

Early Childhood Connections
2016-2017

Annual Report

Early Childhood Connections 0 to 5

305 Main Street
Hays, KS 67601
785-623-2430

Sponsoring Grantee: USD 489
Assistant Superintendent: Shanna Dinkel
Director: Donna Hudson-Hamilton



OUR MISSION

Empowering families to live the possibilities by nurturing children, family and community connections

OUR GOALS

- ◆ Children are ready for school and sustained development and learning
- ◆ Families are engaged in their child's education and with their own personal growth and development
- ◆ Management systems promote school readiness and sustained development and learning.
- ◆ Community partnerships are developed and strengthened to meet the needs of children and families.



OUR LOCATIONS

The Early Childhood Connections 3 to 5 program has five classrooms (morning and afternoon sessions) in Hays, one classroom in Russell (morning and afternoon session), and one classroom in Ellis (morning and afternoon session). The classrooms located in Hays served a combination of children eligible for Head Start, children eligible for State Pre-Kindergarten and children eligible for Early Childhood Block Grant. The classroom located in Ellis serves both children eligible for Head Start eligible and children from the community. Home-based services were provided to families in Ellis, Rush, Russell and Rooks counties.

The Early Childhood Connections 0 to 3 program has a center-based program located in Munjor School. Services are also provided to families in partnering home child-care providers. Early Head Start home-based services are provided in Ellis, Rush, Russell and Rooks Counties. Parents as Teachers services are provided to families in the USD #489 service area.

Hays Classrooms:

Washington Site

Russell Classroom:

Simpson Elementary

Ellis Classroom:

Washington Grade School

EHS Center-Based:

Munjor School



EARLY HEAD START

EHS serves pregnant mothers as well as children through age four. Parents have the option of center-based, family child care or home-based services. Parent Educators meet with home-based parents weekly. Center-based family and child care families receive monthly contact. Primary focus in the program is child development, parenting, goals to strengthen the family and self-sufficiency.

EHS is open to families that meets income-eligibility in Ellis, Rush, Russell and Rooks County. Services are provided through three options: a home-based model, family child care option and center-based option. The center-based site is located in Munjor School outside of Hays. The family child care options are within several of the communities (Hays, Ellis, Russell and LaCrosse). These options allow families to choose the services that best fit their philosophy of care and meets their personal schedule.

Funding for these services are provided through Federal Early Head Start Funding, Kansas Early Head Start Home Visitation and Kansas Early Head Start Child Care.



PARENTS AS TEACHERS

PAT is a child development/parenting/family services program for pregnant women and families with a child between birth through age three. Staff recognize parents as the first and most important teacher of their child.

The PAT program assists parents prenatally through age three by providing up to date information and opportunities to share information and experiences with well trained Parent Educators. Parent Educators meet with parents once to twice a month in their home. The primary focus is child development and parenting and is open to eligible families that live in the Hays School District. PAT, in conjunction with EHS, offers playgroups and socialization opportunities. Kansas State Department of Education plus a local match from the school district funds this program.



PRESCHOOL

The Early Childhood Connections 3-5 program provides preschool children and their families a head start on educational opportunities that may not be afforded to them otherwise. It is a comprehensive, child development program concerned with the health, education and welfare of its participants.

Connections provides services in the areas of: education, special education, nutrition, medical, dental and mental health and social services. Family engagement is a key component in the program. Parents work to meet their own individual goals to move towards self-sufficiency.

The program provides 3.5 hours of class time, four days a week as well as a home-based option. Families are eligible through Head Start criteria or identification of risk factors which include: single parent family, teen parents, no parental high school diploma or GED, limited English proficiency, developmental delays, or eligibility for free lunch (State Pre-Kindergarten and Early Childhood Block Grant). The program is provided at no cost to families and provides 1/3 of a child's daily nutritional requirement.

*Head Start is made possible by a grant from the Department
of Health and Human Services and by people like you!*



FACTS & FIGURES

Connections 0 to 3 Counties:

156 children in Ellis County
1 child in Rush County
18 children in Russell County
2 children in Rooks County

Connections 0 to 3 Staff:

8 Parent Educators, 7 FTE
3 Coordinators, 4 FTE
1 Family Support Worker, 1 FTE
2 EHS Lead Teachers, 2 FTE
7 Teacher Assistants, 5 FTE
1 Custodian, .5FTE

Connections 3 to 5 Counties

155 children in Ellis County
6 in Rooks County
33 in Russell County
0 in Rush County

Connections 3 to 5 Staff

9 teachers, 8 FTE
14 Teacher/Family Assistants, 14 FTE
1 Support Staff, 1 FTE
3 Coordinators, 3 FTE
1 Floating Assistant
1 Custodian, 1 FTE

Early Childhood Staff

1 Director 1 Early Childhood Mental Health Consultant (.2 FTE)
4 0 to 5 Program Coordinators 1 Grant Coordinator

Enrollment is based on prioritized need so number may fluctuate between counties.

All staff receive comprehensive training to meet the needs identified by families.



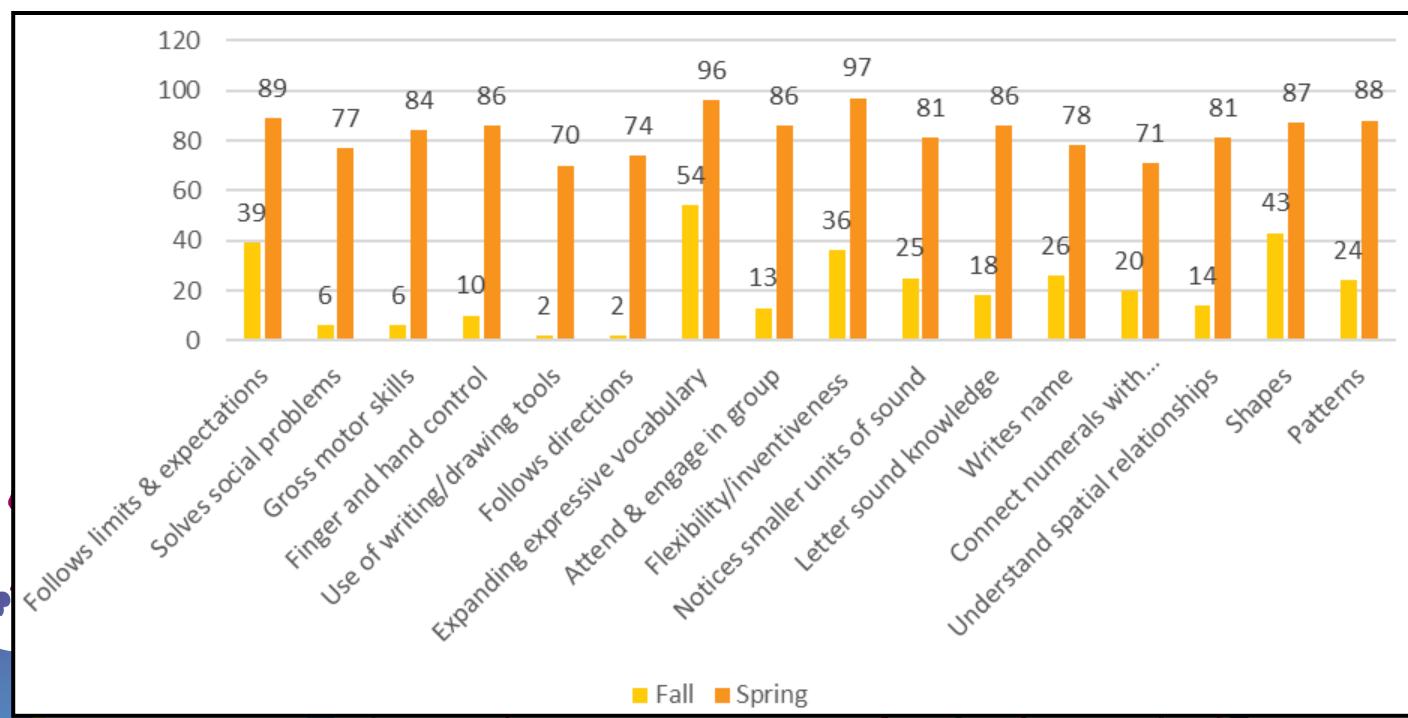
SCHOOL READINESS

The Connections program focuses on comprehensive services to prepare children to be ready to learn when they walk into Kindergarten and for later life-long success. All children are continually monitored and assessed three times a year. Each of these assessments focuses on a number of objectives in the areas of literacy knowledge and skills; language development, approaches to learning; creative arts expression; social-emotional development; physical development and health; social studies knowledge and skills; science knowledge and skills; mathematics knowledge and skills and local reasoning.

Early Childhood Connections uses the Teaching Strategies GOLD assessment tool to assess all 3 to 5 children and to help teachers focus on all aspects of a child's development ensuring that all children are making progress. The assessment is a strength-based approach and is based on observations taken within the context of classroom activities. The program collects data and analyzes children's progress as part of program outcomes. Early Head Start uses birth to three Teaching Strategies Gold and PAT uses PAT milestones and Foundational Curriculum. The 0 to 3 goals align with the 3 to 5 school readiness goals.

Four Year Old School Readiness Goals

Percentage of Children Meeting/Exceeding Target Level of Proficiency, Fall 2016 through Spring 2017



SCHOOL READINESS

The Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework represents the foundation of the Head Start approach to school readiness. It aligns with and builds from the five essential domains of school readiness identified by the National Education Council's Panel and lays out areas of learning and development. Programs are expected to utilize the framework to align with state standards and local education agencies. A committee of Connections staff, Kindergarten teachers and other local early childhood educators met and outlined target school readiness goals.

The targeted goals are:

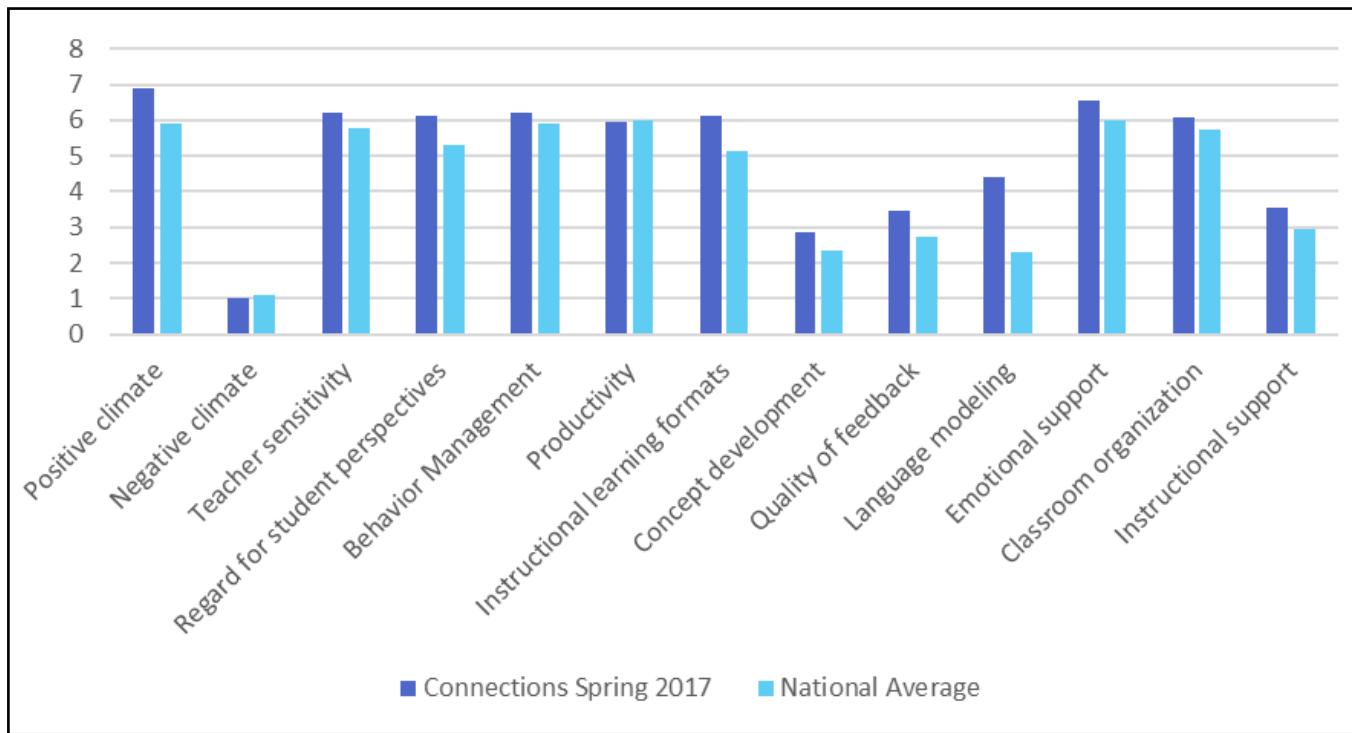
- Children will note and discriminate small and smaller units of sounds.
- Children will use letter-sound knowledge.
- Children will write their names.
- Children will demonstrate the ability to connect numerals with their quantities.
- Children will understand spatial relationships.
- Children will demonstrate understanding of shapes.
- Children will be able to demonstrate knowledge of patterns.
- Children will demonstrate use of fingers and hands.
- Children will demonstrate use of writing and drawing tools.
- Children will demonstrate appropriate gross motor skills.
- Children will attend and engage in group experiences.
- Children will show flexibility and inventiveness in thinking.
- Children will follow limits and expectations.
- Children will demonstrate the ability to solve social programs.
- Children will follow directions.
- Children will use an expanding expressive vocabulary.



TEACHER CHILD INTERACTIONS

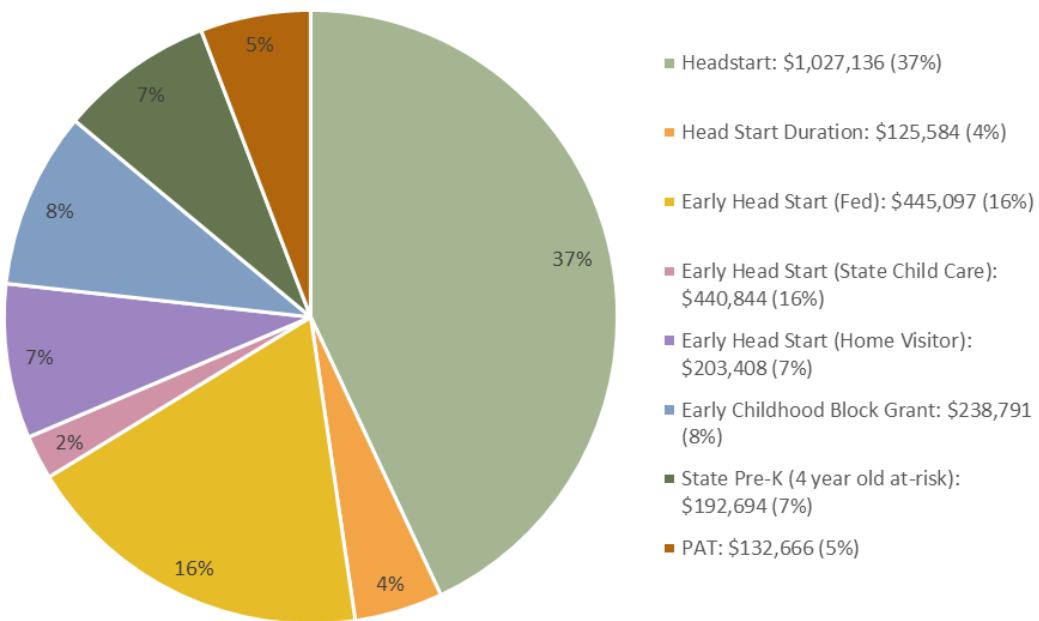
The CLASS tool measures the quality of teacher-child interactions. The CLASS examines social-emotional and instructional interactions that contribute to a student's social competence and academic achievement. The CLASS has 10 subscales organized into three domains: emotional support, classroom organization, and instructional support. The graph below illustrates how Connections teaching staff compare to the national average.

Pre-K CLASS Average Score
Observations occurring: 4/3/2017-5/12/2017

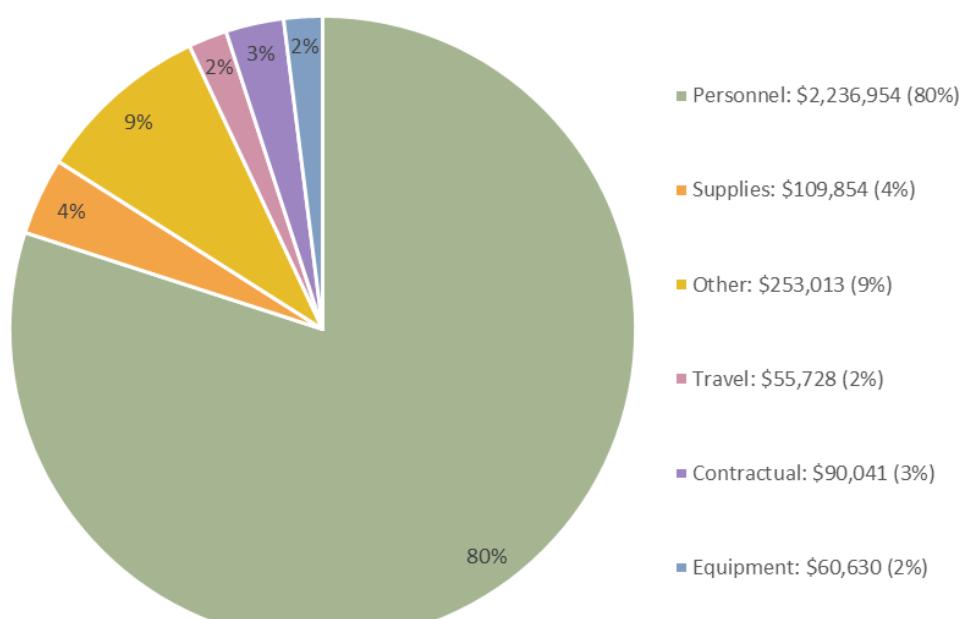


REVENUE & EXPENSES

2016-2017 REVENUE: \$2,806,220



2016-2017 EXPENSES: \$2,806,220



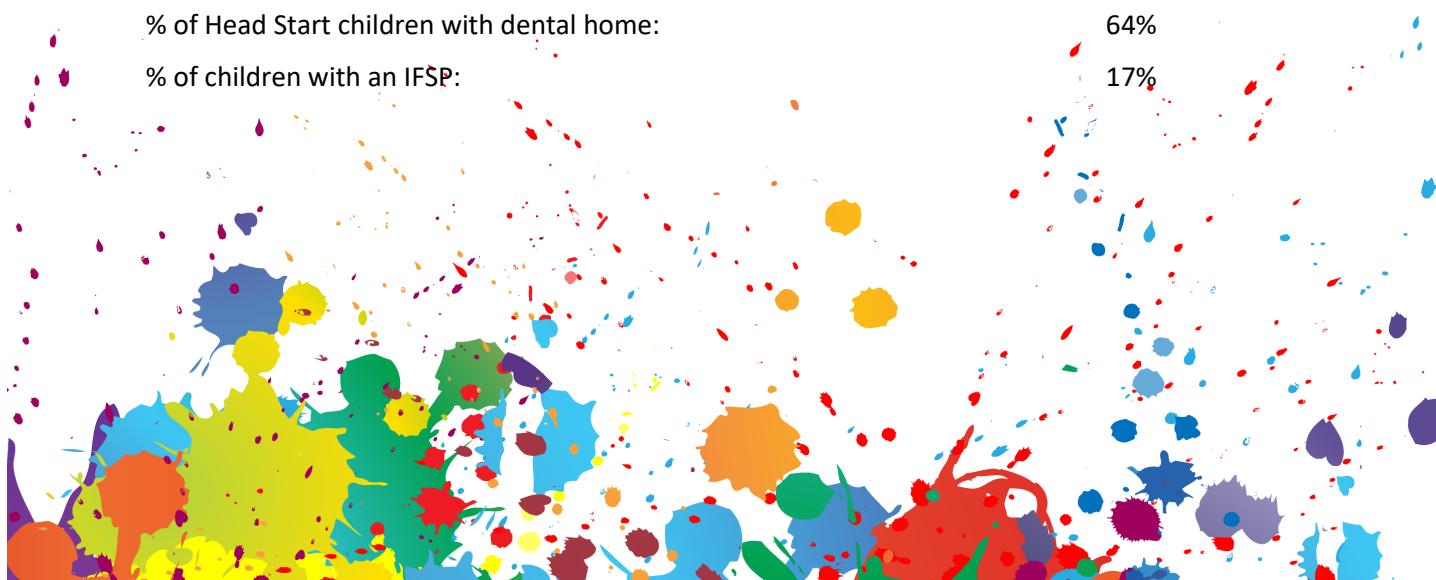
PROGRAM INFORMATION REPORT DATA

Connections 3 to 5 PIR Data

% of Head Start children up-to-date on a schedule of prevention and primary health care:	96%
% of Head Start children completing dental exams:	98%
% of Head Start children with up-to-date, or all possible immunizations:	99%
% of Head Start children needing medical treatment:	17%
% of Head Start children receiving medical treatment:	100%
% of Head Start classroom teachers with a ECE or related degree:	100%
% of Head Start children with health insurance:	94%
% of Head Start children with a medical home:	100%
% of Head Start children with a dental home:	100%
% of Head Start children with an IEP:	36%

Connections 0 to 3 EHS PIR Data

% of EHS children up-to-date on a schedule of prevention & primary health care (PIR data):	86%
% of children with up-to-date, or all possible immunizations	98%
% of children needing medical treatment:	3%
% of children receiving medical treatment:	100%
% of Center-Based Teacher with a CDA:	73%
% of children with health insurance:	92%
% of Head Start children with medical home:	95%
% of Head Start children with dental home:	64%
% of children with an IFSP:	17%



PARENT ENGAGEMENT

Parents, as their child's most important advocate, are encouraged to be engaged in their child's education. Recognizing that parent engagement is an ongoing process that varies from parent to parent, a variety of opportunities are provided to ensure parent participation. These opportunities include:

- Contributing to their child's individual goal development by the completion of a developmental checklist at the beginning of the year.
- Following through on home activities to help children meet individual goals.
- Providing ideas for implementation of curriculum goals.
- Contributing their child's work samples from home for inclusion in the child's portfolio
- Participation in curriculum goals through home activities.
- Participation in literacy activities.
- Volunteering in the classroom.
- Participating in home visits and parent/teacher conferences throughout the year.
- Ensuring their child attends class on a regular basis



PARENT ENGAGEMENT

Empowering Parents! The Connections program offers parent involvement/parent support activities. Free childcare is provided at all activities as well as a meal or snack.

The following activities are available to parents free of charge:

TGI . . . Family Night Out This monthly activity offers families in our community an evening that begins with a free meal, supervised planned activities for children while parents relax. Presentations from experienced professionals on a variety of topics to support families are provided.

Daddy and Me Day This monthly activity is designed to encourage fathers and male role models to be involved in the life of their child. Varied, structured activities are provided for the adults to interact with their children and have fun together. Moms and females are welcome as well.



PARENT & COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Connections needs the support of each child's family and members of the community in order to operate each year. Federal grants only fund 80% of the Head Start program; the remaining 20% is obtained locally through "In-Kind." In-Kind can be parent and community participation in the form of donated time, services, supplies or funding. Any person who volunteers on a regular basis, will be required to have a background screening and TB skin test.

Families and other community members have multiple opportunities to participate and contribute towards meeting our goal. They can:

- Work at home with their child on home activities provided by the center
- Attend parent meetings/serve as an officer
- Serve on Policy council
- Serve on the Health Advisory Committee
- Help with the program Self Assessment
- Serve as a bus monitor
- Be a field trip chaperone
- Answer phones or other office duties
- Help with parent information boards
- Classroom helper



2016-2017 Policy Council Members

USD 489 Hays, Kansas serves as the Head Start grantee. The USD 489 Board of Education is the governing board for the Head Start program. USD 489 Board members are publicly elected positions. The USD 489 School Board receives input from the Connections Policy Council, comprised of parent and community representatives. They work together to make programmatic decisions and meet the needs of the Head Start parents and community. The following individuals give their time and talents to Policy Council:

Amber Thompson
Emmy Vanderwege
Gina Bright
Kurston Ghumm
Heidi Fisher
Krista Fabricius
Jerica Priest
Dana Lecklider
Elisa Chavez
Brianna Salsbury
Rachel Grumbein-Banegas
Dallas Karlin

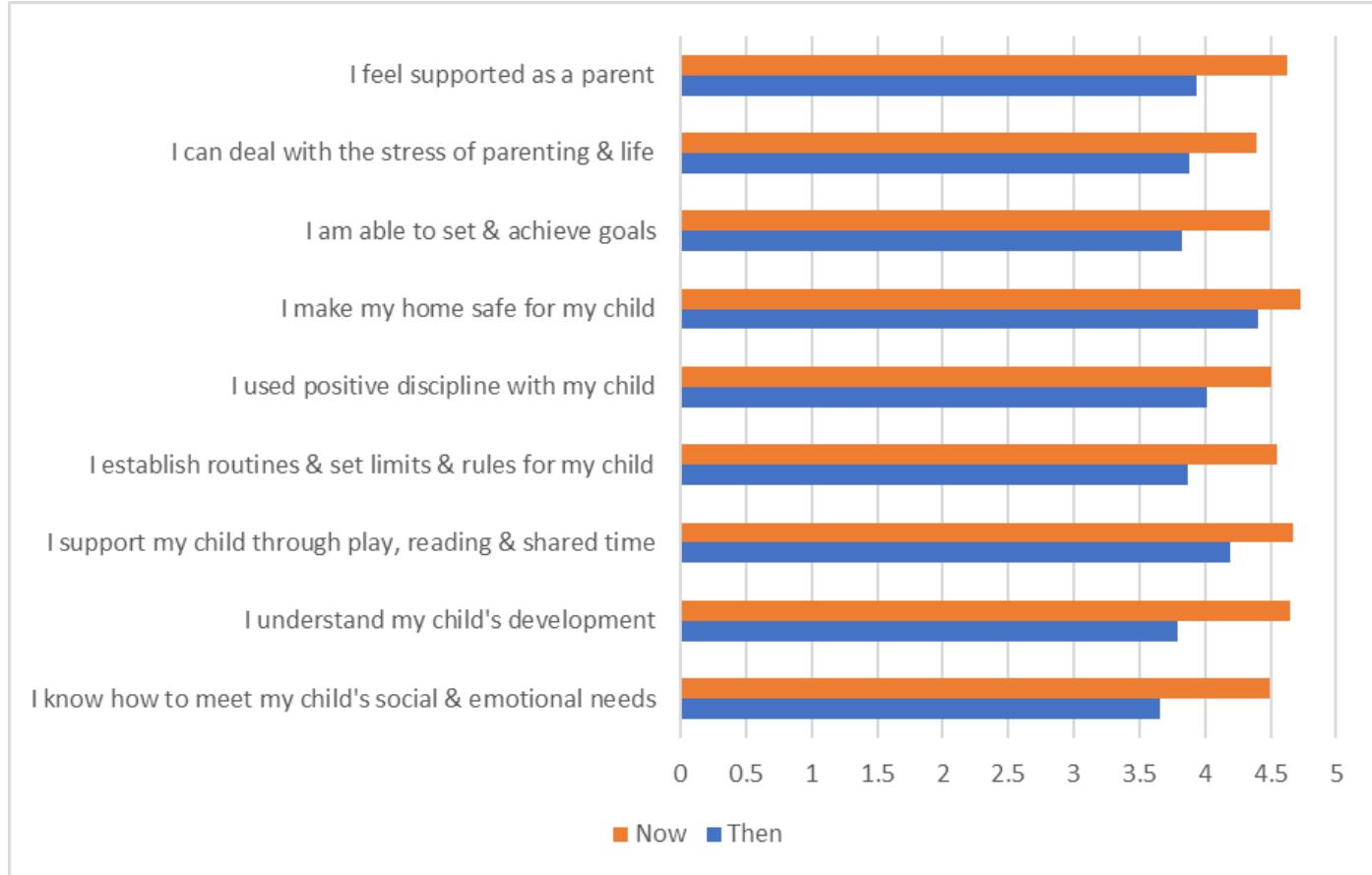
Nichole Herrman
Tosha Hays
Stacy Nussbaum
Heidi Fisher
Sarah Smith
Laura Dunn
Marcy Beougher
Jennifer Oborny
Joan Dunn
Paul Adams (Board of Education)
Shanna Dinkel (Assistant Superintendent)
Donna Hudson-Hamilton (Director)



Participant Feedback

Connections participants completed a parent reflection survey at the beginning and ending of services. The average results are shown below.

2016-2017 Connections Parent Reflection Survey Results



Participant Feedback

We asked families, "What changes have you made in your family or personal life as a result of Early Childhood Connections?"

"The boys are so very proud to show me the things they have done at school. We try to do some more activities at home so they can feel proud of themselves," - Michele



"It has helped my daughter have a better understanding on how to control her emotions. Before she was very dramatic. I regret not having put her in school sooner. She comes home and tells me about her day, talks about her teachers and friends. Having someone at school who speaks my language has been very helpful." - Guillermina

"As a new parent, it was great to have the support of the entire Connections team. The information given to us regarding their development on a regular basis helped us feel more empowered to help them learn. Activities set up for families also helped us connect with others and make the most of our experience," - Sandra

"Before Connections our girls would just be home watching t.v. and we were not as involved.

Now we are aware of things and ways to help them learn." - Carol



"I have a strong support system through the Head Start program. I now have professionals and other parents to turn to if I have questions or concerns." - Sara

"When I first moved to Hays I was a single mom with two kids, working two jobs and barely making ends meet. I was terrified at the thought of trusting a stranger to take care of my shy baby boy. I didn't have family to rely on so I had no option, but to fill out an application for this program. It was one of the best decisions of my life. Aiden's provider is amazing!! He loves her and so do I!" - Angela

