | **Private** |
| Federal | $756,656.00 |  |
| State and Local |  |  |
| Individuals, Corporations, |  | $302,159.15 |
| Foundations, etc. and In-kind |
| **Total** | $756,656.00 | $302,159.15 |

Children and Families Served in the 2019 Program Year

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Head Start Enrollment** | **Early Head Start Enrollment** |
| **Center-based Program** |  |  |
| **a. 5 days per week** |  |  |
| **1. Full-day enrollment** | 93 | 27 |
| **2. Part-day enrollment** |  |  |
| **b. 4 days per week** |  |  |
| **1. Full-day enrollment** |  |  |
| **2. Part-day enrollment** |  |  |
| **Home-based Program** |  |  |
| **Services to Pregnant Mothers** |  |  |
| **Family Child Care Homes** |  |  |
| **Total:** | 93 | 27 |

**Number of Families Served in 2019**

**First Step**

Total Children Served: 120 Total Families Served: 99

Average monthly enrollment (as percentage of funded enrollment): 100%

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Number of Eligible Children in Community, ages 3-5 | 1056 |
| Percentage of Eligible Children Served in Agency | 11% |

**Health**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Percentage of enrolled children who received medical and dental exams** | **Received Medical Exams** | **Received Dental Exams/ Oral Care** |
| First Step | 80% | 80% |

# Parental involvement in Directly Operated, Delegate and Partner Agencies

### **Parent Education Activities**

Our Parent Committee meetings are held on the first Monday of every month, providing an opportunity for families to connect, share their experiences and get involved in the operations of the program. Parents are encouraged to be active participants in the decision-making process and their input is invaluable to planning at First Step. Staff changes, curriculum changes, fiscal reports, and policy decisions are presented to our Parent Committee for consultation.

In addition to our monthly Parent Committee meetings, we offer family activities during the day so that families get to join in the fun right in the classroom. From Grandparents’ Day to Male Involvement activities, tea parties and field trips, we offer multiple opportunities for families to spend quality time with their child and their child’s classmates. It is the policy across the center that any parent may drop in *anytime* to see how their child is enjoying the day, learning new skills and interacting with others. We welcome volunteers and love working alongside the child’s first teachers.

In 2019 we rolled out our parenting curriculum, Parents As Teachers. Meetings are held monthly and offer opportunities for parents and children to come together for age-appropriate learning activities with other parents and children. Activities are facilitated by our Family Support Specialists and include take-home materials so you can continue working with your child at home.

### **Health**

### In 2019 we expanded upon the initiatives begun the year prior, identifying family needs and providing education and resources to enhance the health of our First Step Families. Oral health educational materials were presented to our families and information on the significance of lead screenings/testing and implications of high lead levels in children continued to be an important focus of our parent education initiative. Nutrition education for both children and families took center stage as we received assistance from both our Nutrition Consultant and the University of Illinois Extension Program. The UIC Extension Program presented fun, nutrition-related activities for our Head Start children and sent home enrichment information for our families.

### **Mental Health**

In 2019 we focused on partnering with parents to boost the importance of social-emotional well-being in our young children. We contracted with a Wellness Specialist who worked with our staff and parents, providing a wealth of information on topics such as typical and atypical social-emotional development of children, tantrums, bonding with your child, sibling rivalry, and challenging behaviors.

### **Education and Literacy**

Home visits offer our Head Start families an opportunity to ask questions about the program, give voice to their concerns and provide input on the individual needs of their child. We host regular activity nights focused on family learning experiences in language, literacy and math. The monthly newsletter keeps our families informed regarding education projects and the highlights of the upcoming month. Parents are encouraged to join in the classroom fun as well as engage in learning outside the center at field trips.

### **Community and Social Services**

Connecting families to resources, our Family Support Specialists consult individually with families to identify their needs and work diligently to assist them in accessing services they need. Tapping into a variety of social service/public service agencies, the FSS invites speakers into the center, provides referrals to families, and develops partnership agreements with providers.

# **Special Efforts to Prepare Children for Kindergarten**

First Step Child Care Center uses Creative Curriculum, which aligns with the Head Start Framework and the Illinois State Learning Standards and Guidelines. Creative Curriculum focuses on creating a learning environment that fosters a child’s growth in all developmental areas, through the use of play, small group activities, and whole-class instruction. The curriculum supports the use of Teaching Strategies, which is used to assess children’s growth and development as they learn. Utilizing all of these tools and continually evaluating our children’s needs as well as our practices, we seek to respond to the data in order to meet the child’s individual needs.

Individual child checkpoint data (Learning and Development Report) is shared with parents three times per year during a scheduled home visit or parent conference. During these meetings, parent(s), in partnership with the education staff, develop specific educational goals for the child. Together they discuss how these goals will be implemented and progress communicated. Education staff references the goals when planning classroom activities and experiences so as to provide individualized opportunities for children to accomplish their goals. Child observations, documenting the progress children are making in accomplishing the goals, are collected daily. These observations are used to inform continued individualization for children.

Kindergarten Transition events are held each spring to inform parents about their local school enrollment processes and local Kindergarten staff are invited to answer questions and provide additional information for families.

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# Summary of Annual Review Findings

From 8/16/2016-6/17/2016 the Administration of Children and Families (AFC) conducted a Leadership/Governance/Management Systems review event for the Ounce of Prevention Fund Head Start and Early Head Start Programs.

Based on the information gathered, no area of noncompliance was found during the course of the review. Accordingly, no corrective action is required at this time.