



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

ADMINISTRATION FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES
Office of Head Start
8th Floor Portal Building
1250 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20024

To: Board Chairperson
Mrs. Teresa Adkins
Board Chairperson
Kids Central, Inc.
5345 Esserville Rd.
Norton, VA 24273-0661

From: Responsible HHS Official
Ms. Yvette Sanchez Fuentes
Director, Office of Head Start


Date
7-18-12

Overview of Findings

From 4/22/2012 to 4/27/2012, the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) conducted an on-site monitoring review of the Kids Central, Inc. Head Start and Early Head Start programs. We wish to thank the governing body, Policy Council, staff, and parents of your program for their cooperation and assistance during the review. This Head Start Review Report has been issued to Mrs. Teresa Adkins, Board Chairperson, as legal notice to your agency of the results of the on-site program review.

Based on the information gathered during our review, it was determined that your Head Start and Early Head Start programs are in compliance with all applicable Head Start Program Performance Standards, laws, regulations, and policy requirements. Accordingly, no corrective action is required at this time.

If you are a grantee serving preschool age children in the center-based option, a sample of your preschool classrooms will be observed using the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS). This classroom observation instrument looks at the teacher/child interactions, as well as interactions between children. The Office of Head Start encourages grantees to consider the CLASS results in planning ongoing efforts to improve classroom quality.

Please contact your ACF Regional Office with any questions or concerns you may have about this report.

Distribution of the Head Start Review Report

Copies of this report will be distributed to the following recipients:
Ms. Linda Savage, Regional Program Manager

Ms. Sue Coleman, Policy Council Chairperson
Mr. Darrell Edwards, CEO/Executive Director/Head Start Director

Overview Information

Review Type: *Triennial*
Organization: *Kids Central, Inc.*
Program Type: *Head Start and Early Head Start*
Team Leader: *Mr. W. Jack Abbott*
Funded Enrollment HS: *320*
Funded Enrollment EHS: *100*

Area of Strength

The grantee was creative and aggressive in addressing an image problem affecting recruitment, enrollment, and community partnership engagement. The Executive Director stated that when he joined the agency--under a former grantee name--the program had difficulty with recruitment, was underenrolled, and had problems developing and maintaining community partnerships. In response to the issue, the grantee adopted a creative marketing strategy to rebrand the agency and its Head Start program.

The agency changed its name to Kids Central, Inc. (KCI), developed a new logo, and adopted a mascot named Kasey Kangaroo. The Story of Kasey Kangaroo was used as a recruitment and information publication and showed Kasey Kangaroo arriving at KCI 3 years earlier, befriending hundreds of children and helping them understand friendship, caring, helping, manners, the importance of reading, the importance of good nutrition, and more. Kasey participated in center and community activities in Wise and Dickenson Counties and the City of Norton.

Kasey's picture and the new logo were affixed to agency vehicles, and Kasey and his picture were prominently displayed throughout the service area. The grantee's publications, Annual Report, and recruitment materials were designed to feature Kasey and the KCI logo. Broad outreach to the community as a "new" program and a total marketing approach resulted in an improved community image for KCI.

The grantee created a virtual village called Kaseyville as a means to increase parent participation and empowerment and parent-child interactions in all program options, including Early Head Start, Head Start, and home-based. Children visited Kaseyville and experienced a variety of creative activities focused on the image of a learning-environment village. Kaseyville's main features were a recording studio, where children learned to broadcast the news, weather, and feature stories and were seen on a closed-circuit TV broadcast; a bank, where children received \$1.41 in Kaseyville dollars--one dollar, one quarter, one nickel, one dime, and one penny--for each day they attended; and were given a savings account tracked using an Excel program on the bank's computer, allowing children to monitor their own accounts; an Ice Cream Shoppe offering healthy alternate snacks, such as smoothies, yogurt, and fruit shakes; a library/stationery store, where children were able to purchase books, drawing paper, crayons, paints, stickers, and other products to use to fashion cards and notes; a general store, where age-appropriate toys and other

items were able to be purchased; and a post office, which sold the Kaseyville postage stamp--a genuine U.S. postage stamp with a picture of Kasey the Kangaroo and a mailbox for children to mail their cards, notes, and works of art to someone special.

Each Head Start and Early Head Start child had a Kaseyville bank account, credit card, library card, and identification badge, which was used as proof of membership in Kaseyville and for purchasing items. Kaseyville was a field trip destination for both the center-based and home-based programs.

The success of the re-branding effort helped staff improve Collaborative Agreements. The grantee partnered with agencies, programs, and services, including Family Preservation Services, Inc.; the Wise County Department of Social Services; the Virginia Department of Education; the local Department of Motor Vehicles; the Virginia Department of Health; the Virginia Child and Adult Care Food Program; Frontier Health; the Mountains Empire Older Citizens, Inc., Foster Grandparent Project; the American Red Cross; the Health Wagon; and the Senior Community Services Employment program. Ongoing collaborative relationships with community organizations provided responses to community needs and promoted access to community services for children and families. The collaborative relationships included health care providers, mental health providers, nutrition services providers, and agencies providing services to children with disabilities and their families.

— END OF REPORT —