



ANNUAL REPORT

2022



ABOUT US

E Center is a private nonprofit agency with more than four decades of proven effectiveness in serving the most at-need children and families in northern California. E Center's mission is to "Build Healthy Communities through education, employment, and environmental awareness." E Center programs include Women's Infant and Children (WIC) in Lake County; and Head Start, Early Head Start, Migrant and Seasonal Head Start, and Migrant Early Head Start programs. In addition we are funded by the State of California General Childcare and Development (CCTR) to provide childcare services.



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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COURTNEY KRUSE, HS/EHS POLICY COUNCIL REP.

E Center is well known for its strategic and collaborative federal, state and local partnerships that support families reaching self-sufficiency leading to healthier community for all.





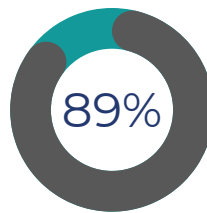
This year, E Center WIC has continued to make great strides despite the challenges of a public health emergency, infant formula recalls and shortages, and a contract formula transition.

E CENTER WIC

E Center WIC staff actively participated and advocated for Lake County's families on a national and state level by traveling to National conferences and speaking up. This ensured our families were not overlooked, and were included to receive priority drop shipments of infant formula for our county during infant formula recalls and shortages. By reporting to infant formula distributors, and National and California State staff on daily, weekly, and monthly basis for what we were seeing in our stores, clinics, and hearing from participants and vendors, we were able to relay this and bridge the gaps as best we could during this crisis. E Center WIC has also participated in advocacy for the extended cash value benefits for families to purchase additional fruits and vegetables, and ensured presence waivers were in place to allow for remote services throughout the pandemic. Your WIC staff have worked tirelessly to ensure we could continue to provide the best support possible during this difficult year.

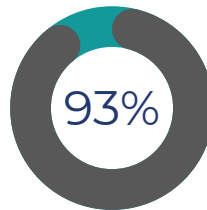


E Center WIC maintains fully credentialed and certified: Dietitians, Degreed Nutritionists, WIC Nutrition Aides, and Certified Lactation counselors and educators.



Farmers Market Redemption

This year E Center WIC was ranked number 2 in the state for our Farmers Market redemption, providing additional fruits and vegetables to our families and supporting our local farmers.



Average Participation

E Center WIC has maintained a higher average participation rate in California, and with over 70% of our counseling staff certified as Lactation Counselors and/or educators, we also maintain higher than average breastfeeding rates in California.

E Center WIC is small but mighty, and continues to advocate for our families on a local, state, and national level.



WIC Staff are active members in the National WIC Association, California WIC Association, the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, and sit on the Maternal Child and Adolescent Health advisory board for the county.

E CENTER WIC PARTNERSHIPS

Partnered with Blue Zones Project, Lake County, in effort to become a Blue Zones certified worksite and empower everyone, everywhere to live longer, better...
<https://lakecounty.bluezonesproject.com/find-all-approved-organizations/>

Partnered with Purdue Global University to ensure a viable and trained workforce.



E Center WIC participated in a Books 4 Kids program where we were able to distribute thousands of books into our community



Welcome

This past season continued to be challenging with the ongoing effects of the pandemic. E Center worked diligently with local public health officials to ensure safety measures were in place to continue services to children and families. Head Start staff were all required by the Office of Head Start to be fully vaccinated or have an approved exemption on file. We were able to provide in person services following new health and safety protocols that protected children, parents, and our staff. All services were offered in person; virtual services were no longer required. We are proud of our ability to navigate through barriers presented by the pandemic and for being able to provide services during extreme circumstances, while keeping our environments safe for everyone.

During the pandemic we were able to continue to provide food to families through a partnership with the Yuba Sutter Food Bank and the Community Action Agency for Butte County through September 2022. Once funding expired in September, we continued to refer families to the local food banks for assistance.

We grew as a program and as an agency. We learned to use technology to become more efficient and new methods for communicating while working in a virtual environment. Our services have returned to in person, many of the trainings and meetings that we participate in as a program and throughout the communities have stayed virtual. I tend to look for the “silver lining” even during truly challenging times! The growth we have made in our use of technology has been positive for our programs and will have a long lasting residual impact.

I welcome and encourage readers of this report to review the information provided, recognize that high quality teaching that is happening in all of our classrooms across our service area. If interested, request a tour of a site or classroom. We have opportunity for community volunteers that are fully vaccinated against COVID to visit our classrooms.

Check us out on Facebook, “like” us to receive updates about activities we are involved in and the celebrations of the good things that happen in a Head Start classroom.

Sincerely,

Jodie Keller
Early Childhood Education Program Director





Our services are provided in center base settings for working families that require care for at least 6 hour per day, 5 days per week. Fees for services are based on family income

CCTR STATE FUNDED CHILD CARE HIGHLIGHTS



E Center received funding in July 2021 from the California Department of Social Services to operate a childcare program for infants and toddlers ages 4 weeks to 3 years of age. That program continues to operate today. Services are provided in Yuba County and in Butte County. In Butte County, we have centers located in the City of Oroville and in the City of Chico and in Yuba County, our center is located in Olivehurst. Both the Olivehurst and the Chico locations opened for services to families in November 2021. The Chico location is at Esplanade House, a transitional housing complex. The center located in Oroville will open to families July 2023. Additional CCTR state funded child care slots will be available throughout Yuba, Sutter, and Butte County as we enter into our 2023-24 season.



HEAD START HIGHLIGHTS



Our services are provided in center base settings, home base settings, and in Family Child Care environments. During the pandemic, virtual services were provided in addition to traditional services with limited group sizes.

SERVICES

E Center prides itself on its learning environments both indoors, outdoors, and on our buses. We firmly believe that children learn best through play and through rich learning environments utilizing Frog Street Curriculum and Partners for Healthy Babies. Our environments provide opportunities for engaged, fun, inquisitive learning for the children, stretching their imaginations and expanding their math, science, language skills and social and emotional growth. E Center welcomes student teachers looking for work experience while in pursuit of the Early Childhood Education degree. Children are supervised at all times by qualified teaching staff throughout their time in our classrooms. If interested, request a tour of a site or classroom. We also have plenty of opportunity for community volunteer activities.



OVERVIEW

For many of our locations, we provide bus transportation to support access to services. You'll read throughout this report the data information related to services provided such as school readiness, family engagement, children's health, mental health, and adult and child interactions. E Center's focus is on supporting the mental health and wellness of the children and on school readiness activities, working collaboratively with the local school districts to support kindergarten transition activities.

The curriculum being on a 0-5 continuum allows for the continued individual growth of children throughout their time in our program and prepares them for school.

We continue to use Frog Street Curriculum which is a research based comprehensive curriculum that supports Infants through Pre-K. Frog Street begins with infants and is developed as a 0-5 continuum allowing for the continued individual growth of children throughout their time in our program and prepares them for school.

EDUCATION

Frog Street Curriculum has both Conscious Discipline and components of the Pyramid Model embedded throughout, allowing teachers to establish environments that promote self-regulation and a healthy social and emotional climate for children to play, interact and learn. In addition, the curriculum focuses on the 5 key educational domains, while also implementing S.T.E.A.M activities for both the classroom and at home.





COACHING FOR TEACHERS AND FAMILY SERVICES STAFF

Professional Development remains a priority for E Center. Practice Based Coaching provides a model for coaching that allows teachers the opportunity to work collaboratively with a coach to complete self-assessments, set goals, practice specific teaching strategies, have intentional observations and reflect on their strengths with the intent of using those identified strengths to improve areas that were identified as opportunities for growth.

The Coach is able to facilitate the process of assessment and reflection with the group while allowing for the opportunity to share and connect with their peers.

In addition to coaching for teachers, we were able to continue coaching for our Family Service Professionals. We have many resources in place to assist teachers in professional growth and development. And, we are strengthening our coaching resources for Family Service Professionals. Their skill set is unique in that they are developing relationships and goals with adults as opposed to children. It is important that staff in these roles have an opportunity to grow and strengthen their strategies and practices in their area of expertise. Our coaching model has them using a version of the Practice Based Coaching Model, and it is done with a small community of peers as opposed to one on one. With this model our staff have been able to go through the coaching cycle of assessment, goal setting and reflection with a small community of their peers, usually no more than 4-5 in a group. The Coach is able to facilitate the process of assessment and reflection with the group, while supporting opportunity to share and connect with their peers.



NAVIGATING SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL WELLNESS WITH STAFF AND THE COMMUNITY

E Center has made intentional efforts to support staff and families in navigating their way through and out of the pandemic. It has been critical to recognize the impact the pandemic has had on all of us, and to also create a space for recovery and adaptation as we navigate our way back.

E Center Head Start has prioritize the Mental Health of our staff, families and children. We are intentionally working to integrate Mental Health throughout our agency through observations, referrals and counseling, collaboration with local agencies and professional development. E Center is contracted with 3 Mental Health Professionals that are able to complete classroom observations, receive and make referrals and meet with families to provide counseling and other resources as needed.

OVERVIEW

E Center continues to participate on committees to collaborate, learn, as well as obtain and maintain agreements with agencies that will directly support our families such as, homeless consortiums, Salvation Army, Local Hospitals, Child Housing Action Team, Bi-County Early Access Support Collaborative (BEAS), Displaced Youth Multi-Disciplinary Team, Blue Shift, Community Health Assessment and Transitional Housing



This past year E Center served 209,036 meals to children enrolled

- Teachers encourage children to try new foods.
- Children learn how to serve themselves portions appropriate for their age.
- Children learn to make healthy food choices by observing positive attitudes.
- Children learn mathematical skills, including spatial relationships.
- Children learn how to share and use good manners.





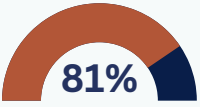
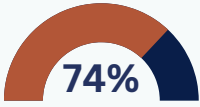

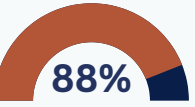
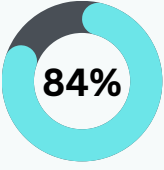
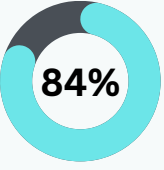


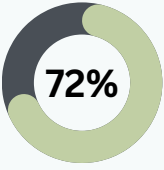
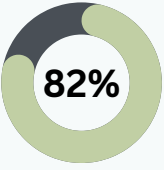
NUTRITION

Meal Counts				
Meal	Head Start	Early Head Start	Migrant and Seasonal	Migrant Early
Breakfast	39,575	8,805	17,932	1,339
Lunch	46,792	10,188	18,550	1,392
Snack	37,208	9,054	16,926	1,275

Mealtimes at E Center are a time for everyone to share their day, ideas and interest, while helping children grow independence and self-confidence.



HEAD START PROGRAMS INDICATORS

	HS	EHS	MSHS	MEHS
Number of Families Served by Program	564	313	254	20
Percentage of families with at least one direct service	 87%	 98%	 97%	 95%
Enrollment	512	232	310	23
Average Daily Attendance	 81%	 74%	 86%	 88%
Percentage of Children that received Medical Exams	 84%	 84%	 90%	 95%
Percentage of Children that received Dental Exams	 72%	N/A	 82%	N/A

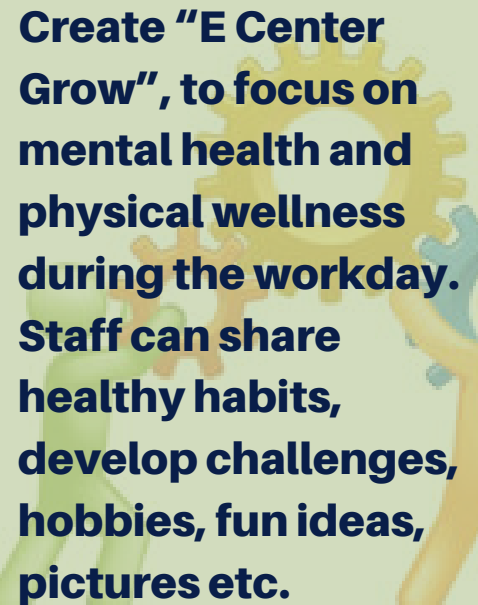


HUMAN RESOURCES UPDATE

As the dust continues to settle and we learn to adjust to a new normal, the role of Human Resources (HR) has fundamentally changed, putting the emphasis on the people part of the job. This includes developing practices, policies and procedures that recognize the life experiences employees are going through, to support them not just in their experiences as employees but in their everyday lives when possible.

In 2022, in partnership with the Office of Head Start, Women Infants and Children (WIC) and General Child Care and Development (CCTR) we were able to:

- Assemble a new Health and Wellness Committee with more of a focus on health, safety and mental health and wellness. Committee members enrolled in UCLA's Wellness Program for 4 weeks to learn, gather resources and develop connections.
- Implement an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) with Uprise Health, that employees were able to access even during lay off status. Previously employees were only eligible for EAP if they were enrolled in one of our Medical plans.
- Anthem donated funds were used to provide gas cards for employees as part of the years of service recognition and awards.
- E Center worked with Blue Zones to become a Blue Zones certified work place in Lake County and Yuba Sutter.
- Board supported the implementations of a remote work policy where possible.
- Incentivize staff who complied with the Office of Head Start vaccines mandate (E Center employees received \$300.00 to get the COVID Vax).
- Provide E Center employees with a Health and Wellness Stipend.
- Support E Center programs with their implementation of providing additional opportunities for mini breaks.




Create “E Center Grow”, to focus on mental health and physical wellness during the workday. Staff can share healthy habits, develop challenges, hobbies, fun ideas, pictures etc.

Looking forward our emphasis will continue to focus on:

- Growing a people centric work culture.
- Creating new partnerships to increase pathways to recruit qualified personnel.
- Reviewing compensation to stay competitive.
- Building efficiencies with the continued use of technology.
- Finding better ways to support staff from pre-boarding through retirement.

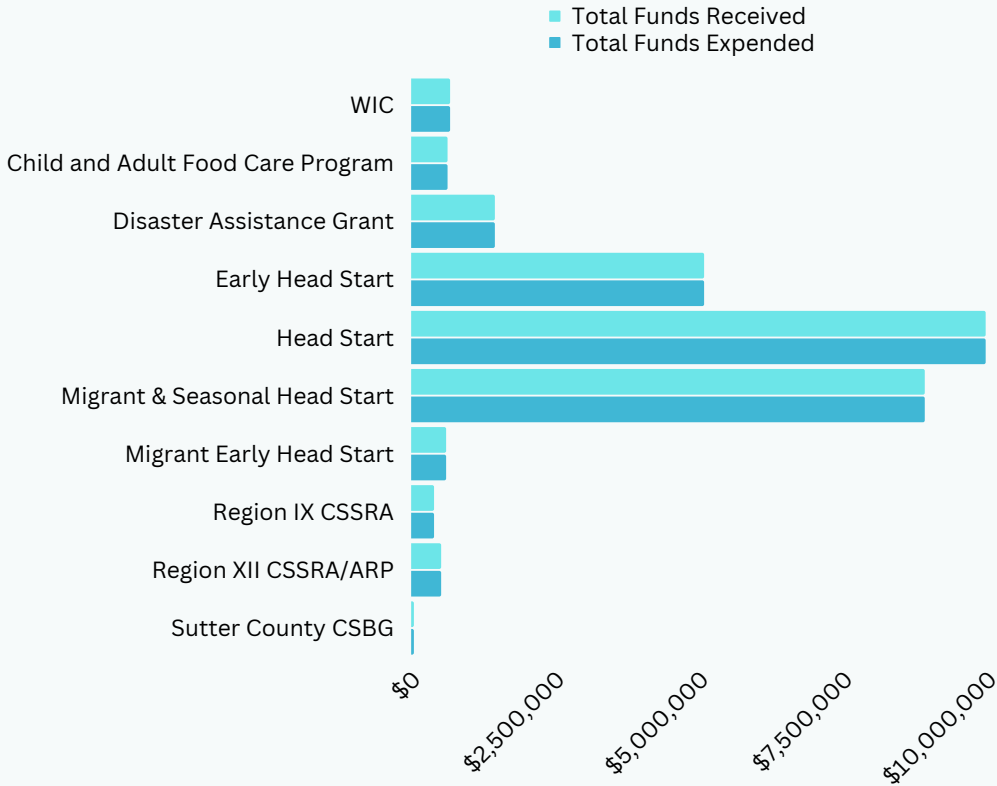
FOCUS

- 
- People
 - Experiences
 - Relationships

BUDGET EXPENDITURES AND PROPOSED BUDGET

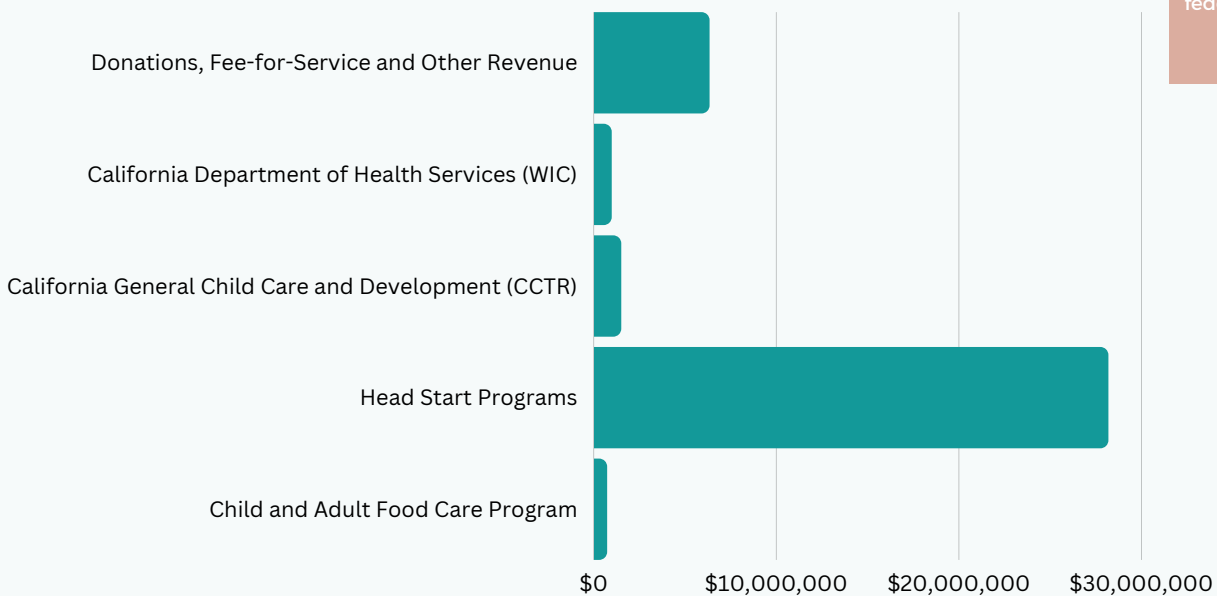


E Center Funds Received and Expended July 1, 2021-June 30,2022



In accordance with Government Auditing, WIPFLI, an independent auditor, issued a report dated October 31, 2022, on their consideration of E Center's internal control over financial reporting and its test of our compliance with appropriate laws, regulations, contracts and grant agreements and other matters. It is the opinion of WIPFLI, that E Center complied, in all material respects, with the compliance requirements described in the U.S. Office of Management and Budget Compliance Supplement that could have direct and material effect on its major federal program for the year ended June 30, 2022.

E Center 2021-22 Operating Budget by Type





Access to Primary Medical, Mental Health, and Dental Care

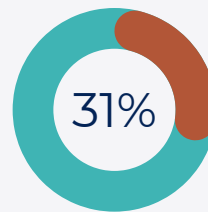
Within counties that make up E Center’s Service Area, Glenn, Yuba, Colusa, Lake, and Tehama counties have significant shortages in access to health, dental and mental health services. Those counties are also counties with higher levels of poverty and tend to have higher levels of rural residents.

Percent Served by E Center Head Start and Early Head Start Services.

COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT UPDATE

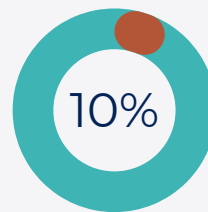
Estimated Number of Migrant and Seasonal Children Under 6 Years

County	Estimated Number of Migrant Children Under 6 Years	Estimated Number of Seasonal Children Under 6
Glenn	417	210
Yolo	392	509
Tehama	248	300
Lake	234	74
Colusa	189	444
Sutter	139	795
Butte	116	754
Yuba	106	424



Head Start

We estimate a total of 2,120 pre-school age children living below the poverty level in Yuba, Sutter and Butte County.



Early Head Start

We estimate 3,178 children under the age of three living below the poverty level in E Center's EHS service area.

Early data suggests that unemployment rates are returning to 2019 levels, prior to the COVID pandemic – Counties with Health Care and Social Assistance (Yolo, Yuba, Sutter, Lake, Glenn and Butte) and Educational Services (Yolo, Butte) as one of their top 3 industries, seem to have the most economic resilience– with lower unemployment rates in 2022 and returning to pre-COVID rates at a faster rate.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND ADVOCACY



Arbuckle Site Expansion Rib Cutting



Lake County Farmers' Market



USDA Farm and Food Worker Relief Payment Project



Blue Zone Approved Worksite - E Center WIC



Head Start California Advocacy Day



National Head Start Association Hill Visit