



Douglas-Cherokee Economic Authority, Inc.

Head Start/Early Head Start

Blount • Cocke • Grainger • Hamblen • Jefferson • Monroe • Sevier • Union
2024-2025

This Annual Report to the Public is available on our website www.dceaheadstart.org.

About Our Program



www.dceaheadstart.org

In 1965, Douglas-Cherokee Economic Authority, Inc. Head Start Program began providing comprehensive child development services to economically disadvantaged children and their families with a focus on assisting preschoolers to develop the social, early literacy, and math skills to be successful in school. Early Head Start was added in 2003, and we began serving pregnant women, infants, and toddlers.

We provide services in 8 counties in East Tennessee in 33 locations and 54 classrooms. Children receive comprehensive services including health, dental, nutritional, and mental health screenings and follow up, plus classroom education services.

As parents are their child's primary teachers, our program partners with parents to ensure they have the tools necessary to help prepare their children for public school and beyond. The Head Start approach involves supporting the child, parent, and family. Parents have opportunities to volunteer in the classroom and are part of their center parent committee, and several serve on Policy Council.

About Our Agency



Douglas-Cherokee Economic Authority, Inc. is a Community Action Agency serving 30 counties in Tennessee and 2 counties in Kentucky.

The purpose of the Agency is to help families living in poverty improve their lives by providing them with assistance and services that they are not able to provide for themselves. The focus of the Agency is to help people help themselves.

DCEA Head Start/Early Head Start is a federal program primarily funded by the Dept. of Health & Human Services. Our program does not discriminate due to race, creed, color, national origin, religion, sex, family status, handicap, veteran status, political affiliation, or beliefs.

127 Cedar Street
Morristown, TN 37814

Program Director
Curt Amos

County Break Down

Blount: 6 rooms, 102 slots

Cocke: 6 rooms, 102 slots

Grainger: 3 rooms, 51 slots

Hamblen: 12 rooms, 204 slots

Jefferson: 4 rooms, 68 slots

Monroe: 4 rooms, 68 slots

Sevier: 7 rooms, 119 slots

Union: 3 rooms, 51 slots

EHS: 9 rooms, 72 slots

Our program serves 765 preschoolers across eight counties and 72 pregnant mommies, infants, and toddlers in Hamblen county.



534 East 1st North Street
Morristown, TN 37814
Megan Barnard
Executive Director
www.douglascherokee.org

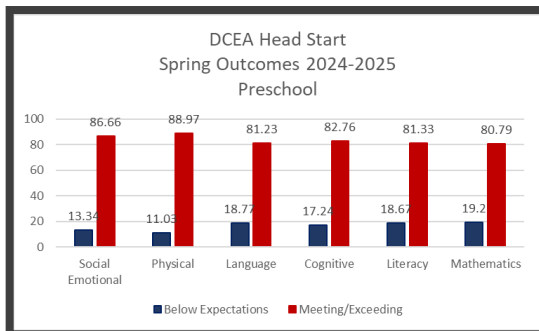
Our Program at a Glance

- ⇒ 892 Head Start families served
- ⇒ 118 Early Head Start families served
- ⇒ 4 Pregnancy mommies served
- ⇒ Average monthly enrollment 98%
- ⇒ 99% of enrolled children received medical exams
- ⇒ 95% of enrolled children received dental exams
- ⇒ 7 different home languages were spoken
- ⇒ 93% of families served were income eligible, foster, homeless, or received public assistance. Most families who were not income or categorically eligible had a child with a perceived or diagnosed disability upon enrollment.



HS/EHS receives funding from the Child Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) to help provide nutritious foods for our children.

School Readiness



This graph shows Spring 2025 outcomes for our Preschool children.

Our school readiness goals address the five central domains from the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework and are aligned with the Tennessee State Early Learning Developmental Standards and local standards. Goals are also aligned with the programs curriculum assessment tool and CLASS domains for pre-school children.

Goals are measured using the Teaching Strategies Gold Assessment (TSG). Data on children's progress is collected throughout the school year and assessment checkpoints are completed three times per year to identify current developmental level. TSG reports are generated and analyzed to determine individual, classroom,

and program level progress toward school readiness goals. This information is utilized in the Community Assessment and to develop program goals and training plans.

Transition within the Program and into Kindergarten

Children develop and move through the early stages of life while in the Head Start program. There are many transitions that take place as they grow. These transitions do not have to be a difficult. Every Head Start child has a transition plan that follows them throughout their Head Start experience no matter what age/level they begin. We serve pregnant mommies, infants, toddlers, and preschool age children.

Each year parent trainings are held in partnership with local public school systems to ensure parents get the information they need to have a successful transition into kindergarten. In the classrooms, special activities are planned to help children develop a better understanding of what to expect in kindergarten. This year each child entering kindergarten received a backpack, pencil box filled with pencils, a pencil sharpener, crayons, glue sticks, scissors, and a pamphlet on kindergarten.



302 children from our program transition to kindergarten!

Services to Children with Special Needs

Head Start

- ♦ 114 children had an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or Individual Family Services Plan (IFSP).
- ♦ Therapy services were provided by local school systems and supplemented in the classroom.

Early Head Start

- ♦ 20 infants and toddlers had an Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP).
- ♦ Tennessee Early Intervention Services (TEIS) provided the therapy needed on site.



Over 16% of enrolled children received special services while attending our program exceeding the mandated 10% of enrollment.

Parent, Family, and Community Engagement



Parents and community members serve on the Head Start Policy Council. This council is an important piece of the program governance.

Creating a quality Head Start/Early Head Start Program requires staff and parents working together, sharing their talents, knowledge, and energy so children can receive the greatest benefit.

Our goal is to work with families to help build connections that will support children and families with the skills and tools necessary for learning.

Parents are encouraged to attend the Active Parenting: First Five Years sessions. These sessions help parents develop skills to better equip them for the more difficult parts of parenting.

Involvement and Volunteering

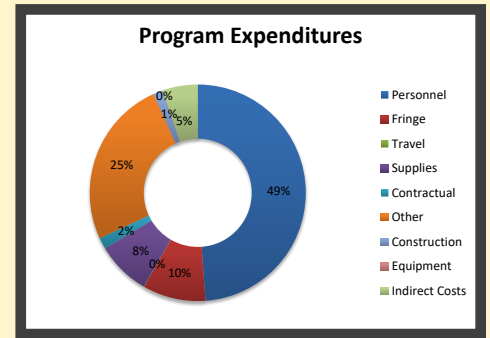
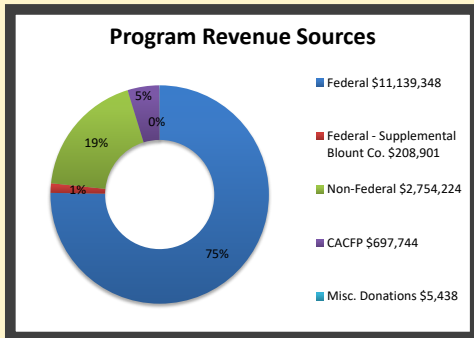
Our program recognizes that family and community engagement is essential to building relationships that can positively impact children and their families for a lifetime. We believe that partnerships with parents are essential to providing quality early childhood services. Our staff also work to engage fathers as advocates, lifelong educators, and first teachers of their children. Family members and father figures serve key roles in the healthy development of their children and families. Our program provides a variety of ways for parents to support their children in their journey toward School Readiness.

Our program enhances the local communities we serve. In order to continue receiving federal funding, we must receive donations from the community. Donations called 'In-Kind' must equal at least 20% of the total dollar amount received from the grant. These donations may include time, space, and materials. Also, employment with benefits for current and former parents impact the community in a big way. Currently, around 38% of our staff are current or former Head Start/Early Head Start parents. The program employs over 280 staff in the eight county service area. **We logged 34,580 volunteer hours this program year.**



Male involvement and volunteers are encouraged throughout our program.

Lets Talk Money



A Glimpse of the Past



The photo above shows the street side view of the old Roberts School in Morristown, TN that was built in c.1901.

The photo below shows the old Roberts School present day. This building now serves as the Central Office location for Douglas-Cherokee Economic Authority, Inc. and the Head Start/Early Head Start program.

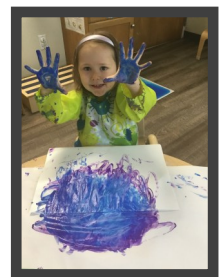


Federal Monitoring Review Information

Our program's last Focus Area 2 and CLASS review was in the 2023-2024 program year. The program will enter a new five year grant cycle in the 2025-2026 program year. We anticipate required federal reviews at any point in the new grant cycle.

Audit Information

The 2024 audit was completed and the results were an unqualified opinion-no deficiencies or concerns.



Hands on art experiences are seen on a daily basis in our program!

Mission Statement

To be a quality-focused organization in order to bring about a greater degree of social competency in children and self-sufficiency of families.

Philosophy

To be respectful of all, empower children and their families, and to be a positive influence in the community we serve.