

Quality Improvement Funds FY 2020

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COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT FINDINGS THAT SUPPORT THE USE OF QI FUNDS:

Mental Health Services:

Enfield Head Start's 2019 Community Needs Assessment revealed areas of strengths as well as services and program gaps. Of the gaps identified, a lack of mental health services for children and adults due to long wait lists and limited public transportation, could be supported using the Quality Improvement funds.

COVID -19

Akin to communities around the globe, COVID-19 has left the young children and families in the Enfield community to face food insecurity, loss of employment, disruption in typical routine and structure due to extended school closure, social isolation, loss of loved ones, anxiety, uncertainty, etc. The effect of these experiences on the children and families served by Enfield Head Start remains largely unknown.

CURRENT STRUCTURES THAT SUPPORT A TRAUMA INFORMED APPROACH:

Co-location of shared programs:

Enfield Head Start is co-located with 3 subsidized early care and education programs in the Stowe Early Learning Center. Additionally, the Family Resource Center, and Enfield's Early Childhood Collaborative, KITE (Key Initiatives to Early Education) also share the space. Co-location allows for increased access to resources including, but not limited to professional development, access to playgroups, and shared transportation.

Mental Health Services:

Enfield Head Start has an active MOU with the Family Resource Center which gives us access to a Licensed Master Social Worker and Child First, a national, evidence based, two-generation model that provides intensive, home-based services to vulnerable children and families.

Classroom Quality:

EHS serves 102 children in 6 classrooms. Each classroom is staffed with 1 certified teacher and 2 teacher assistants, maintaining a ratio of 1:6 or better. Creating predictability has been and will

continue to be an initiative supported by professional development and coaching in the area of Executive Function.

Family Services:

Transportation for all Head Start children is being offered by the BOE. Family Services staff are being trained in Circle of Security. Circle of Security is a relationship-based early intervention program designed to enhance attachment security between parents and children. This program will be offered to all families throughout the year.

Trauma Informed Workforce:

Family Advocates have 34 children and families on their caseloads. District wide professional development workshops are consistently offered on an intentionally staggered schedule to build staff competence in trauma informed approaches to teaching.

Program-Wide Trauma Informed Environment:

As a result of the mental health gap identified in our community needs assessment, our LMSW will serve on our Health Services Advisory Committee and have a standing agenda item.

INTENDED USE OF QUALITY IMPROVEMENT FUNDS:

Contractual:

\$22,000

- Early childhood mental health/behavioral consultation
- Board Certified Music Therapist:
 - impulse control and self-regulation
 - social emotional awareness and expression
 - increase socially appropriate behaviors in a group setting
- Professional development and ongoing coaching with Gesell Institute (for staff and governing bodies)
 - Managing challenging behaviors
 - Self-care and secondary stress
 - Teaching Generation-C (Post-COVID)

- Family learning opportunities with Gesell Institute
 - Supporting young children through the pandemic
 - Creating predictable routines and home environments
 - Self-care for the caregiver
- Systems Development with Gesell
 - Oversight of a trauma informed approach/environment
 - On-going monitoring of implementation to identify strengths, gaps, and next steps
 - Development of common language and expectations to support predictability of adult behaviors and responses.
 - Infusing a trauma informed approach into practices and policies i.e. mission statement, orientation/intake practices and materials, etc.

Supplies to Support the Physical Environment:

\$3, 732

Examples include:

- Calming Cubes
- Soft Floor Pillows *Dependent upon CDC guidelines for re-opening
- Sensory/Calming materials
- Books related to Belly Breathing and Feelings