

Head Start Promotes Child Readiness through Comprehensive Interprofessional Collaborative Services



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Head Start Program

- Federally funded program that promotes school readiness for 3-4 year olds whose family income falls below the national poverty line
- Children who are in foster care, families who receive public assistance, and children with a documented disability may be eligible regardless of family income
- Services are available for children and their parents to help address medical, dental, social and emotional needs
- Emphasis is placed on parental involvement

Objectives

- To assess the effectiveness of *Cooking Matters* for parents through pre- and post-assessments
- To provide various health screenings for early detection
- To understand and evaluate the inter-professional roles involved in caring for Head Start children

Population of Focus

- Four locations: Mill Swan A & B, Millbury St. and Greendale
- 822 children enrolled during the 2012-2013 academic year
- 51.5% Hispanic/Latino children
- Main health conditions: anemia, asthma, vision problems, low and high BMIs, and dental caries that can lead to speech delay and malnutrition

Figure 1. Percentage of Student Enrollment by Ethnicity from 2012-2013 (822 students total)

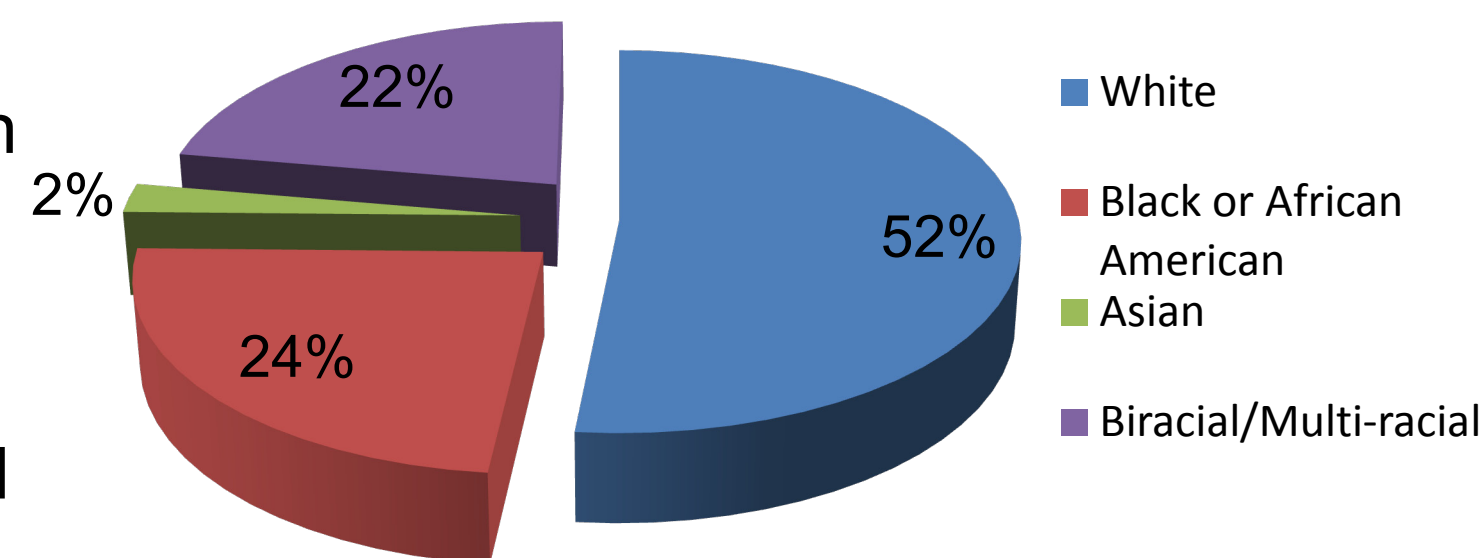
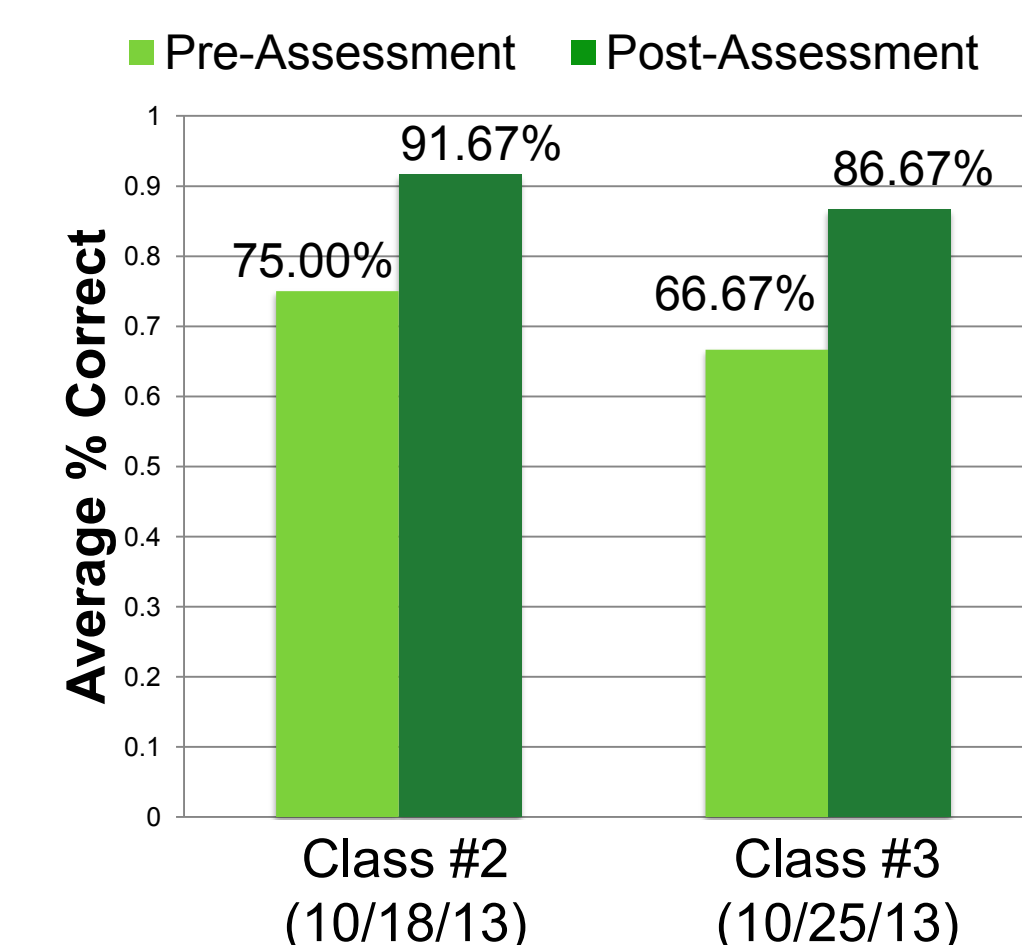


Table 1. Health Screening Results of Head Start Children at Worcester Centers Mill Swan A & B

Center	Test	# Tested	Notable Results
Mill Swan A	Hearing	154	5 (3%) require re-test
	Vision	155	10 (6%) require re-test
	BMI	155	5 (3%) require re-test for strabismus
Mill Swan B	Hearing	96	Majority in 50 th -75 th percentile
	Vision	96	4 (3%) above 95 th percentile
	BMI	96	3 (2%) below 5 th percentile

Results from health screenings performed on 2 of the 4 Worcester sites. Children who did not pass require re-testing; continuous re-tests necessitate follow-up with provider.

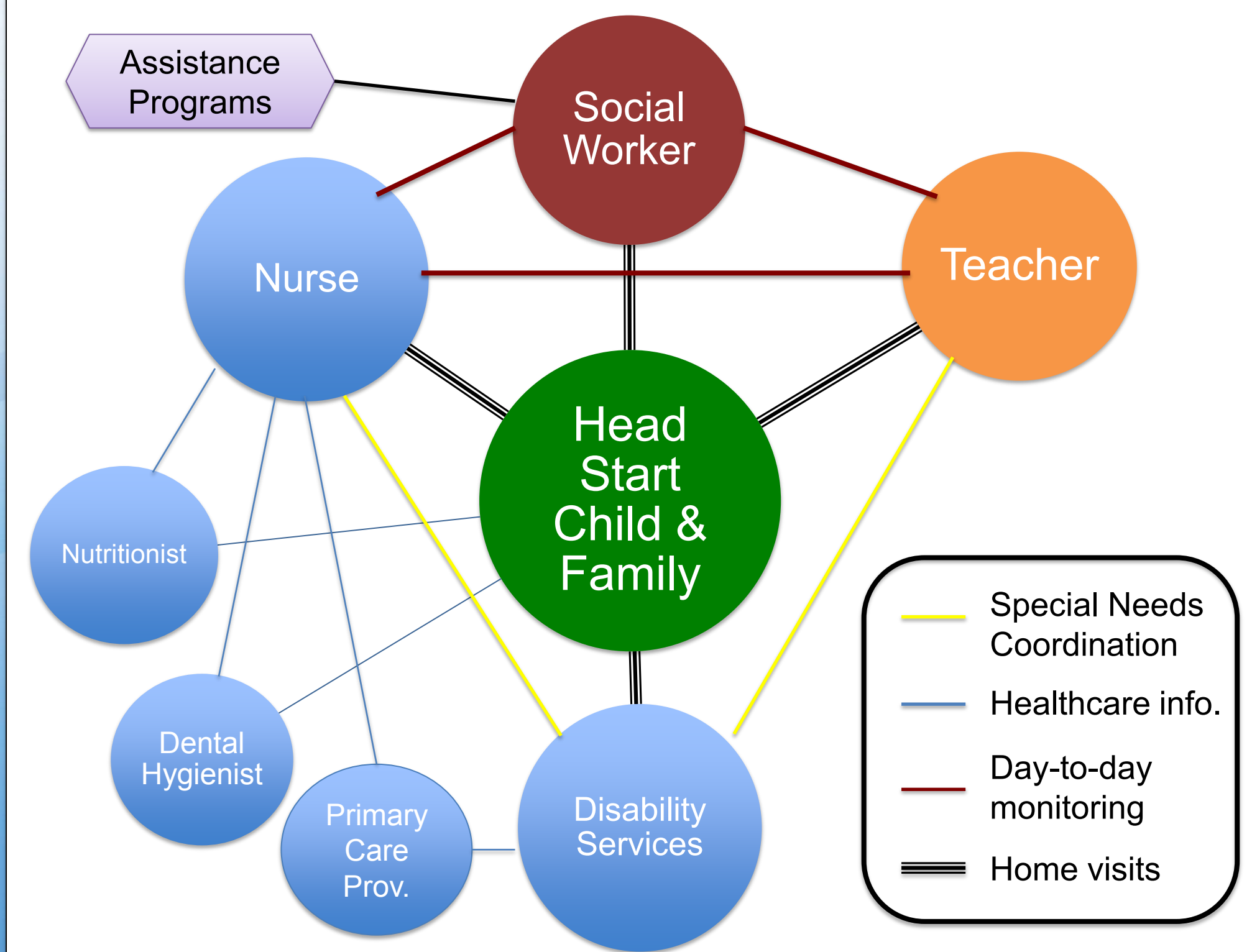
Figure 2. Pre- and Post-Assessments of Parents in *Cooking Matters* Class



Cooking Matters is a community program that helps reduce childhood hunger by educating parents on nutrition, healthy cooking, and shopping on a budget.

Each week, parents were given the same assessment quiz before and after the class to evaluate knowledge learned.

Figure 3. Schematic diagram depicting the various interdisciplinary roles that care for children at Head Start



Conclusions and Recommendations

- Pre- and post-assessments during *Cooking Matters* improve parental learning and evaluate effectiveness.
- There should be nutritional services for more families including monthly newsletters with recipes, shopping recommendations, and food safety information.
- As the subject of continuous federal budget debates, Head Start can benefit from the advocacy of healthcare providers by raising awareness at both the community and national levels.

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References: An Office of the Administration for Children and Families Early Childhood Learning & Knowledge Center. (2013). Head Start. Retrieved from: <http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc>
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