



UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA AT BIRMINGHAM EARLY HEAD START ANNUAL REPORT 2024-2025

The **University of Alabama at Birmingham Early Head Start Program (UAB EHSP)** is based on the program operation cornerstones outlined in the Head Start Program Performance Standards to promote school readiness of enrolled children through:

- education and child development,
- health, and
- family and community engagement.

The UAB EHSP uses these cornerstones as the foundation for providing high quality, comprehensive services to infants, toddlers and pregnant women. The overarching goal of the UAB EHSP is to provide the highest quality early learning experiences (school readiness) and child health services to infants and toddlers who live in high-risk environments. For these services to be maximally effective, family and community engagement services are provided to empower the families to focus on providing high quality early learning experiences for their children, enhancing family strengths, as well as addressing family needs.

Mission: The mission of the University of Alabama at Birmingham Early Head Start Program (UAB EHSP) is to form partnerships with families to support child development and family goals. Through continuous training and professional development and in collaboration with the community, we strive to enhance opportunities for children and families.

Established: The UAB EHSP has been continuously funded since 1998 to serve 88 infants and toddlers and their families or pregnant women challenged by poverty. The program provides services in Jefferson, St. Clair, and Walker Counties.

Please enjoy reading about all the wonderful and exciting work that the UAB EHSP has engaged in with children and families during this program year.

Kristi Guest PhD

Kristi Carter Guest, PhD
Director
UAB Early Head Start Program



UAB The University of
Alabama at Birmingham.



PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS FOR 2024 – 2025

ELIGIBILITY, RECRUITMENT, SELECTION, ENROLLMENT & ATTENDANCE (ERSEA):

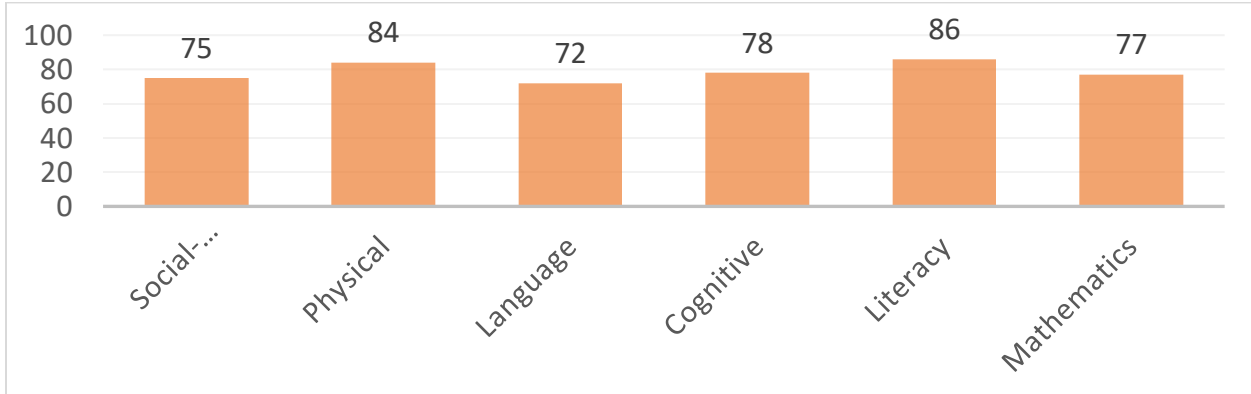
- *Eligibility:* 25% of enrolled participants were income-eligible for the program; 54% qualified as receiving Public Assistance (SNAP/SSI/TANF); 2% were foster children; 13% were homeless; and 6% were over-income.
- *Recruitment:* The program maintains an active waiting list to replace any dropped participants. August 2025, we transitioned thirty-one participants and ended the program year with fourteen recruits with pending eligibility documentation.
- *Selection:*
 - Selection Criteria ranking format approved by both the Governing Body and Policy Council November 13, 2024.
 - The average number of selection points for an eligible participant was 50.
- *Enrollment:*
 - Funded to serve 88 participants total, 80 home-based and 8 center-based.
 - We reported full enrollment to the Head Start Enterprise System by November 2024, and despite continued staff retention frustrations we were able to maintain full enrollment for the remainder of the program year. In addition to the 30-day vacancy replacement allowance, we continued to utilize 2 reserved slots for pregnant women.
 - Cumulative enrollment reported on the Program Information Report (PIR) for 2024-2025 was 118, twelve pregnant women and one hundred six children.
 - Bilingual Family Partner maintained a full caseload of dual language learners (DLLs): 17 children cumulative; 16 children receiving services at the end of the program year.
- *Attendance:*
 - Jasper Area Family Services Center's (JAFSC) overall average daily attendance from September 3, 2024, to August 22, 2025, was 79.24%, which is only a .25% decrease from the previous program year and just slightly 5% below the Head Start Program Performance Standards (HSPPS) mandated minimum of 85%.
 - The total number of dropped participants for the entire program increased by 6% to 23% of the total cumulative enrollment (18/109 for previous program year compared to 27/118 for this program year).

EDUCATION (CURRICULUM, SCREENING & ASSESSMENT, AND SCHOOL READINESS):

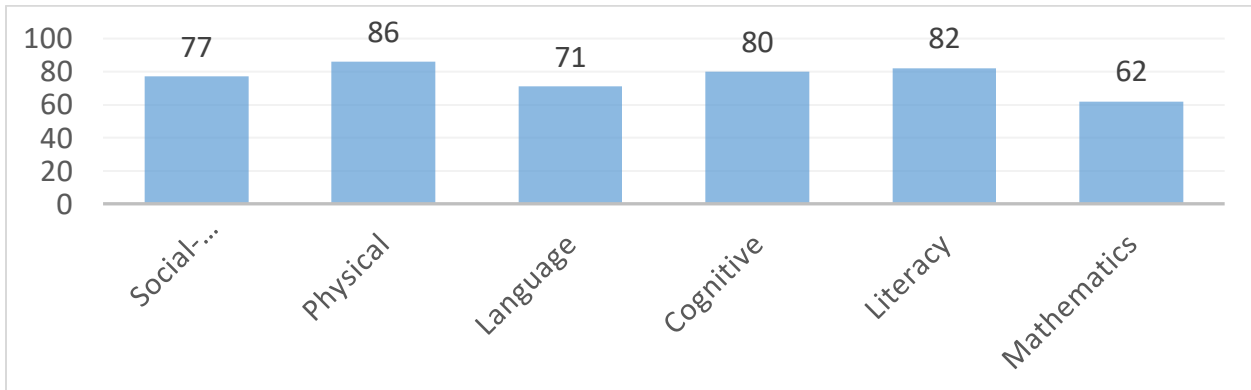
- Our program takes a holistic approach with each child, and we individualize and meet children where they are in their development. Family Partners and Teachers continue to form partnerships with parents to establish individual children’s goals that are in alignment with Head Start’s Early Learning Outcomes Framework (*ELOF*) and the UAB EHS school readiness plan.
 - 92% of all program children had a Preliminary Individualized Development Plan (*IDP*).
 - 98% of all program children had Midyear IDPs
 - 94% of all program children had End-of-Year IDPs
 - 100% of all IDPs are aligned with ELOF
- 100% of Weekly Lesson Plans (*home-based and center-based*) incorporate pre-literacy.
- Program staff are equipped to work with all children to individualize based on development and to incorporate early intervention services for children with disabilities.
- Staff training on utilizing our home-based curriculum, *Partners for a Healthy Baby*, to fidelity is ongoing.
- Continued monthly Family Partner meetings to include opportunities for group planning time and peer-to- peer coaching.
- *Assessment*: Data by *GOLD*® checkpoint and developmental domain with a combined percentage of those meeting or exceeding the widely held expectations for children by age. **Note**: The fluctuation and decrease of percentages from Fall to Spring is attributed to continued staff turnover and will be addressed by a program-wide assignment to complete *GOLD*® Interrater Reliability certification.
 - *Fall Checkpoint (September-December)*:
 - Social-Emotional **75%**
 - Physical **84%**
 - Language **72%**
 - Cognitive **78%**
 - Literacy **85.5%**
 - Mathematics **77%**
 - *Winter Checkpoint (January-April)*:
 - Social-Emotional **77%**
 - Physical **86%**
 - Language **71%**
 - Cognitive **80%**
 - Literacy **82%**
 - Mathematics **62%**
 - *Spring Checkpoint (May-August)*:
 - Social-Emotional **75%**

- Physical **81%**
- Language **66%**
- Cognitive **79%**
- Literacy **89%**
- Mathematics **70%**

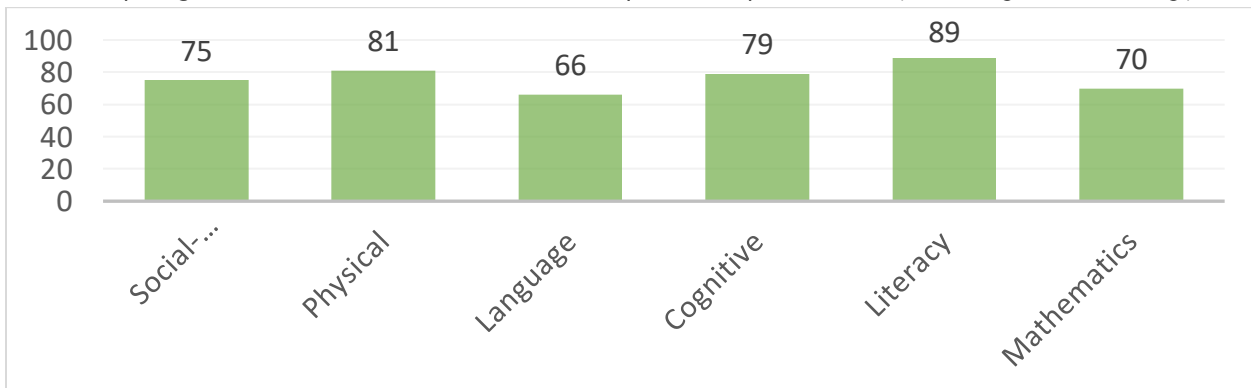
GOLD® Fall Assessment 2024-2025 – Widely Held Expectations (*Meeting + Exceeding*)



GOLD® Winter Assessment 2024-2025 – Widely Held Expectations (*Meeting + Exceeding*)



GOLD® Spring Assessment 2024-2025 – Widely Held Expectations (*Meeting + Exceeding*)



- 100% of home visitors, teachers, and coordinators model positive and nurturing parent/child interactions.
- 114% (n=25) of socializations are completed for the program year (only required to offer 22 but we offered 25 opportunities for socializations this program year).

PARENT INVOLVEMENT ACTIVITIES:

- Offered UAB EHSP families the opportunity to participate in 25 socialization activities throughout the program year, such as the parent involvement activities below:
 - Welcome Socialization with the Shar-Itt Petting Farm bus
 - The Great Pumpkin Patch in Hayden, where each family took home a pumpkin after exploring the various activities offered at the pumpkin patch
 - “1,2,3 Play with Me” socializations for play and story time (English/Spanish) at the Birmingham Public Library
 - Trunk or Treat Fall Festival
 - Meal of Thanks Socialization together at the Golden Corral restaurant.
 - Winter Wonderland Socialization with the opportunity to ride the trackless train, create paper plate snow globes with pictures of the children, and take pictures with Santa. Each child received a sack pack with a social/emotional toy (Corduroy Bear; Pig or Mouse from “*If You Give A...*” series; or Curious George) and the “Red Sled” book.
 - African Drumming Socialization, where families learned about West African culture including a drumming, story, and dancing experience with Sahi On Ko Djony
 - Vocabulary’s World Socializations where our program children learn new words through music, song, movement, crafts, and stories at Art Play
 - Building Blocks of the Symphony: Encanto, where families were engaged and participated in a sing-along with the Alabama Symphony to the Disney Movie “Encanto”.
 - Family Yoga
 - Valentine’s Day Dance
 - Fiddlesticks Music, where families learned and participated in various music and movement engagement activities with Maggie with Fiddlesticks Music
 - Spring Wellness and Community Resource Fair at the Lee Community Center, where families had the opportunity for free play, to learn about various community resources such as Operation Hope, Pediatric Dentistry, STRIVE Birmingham (*job readiness training and placement*), One Roof, BirthWell Partners Community Doula Project, etc. Families also received massages.
 - Egg Hunt at Pelham Park where families hunted for eggs, played on the playground, and had lunch together.
 - Fun Day at Vestavia Hills Splash Pad
- UAB ESHP families were offered parenting sessions utilizing the Ready Rosie and Partners for a Healthy Baby Curriculum.

HEALTH SERVICES:

- 99% of program children (n=104) have ongoing, continuous health care.
- 99% of program children (n=104) have health insurance.
 - 95.2% of program children (n=100) have Medicaid.
 - 3.8% of program children (n=4) has private health insurance.
 - 1% of program children (n=1) did not have health insurance.
- Medical/well child visits data indicated:
 - 77% of program children (n=81) were up to date on Alabama Medicaid EPSDT periodicity schedule for well-child check-ups at the *end* of the program year.
 - 23% of program children (n=24) were behind Alabama Medicaid EPSDT periodicity schedule for well-child check-ups at the *end* of the program year.
 - With the COVID-19 pandemic continuing to lessen in impact, parents are getting their children up to date on medical/well child visits.
- Immunizations data showed:
 - 71% of program children (n=75) are up to date on the CDC recommended immunizations schedule.
 - 21% of program children (n=22) have received all immunizations possible at this time but who have not received all immunizations appropriate for their age.
 - 3% of program children (n=3) are behind on the CDC recommended immunizations schedule.
 - 5% of program children (n=5) meet state guidelines for an exemption from immunizations.
 - With the COVID-19 pandemic continuing to lessen in impact, parents are getting their children up to date on immunizations.
- Dental services and dental screenings data revealed:
 - 64% of children over 1 year of age (n=46) have access to oral health care at the end of the program year.
 - 36% of children over 1 year of age (n=26) did not report having an oral health care provider.
 - 33% of children over 1 year of age (n=24) received a dental exam.
 - 67% of children over 1 year of age (n=48) did not receive a dental exam.
- Pregnancy medical insurance for 12 Pregnant women served this program year revealed:
 - 100% of pregnant women have ongoing medical care (n=12).
 - 100% (n=12) have Medicaid health insurance
- Pregnancy medical and wellbeing services:
 - 100% of pregnant women received prenatal care (n=12).
 - 100% of pregnant women received education on fetal development (n=12).
 - 100% of pregnant women received education on the benefits of breastfeeding (n=12).

- 100% of pregnant women received education on infant care and safe sleeping practices (n=12).
- Pregnancy Oral Health data for 12 Pregnant women served this program year showed:
 - None of the pregnant women reported having dental care (n=12).
 - A list of dental providers for adults was included in the pregnancy handouts.
- Continued to encourage access to dental homes with list of providers for families regarding dental services available in their community and continued collaboration with UAB Pediatric Dentistry to provide education and screening services.
- Program continued collaboration with a nutrition consultant, Maegan Guven, who is a Registered Dietician and consultant with UAB for all nutritional screenings.

MENTAL HEALTH:

- Maintained and utilized Ages and Stages Questionnaire: Social-Emotional-2 (ASQ:SE-2) screenings annually to identify children at risk for socio-emotional difficulties and in need of further services (as recommended by Head Start and the American Academy of Pediatrics).
 - 90 infants and toddlers have at least one ASQ:SE-2
 - Of all screened, 2 children had to be rescreened due to social-emotional concerns
 - Health Coordinator followed up with families or home visitors to address concerns unless the child had a disability and already received EI services.
 - All Teachers and Home Visiting staff received assistance from a mental health consultant through observation and consultation.
- Continued to promote the mental health and wellness of mothers
 - 69 completed Beck Depression Inventories-2 (BDI-2) with program mothers
 - 10 women had depression concerns
 - 3 women are receiving counseling services
 - 18 completed Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale with women (**completed each trimester and postnatal**)
 - 0 women had depression concerns
 - 0 women is receiving counseling services due to personal reasons
- Mental Health consult regarding 9 children for child behavior concerns
- 100% Mental Health Checklists (n=6) were not completed in the classroom.

DISABILITY SERVICES:

- 103 children (100%) have screenings for developmental progress with the Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ-3).

- Of all children screened, 5 children (5%) were identified as needing a developmental screening recheck.
- Of all children screened, 20 children (19%) were identified as having developmental concerns and most were served by intervention providers.
- 59 children were newly enrolled since last program year and all 59 (100%) received a developmental screening within 45 days of entry into the program
 - Of these 59 children, 6 (10%) were identified as needing follow-up screenings or a formal assessment to determine if the child had a disability.
- During the year, we served 18 (17%) children with documented disabilities.
 - Of those 18 children, eligibility was determined prior to the program year for 10 (56%) and 8 (44%) were eligible within the current program year.
 - All 18 children are receiving special services.
 - 18 (100%) children with IFSPs (Early Intervention)
- Additionally, we served 1 more child with disabilities through a private SLP provider.
- We consistently meet and exceed the required 10% service to children with disabilities.
- Classroom environment is based on individual needs of each child to help every child grow and develop at their own pace.
- Family Partners, Teachers, and Disability Services Coordinator continued to have an excellent collaborative relationship with local early intervention programs.
 - Staff include IFSP/IEP goals with program education goals and often share visits with early intervention service providers.
- Staff regularly attend IFSP, IEP, and/or therapy meetings.
- Classroom environment is based on individual needs of each child to help every child grow and develop at their own pace.
- We have a strong network of community resources for children with disabilities.
- Timely referrals were made for children in need of developmental services.
- The Disability Services Coordinator serves on the Alabama Early Intervention District Council and serves on the Alabama Early Intervention & Preschool Conference Planning Committee.
- Continuing to make referrals and help families complete the intake packets for UAB Civitan-Sparks Clinics for children who need more comprehensive developmental evaluations. We have an interagency agreement with UAB Civitan-Sparks Clinics to get our children seen expeditiously.

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT SERVICES:

- During the program year, UAB EHSP served 91 families.
 - 70% of families are single-parent families
 - 30% of families are two-parent families
 - 47% of families report being unemployed, retired or disabled at time of enrollment; this number decreased to 31% at the end of the program year

- 53% of families report at least one parent is employed, in job training, or in school at enrollment; this number decreased to 36% at the end of the program year
- 100% of home visitors and teachers support parents as the primary teachers of their children.
- Strong parent involvement occurs in choosing individual goals for their children for their Individual Development Plans.
- UAB EHSP assists and empowers parents and caregivers in defining, setting, and accomplishing their family goals.
 - 96% of preliminary family Strengths and Needs Assessments were complete
 - 84% of mid-year family Strengths and Needs Assessments were complete
 - 87% of end-of-year family Strengths and Needs Assessments were complete
 - Preliminary and Mid-Year data revealed the same top 2 areas of need:
 - Employment
 - Financial Security
 - End-of-year data revealed these top 3 areas of need:
- Employment
- Financial Security
- Food (Due to families receiving SNAP benefits)
- To address these needs, the UAB EHSP provided the following services/referrals the most often to families:
 - Parenting education
 - Health education/Mental health services
 - Child development education
 - Housing/utility financial assistance
 - Food banks
 - Diapers
 - Transportation
- Homelessness impacted 15% (n=14) of families in the UAB EHSP during the program year and 50% (n=7) of those families acquired housing during the program year.
- A small percentage of children enrolled are in foster care (.05%) this program year.

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS:

- Partnered with Eleanor Walker to provide home-based and center-based coaching for our program. Eleanor also participated in coaching during socializations, Family Partner Coaching Meetings, and Family Reviews.
- Continued partnership with Jasper Area Family Services Center for our center-based services; partnered with Operation Hope, Lee Community Center, Childcare Resources, Birmingham Public Library, and UAB ArtPlay for socialization and parenting activities/information.
- Continued to work with other Head Start programs in Jefferson and St. Clair Counties to facilitate smooth transitions from UAB Early Head Start to Head Start. Maintained an

Interagency Agreement with Childcare Resources Head Start and St. Clair County Head Start.

- Staff serve on multiple community boards and provide awareness of program services and community trainings:
 - Coordinators attend meetings including the Fairfield City Schools EHS/HS Health Services Advisory Committee, Children’s Policy Council Early Care and Education Work Group, Children’s Policy Council First Friday Forum, **HEALTHY Brain and Child Development Study Community Advisory Board**, BirthWell Partners Board of Directors, Lovelady’s Books, Balls, and Blocks Resource Fair, Restore Games Community Resource Fair, St. Clair County Department of Human Resources Provider Resource Fair, **Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services Community Resource Fair**, Promoting Positive Early Experiences and Relationships in Alabama: a Team-Based Approach (PPEER), Alabama Early Intervention & Preschool Conference Planning Committee, Alabama Early Intervention District Coordinating Council, Alabama Early Intervention District Coordinating Council Training Subcommittee, Alabama Head Start Association (AHSA) Board meetings quarterly, and AHSA Training Subcommittee.
- Maintained our collaboration with BirthWell Partners community doulas for pregnant mothers. Program Specialist with BirthWell Partners serves on our UAB EHS Policy Council. One of our UAB EHS Home Visitors completed training to become a BirthWell Doula.
- Families are informed of great community resources by program staff.
 - General resources have been shared with home visitors for families and posted to our program Facebook page for families to easily access.

COMMUNICATION:

- Relationships are strong with our UAB EHS families to support them and link them to resources and services in the community.
- We develop personal relationships with program families in their natural environment and through socialization events.
- Team approach to services is a strength. Staff have a team of coordinators to help with any questions or concerns.
- Fully staffed during most of the program year.
- Home visitors focus on the family to show our long-term investment to support children and families. There is strong continuity with the families we serve. Parents in our program are very invested and engaged with their children. The literacy program enhancements with books and activities have facilitated parent engagement.
- UAB EHS Governing Body praised our program for the great leadership skills demonstrated and great communication skills evidenced with the Governing Body.
- UAB EHS Policy Council praised our program for the management and communication skills demonstrated by program staff with the Policy Council.

- Maintained and advertised our UAB Early Head Start Program Facebook page to enhance public awareness and communication with program families about program and community events.
- Continued updates of the UAB Early Head Start Program website, which includes the Program's Annual Report.
- Conducted regular and ad hoc staff and coordinator's meetings to address areas of need.

RECORD KEEPING AND REPORTING:

- Continued having a UAB undergraduate work study part-time doing Data Entry to facilitate record keeping and reporting.
- Continuing to use ChildPlus for data tracking and staff are using UAB EHS and ChildPlus reports for ongoing monitoring.
- Conduct bimonthly family/child reviews of all enrolled home-based children and their Home Visitors with coordinators.
- Conduct monthly child reviews with teachers reviewing center-based children with coordinators.
- Sign in sheets are completed for each meeting held to document attendance.

FINANCIAL AUDIT/ANNUAL AUDIT

There were no findings in our annual A 133 fiscal audit conducted by PricewaterhouseCoopers for the year ending September 30, 2024.

PROGRAM BUDGET FOR THE 2024-2025 FISCAL YEAR

FUNDING AWARDED BY ACF FOR 2024-2025: \$1,305,514

<u>Budget Category</u>	<u>Funds Budgeted</u>
Cell Phone Charges	\$6,000.00
Conference Travel	\$6,500.00
Disability Services	\$1,000.00
Educational Supplies	\$6,000.00
Health Services	\$500.00
Family Services	\$500.00
Local Travel	\$42,000.00
Mental Health Services	\$500.00
Nutrition/Food for Events	\$19,050.00
PIPA	\$6,500.00
Supplies/Socialization Supplies	\$33,213.00
Child Services Consultant	\$18,000.00
TA/Training	\$18,661.00
Walker County Subcontract	\$176,537.00
Salaries and Wages	\$643,437.00
Fringe Benefits	\$228,116.00
Total Direct Cost	\$1,206,514.00
Indirect Cost	\$130,929.00
Account Total	\$1,337,443.00

PROGRAM FUNDS EXPENDED FOR THE 2024-2025 FISCAL YEAR

ACF FUNDS FOR THE UAB EHSP (TOTAL AWARD \$1,337,443 FOR 2024-2025)

<u>Budget Category</u>	<u>Expended</u>
Cell Phone Charges	\$6055.55
Conference Travel	\$7,028.83
Disability Services	\$797.91
Educational Supplies	\$5,641.12
Health Services	\$428.08
Local Travel	\$34,989.13
Family Services	\$137.52
Mental Health Services	\$413.99
Nutrition/Food for Events	\$19,877.54
PIPA	\$6,395.36
Supplies/Socialization Supplies	\$50,780.00
Child Consulting Services	\$18,758.97
TA/Training	\$14,074.42
Walker County Subcontract	\$173,563.26
Salaries and Wages	\$583,978.94
Fringe Benefits	\$206,869.27
Total Direct Cost	\$1,129,789.89
Indirect Cost	\$117,636.23
Account Total	\$1,247,426.12

Local Travel - staff mileage (home visitors and coordinators travel)

Nutrition Services - food for socializations, policy council, parenting, and health advisory committee meetings

Parent Committee funds - uber service to parent functions, parent trainings, parent mileage reimbursements, etc.

Supplies – supplies needed for socializations, office supplies, etc.

TOTAL ACCOUNT AND IN-KIND MATCH: \$ 1,599,026.30

UAB'S FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION (IN KIND AND MATCH): \$351,600.18