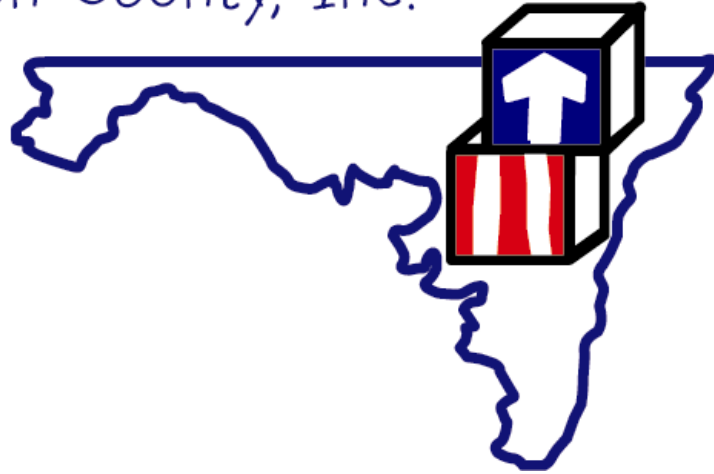


HEAD START

of Washington County, Inc.



HEAD START / EARLY HEAD START COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT UPDATE

December 2010

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Highlights

Sites and Program Options

Head Start of Washington County, Inc. (HSWC) saw significant changes in the numbers of children served during 2010 due to the additional grant funding through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). The agency was granted ARRA money in both the Head Start and Early Head Start programs, for a total increase of 60 slots, including 57 children, and 3 expectant women.

In January a new Head Start classroom opened. This class, targeted to serve 15 children who will enter Kindergarten in August 2010, focused on Kindergarten readiness skills. Students in this class attend an extended school year and a Family Advocate provides family services. Parent volunteerism in this class has been above average, and the class has been successful in fulfilling its purpose.

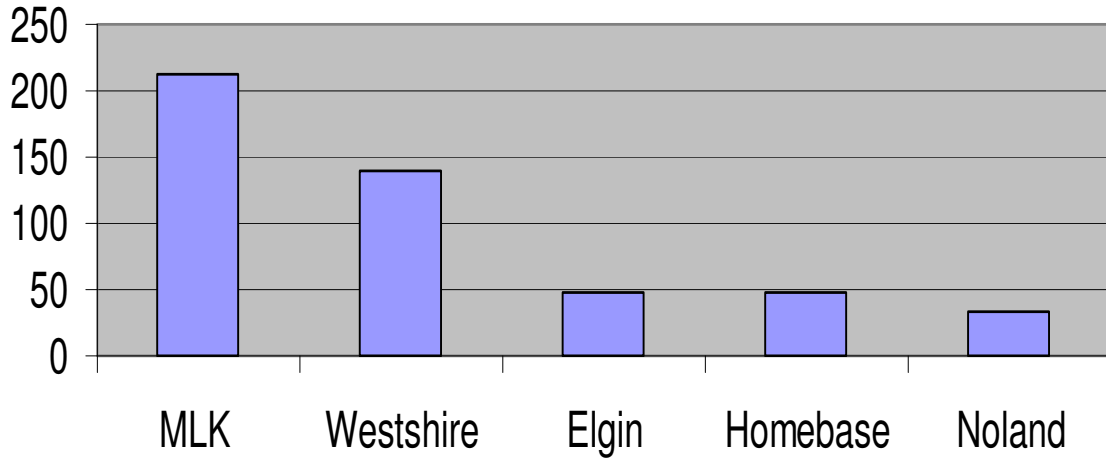
During the summer, the agency opened its first Early Head Start expansion class of eight children. In total, 42 children ages birth through age two are being served, as well as three expectant mothers. Children are served in several newly renovated classes. Five of the six new classes are housed at the MLK Center, and the sixth is in the Westshire Center. The three expectant parents are receiving services from the new Lead Home base teacher. Although the staff person is not new, this position is new for the agency this year. The other five Early Head Start classes started serving children in September.

Children are served in a variety of program options at the following sites:

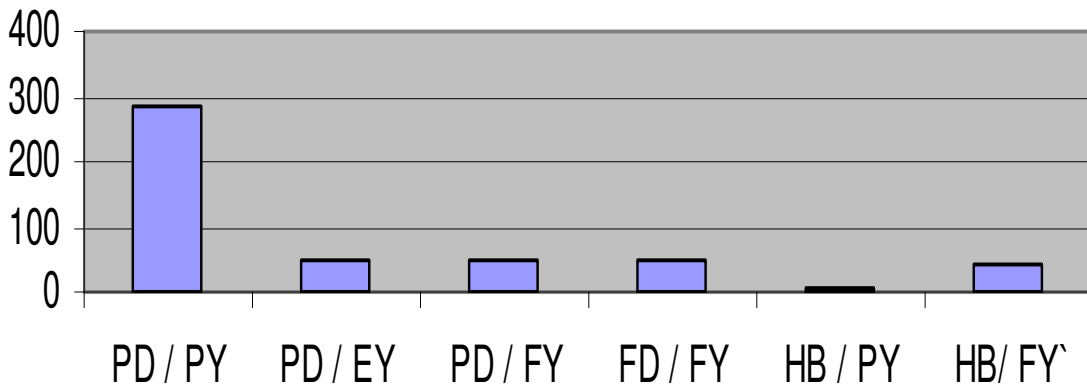
SITE	PROGRAM OPTION	CHILDREN SERVED
MLK HS	Part-Day / Part-Year	153
MLK HS ARRA	Part-Day / Extended-Year	15
MLK EHS	Part-Day / Full-Year	8
MLK EHS ARRA	Part-Day / Full-Year	36
Westshire HS	Part-Day / Part-Year	134*
Westshire EHS ARRA	Part-Day / Full-Year	6
Elgin Station HS	Full-Day / Full-Year	34
Elgin Station EHS	Full-Day / Full-Year	14
Noland	Part-Day / Extended-Year	34
Home Based HS	Part-Year	8
Home Based EHS	Full-Year	37*
Home Based Expectant Mothers		3
Total		482*

- *Total does not include 2 HS openings at Westshire and 1 EHS opening in Home based. (All are less than 30 days old and all have children assigned who will be starting January 3, 2011.)*

Children Served by Location



Children Served by Program Option



The ARRA funding and the number of new slots it provided accounts for 4% of all Head Start aged children served by HSWC. The ARRA Early Head Start funding provides 42% of all Early Head Start slots and 100% of all slots reserved specifically for expectant parents.

Because of the increased enrollment numbers, as well as concerns about current sites, the agency has been searching for property to lease or purchase. Hagerstown, according to census data, is where the majority of eligible children are located, so the property must be in close proximity to the Hagerstown area. The Executive Director and administrative staff, along with the Board of Directors, have diligently explored multiple buildings, churches, and other sites for ample space that will meet all required guidelines with minimal renovations and construction work. One site is seriously being considered by the Board of Directors. This site will require renovations, but is the most adequate site available at the present time.

The full-day/full-year services for children birth through age five at the Elgin Station site experienced a change in program hours for the 2010-2011 school year, based on a response to parent's schedules and in order to utilize staff in the most effective and efficient way. While the closing time still remains at 5:30 p.m. the center now opens to students at 7:00 a.m. instead of 6:30 a.m., a change of 30 minutes.

Children and Families in the Program

As of December 22, 2010, Head Start of Washington County's Head Start and Early Head Start programs have an enrollment of 482 children.* The program has a total funded enrollment of 485 amongst all grants. The breakdown is as follows:

- Head Start 365
- Early Head Start 60
- Head Start ARRA Expansion 15
- Early Head Start ARRA Expansion + 45 (including 3 expectant mothers)
- GRAND TOTAL 485 children / expectant mothers**

- *As of December 22, 2010, there are three open slots. All three slots are less than 30 days old. Two are Head Start slots at the Westshire Center and the third is an Early Head Start slot in the home based program. All three have children assigned, all paperwork is completed, and the three assigned children will be starting in the program on January 3, 2011.
- The Head Start program has 8 children enrolled in home based services, 323 children enrolled in part-day/part-year center based services, and 34 enrolled in full-day/full-year center based services. (Total of 365 Head Start children)

- The Early Head Start program has 14 children attending a full-day / full-year program, 8 attend a part-day / full-year program, and the other 38 take part in the Home based option. (Total of 60 Early Head Start children)
- The Head Start ARRA Expansion Program has 15 children enrolled in a part-day / extended year program focusing on Kindergarten Readiness skills. (Total of 15 Head Start ARRA Expansion children)
- The Early Head Start ARRA Expansion Program has 42 children enrolled in part-day / full-year center-based classrooms, with 6 infants served at the Westshire Center, 12 infants served in 2 classrooms at the MLK Center, 24 toddlers served in 3 classrooms at MLK, and another 3 expectant parents served in the home based program. (Total of 42 Early Head Start ARRA expansion infants / toddlers and 3 expectant parents for a grand total of 45 slots.)
- Head Start maintains a waiting list of eligible Head Start and Early Head Start children for both part-year and full-year programs.
- Currently there are 182 children ages 3-5 on the waiting list for part-day and/or home based programs and 39 children ages 3-5 on the waiting list for full-day programs. The table below reflects the large growth in the Head Start waiting lists during the last 4 years, as well as the decline in the full-day / full-year wait list. It is speculated that this decline could be the result of (1) a lack of jobs due to the economy and high unemployment rates in Washington County or (2) an increase in the number of four year old children who are dually enrolled in both Head Start and Pre-Kindergarten programs.

Head Start Waiting List (average per year)	07	08	09	10
Head Start Waiting List	102	114	153	167
Head Start Full-Day / Full-Year Waiting List	44	42	41	30

- Currently there are 123 children ages 0-3 on the waiting list for part-day and/or home based programs and 36 children ages 0-3 on the waiting list for full-day programs. The table below reflects the large growth in the Early Head Start waiting lists during the last 4 years, as well as the decline in the full-day / full-year wait list for the last three years. As with Head Start, perhaps this decline also reflects lack of jobs available for parents.

Early Head Start Waiting List (average per year)	07	08	09	10
Early Head Start Waiting List	82	101	106	167
Early Head Start Full-Day / Full-Year Waiting List	30	47	46	27

- It also is of note that since the Early Head Start ARRA program increased the number of EHS students by 43%, the average number of children on the EHS waiting list since September 2010 (when EHS ARRA was fully enrolled) still stood at 33 students.

Parent Survey for 2009-2010 School Year

- In May 2010 a survey was distributed to all Head Start of Washington County families. One hundred thirty-three surveys were returned for a return rate of 31% of all families enrolled during the month of May. Surveys indicated that families were very pleased with the services they received during the program year.
- Of the 133 families who responded to the survey 83% strongly agreed with the following statement: “Overall, I am very pleased with the services my child and family received this year from Head Start of Washington County.” Another 15% indicated that they agreed with the statement. Only two families (less than 2%) answered that they disagreed with the statement.
- Eighty-one percent of the parents surveyed replied that they were in strong agreement with the agency’s increased focus on School Readiness skills, and another 17% answered that they agreed with the statement.
- Families were asked in short-answer form to state what they would consider to be the agency’s greatest strength. The top five answers are listed below, along with the number of responses.
 - Caring Staff / Patience 35
 - Kindergarten Readiness / Discipline 34
 - Works individually with children 12
 - “Everything” about the program 9
 - Family Services / Help for the Family 8
 - 19 other topics were mentioned by respondents
- The survey’s second short-answer question follows: “If you could choose one thing to help improve our program, what would it be and why?” The top 5 suggestions are listed below:
 - Full-Day / Longer Day 8
 - More instruction time 3
 - Friday classes for part-day / full-year 3
 - More fresh food at meals 3
 - Daily communication / teacher and parent 3
 - 32 Other ideas were mentioned by respondents

Selected Characteristics of Children and Families

Enrollment: (Data based on 2009-2010 School Year *prior to ARRA EHS expansion*)

Head Start: There was a total cumulative enrollment of 422 children enrolled in the Head Start program. At the end of the school year, 171 of the children were eligible to transition to the public school system and / or other educational settings in the fall of 2010. Ages are reflected in the table below:

Head Start Children by Age	Based on Cumulative Totals: 2009-2010
Three Year Old Children	224
Four Year Old Children	198

Early Head Start: There was a total cumulative enrollment of 92 children and 5 pregnant women enrolled in the Early Head Start program. Ages are reflected in the table below:

Early Head Start Children by Age	Based on Cumulative Totals: 2009-2010
Under 1 Year of Age	16
1 Year Old	33
2 Years Old	43
3 Years Old	0

Developmental Services:

There are 56 children with identified special needs in the Head Start program. Currently the program is serving children with the following disabilities.

- Health impairment
- Speech or Language impairments
- Mental Retardation
- Autism
- Multiple disabilities, including deaf-blind

The total number of children with identified disabilities represents 15% of the Head Start of Washington County population which is consistent with the previous year. The Early Head Start program reports 31% of children with an Individualized Family Service Plan. There continues to be a disproportionately higher ratio in the Early Head Start population (ages 0-3) of 30.99% compared with the Head Start population (ages 3-5) of 14.74%. Identification and early enrollment into the Head Start of Washington County program is due largely to a strong working relationship with The Washington County Early Intervention Birth to Five program.

Mental Health professionals consulted with program staff and / or the parent or guardian of 30 Head Start children and 4 Early Head Start children. As a result, the Mental Health professional provided an individual mental health assessment for 30 Head Start children and 3 Early Head Start children. The mental health profession referred 7 Head Start children for mental health services, and 4 of these children received services. No Early Head Start children received mental health referrals.

Health:

Insurance

Head Start reports that during the 2009-2010 School Year, over 99% of children enrolled in the Head Start and Early Head Start programs had some type of health insurance.

<u>Health Insurance Information</u>	<u>Head Start</u>	<u>Early Head Start</u>
Children with Health Insurance	421	92
Medicaid	9	5
Child Health Insurance Program (CHIP)	367	83
Combined CHIP/ Medicaid Program if the state operates a Medicaid expansion	4	0
State-only funded insurance	5	2
Private Health Insurance	36	2
Other Health Insurance, i.e. Military Health	0	0
No Health Insurance	1	0
Children with a ongoing source of continuous, accessible health care	405	92

Screenings and Exams

For the first time in many years, the agency is seeing positive results in the area of dental accessibility for Head Start eligible children. Vision and hearing screenings have never caused a major concern as far as follow-up for identified needs: however, for many years dental follow-up for referred children was an unresolved issue in large part due to a lack of dental accessibility.

In 2007 the death of a young child in Maryland due to lack of dental care caused the state to take seriously the lack of dental care for at-risk children. The state began a Maryland Dental Home Initiative in 2008. This year (2009-2010) the agency is starting to see positive results because of the initiative.

The agency's Health Manager reports that this initiative has made a substantial impact for Head Start children and families. Although there are many more hurdles to overcome, the statistical data shared below is much improved over recent years. There is an increase in the number of local dental providers who now accept medical assistance and treat pre-school children. A larger percentage of enrolled children now have a "dental home" and more parents are working with providers to complete the necessary follow-up recommended for their children.

Two hundred twenty-eight Head Start children have continuous, accessible dental care and have received preventative care. Three hundred fifty-nine (or 85%) have had a professional dental examination. Sixty-six were determined to need further treatment and twenty-two of them either have received or are receiving treatment. Twenty of the Early

Head Start children have continuous, accessible dental care. Eighty-one of them are up-to-date with preventative and oral health care.

Medical Needs

HSWC has 132 Head Start children and another 7 Early Head Start children diagnosed with a chronic condition requiring medical treatment. Each and every child either received or is currently receiving treatment for their various conditions, as listed below:

<u>Chronic Health Condition</u>	<u>Head Start</u>	<u>Early Head Start</u>
Asthma	12	2
Hearing Difficulties	12	1
Overweight	69	3
Vision Problems	10	1

Preventative Medical and Dental Services

Collaboration with the Washington County Health Department, the Walnut Family Practice, the HCC Nursing Program, and local physicians and dentists along with a number of other community partners enables the HSWC program to offer parent and staff health trainings. In addition these agencies provide publications for use as part of HSWC’s parent education on health needs for their families.

HSWC funds are used as dollars of last resort to assist with the medical needs of families in the program. These include:

- nutrition assessments
- transportation to appointments

Unmet Medical Needs for Children in the Program:

- Insurance 01
- Dental follow-up 44
- Continuous Dental Care (Dental Home) 84

As mentioned above, although these numbers seem high, these represent decreases over previous years, and as the Maryland Dental Home Initiative becomes more widely accepted, it is anticipated that these unmet needs will decrease.

Population Characteristics

Population and Age

According to the 2000 US Census data Washington County has a population of 131,923. Thirty thousand nine-hundred fourteen (30,914) or 23% of the population in Washington County is under the age of 18 and 6,285 or 5% are 65 or older. Eight thousand one-hundred eight (8,108) or 26.2% of children under the age of 18 are under the age of 5. Washington County ranks fourth in the state among 23 counties and Baltimore City for this population.

Children in Poverty

In Washington County 1,410 or 17.5% of the children who are under the age of 5 are living in poverty. Washington County ranks sixth in the state among 24 counties for this population.

Race and Ethnicity

During the 2009-2010 school year, children in the program fell into one of the following race categories:

<u>Enrollment by Race</u>	<u>Head Start</u>	<u>Early Head Start</u>
Asian	3	0
Black or African American	104	21
Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	2	0
White	173	38
Bi-racial / Multi-racial	111	31
Unspecified	29	7

In comparison, according to the 2000 Census, of the 1,410 children under age 5 who are living below poverty 73% are Caucasian, 19% are Black, and 7% are two or more races.

Table 14. Population Below Poverty by Age Group and Race* in the 2000 Census								
Age Group	Total	One Race						Two or More Races
		White	Black or African American	American Indian & Alaska Native	Asian	Native Hawaiian & Other Pacific Islander	Some Other Race	
Population under age 18 below poverty	3,902	2,965	637	31	11	0	16	242
Under age 5	1,410	1,033	266	0	8	0	0	103
Age 5	277	210	36	0	0	0	0	31

Hispanics, who can be of any race, are included in the racial figures shown here.

Source: Population Reference Bureau, analysis of data from U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Census Summary File 3 (Tables P159A-P159G)

Unmet Need for Head Start/Early Head Start Services

Unmet need is defined as the estimated number of children who are eligible for Head Start / Early Head Start services in Washington County but currently are not enrolled in the program. Census data for the year 2000 reflect that in Washington County, Maryland 1,410 children under the age of 5 are living below the poverty level. Head Start was funded to serve 380 Head Start children and another 71 children and / or pregnant women, as reported in the most recent Program Information Report (PIR), for a grand total of 451 children. Based on these statistics, it is estimated that the Head Start / Early Head Start programs in the county serves 32% of the birth - 5 poverty level / eligible population. See table 13.

Age Group	Total	Below Poverty	
		Number	Percent
Population under age 18 for whom poverty is determined	30,298	3,902	12.9
Under age 5	8,035	1,410	17.5
Age 5	1,806	277	15.3
Ages 6 to 11	10,027	1,264	12.6
Ages 12 to 14	5,388	461	8.6
Age 15	1,863	236	12.7
Ages 16 and 17	3,179	254	8.0
Population ages 18 to 64 for whom poverty is determined	74,992	6,132	8.2
Population ages 65 and over for whom poverty is determined	17,560	1,663	9.5

Source: Population Reference Bureau, analysis of data from U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Census Summary File 3 (Tables P87 & PCT49)

It should also be noted that Census Data “Quick Facts” for Washington County, Maryland speculates that there has been a 10.6% population growth between the time periods of April 1, 2000 to July 1, 2009. No data is available at the present time to determine what percentage of this population growth falls below the poverty level. With the large growth (an estimated increase of 13,987 people) it is highly speculated that the percentage of eligible children served in both Head Start and Early Head Start could be substantially lower than 32%.

Other Issues Impacting Head Start/Early Head Start Services

Single-Mother Families

According to the 2000 U.S. Census there are 2,294 single-parent households with children under the age of 5 in Washington County. One thousand seven hundred forty-six (1,746) or 76% of these are single-mother families and 965 (55.3%) of all single-mother families with children under the age of 5 are living in poverty. This is the highest percentage for all family types and age groups living in poverty in Washington County (See table 16). Washington County ranks sixth in the State among 23 counties and Baltimore City for this population (See Table A)

Table 16. Poverty Status of Related Children by Family Type and Age Group in the 2000 Census

Family Type and Age Group	Total	Below Poverty	
		Number	Percent
Related children under age 18	30,080	3,705	12.3
In married-couple families	22,497	1,036	4.6
Under age 5	5,741	363	6.3
Age 5	1,311	54	4.1
Ages 6 to 17	15,445	619	4.0
In single-mother families	5,720	2,430	42.5
Under age 5	1,746	965	55.3
Age 5	397	198	49.9
Ages 6 to 17	3,577	1,267	35.4
In single-father families	1,863	239	12.8
Under age 5	548	82	15.0
Age 5	98	25	25.5
Ages 6 to 17	1,217	132	10.8

Source: Population Reference Bureau, analysis of data from U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Census Summary File 3 (Table PCT52)

Table A

Percent of Single-mother Families with Related Children Under Age 18 that are Below Poverty: 2000			
National Rank	In-State Rank	Geographic Area	%
1141	1	Kent, MD	41.9
1278	2	Somerset, MD	40.5
1315	3	Allegany, MD	40.2
1531	4	Baltimore City, MD	38.3
1646	5	Garrett, MD	37.2
1769	6	Washington, MD	36.2
1913	7	Worcester, MD	34.8
1942	8	Dorchester, MD	34.5
2046	9	Caroline, MD	33.2
2089	10	Wicomico, MD	32.6
2533	11	Talbot, MD	27.4
2639	12	Cecil, MD	26.0
2747	13	St. Marys, MD	24.2
2828	14	Harford, MD	22.8
2911	15	Queen Annes, MD	20.9
2956	16	Carroll, MD	19.6
2962	17	Calvert, MD	19.5
2973	18	Frederick, MD	19.2
2995	19	Baltimore, MD	18.3
3000	20	Anne Arundel, MD	18.1
3016	21	Charles, MD	17.5
3076	22	Montgomery, MD	15.2
3096	23	Prince Georges, MD	14.1
3103	24	Howard, MD	13.4

N/A = Not Applicable or Not Yet Available



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Unemployment / Recession

Washington County has experienced high unemployment since the last complete Community Assessment of 2008. Not only has this affected waiting lists and family services, it has also taken a high toll on other community agencies who partner with / serve similar clientele as Head Start.

The Maryland Department of Labor Licensing and Regulation reported that for much of 2010 Washington County's unemployment rate exceeded that of the nation and the state of Maryland. While Maryland's rate of unemployment held steady at 7.4%, and the national rate held fairly steady between 9.6-9.8%, Washington County's rate fluctuated from a high of 11.9 in February to a low of 9.4% in October.

These numbers represent an increase in unemployment since 2009. Home sales and the average prices of homes in Washington County also decreased significantly, as did consumer spending. During September of 2009 Washington County reported spending of \$130.03 million, based on Maryland sales tax collections. In September of 2010, spending was reported at \$124.04 million, a decrease of 4.6%.

All these unfortunate statistics can be reflected by the increased waiting lists and decreased need for full time care, as mentioned earlier in this update.

Homelessness

During the 2009-2010 school year, a total of 27 Head Start families (7%) and 7 Early Head Start families (9%) were reported as "homeless" at some point during the school year.

Employment / Job Training Status

Employment Status of Parents / Guardians	Head Start – *Percentage of Families	Early Head Start – *Percentage of Families
<u>Two Parent Families</u>		
Both parents / guardians employed	20%	9%
One parent / guardian employed	48%	45%
Both parents / guardians are not working, such as those that are unemployed, retired, or disabled	32%	45%
<u>Single Parent Families</u>		
The parent / guardian is employed	47%	23%
The parent / guardian is not employed	53%	77%

Job Training / School Status of Parents/ Guardians	Head Start – *Percentage of Families	Early Head Start – *Percentage of Families
<u>Two Parent Families</u>		
Both parents / guardians are in job training or school	1%	0%
One parent / guardian is in job training or school	7%	9%
Neither parent / guardian is in job training or school	92%	91%
<u>Single Parent Families</u>		
The parent / guardian is in job training or school	7%	2%
The parent / guardian is not in job training or school	93%	98%

**For these categories, percentages were used instead of the actual number, in order to more accurately reflect the effect the economy has had on families.*

In Summary

Strategic plans, goals, objectives, and even future funding for Head Start in the nation hinge on the present economy. Although the last half of 2010 reflects that unemployment may be decreasing, the future of Head Start is in jeopardy. We must assure that this agency advocates for the needs of eligible families. While to the reader these numbers may be just that – numbers, to the staff of Head Start of Washington County, Inc. these numbers represent REAL people who have strengths, weaknesses, goals, dreams, hopes and ambitions. For over 45 years the nation has stood behind Head Start eligible families and children, assisting them, advocating for them, and helping them to see that they too could dream about a better future for themselves, their families, and most importantly, their children. The need is great, far too great. The economy is vulnerable, far too vulnerable to force at-risk families to try to struggle in such a fragile economy. Head Start often serves as a bridge – a bridge for education, for employment, for individual goals, for entrance into kindergarten for an eager and emergent learner. The numbers prove that the agency is doing its job – but that the agency is not funded adequately to meet the needs of all eligible children in Washington County, Maryland.