

# Head Start Promotes Child Readiness through Comprehensive Interprofessional Collaborative Services

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## Head Start Program

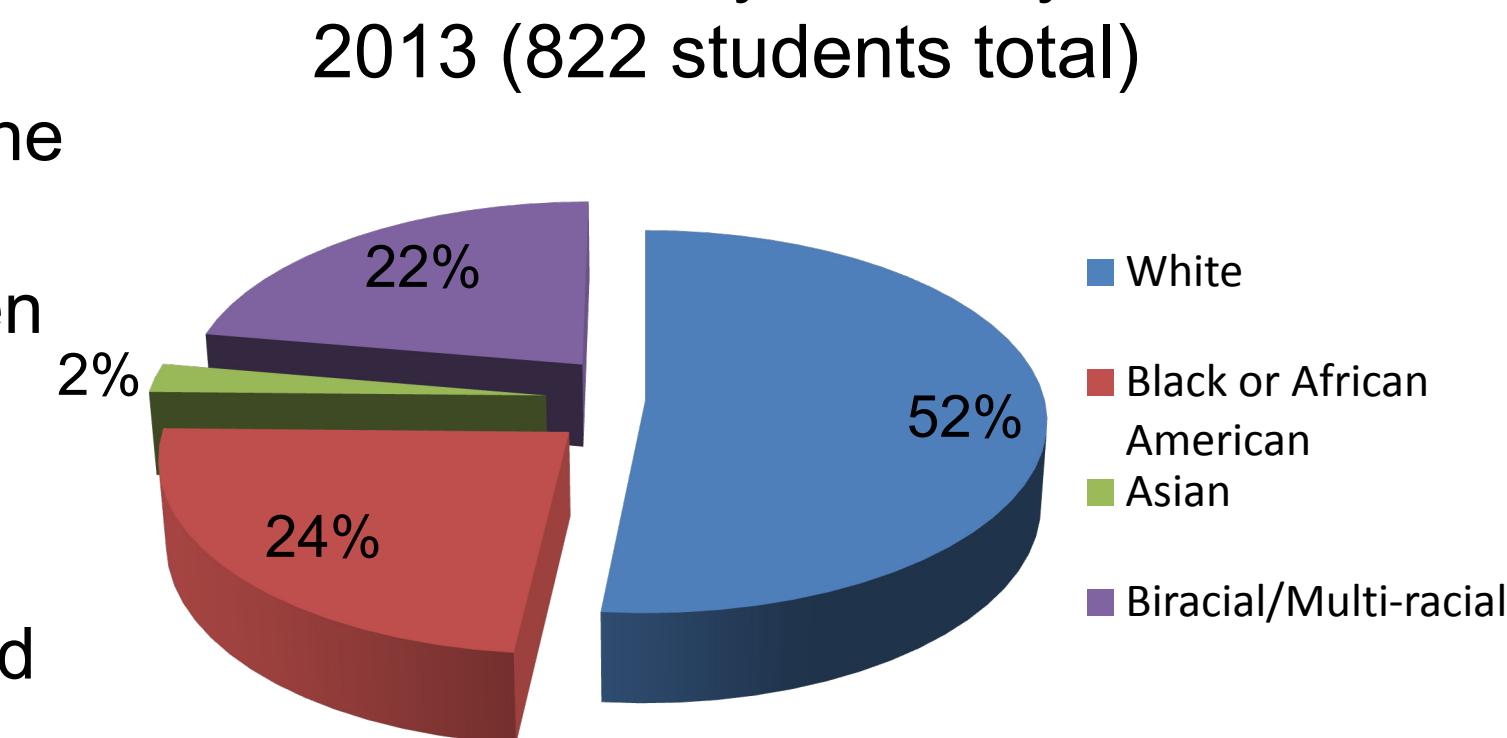
- Federally funded program that promotes school readiness for 3-4 year olds whose family income falls below the national poverty line
- Children who are in foster care, families who receive public assistance, and children with a documented disability may be eligible regardless of family income
- Services 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



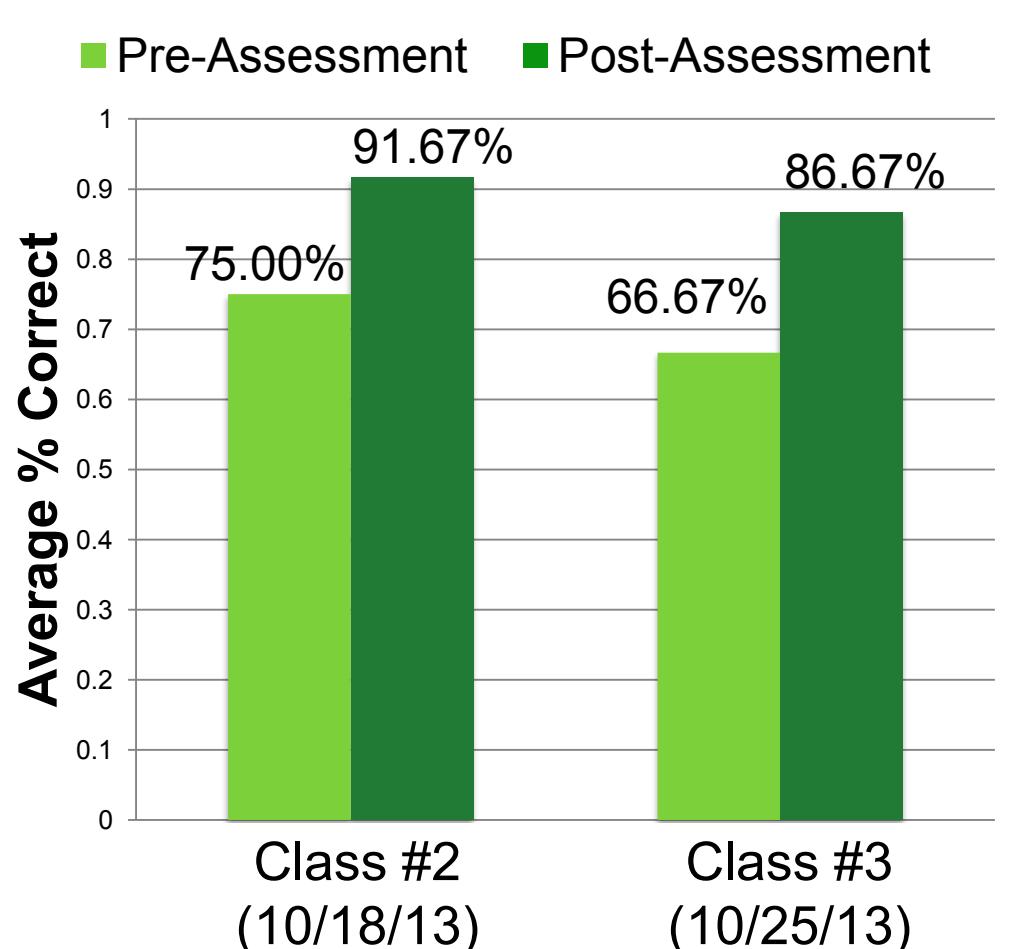
**Figure 1.** Percentage of Student Enrollment by Ethnicity from 2012-2013 (822 students total)

**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 5 (3%) require re-test for strabismus
	BMI	155	Majority in 50 <sup>th</sup> -75 <sup>th</sup> percentile 4 (3%) above 95 <sup>th</sup> percentile 3 (2%) below 5 <sup>th</sup> percentile
Mill Swan B	Hearing	96	14 (15%) require re-test
	Vision	96	16 (17%) require re-test 7 (7%) require re-test for strabismus
	BMI	96	Majority in 50 <sup>th</sup> -75 <sup>th</sup> percentile 7 (7%) above 95 <sup>th</sup> percentile 2 (2%) below 5 <sup>th</sup> 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.

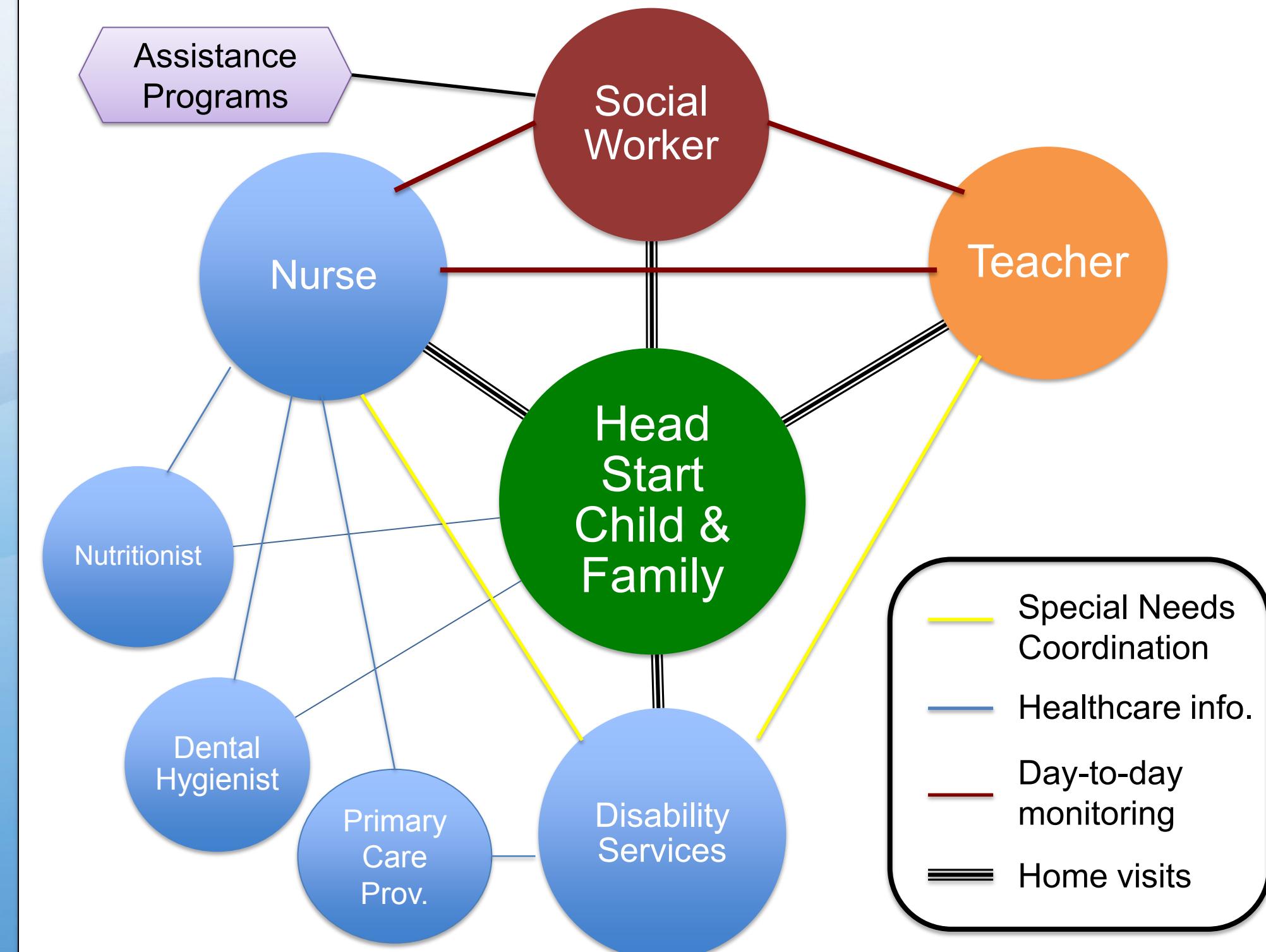
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References: *An Office of the Administration for Children and Families Early Childhood Learning & Knowledge Center. (2013). Head Start. Retrieved from: <http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc>*  
*2012-2013 Head Start Program Information Report. (2013). Child Development Head Start- Worcester Public. Retrieved from: <http://hse.s.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/pir>*

**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.

