



Early Childhood Programs

2024 ANNUAL REPORT



Our community

MICA helps people who are experiencing poverty meet their needs, build on their strengths, and achieve their goals.

According to the U.S. Census American Community Survey, nearly one in eight children under the age of five in MICA's five-county core service area live in low-income households. Research has shown that these children are more likely to start their education at a development level behind that of their peers – a gap that tends to grow throughout a child's education.

MICA offers Head Start (HS), for children 3-5 years old, and Early Head Start (EHS), for pregnant enrollees and children 0-3 years old. These programs combine age-appropriate learning, social interaction, health screenings, nutrition education, strong family engagement and assistance services to provide children with a rich learning environment.

More detailed information about the communities we serve can be found in the agency's community assessment, available online at www.micaonline.org/reports.

Learn more about our
communities through our
Community Needs
Assessment!

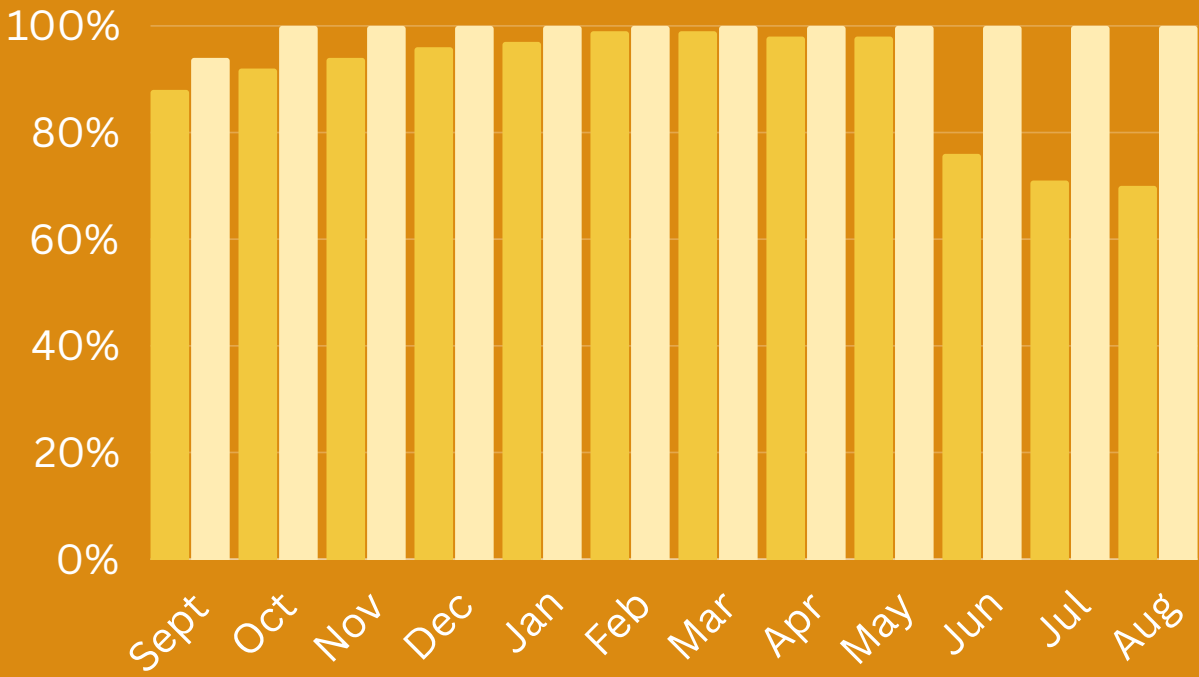


Our Impact

At MICA, we measure our impact in the number of lives we change.

In 2024, MICA's Early Childhood Programs served 316 children and families (207 in HS, 109 in EHS). Not only did hundreds of children receive a quality early childhood education, but their adult family members also received information and assistance, creating a strong and stable family environment.

Several HS classrooms operated on a program year with a summer break. Therefore, it is normal for HS enrollment to fall below capacity during the summer months. This year, MICA completed a Full Enrollment Plan with the Office of Head Start. Staff actively recruited for this program and we are currently fully enrolled.



A Strong Start

MICA's Early Childhood Programs provide the groundwork for a child's lifelong educational success. Its immediate impact can be seen in preparing children for entry into kindergarten.

Making a difference!

With support and planned at-home activities from their Head Start teacher, a Head Start family shared they have increased conversations, reading books, and connection activities at home with their toddler. When school started, their child spoke 5 words and is now speaking over 45 words and continuing to add more.

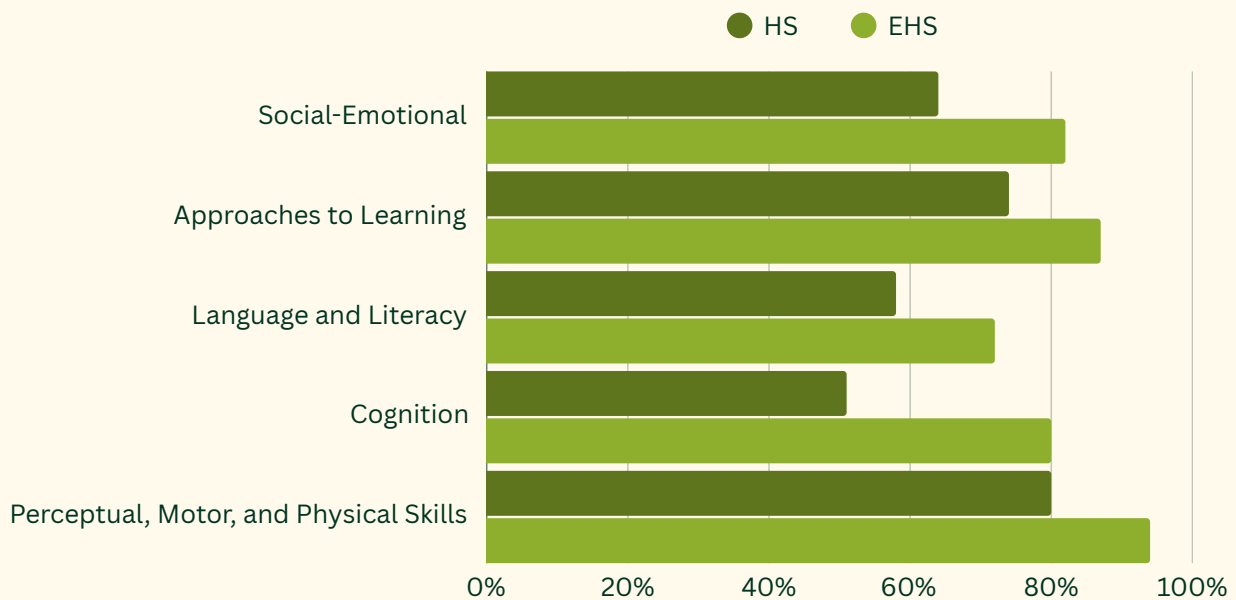


A Whole Family Approach

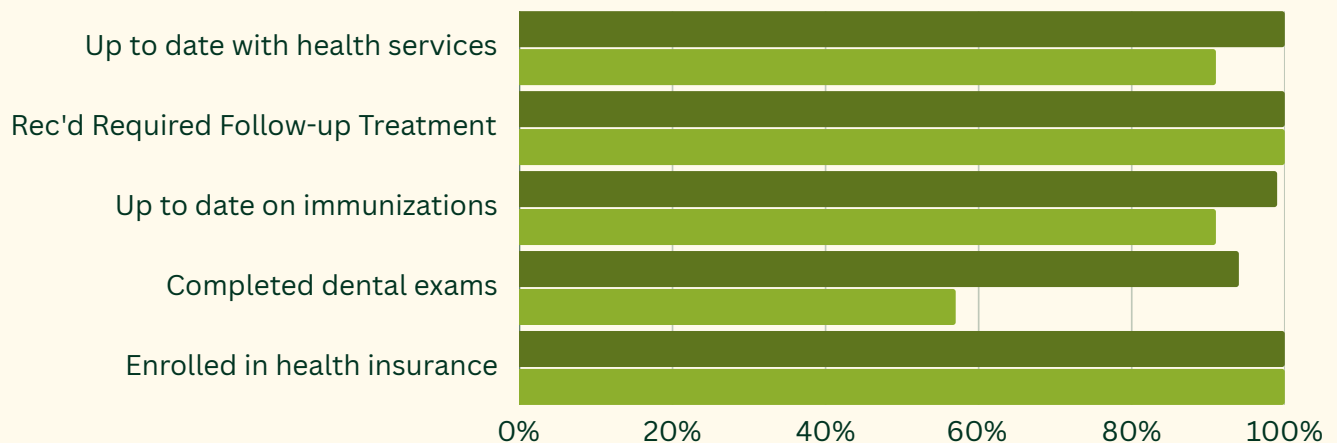
Thanks to MICA's Full Day Head Start classrooms, a single mother has been able to maintain her full-time job, while having quality care for her child. She shared she's thankful for not having to worry about paying for childcare and she has seen a tremendous amount of growth in her child's speech and academic skills. This is the family's last year at Head Start and the mother adds she sees how much MICA's Head Start has contributed into getting her daughter kindergarten ready!

Assessment Goals

The chart below shows the percentage of children in both EHS and HS who were meeting MICA's School Readiness goals for year-end 2024.



Health and Wellbeing



Family Engagement

A child's family members are their most important teachers. They participate in home visits and conferences, set educational goals, read to their child, and engage in educational activities with their child at home.

MICA gives family members many opportunities to be involved in their child's education. Their involvement in regularly scheduled meetings like the Policy Council and Parent Committees help shape the direction of the program and give them a meaningful role in the decision-making process. We also provide support and family engagement on a variety of topics. The list below reflects some of the topics we discussed during the 2023-2024 program year:

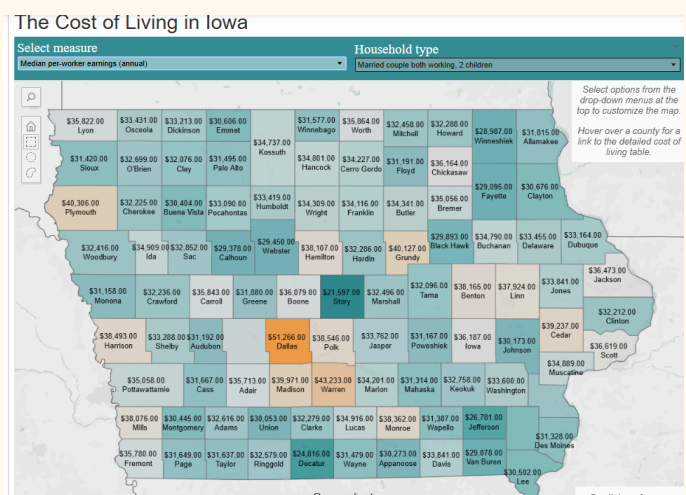
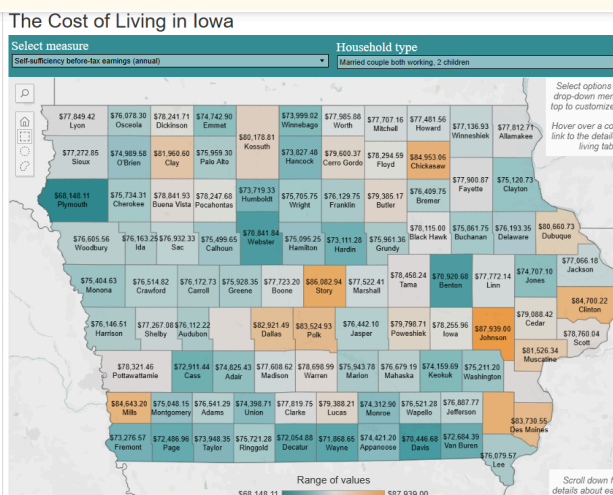
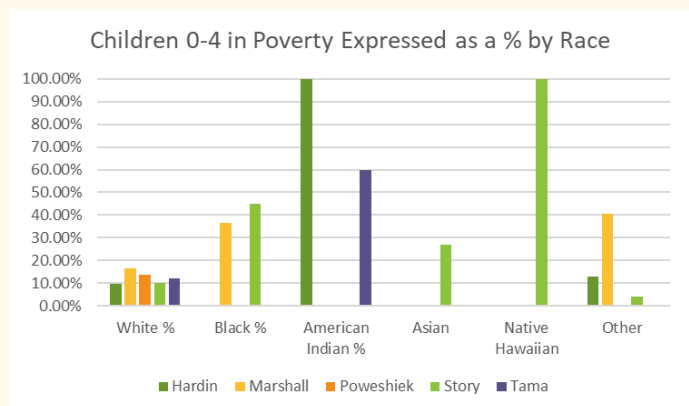
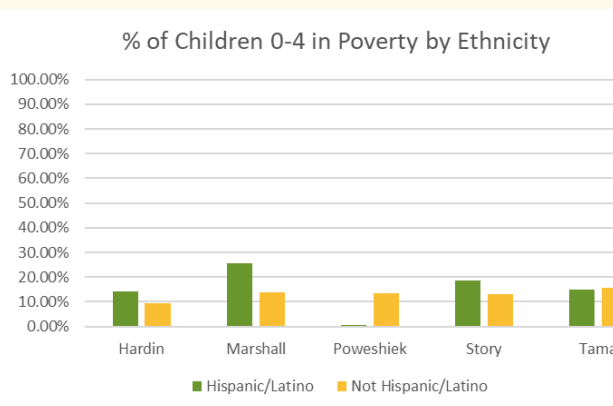
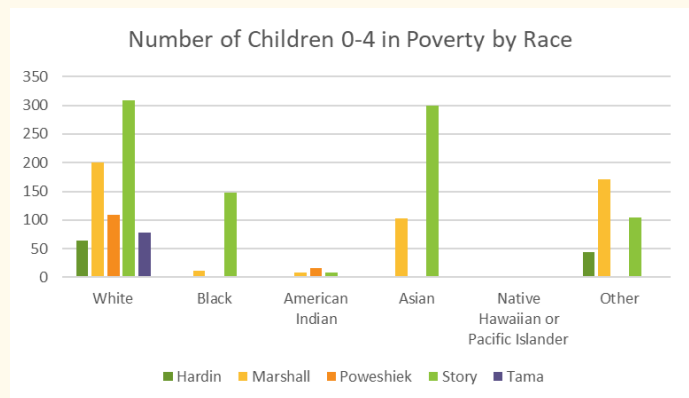
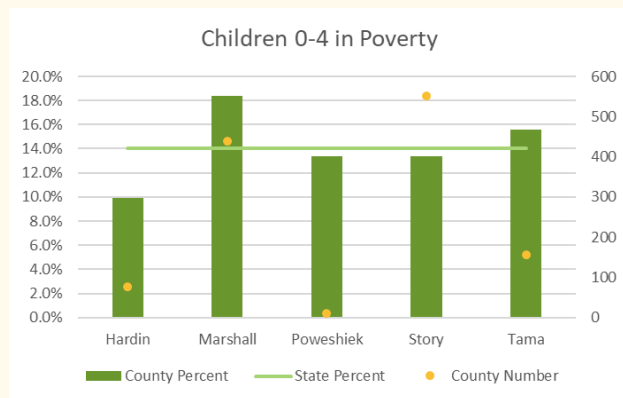
Family Engagement Topics:

Attendance
Autism
Behaviors
Childhood Illness
Conscious Discipline- Breathing Techniques
Conscious Discipline- I Love You Rituals
Co-parenting
Drowning Prevention
Environmental Hazards
Finance
Fire Safety
Health
Healthy Relationships
Home Safety
Literacy
Managing Stress
Mental Health
Nutrition on a Budget
Nutrition
Oral Health Care
Period of Purple Crying: Shaken Baby Syndrome
Positive Parenting

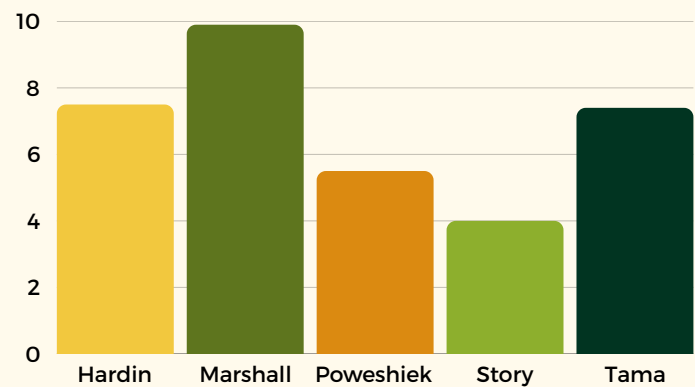
Postpartum Depression
Potty Training
Relationships
Routines
Screen time
Sleep
Substance Use and Misuse
Summer Safety
Transition from Early Head Start to a preschool setting
Transitions from Head Start to Kindergarten
Winter Safety



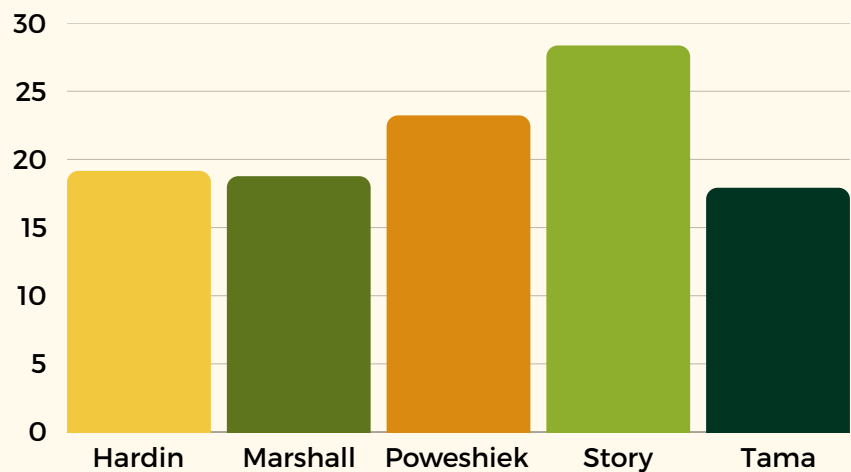
Updated Community Needs



% of total population enrolled in SNAP



% of families who are housing cost burdened



% of families who are severely cost burdened

