



Child Care Access and Affordability: Results from 2022-2024

HHS - SomerPromise Department

Somerville Child Care Access and Affordability Program - Overview

This program was open to residents who met the following criteria:

- Children must be 15 months to 4 years old by August 31.
- All parents or guardians must be working, going to school, seeking employment or must be unable to work due to disability.
- Family income must not exceed the amount in the chart below.

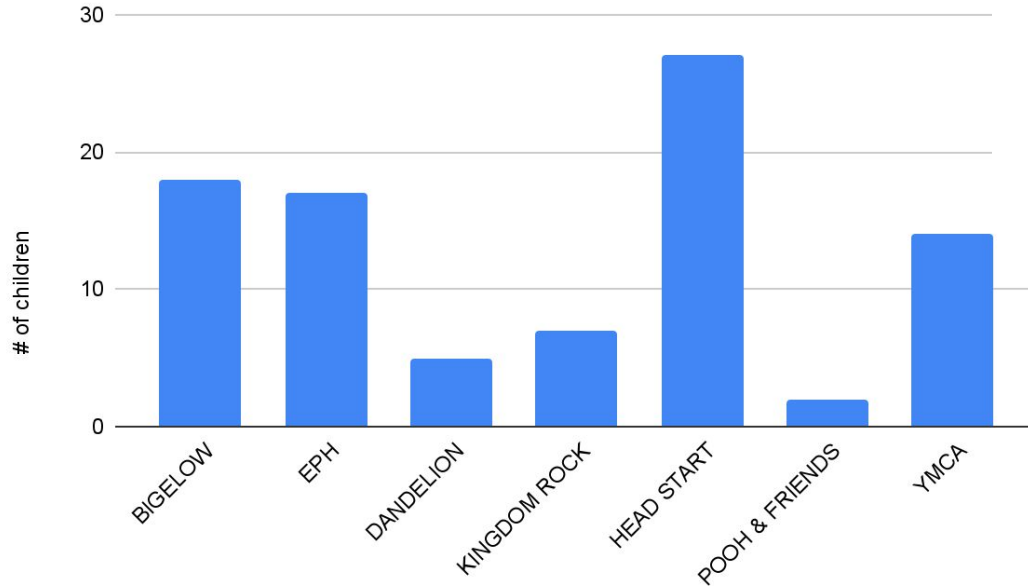
<u>Family Income Guidelines</u>							
Household Size	2-person	3-person	4-person	5-person	6-person	7-person	8-person
Income Limit	\$89,750	\$100,950	\$112,150	\$121,150	\$130,100	\$138,088	\$148,010

What are the characteristics of families that were awarded the scholarship in SY23 and SY24?

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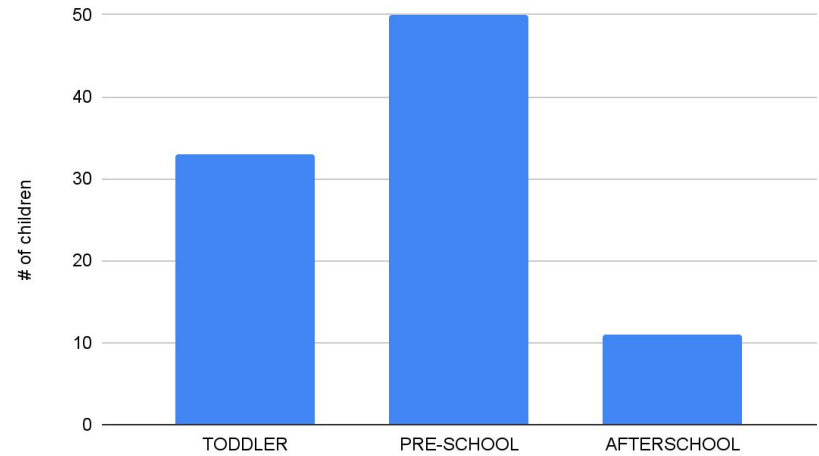
Placements in SY23 & SY24

Placements across SY23 and SY24

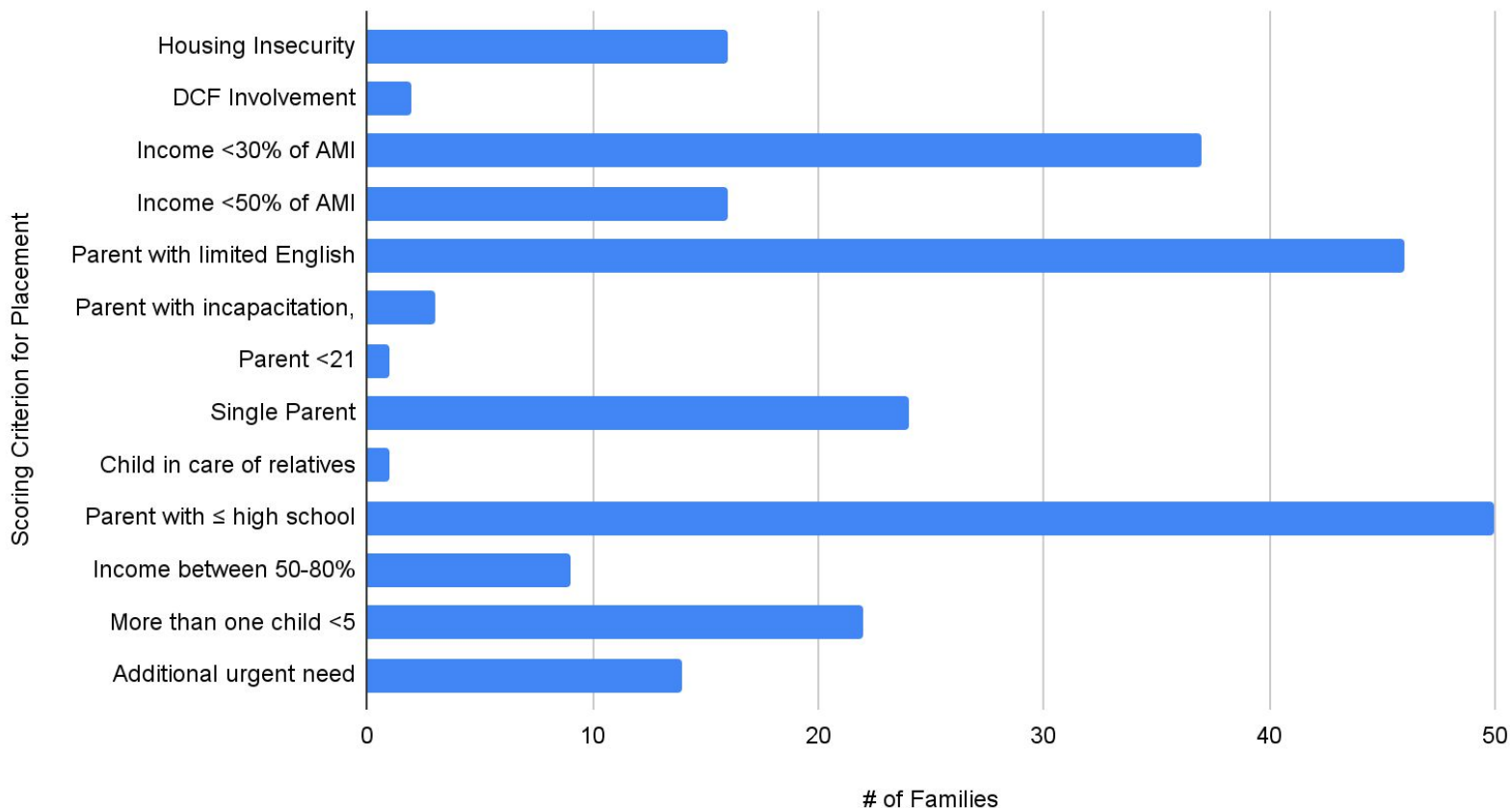


Placements across SY23 and SY24

Age at Placement in Center for SY23 & SY24



of Families of Placed Children Reporting Needs (SY23 and SY24)

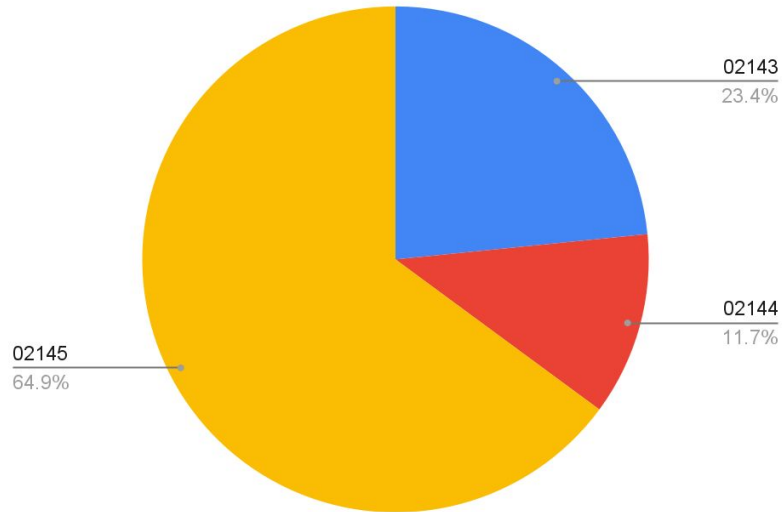


Placed families were more likely to:

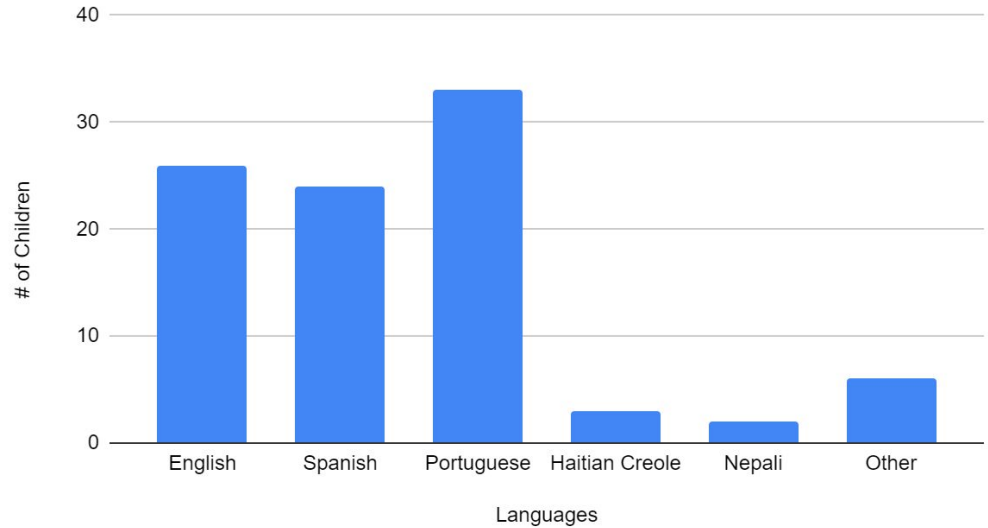
- Have a high school education or less.
- Have a parent with limited English proficiency.
- Have an income <30% of the regional median income.
- Have more than one child under 5.
- Be a single parent.

Characteristics of Enrolled Children

Zip Code of CCAA Participants SY23 and SY24



Home Languages of CCAA Participants SY23 & SY24



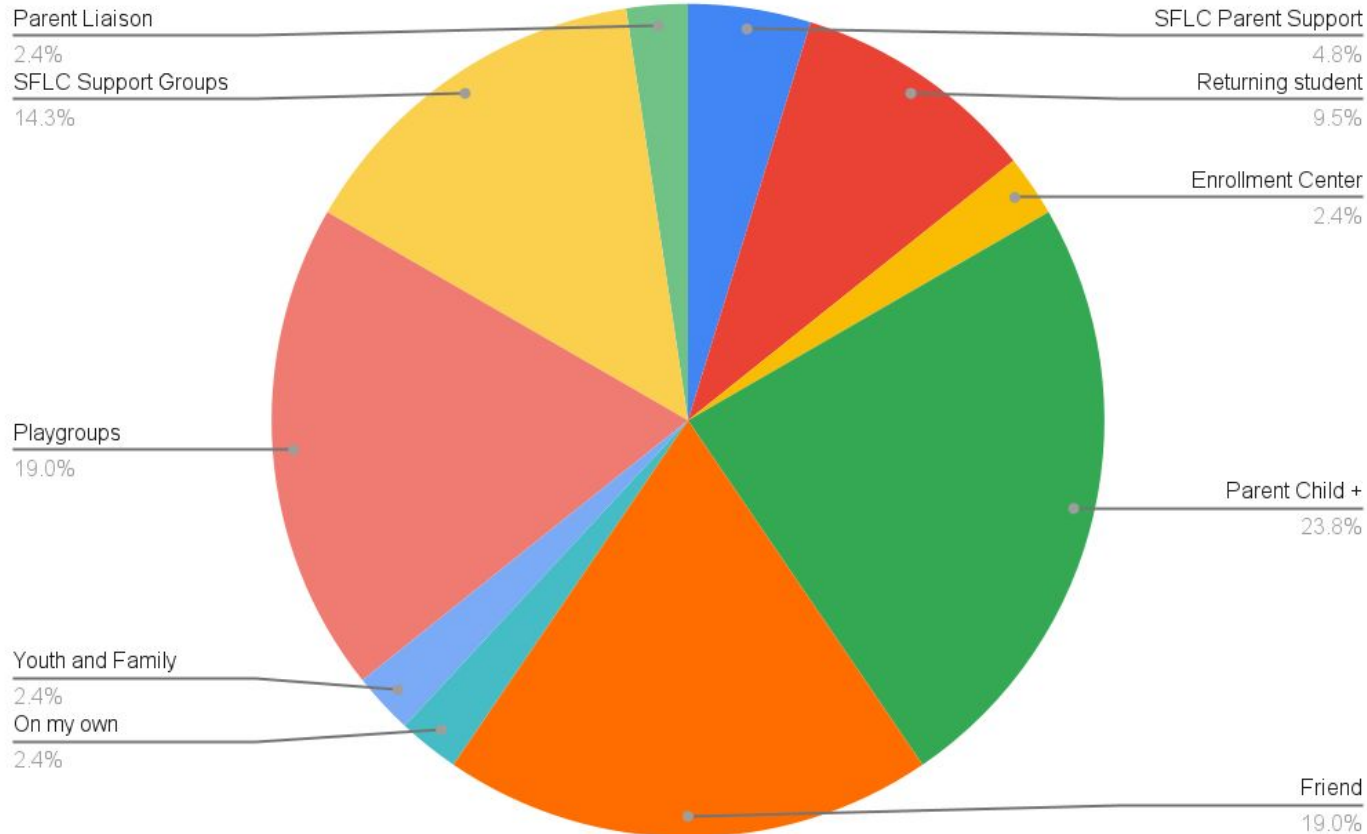
- 14 out of 94 children were placed in afterschool programming at the YMCA through the tuition assistance program.
- 27 children were referred to Head Start through the CCAA program.
- Seven children withdrew from their placement.

A Continuum of Care:

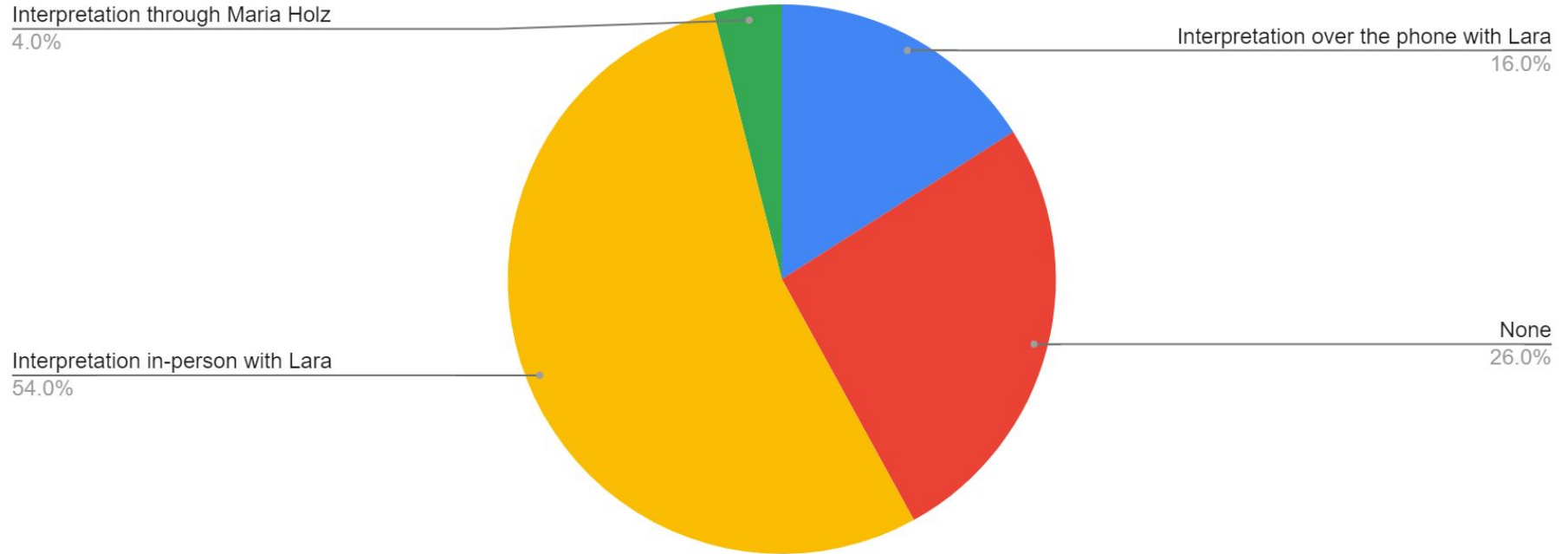
- 25% of children awarded tuition assistance at a partner center were previously visited by SomerBaby.
- 20.7% of placed families had received ParentChild+.
- 10% of children placed in partner centers had attended Playgroups.

Parent Satisfaction with Enrollment Process

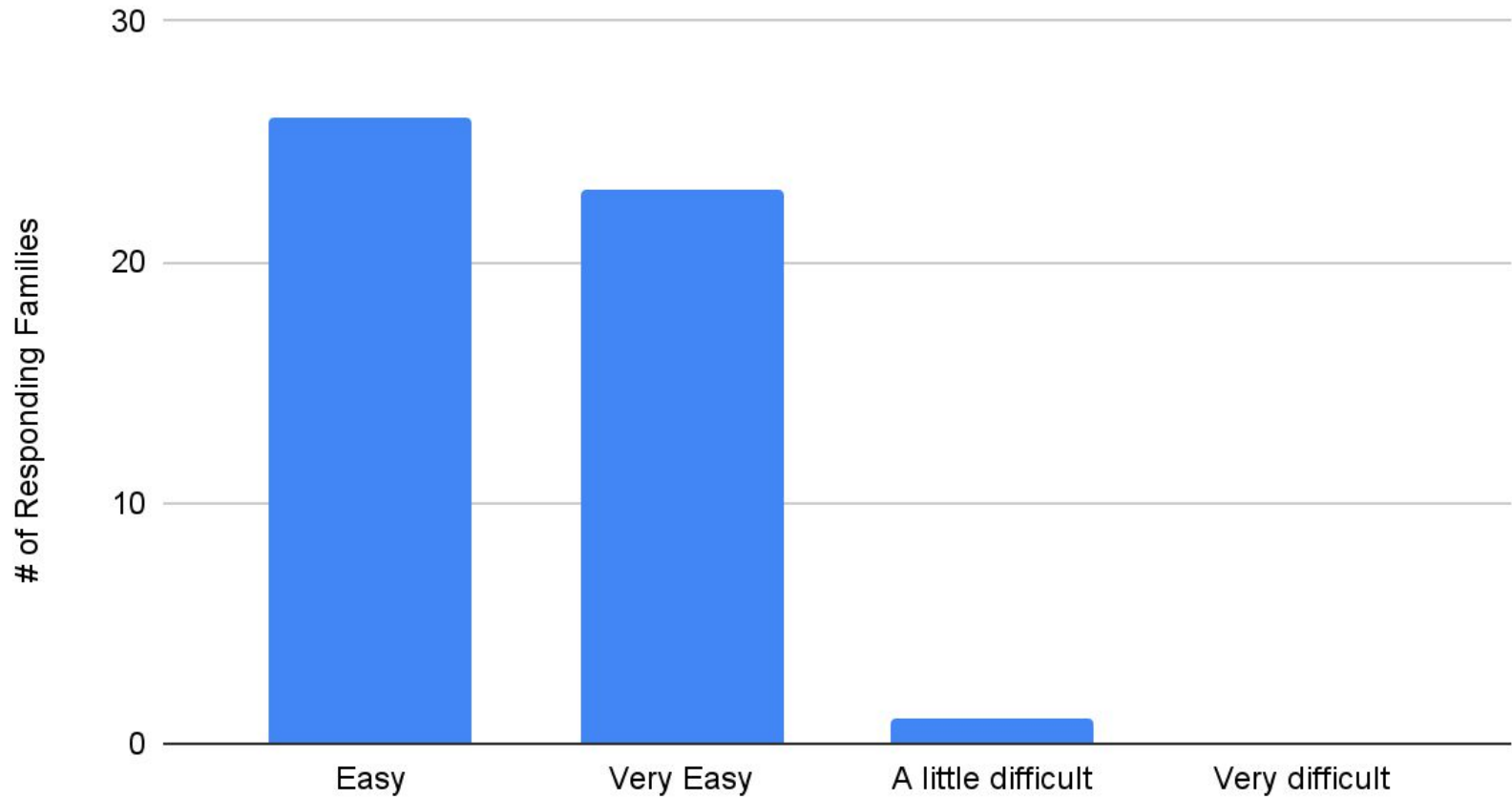
How did you hear about the CCAA program?



Did you require assistance to fill out the application?



Ease of Application





Do you have any suggestions on how to improve the enrollment process?

- “Providing ratings regarding academic, community, child growth and development on the different programs.”
- “It took many months for the program to start, since the application in February.”
- “The process itself was so smooth and easy. The information is not easy to find though, I had heard that pre school was super expensive or impossible to find for a reasonable price.”

Only three respondents suggested improvements to enrollment for the program.

Parent Satisfaction with Center Experience



Are there any barriers to participation in the program or with the center that you would like to share with us?

- Six families reported that language can be a barrier in communicating with centers and four reported using Google translate to solve.
 - “Language can be barrier, so we use google translate but I'd love to be able to express myself fully.”
- One reported safety protocols related to RSV and COVID-19 as a barrier.
- Two reported the distance from centers as a barrier.



Child Progress

- 90% of the families report that their child has made progress since enrolling in their center through the program.
- 66.7% of families reported improvement in speech and 55.6% reported improvements in social interactions.
- Improvements in independence, listening and eating/sleeping skills were reported in at least 1 in 5 participants.



Child Progress

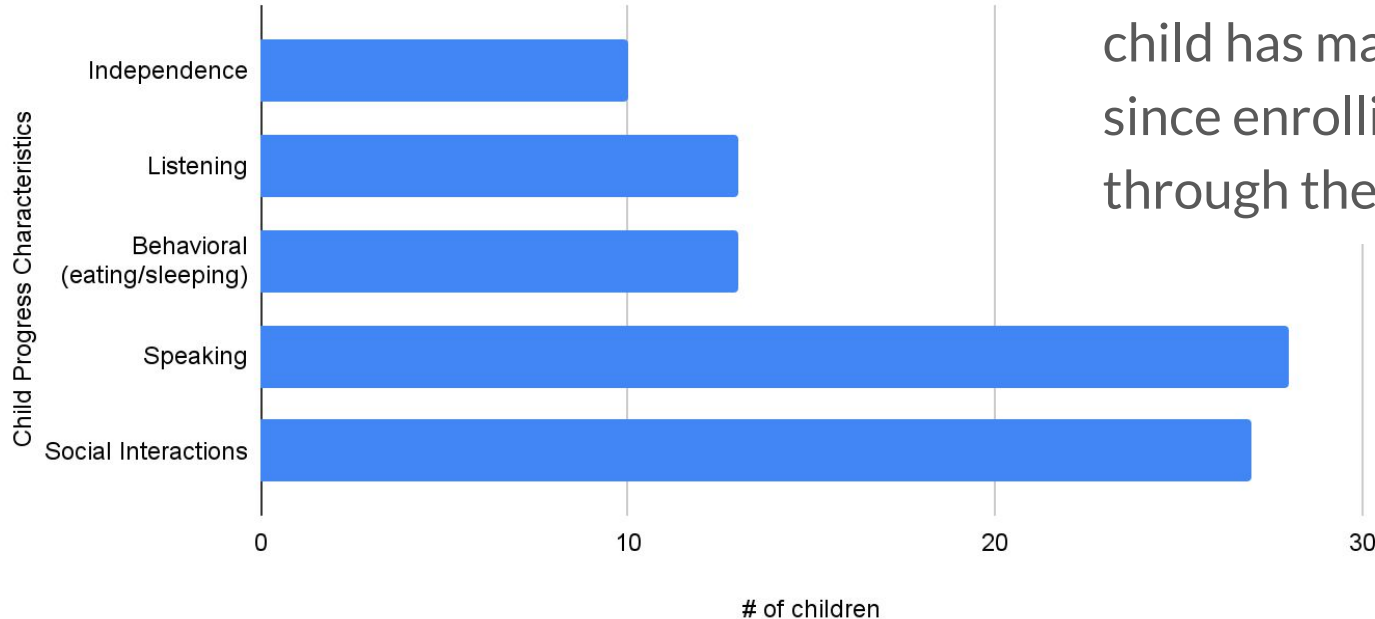
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Reported Progress in Participating Children	
Independence	10
Listening	13
Behavioral (eating/sleeping)	13
Speaking	28
Social Interactions	27

Child Progress



Child Progress Reported by Parents



90% of the responding families report that their child has made progress since enrolling their child through the program.



Family Progress

- 95% of families reported that participation in the tuition assistance program allow them to work, go to school, or increase their work hours.
- 85% of families reported that participating in the tuition assistance program would increase their chances of continuing to live in Somerville.

Reported Family Benefits of Participation	
Financial stability	40
Social connections to other families	29
Less Stress	46
Food stability	14
Housing stability	17
Navigating community resources	38
Work/life balance	31

Diversity is an Asset!



***A parent at
Bigelow who did
not receive tuition
assistance
discussed how the
center has
benefitted from
participating in
CCAA:***

“We, as a community, are growing stronger and becoming more integrated. I could not imagine better learning conditions for my child. None of this would have been possible without the City of Somerville’s Child Care Access and Affordability program, and you have very strong allies in our school.”

Additional Comments: Enriching Parents



“We appreciate so much the support provided with one child, but expanded to both our young children would mean for me to be able to go to work.”

“I have been able to take my driving lessons and have more time for myself.”

“This opportunity has allowed for me to keep my daughter in daycare during an extremely difficult time. I’m able to work full time and provide for us while navigating becoming a single mother and advancing my career. I’m so fortunate to have been selected for this program, you really changed our lives - you have no idea!”

Additional Comments: Center Feedback

"I am very appreciative of this opportunity for my daughter to be a classroom setting where she will develop socially and learn through play with peers."

"[My child] is having a great time at Bigelow. Teachers are very friendly and communicative. I love to see [her] activities in school throughout the day."

"We really like the school, the teachers love [my child] and she loves them."

"I would like to have a better understanding about lunch time in school."


"I feel the school has been very strict and limiting our family choices in terms of food and drinks. I believe the cultural element should be validated more."

"The only element that would help the family even more would be the extended day until 5:30pm."

"I appreciate the program greatly, the only element I would like to be different is the possibility for lunch to be heated up in school."

"The Elizabeth Peabody House is an incredible place where [my child] can learn and thrive, surrounded by love."

Additional Comments: SomerPromise Feedback



"The program has been wonderful and an incredible support for families, especially low income families."

"So grateful, I have lived [in the US] for 7 years, and it has been 2 years that I live in Somerville, and I'm very happy to be in this city. My life has changed, I met many people who added to my life and family. For me, I consider the best city of Somerville, thank you."

"Living in Somerville it was the best choice I ever made, the support and the wrap around services received here have been amazing."

"In Somerville we found a very supportive community. We are very grateful for everything our family has been receiving."

"I'd like to thank the whole team immensely. They are very professional people and help me a lot."

"The help of the city was and is always very important, because it opens doors for families who need help most whether financial or sentimental and Lara is part of our lives because she can connect us in a very gentle and light way."

Helping Children Gain Access to Special Education Services

Our Team: Lara and Ashley



Lara...

- Facilitated interpretation for applying to the program
- Scored applicants
- Advocated for families concerns for cultural, language, and location concerns
- Connected families to wraparound resources throughout the application and placement process
- Helped families fulfill the requirements for centers (physical, immunizations, IHCPs)

Ashley....

- Observed children during placement process to inform best placement or need for additional services.
- Attended center visits to monitor child transition
- Coordinated with center directors to provide children MTSS Itinerant Team access in coordination with the CPPI Team



Expanding Access to Special Education

- How many children did we support getting right placement through Ashley observation?
- How many ASQ's did we facilitate?
- How many MTSS referrals were initiated from our observations?



Additional Comments Summary

- The comments related to receiving wraparound services and family relationships with the Youth and Family Resource Navigator (Lara Versari) came from two Spanish-speaking families and three Portuguese-speaking families.
- 50% of the additional comments from families explicitly mentioned their child's happiness and/or development since joining the program.
- The majority of comments about cultural differences (all food-related) came from Spanish-speaking households.