



General Update

The **ParentChild+ Program** is a leading early childhood, school readiness program working in 142 partner agencies across 15 states and six countries. JFCS is proud to deliver this program in Minnesota, where it is helping to bridge the opportunity gap and prepare children for future success in school. This exceptional program serves 387 children in the Twin Cities metro area and in four sites across Greater Minnesota. We are pleased to report that once again ParentChild+ is on track for a successful year. We continue to place an emphasis on in-person in-home visits that have long been at the core of service delivery while still allowing for virtual visits based on family preference. For the 2024-2025 program most families continue to choose in-person home visits. In the Twin Cities and all four Greater Minnesota partner sites, our extensive outreach efforts resulted in successful family recruitment and enrollment during the summer and fall.

At JFCS we were successful in hiring eight Early Learning Specialists (ELS), including three that are bilingual in Spanish/English and one bilingual in Somali/English. Among these new hires, two are former participants in the program. One of our partner sites, Rice County, was unable to meet their hiring needs which led to a reduction of their goal of enrolled children from 62 to 47. However, due to the successful hiring at JFCS and current JFCS ELS increasing their caseloads, we were able to absorb these numbers and exceed the overall enrollment goal of 370 by serving an additional 17 children above our goal. To date, home visits for all five sites are on pace to reach the goal of 46+ visits for 85% or more of enrolled children.

Accomplishments Made in Past Six Months

For the 2024-2025 program year, JFCS and the Greater Minnesota partners are serving 387 children in 331 families (there is some overlap due to sibling groups where each child is enrolled). Of this total, 230 children are in the Twin Cities metro area, and 157 are from our partner sites in Greater Minnesota. Specific totals in Greater Minnesota are: 40 children served by Intercultural Mutual Assistance Association in Rochester, 52 by Promise Neighborhood of Central Minnesota in St. Cloud, 47 by Healthy Community Initiative in Rice County, and 18 by Northland Area Family Service Center and Pine River-Backus Family Service Center in Cass County. All families are at or below 200% of the 2024 Federal Poverty Guidelines (FPG), with 64% percent at or below 100% of the guidelines, and 36% between 100%-200% FPG. Currently, 49% percent of children identify as female and 51% percent identify as male. ParentChild+ serves a diverse population, with 29% of the population identifying as Somali, 34% percent Hispanic/Latino(x), 10% other African, 9% African American, 11% white, 1% Afghan, 2% Multi-racial, 3% Asian, and 1% Native American.

The centerpiece of ParentChild+ is that Early Learning Specialists (ELSS) provide families with twice weekly home visits. During these visits, the ELS models and facilitates enriched verbal interaction between the child and parent. Visits also model positive parenting techniques such as encouragement, nurturing, redirecting, and engaging. ELSS also provide one educational toy or book to each participating child each week.

As noted, JFCS continues to emphasize in-person in-home visits, and provide choice for families who prefer to continue virtual visits. In the Twin Cities, 98% of visits have been in-person and 2% percent have been virtual,

using a variety of platforms. Nearly all Greater Minnesota families have chosen and are receiving in-person visits.

Between September 1 and December 31, 2024, ELSs provided a total of 8132 home visits to families. Below is a summary of visits delivered through December:

Site	Number of Visits
Intercultural Mutual Assistance Association serving families in Rochester	1040
Promise Neighborhood of Central MN serving families mainly in St. Cloud	1263
Healthy Community Initiative serving families mainly in Faribault and Northfield (in and around Rice County)	894
Northland Area Family Service Center and Pine River-Backus Family Service Center serving families in and around Cass County	338
JFCS serving families in Twin Cities metro area	4597
Total Visits	8132

Program Challenges

The primary challenge at JFCS was two ELS staff leaving at the end of October/beginning of November. This meant we had to hire quickly to continue to serve the families enrolled. We were able to successfully post for the two positions, hire and train staff by the third week of November, causing little disruption to the families and our enrollment goals. Another challenge this year has stemmed from one of our partner agencies not able to enroll their goal number of children served. This caused them to reduce the overall number of participants at their sites. However, due to the hiring at JFCS and current JFCS ELS increasing their caseloads, JFCS was able to absorb these participants still allowing us to exceed our goal of 370 across all sites.

At JFCS, our original plan was to serve 200 children. The staffing plan was to have 14 returning ELSs serving 144 children (average of 10 children/ELS) and 6 new ELSs serving 56 children (average of 8 children/ELS), along with the leadership team staff serving 9 children. During the hiring process, we were able to hire an extra bilingual ELS, moving our planned 6 new hires to 7. This brought us slightly higher than our goal of 200, which allowed us to adjust if a returning or new ELS needed to reduce their caseload downward. We had one ELS choose not to return during the summer, which brought us to hiring 8 new ELS. Of the new ELS staff we hired, 1 new ELS that was set to serve 8 children left their position as of October 2024. 1 returning staff set to serve 8 children left the beginning of November 2024. As stated above, both ELS were replaced by the end of November 2024. The departed staff's caseloads were redistributed to current ELS and the new ELS hires.

In the end, we currently have 12 returning ELSs serving 136 children (average of 11.3 children/ELS) and 8 new ELSs serving 77 children (average of 9.6 children/ELS), with leadership team staff serving 11 children. Due to returning and new ELS increasing their caseloads, we are well over our goal of 200 enrolled children at JFCS, reaching 230 children enrolled.

Our Rice County partner was able to hire one ELS to fill one position but was unable to fill another position due to an ELS leaving close to the start of the program year. As a result, this agency is serving 47 children out of their planned 62. IMAA in Rochester had their coordinator leave her position and promoted a new coordinator from within. They successfully filled one of the ELS openings to serve the 40 enrolled children (average 13.3 children/ELS). Cass County had their two ELS return, serving 18 children of the planned 18 (average of 9

children/ELS). Promise Neighborhood hired one ELS to fill an open position and are serving 50 children of the planned 50 (average of 10.5 children/ELS). Across all sites, the starting wage and returning wage for ELS was increased to help recruit and retain staff.

Spending Down the Award

We anticipate spending \$2,068,988 in government funds, including \$1,800,000 in current year base funding and \$268,988 in carryover funding.

Total direct expenses in the revised budget are \$1,999,433. The direct cost per child is \$5,165 (a decrease of 4%, compared to the prior program year), while the total cost per child decreased by 3% (compared to prior program year), to \$6,444.

Significant changes include:

- Staffing: 4% increase in JFCS salaries and benefits for ELS staff (finalized enrollment is 15% above initial projections).
- Fees: 7% decrease in anticipated partner agency expenses (largely driven by lower than anticipated enrollment at Rice County partner agency, which is 24% below initial projections).
- Staff Training & Development: 5% increase to account for anticipated costs associated with the Parent Child+ conference and MACMH Annual Child and Adolescent Mental Health Conference.

Remainder of the Year

Overall, ParentChild+ is in a strong position, and we expect the program to meet all program goals by the end of the year. We had 38 children across all sites that did not return for year two after completing the first program year (2023-2024) due to moving out of service area, change of employment, daycare, and other personal, non-program-related reasons. We have had 9 children start this program year (2024-2025) that have had to discontinue services for similar reasons. Last year, we had 39 children and their families (11%) leave the program before June 2024. Over the past three years, our retention rate has consistently been between 87% - 91% over the course of the full, 2-year program, and we expect to be in that range again this year.

We have served 53 more children than at this point last year and currently have an average of 21 visits per child across all sites. This continues to be a positive indicator that enrolled families are well on their way to reaching the 46+ visit goal, and likely to hit the goal that 85% of all children would reach the 46+ visits. This high level of engagement, and the fact that we currently are running waiting lists for interested families, suggest that community interest in the program remains high. We are gratified to see families place a high priority on in-person visits, as we feel this gives the best opportunity to optimize program impacts and monitor results.



Minnesota Coalition
FOR FAMILY HOME VISITING

Representative Carlie Kotyza-Witthuhn
Chair, Children & Families Finance & Policy Committee
120 MN State Capitol
Minnesota Capitol, Room 123

March 24, 2023

Dear Chair Kotyza-Witthuhn and Members of the Children & Families Committee:

Minnesota's Coalition for Family Home Visiting (MCFHV) writes in support of HF 994, to increase funding for ParentChild+, an evidence-based home visiting program that aims to support school readiness and prepare children for a lifetime of learning. MCFHV is excited to see significant support for the healthy growth and development of Minnesota's youngest children and supports this investment in their education and future. We believe supporting a broad coalition of evidence-based programs and models will increase our ability to meet the unique needs of families across all stages of their child's development.

ParentChild+ is an early intervention home visiting program, proven to increase school readiness and produce a significant return on investment. Children who receive these services are 50% less likely to need special education services by third grade and graduate high school at higher rates than their peers. ParentChild+ home visiting promotes equity by providing age-appropriate educational books and toys for children and supports non-English speaking home visitors to work with families in culturally and linguistically responsive ways.

The Minnesota Coalition for Family Home Visiting urges you to support SF 2097 to address academic disparities in Minnesota and ensure all children have the opportunity to a strong start on their academic journey.

Thank you,

Paula Frisk,
Minnesota Coalition for Family Home Visiting, Chair
St. David's Center for Child & Family Development,
Program Director of Parent & Child Services
Mental Health Practitioner & Infant-Parent Specialist

Laura LaCroix-Dalluhn,
Minnesota Coalition for Family Home Visiting
Projects Coordinator

Cati Gómez
Minnesota Coalition for Family Home Visiting
Policy Associate



Date: March 24, 2025

From: John J. Fanning, Director, Education Partnerships Coalition of Minnesota

RE: Letter of Support for HF994 – ParentChild+ Program Funding

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the Education Partnerships Coalition (EPC), a Minnesota-based prenatal-to-profession initiative, I am writing to express our strong support for House File 994, specifically for the appropriations to the ParentChild+ program.

As a statewide coalition of nine member organizations across our great state, we are committed to ensuring that all children and youth in Minnesota have access to the educational resources they need to succeed – regardless of their background or zip code.

We believe this investment is both timely and critical. The ParentChild+ program is a vital resource for children and families, providing early childhood literacy and school readiness services to children aged 16 months to four years.

This evidence-based, research-validated program has been proven to improve educational outcomes by fostering early literacy skills and preparing children for success in school and beyond.

The program's focus on engaging parents and caregivers is key to its success, and the \$1.8 million in funding for fiscal years 2026 and 2027 will ensure that more children have access to these life-changing opportunities.

Additionally, the growth into new rural, suburban, and urban areas will help to reach even more children who would benefit from this critical support. With the base of \$1.8 million for fiscal year 2028 and beyond, the program will be able to continue its mission of empowering families and providing the foundation for children to succeed in school and life.

EPC is committed to advancing educational opportunities for all students, and we believe that investments like those proposed in House File 994 are necessary for achieving this vision. Ensuring that children have the tools and support they need in their earliest years is essential to their long-term success.

The ParentChild+ program is a proven model that aligns with our mission, and we encourage the legislature to approve the appropriations outlined in this bill.

Thank you for your leadership on this important issue and for your ongoing commitment to the success of Minnesota's children, youth, and families.

Sincerely,

Education Partnerships Coalition, including:

Austin Aspires * Children First (West Metro) * C2C (Rochester) * Generation Next (Twin Cities) * Healthy Community Initiative (Northfield & Faribault) * Northside Achievement Zone (Minneapolis) * RiseUp Partnership (Red Wing) * Saint Paul Promise * United Way of Central Minnesota (Greater St. Cloud)

Our children succeed in school and in life. Our communities thrive. Our state is equitable and prosperous for ALL.

404 South Eighth Street - Minneapolis, MN 55404 - www.epc-mn.org



Intercultural Mutual Assistance Association
2500 Valleyhigh Drive NW, Rochester, MN 55901
PHONE: 507-289-5960 FAX: 507-289-6199 www.imaa.net

IMAA is building bridges between cultures.

Chairpersons Rep. Nolan West and Rep. Carlie Kotyza-Witthuhn
Children and Families Finance and Policy Committee
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
St. Paul, MN 55155-1298

Re: HF 994 - APPROPRIATION; PARENTCHILD+ PROGRAM

Dear co-chairs Rep. Nolan West and Rep. Carlie Kotyza-Witthuhn and Members of the House,

Intercultural Mutual Assistance Association (IMAA) strongly supports House Bill HF 994, because Minnesota families need evidence-based and research-validated early childhood literacy and school readiness program for children ages 16 months to four years. IMAA is refugee led and multi-cultural organization that has 41-year experience in serving refugee and immigrant families in Rochester, Minnesota area. Through ParentChild+ project, we are also proud partner with Jewish Family and Children's Service of Minneapolis (JFCS).

Since 2019, IMAA has actively participated in delivering ParentChild+ curriculum to refugee and immigrant families in Rochester, Minnesota. We started with 15 families first program year and have grown the program to serve 40 families this program year. This program year, the families served are legal refugees and immigrants from various countries worldwide. We hire locally and each family is matched with a community-based early learning specialist (ELS) who shares their language and cultural background. Our early learning specialists build meaningful relationships with families and support parents in realizing their role as their children's first and most important teacher as well as ongoing academic advocates. As we build strong trust relationships with families, early learning specialists are able to connect families to a wide-range of community resources and programming including food, housing, health care, and educational services. As families graduate from ParentChild+, our staff works to ensure that the program children are enrolled in high-quality preschool programs, the critical next educational step.

The impact that ParentChild+ program has had on refugee and immigrant families in Rochester area is immense. When our young children are nurtured through an effective early childhood literacy and school readiness program, they can achieve their full potential and their parents have more options to improve their future. For these reasons, IMAA respectfully asks for your "Aye" vote for House Bill HF 994.

Here is a success story from last year:

Zayd Abdallah is a smart and attentive child who has shown significant improvement through the Parent Child Plus program. He has made great strides in reading, recognizing his alphabets, and developing his own identity. Zayd's mom stated that this program has been incredibly beneficial for her child, with excellent teachers and diverse learning methods. They complement her efforts in teaching Zayd, making her feel proud as a mother. It's heartwarming to see him get excited about receiving new toys and books, his mother said. Zayd comes from a two-parent household with two siblings—an older sister and a younger sister. His parents are both from Somalia and arrived in the USA as refugees, while the children were born in the USA. Zayd was enrolled in the Parent Child + program two years ago and graduated this year. He is now on his way to kindergarten this fall. We wish him the best of luck as he embarks on this new journey, confident that he is more than prepared to shine.

Sincerely,

Armin Budimlic
Executive Director

Report to MN Department of Education

REPORT PERIOD: JULY 1, 2023 – JUNE 30, 2024



JEWISH FAMILY AND CHILDREN'S SERVICE OF MINNEAPOLIS (JFCS)

5905 Golden Valley Road, Golden Valley, MN 55422

Amy Weiss, Chief Program Officer, Program Contact – 952-542-4809

GENERAL UPDATE

The **ParentChild+** Program is a leading early childhood, school readiness program working in 42 partner agencies across 15 states and in 6 countries across the world. JFCS is proud to deliver this program in Minnesota, where it is helping to bridge the opportunity gap and help prepare children for future success in school. ParentChild+ served 334 children in the Twin Cities metro area and in Greater Minnesota, including with our partners: Northland Area Family Service Center and Pine River-Backus Family Center, Promise Neighborhood of Central MN serving families mainly in St. Cloud, Intercultural Mutual Assistance Association serving families in Rochester, and Healthy Community Initiative serving families mainly in Faribault and Northfield (in and around Rice County).

As noted in the Interim Report, we continue to put an emphasis on in-person, in-home visits that have long been at the core of service delivery. This was our second program year of being back to in-person in-home visits as our standard service delivery model after COVID moved us to all-virtual visits during the pandemic. We still provided the option to families to utilize virtual visits depending on their preference, or when inclement weather or illness would make virtual the more optimal option. For the 2023-2024 program year, 91% of all families chose in-person as their regular service delivery model.

Across the five sites, ParentChild+ retained a total of 295 of 334 children who enrolled in fall of 2023 (88% retention rate). We had 39 children and their families (11%) leave the program before June 2024 for a variety of reasons, including relocation, housing, job schedules and medical reasons.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN THE PAST YEAR

In Spring 2024, there were a total of 99 graduates between all ParentChild+ sites. We have 196 children who we anticipate will move to year two of the program in fall of 2024.

JFCS (Twin Cities Metro) – 180 Children

- 54 children in Minneapolis and 88 in suburban Hennepin County
- 12 children in St. Paul and 2 in suburban Ramsey County
- Other Metro Counties: 13 children in Anoka, 2 in Carver, 2 in Dakota, 2 in Scott, 2 in Washington, and 3 in Wright.

Greater MN Counties – 154 Children

- Northland Area Family Service Center and Pine River-Backus Family Center served 16 in Cass County and 5 in Crow Wing County.
- Promise Neighborhood of Central MN served 6 in Benton, 1 in Morrison, 6 in Sherburne, and 29 in Stearns Counties.
- Intercultural Mutual Assistance Association served 40 in Olmsted County.
- Healthy Community Initiative served 1 in Dakota, 49 in Rice, and 1 in Steele Counties.

Population Demographics:

- All families are at or below 200% of the 2023 Federal Poverty Guidelines (FPG), with 65% at or below 100% FPG, and 35% between 100%-200% FPG.
- 49% of child participants identified as female and 51% identified as male.
- ParentChild+ serves a diverse population, with 27% of the population identifying as Somali, 30% percent Hispanic/Latino(x), 13% other African, 12% African American, 11% white, 2% Afghan, 2% Multi-racial, 2% Asian, and 1% Native American.

Between July 1, 2023, and June 30, 2024, Early Learning Specialists (ELs) provided a total of 16,333 home visits to families.

Site	Number of Visits
Intercultural Mutual Assistance Association serving families in Rochester	1,898
Promise Neighborhood of Central MN serving families mainly in St. Cloud	2,358
Healthy Community Initiative serving families mainly in Faribault and Northfield (in and around Rice County)	2,338
Northland Area Family Service Center and Pine River-Backus Family Service Center serving families in and around Cass County	954
JFCS serving families in Twin Cities metro area	8,785
Total Visits	16,333

To fully complete the program year, participants need to complete a minimum of 46 visits. This year, 85% of all 334 enrolled children achieved the goal of 46 visits. Of the 295 children who remained enrolled throughout the entire program year, 95% achieved the goal of 46 visits.

Goal #1: Children are ready for school.

Activity 1.1: Home Visiting

Outcomes 1.1:

1. 88% (Goal was 85%) of children demonstrated age-appropriate development within six domains as measured by the ASQ and ASQ-SE developmental screening tool: 90% Communication, 91% Gross Motor, 89% Fine Motor, 90% Problem Solving, 89% Personal-Social and 80% Social-Emotional.
2. 86% (Goal was 85%) of children participated in kindergarten screening for three-year-olds. ParentChild+ staff provided referrals, information and support to families who reported that they had not completed their child(ren)'s screenings.
3. 100% (Goal was 100%) of participating children showed increased familiarity with reading and written materials such as pre-school books and magazines.
4. 82% of first year and 90% of second year participating children (goal was 60% of first year and 85% of second year children) showed increased attention span and ability to listen to books being read for a sustained period of time.
5. 76% of first year and 88% of second year children (goal was 60% of first year and 85% of second year children) showed increased ability to take turns and tolerate frustration.

Activity 1.2 Children receive early interventions as appropriate

Outcome 1.2

11% (our estimated need was 8%) of participant children were referred for intervention services by the Early Learning Specialist in consultation with the ParentChild+ Coordinator.

Goal #2: Children live in safe, stable, nurturing environments.

Outcome 2.1 Families demonstrate positive, responsive parenting techniques that support children's social, emotional, cognitive, and physical development

89% (goal was 85%) of families showed progress in demonstrating positive, responsive parenting techniques with their children.

Outcome 2.2 Families promote children's language development

90% (Goal was 85%) of families showed an increase in parent/child communication techniques that promote language/literacy skills of children.

Outcome 2.3 Families access community services as needed

100% (goal was 100%) of families received at least two referrals to essential community resources. This year, Early Learning Specialists made a total of 2,097 referrals (an average of 6.2 per child), which helped families connect to needed resources such as for assistance related to housing, transportation, food security, legal aid, educational and employment-related services, and more.

99% (goal was 95%) of families received follow-up in accessing these referrals. Early Learning Specialists confirm follow-up receipt of community resources by parents self-reporting during visits.

Goal #3: Children are healthy

Outcome 3.1 Children are up to date with immunizations

96% (goal was 85%) of parents reported that their children have up-to-date immunizations.

Outcome 3.2 Children complete annual well-child check-ups

98% (goal was 85%) of parents will report that their children have completed an annual well-child check-up.

PROGRAM CHALLENGES

While the program successfully met and exceeded many of its goals, staffing challenges had an impact on our ability to serve our original goal of serving 360 children across all 5 ParentChild+ program sites. JFCS and Healthy Community Initiative (HCI) in Rice County were two sites that had staffing challenges, which required a revision to the original enrollment goal to 340 children served. Even with the reduction in staff, the overall number of children served was 334 across all 5 sites, which was only 6 children short of the revised enrollment goal.

Our original plan at JFCS was to have 13 returning Early Learning Specialists (ELs) and 6 new ELs, along with the leadership team staff, who would collectively serve a total of 200 children. We were able to hire the required staff through October; however, three new ELs left their positions before the end of December, all citing personal reasons not related to the work as their need to leave. By the time the new EL staff left in December, there were not enough weeks left in the program year to hire and train replacement staff, nor was there enough time to enroll families for them to be able to complete the minimum required number of 46 home visits before the end of the school year. The EL staff caseload was redistributed to leadership team and other EL staff, and we lowered our enrollment goal to 180 children.

HCI in Rice County also reported a challenge in hiring, serving 51 children compared to their goal of 60 due to not being able to hire one EL. IMAA in Rochester had two ELs resign their positions during the program year and were able to hire to fill their positions maintaining their goal of serving 40 children. Promise Neighborhood in St. Cloud was able to hire one additional staff to exceed their enrollment goal of 40 children and served a total 42 children. Cass County had no changes in staffing and exceeded their enrollment goal of 20 children by serving a total of 21 children.

Another challenge we successfully managed was implementing changes mandated by the ParentChild+ International Center regarding assessment tools, as well as the frequency of when assessment tools are required to be completed during the full two years of the program. The decision for this change evolved from a renewed effort to engage parents in the assessment of their child's development in collaboration with their

ELS, reflecting the program's fundamental belief that parents are the experts on their child's development.

One change was the implementation of a new assessment tool called Parent Involvement in Learning (PIEL), which is to be executed three times during the two-year program. PIEL replaces the previously required Child Behavior Trait (CBT) and Parent and Child Together (PACT) assessment tools that were completed four times during the two-year program, and were an observational assessment done by staff. Only families in the first year of the program adopted the new PIEL assessment, while the families in the second year of the program continued to use the CBT and PACT assessments. The plan is to phase out CBT and PACT and phase in PIEL to replace CBT and PACT. We will continue to use some questions from CBT and PACT in parent surveys and utilize PIEL results in future reports.

Another change included requirement of the Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ) and ASQ-Social Emotional three times during the two years children are in the program. While we have always required the ASQ/ASQSE in Minnesota, the frequency and time of the program year to do these assessments was new to staff.

LOOKING AHEAD: HOW OUR CHALLENGES WILL INFORM FUTURE WORK

Given the previous year's staffing challenges, JFCS has explored and implemented a variety of solutions to help recruit and retain the necessary staff members. We plan to hire 5 new ELSs for the next program year and shift our focus to supporting those returning ELSs and recently hired ELSs in their work, as well as to look at additional ways to increase our enrollment goals. We will continue to have one of our ELSs to work as a Summer Family Recruitment Specialist during the summer to ensure we will reach our enrollment goals here at JFCS. This role will work with the year-round leadership team staff on outreach, recruitment, and enrollment of new families during the summer when home visits and all other ELS staff are on break.

Interest in the program continues to run high, especially among Spanish-speaking families. JFCS had 3 Spanish-speaking ELSs and 3 Spanish-speaking supervisors to serve the community, but due to unexpectedly high demand, we had to place several Latino(x) families on a waiting list. We continue to work on our recruitment effort of Spanish-speaking ELSs as we head into the next program year.

Our staffing challenges are not unique; many nonprofit and for-profit organizations have found it difficult to maintain necessary staffing levels in the current job market. As a strategy for staff retention and recruitment, when ELS staff returned to JFCS in the fall of 2023, all received a substantial increase in wages. Wages for new ELS hires also increased significantly. Our Greater Minnesota partners also increased staff wages for this program year and all five sites are planning for another increase for the next program year. Due to the employment period aligning with the academic year, rather than year round some turnover is to be expected.

As part of our strategic plan, the leadership team is creating tools to examine our recruitment process from the point of initial interest to the family's full enrollment in the program. Tracking the multiple steps and time in this process both for families who successfully enroll and families who do not make it to the enrollment step will help inform and improve our work in family recruitment. Another area of our strategic plan is reexamining the Home-Based Child Care (HBCC) model and the impact it could have on our community. Pre-pandemic JFCS provided this model which was then called the Family Child Care Model. Leadership team members attended the ParentChild+ International Center's training for the HBCC model this year and are developing a plan for potential implementation of HBCC in program year 2025-2026.

A STORY OF SUCCESS

A testament of the power of ParentChild+ to change lives of young learners and their families comes from the example of a 2-year-old we'll call "Sara." Sara was a bundle of energy who was much beloved by her family; they were also excited to prepare for a new baby to be born. Sara's father was not around much during the day due to his work, and he was not initially part of the ParentChild+ site visits with the ELS. But as the due date for Sara's sibling drew near, the father's work schedule changed, and he was able to be part of the visits. Dad expressed sadness and frustration that he had not been around Sara as much as he would have liked, and had missed so many of her milestones. But he was thrilled to see how much Sara had learned in the program and was excited for her future. When dad first joined the visits, he was hesitant to read to Sara and was afraid of "messing things up." The ELS modeled picture reading and made suggestions of how he could make the books his own. Dad started making silly voices while pointing out pictures to Sara, and she absolutely adored it! Dad may have been quiet at first, but as the visits continued, he became confident in his reading and his abilities as a father, and started to ask questions about infants and toddlers and how they learn. Overall, he said his experience of helping Sara learn made him a more active member of the family, and he expressed that he wanted to be more engaged with Sara and her new sibling so that they could all help learn together. In the end, the ELS notes that at each visit Dad would come with a prepared list of questions, not just about learning but about finding additional resources to help his family thrive. Later, he explained that he was preparing to work with his job to secure paternity leave when the baby was born to deepen their relationship. Together, Dad and Sara—and everyone in the family—are successfully working together to build a better future for them all.



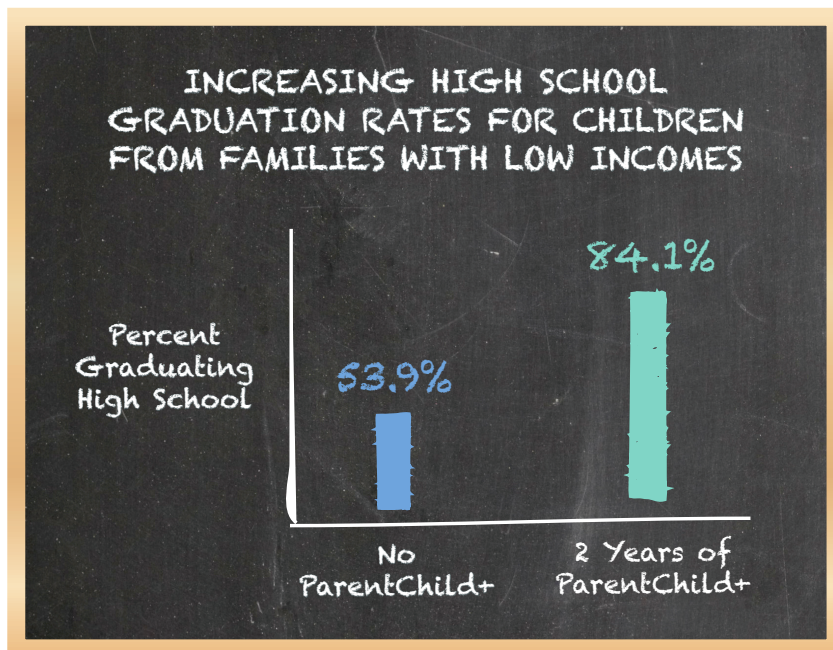
ParentChild+



CLOSING THE OPPORTUNITY GAP BY BUILDING SCHOOL READINESS AT HOME

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

ParentChild+ is an intensive home visiting program for families with children ages 2-4 that supports families with school readiness, parenting skills and child development—at no cost to the family. It helps children from communities that are underserved bridge the opportunity gap and prepare them for success in school by bringing highly-trained early learning specialists into the families' homes for twice-weekly visits over a two-year period.



ParentChild+

helps parents as their child's first and most important teacher, modeling new ways to interact with their child and introducing opportunities to impact their child's developmental growth.

90% of families showed an increase in parent/child communication techniques that promote language/literacy skills of children



Founding Sponsors: Anonymous, Constellation Fund, Richard and Beverly Fink Family Fund, Beverly N. Grossman Foundation, Lynne and Andrew Redleaf Foundation, Richard M. Schulze Family Foundation, Allan Stillerman, in memory of his late parents: Friedel and David Stillerman; late parents of Loni Stillerman: Shirlee and Maurice Pilch and in loving memory of Loni Stillerman

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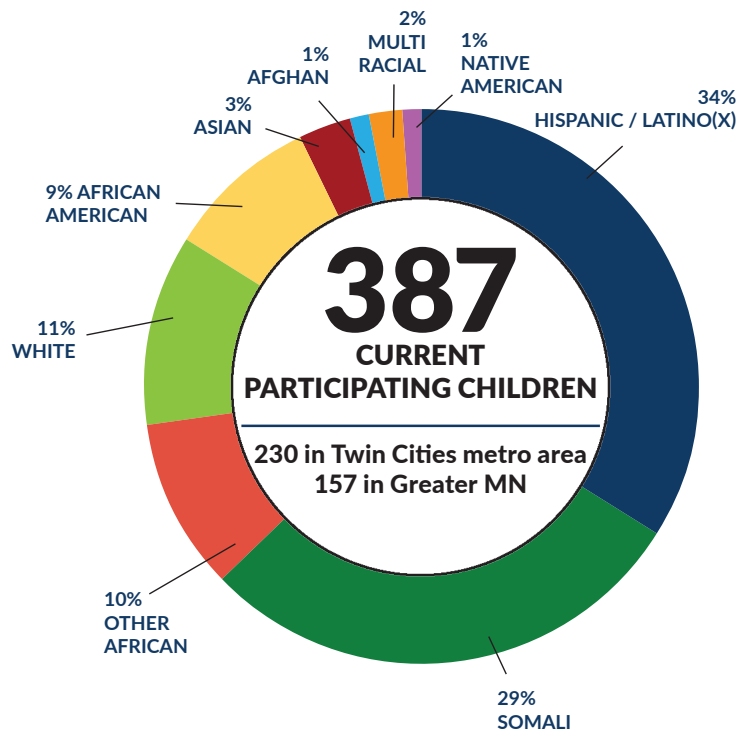
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ParentChild+ is a program of Jewish Family and Children's Service of Minneapolis
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952-546-0616 | 952-593-1778 fax | www.jfcsmpls.org

For more information:

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Thank you

for supporting
ParentChild+!

The impact of ParentChild+ can last a lifetime



Ruth Ann and Caleb, former ParentChild+ participants, reached out after many years to proudly announce that Caleb was graduating high school in June. They shared how much ParentChild+ supported Caleb's learning, his school success, and how Ruth Ann was empowered in her parenting.

Ruth Ann was referred to ParentChild+ by a local food shelf at a critical time in their lives. She had suddenly become a mother of a toddler at an older age when she needed to be working full time. Caleb is on the Autism spectrum and Ruth Ann didn't know how to help him learn. ParentChild+ helped Ruth Ann think of creative ways to guide him and she learned how to become an advocate for Caleb throughout his school career. The program also inspired her to get two IT tech degrees while she was raising her son.

Caleb is interested in computers and coding and hopes to study radiologic technology. Ruth Ann said that ParentChild+ "was a godsend... it was a way to bond with my child and a way to learn how he learns. At that time, I needed those tools." She is excited to see what Caleb will accomplish in the future. "He is destined for something great. He is going to influence something that is going to change the world."

Compared to their
socio-economic
peers, ParentChild+
children are:

50% more likely to be
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50% less likely to need special
education services by third grade



ParentChild+

Northland Area
Family Service Center

PINE RIVER-BACKUS
FAMILY CENTER

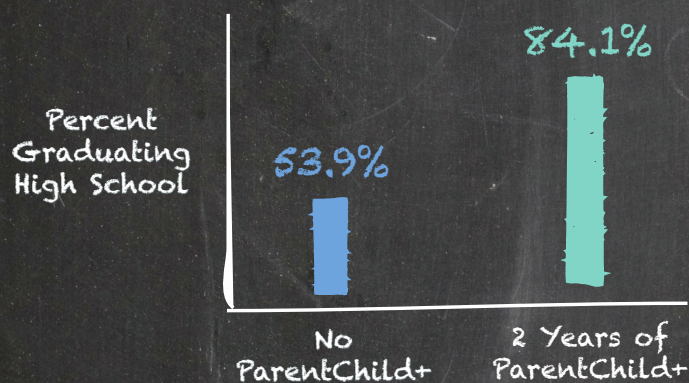


CLOSING THE OPPORTUNITY GAP BY BUILDING SCHOOL READINESS AT HOME

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

ParentChild+ is an intensive home visiting program for families with children ages 2-4 that supports families with school readiness, parenting skills and child development—at no cost to the family. It helps children from communities that are underserved bridge the opportunity gap and prepare them for success in school by bringing highly-trained early learning specialists into the families' homes for twice-weekly visits over a two-year period.

INCREASING HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION RATES FOR CHILDREN FROM FAMILIES WITH LOW INCOMES



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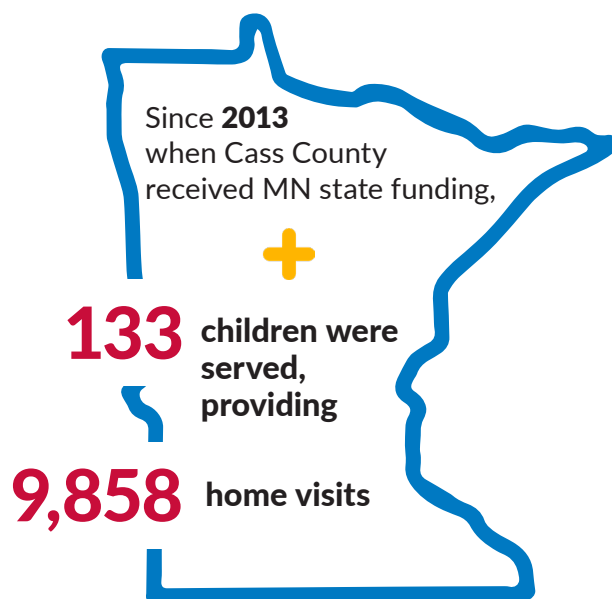
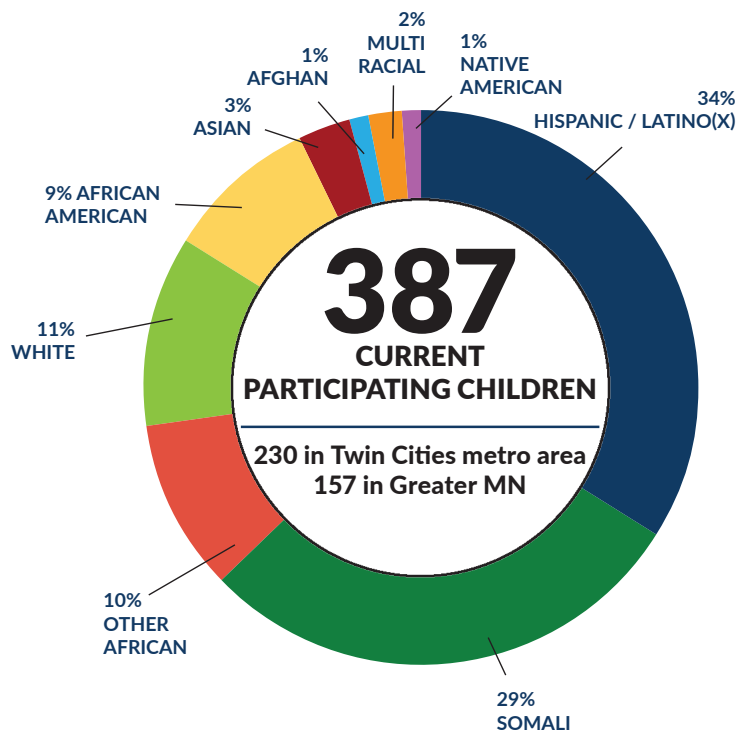
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952-546-0616 | 952-593-1778 fax | www.jfcsmpls.org

For more information:

Chantel Jullie, ParentChild+ Program Manager

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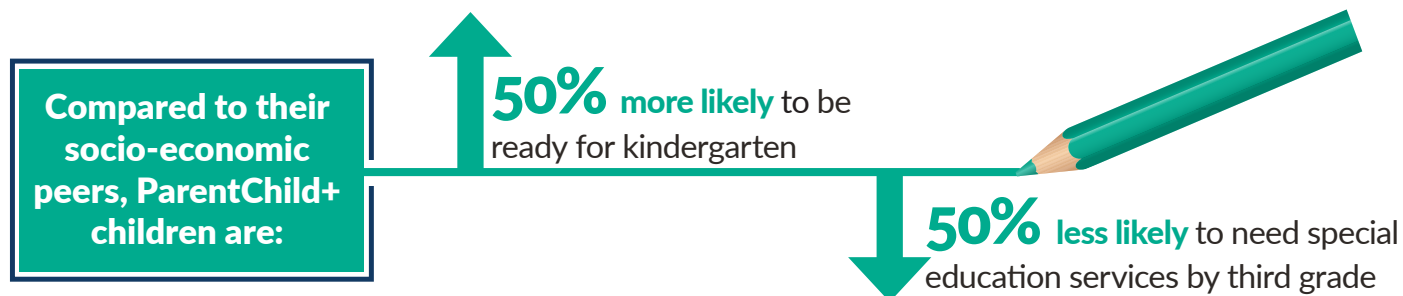
Creating bonds through song



Early Learning Specialist, Shelly was working with a family in their second year of the program. The little girl, Kira, had a very short attention span, causing the mother to often feel frustrated. At a visit one day, Kira was struggling to focus. Shelly, who had attended a ParentChild+ conference the day before, remembered one of the presenters talk about helping families create “I Love You Rituals” with songs. Shelly suggested trying this technique with the song, “Twinkle Twinkle Little Star” and changing a few words to make it personal to Kira.

Kira sat on her mom’s lap, facing Shelly, who read each line that the mother would then sing to her daughter. Kira watched her mother as she sang, and gave her a big hug when the song was over. It was a magical moment, and completely changed the vibe of the room.

Shelly encouraged the mother to try this with her daughter any time she needs support with emotion regulation. Shelly also suggested the mother change the words to any song or nursery rhyme to fit their family and even supplied them with printed songs to help provide ideas and create more magical moments.





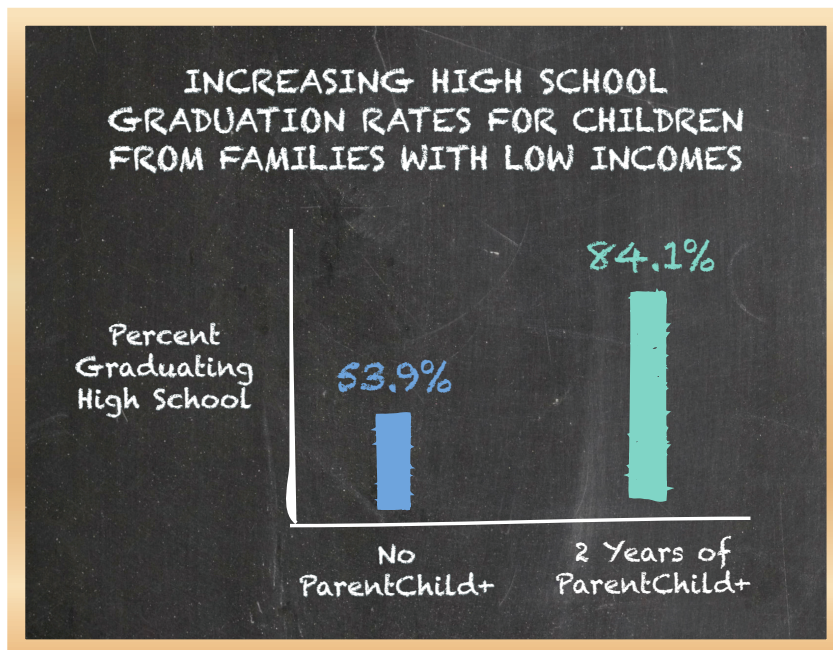
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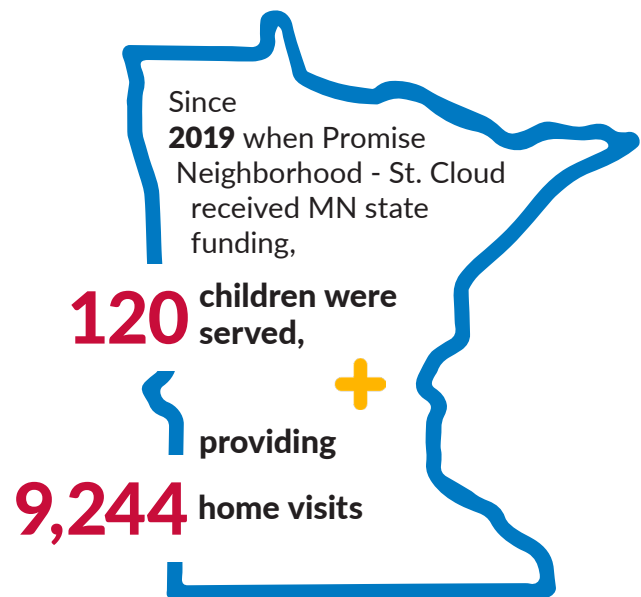
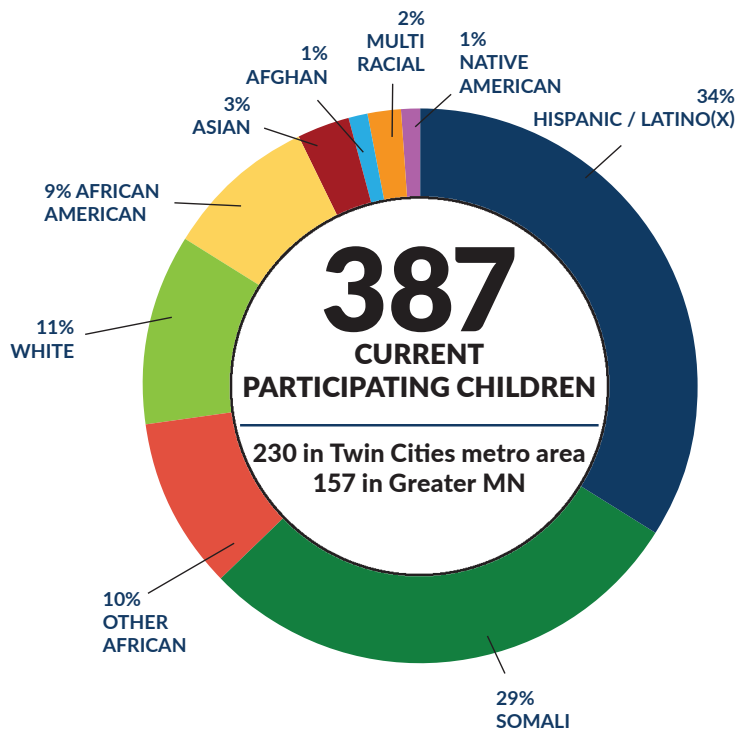
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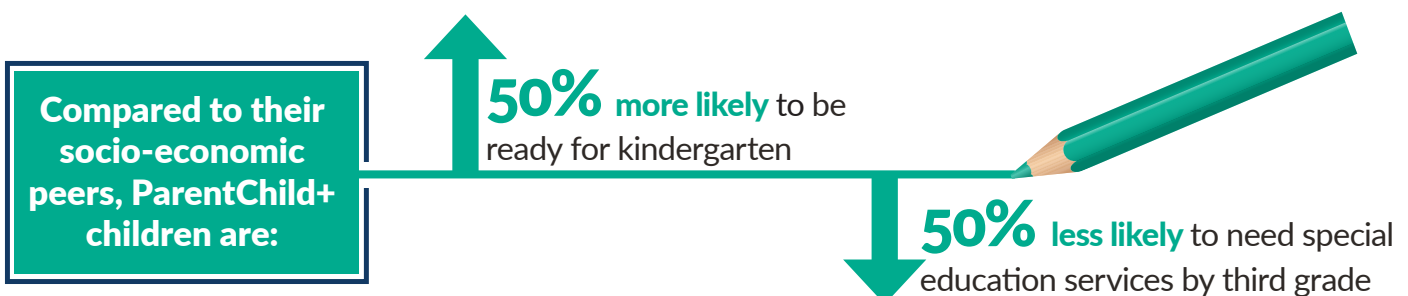
ParentChild+ creates an increased love of reading and a new “bestie”



Kamiyah graduated from the ParentChild+ program this summer. The graduation was a huge accomplishment and proud moment for her family. Grandparents, uncles, and siblings were in attendance to cheer her on.

Her family said that she gained so much information and knowledge from the educational toys and books that were provided them. Before they started the program, Kamiyah had a deep love and passion for books. That love of literacy only increased when she was given a new book every other week. She enjoyed the educational toys as well and was always excited to show them to her brother when he came home from school.

The family was also able to have a close, great working relationship with their Early Learning Specialist, Ms. Allison. Kamiyah would often ask when her “bestie” Ms. Allison was coming to visit. The love and bond Kamiyah and Ms. Allison shared is very touching to the family. Ms. Allison was helpful with resources and completion of school readiness paperwork. Kamiyah will be going to a Head Start classroom in the fall and the family is excited for her to show off her skills she has learned these past two years. The family shared how grateful they are to have had this opportunity.





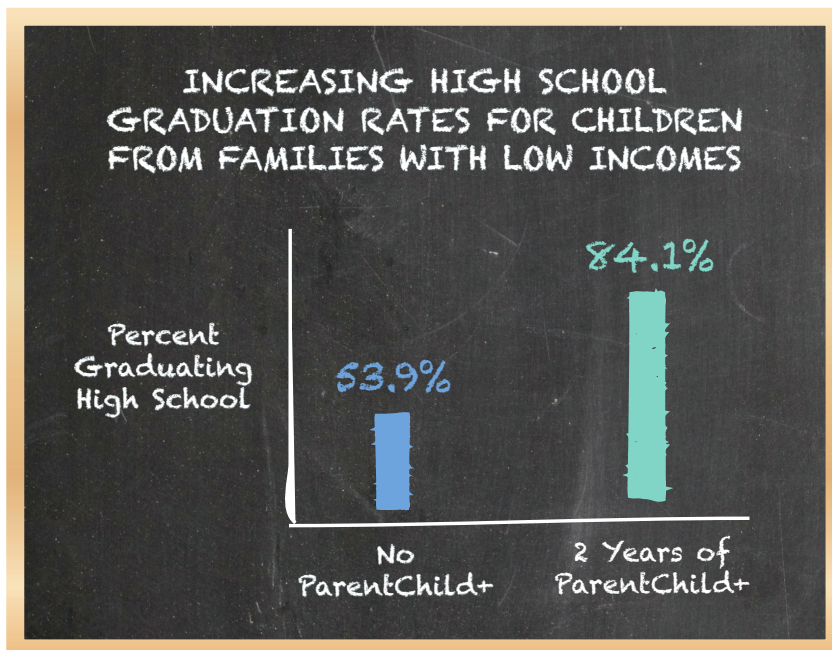
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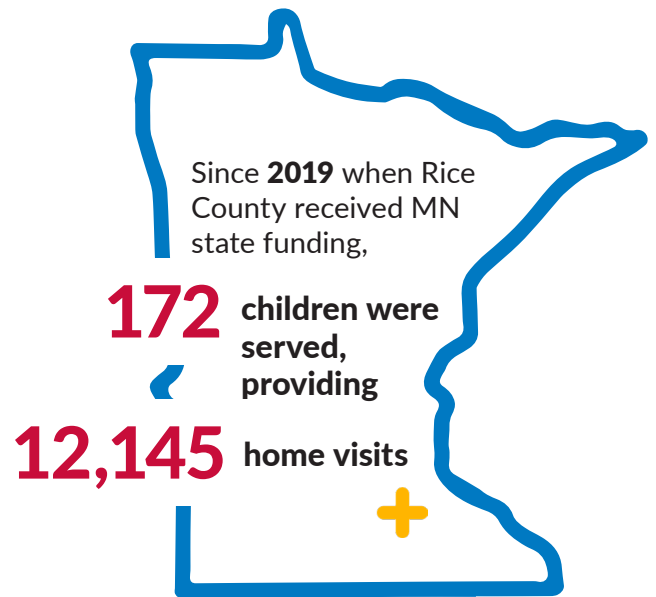
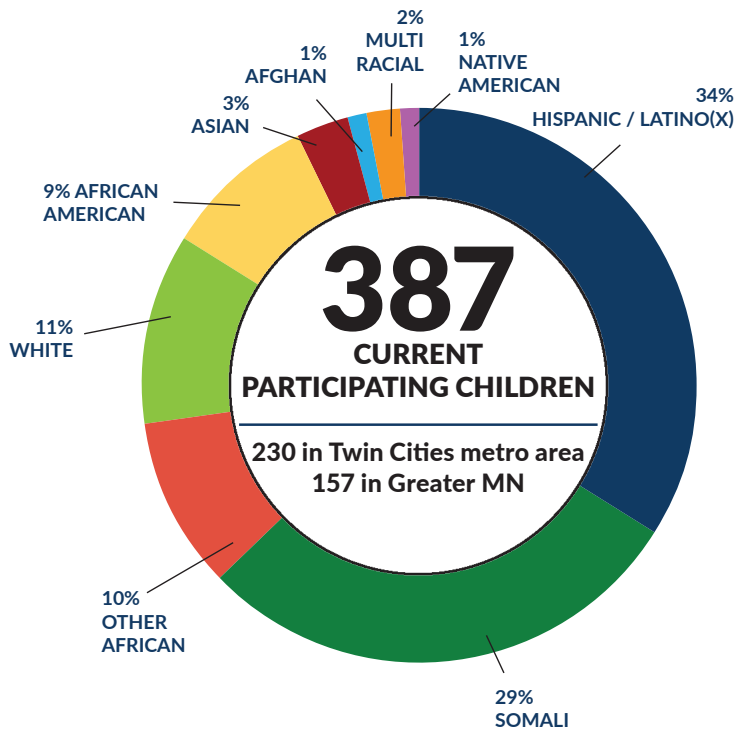
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ParentChild+ helps Brisa's family in more ways than one



For two years, Growing Up Healthy Early Learning Specialist Laura Garcia met weekly with Brenda and her family to boost the early learning skills of Brenda's child, Brisa.

"Brisa knew what day I came each week and was excited to see me and a new toy or book," Laura said. "Brisa and her mom participated and gave it their all. Brisa now knows how to count to 100, all her colors, and the alphabet letters in English and Spanish. It was great working with them."

Fifty-three Rice County children participated in ParentChild+ in 2023-24, and 19 of them, including Brisa, graduated from the program in June 2024. Brisa will attend kindergarten in the fall.

Brenda said participating in the ParentChild+ program helped her learn how important it is to engage her children daily in educational material. "They brought books that caught Brisa's attention,

and every day she tells me to read to her," Brenda said. "Although she doesn't know how to read yet, she's already learning the stories, and her little brother Brent loves them too. Reading attracts attention, and that makes me very happy."



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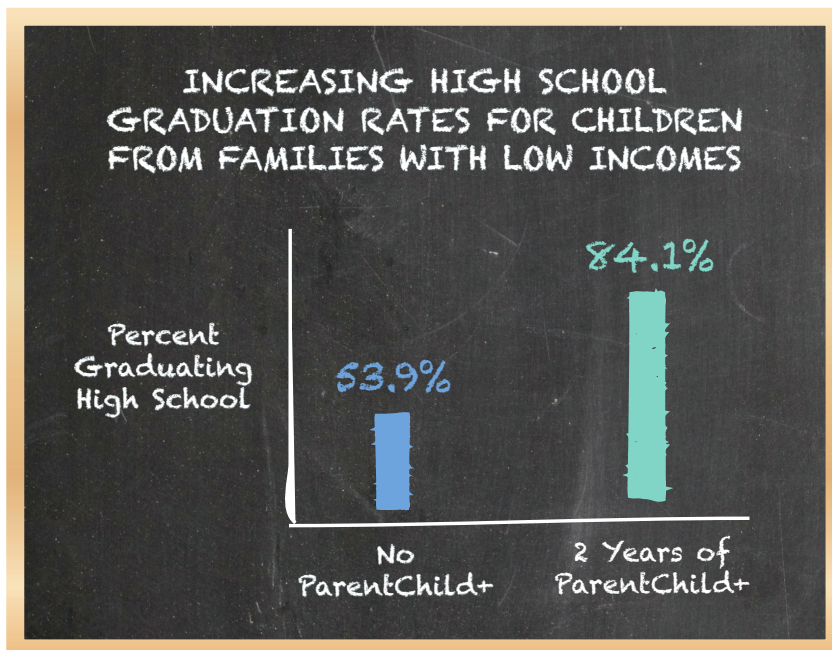
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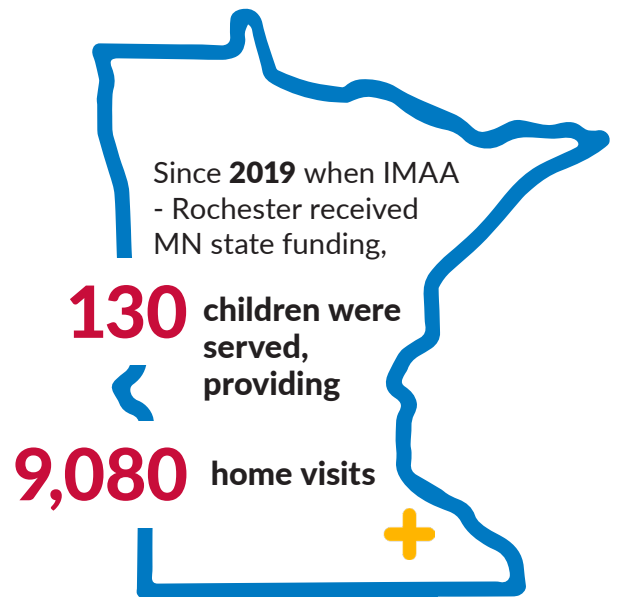
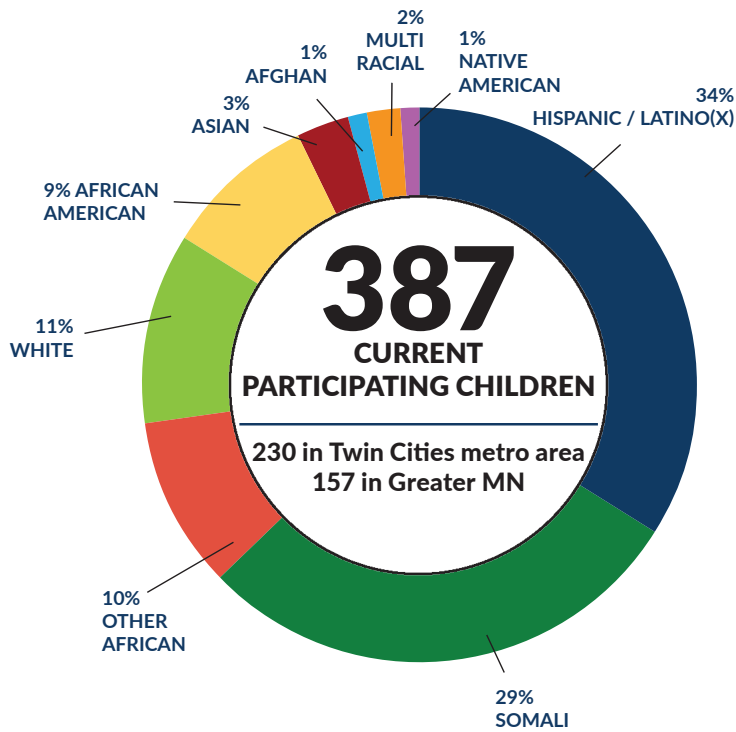
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Zayd is off to kindergarten – confident in his abilities and with a proud mother

Zayd is a smart and attentive child who has shown significant improvement through the ParentChild+ program. He has made great strides in reading, recognizing letters in the alphabet, and developing his own identity.

Zayd's mother stated that this program has been incredibly beneficial for her child, with excellent Early Learning Specialists and diverse learning methods. The work of ParentChild+ complimented her efforts in teaching Zayd, making her feel proud as a mother. "It is heartwarming to see him get excited about receiving new toys and books," she said.

Zayd comes from a two-parent household with two siblings, an older sister and a younger sister. His parents are both from Somalia and arrived in the U.S. as refugees; the children were born in the U.S. Zayd was enrolled in the Parent Child+ program two years ago and graduated this spring. He is now on his way to kindergarten this fall. We wish him the best of luck as he embarks on this new journey, confident that he is more than prepared to shine.

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March 24, 2025

Re: HF994

Children and Families Finance and Policy Committee

Dear Co chairs Rep. Nolan West and Rep. Carlie Kotyza-Witthuhn

Since 2016 Promise Neighborhood of Central MN has actively participated in delivering ParentChild+ curriculum to low-income families mostly of color in St. Cloud, Minnesota. We started with fifteen families in the first program year and have grown the program to serve fifty families this program year.

We hire locally and each family is matched with a community-based early learning specialist to support parents in realizing their role as their children's first and most important teacher as well as ongoing academic advocates. We develop trusting partnerships with families and connect each client to a wide range of community resources and programming.

One of our families has shown tremendous progress and will be ready for Pre – k and succeeding in a classroom setting. The mom is also prepared to support her child going forward and being an advocate for school success.

Please support HF 994 so we can continue the wonderful work that is happening with PC+ in Saint Cloud, Rochester, and Rice Count Minnesota.

John D Smith

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