

Boston EQUIP

Boston Early Education Quality Improvement Project

1999 Neighborhood Profiles: Roxbury, Jamaica Plain, Mission Hill*

DEMOGRAPHICSⁱ

Roxbury is one of Boston's largest and oldest neighborhoods. While Roxbury is rich in assets, history, and diversity, it is one of the poorest neighborhoods in Boston. Roxbury's population is becoming increasingly diverse with

<i>Total Population:</i>	99,871	<i>Median Income:</i>	\$25,191
<i>Population under 18 years old:</i>	26,977	<i>Percent in Poverty:</i>	24.4%
8.1% Age 0-4	8,348	<i>Percent of Youth in Poverty:</i>	37.4%
18.0% Age 5-17	18,629	<i>Unemployment Rate:</i>	11.6%
<i>Racial/Ethnic Diversity:</i>		<i>Highest Educational Attainment:</i>	
3.1% Asian		31.9% Less Than 12th Grade	
49% Black		25.2% High School Graduate	
22.3% Hispanic		18.6% Some College	
0.5% Native American		24.5% College Graduate	
33.9% White			
13.5% Other			

rapid growth in the number of Cape Verdeans, Haitians, Asians and Latinos. Other trends include an increasing number of single mothers with young children, more grandmothers serving as surrogate parents, and growing rates of unemployment. Jamaica Plain, originally part of Roxbury is now recognized as an independent community. The Latino population has experienced marked growth, representing 27% of the population in 1990. Jamaica Plain lacks sufficient child care and alternative activities for local youth.ⁱⁱ

PROGRAM INFORMATION

Capacityⁱⁱⁱ

Program Type	Capacity
Center & Head Start Programs (CHS)	2483
School-Age Programs (SACC)	707
Family Child Care (FCC)	720

Capacity by Age Group	
CHS	
Infant	148
Toddler	329
Preschool	2006
SACC	
Elementary School	579
Middle School	128

Waitlists

Demand for child care combined with limitations on capacity often result in long waitlists. The average number of children on a waitlist at **each individual Center and Head Start is 66; for School-Age Child Care the average is 20. Family Child Care Providers in this neighborhood reported an average of two children on their waitlists.** Citywide, these numbers are 62, 10, and five respectively. In June 1999, approximately 613 of the children in this neighborhood were on the waitlist for a state Office of Child Care Service (OCCS) subsidy, according to OCCS.

Subsidies

Subsidies often provide access to child care for families who cannot afford to pay regular rates. **Per program, the total number of children in Roxbury, Jamaica Plain and Mission Hill who use subsidies for Centers and Head Start, School-Age Child Care, and Family Child Care are 47, 35,**

and three respectively. Citywide, these numbers are 38, 30, and two respectively.

ACCREDITATION^{iv}

Accreditation is often used as an indicator of the quality in a child care program. **In this neighborhood, six centers and Head Start programs are accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). One Family Child Care provider was accredited by the National Association of Family Childcare (NAFCC) at the time of the EQUIP survey.**

	Roxbury, Jamaica Plain, Mission Hill	Boston	EQUIP Benchmark
CHS	12%	16%	25%
FCC	<1%	10%	25%

TRAINING

Research shows that the quality of programs is directly related to the education and training of their staff.^v Specialized early childhood training for caregivers helps make the most of children’s developmental potential. **In Roxbury, Jamaica Plain, and Mission Hill, 50% of Center and Head Start staff had received college training in the past year; 32% of all SACC staff received college training; and 53% (eight out of 15) of all FCC providers responding had received college training.** While CHS and FCC exceed the benchmark set by EQUIP, SACC is below both the benchmark and the citywide average.

Additionally, a significant number of qualified professionals have obtained a college degree. **Those who have obtained a BA or more include: 50.4% of CHS teachers and lead teachers, and 47.2% of SACC group leaders and senior group leaders^{vi}.**

Staff Receiving College Credit

	Roxbury, Jamaica Plain, Mission Hill	Boston	EQUIP Benchmark
CHS	50%	41%	43%
SACC	32%	50%	43%
FCC	53%	57%	43%

Staff with BA or more

	Roxbury, Jamaica Plain, Mission Hill	Boston
CHS	50%	29%
SACC	47%	55%
FCC	NA	12%

PARENT ENGAGEMENT

Parents play a significant role in the education of their children. Many programs encourage opportunities for parents and providers to work together not only in activities inside the classroom like assisting teachers or participating in celebrations, but in the leadership of the program through activities like hiring staff, evaluating programs, and serving on governing boards. **Averaging the parent engagement on a number of activities, an overall score indicates 26% of parents are involved in Centers and Head Starts in this neighborhood, 14% of parents are involved in School-age Child Care, and 58% of parents are involved in Family Child Care.**

Average Parent Engagement

	Roxbury, Jamaica Plain, Mission Hill	Boston	EQUIP Benchmark
CHS	26%	26%	50%
SACC	14%	16%	50%
FCC	58%	17%	50%

Top Three Parent Engagement Activities

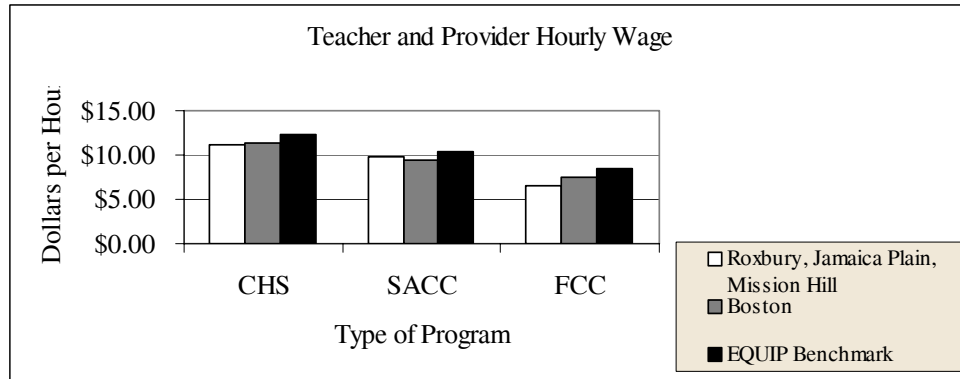
CHS	
Parent/Teacher Conferences	78%
Celebrations, Holidays, Festivals	60%
Field Trips	35%
SACC	
Parent/Teacher Conferences	37%
Celebrations, Holidays, Festivals	37%
Staff Evaluations	23%
FCC	
Playing with Children	58%
Celebrations, Holidays, Festivals	47%
Field Trips	47%

SALARIES

Teacher and Provider Hourly Wage

Low salaries are often linked to high staff turnover rates and lower quality of child care. Higher salaries generally correlate with higher levels of education, professional training, and a commitment to staff retention. **The average hourly wages for CHS, SACC, and FCC are \$11.25, \$9.88, and \$6.47 respectively.** None of the programs exceed the EQUIP benchmark, but SACC hourly wages exceed the citywide average.

	Roxbury, Jamaica Plain, Mission Hill	Boston	EQUIP Benchmark
CHS	\$11.25	\$11.32	\$12.40
SACC	\$9.88	\$9.41	\$10.35
FCC	\$6.47	\$7.47	\$8.46



Benefits and Health Care

Another indicator of a program's commitment to its staff is the level of benefits offered. In this neighborhood, CHS and SACC programs provide fairly comprehensive benefits to their full-time employees. **11% of CHS and 88% of SACC programs responding, however, did not offer health care benefits to their full-time employees.**

For FCC providers, benefits are less commonly available. Paid sick time was frequently cited--10 of the 15 providers -- but other benefits like paid holidays maternity leave, and health care were not provided by their own FCC businesses. **53% of Family Child Care Providers responding had no health care coverage – either through their own business or through another family member.**

Turnover

Continuous changes in personnel limit efforts to build stable environments and relationships for children and their families. **Both CHS and SACC programs reported relatively high levels of turnover.** In both cases, rates were higher than citywide averages for annual staff turnover.

	Roxbury, Jamaica Plain, Mission Hill	Boston
CHS	28%	23.3%
SACC	75%	56.3%

FACILITIES

Physical environment is important in a program's ability to deliver quality care. A safe, well-maintained, inviting, and well-designed environment contributes to physical, emotional, and cognitive development in children.

Closures

Program closures due to unforeseen circumstances such as building problems place a burden on parents to seek alternative child care while providers potentially face lost revenue and the prospect of losing families. In addition, closures due to facility problems are an indicator of the need for repairs and general maintenance. **Three out of 35 (9%) centers, and two out of 16 (13%) School-Age Child Care programs reported having to close at least once in the past year.**

Expand, Relocate, Renovate

When Centers and Head Start programs were asked if they would like to expand, renovate, or relocate, (28) 80% wanted to expand, (25) 71% wanted to renovate, and (16) 46% wanted to relocate.

	Roxbury, Jamaica Plain, Mission Hill	Boston
Expand	80%	63%
Renovate	25%	78%
Relocate	16%	39%

Computers

Caregivers can use computers for both instructional and administrative tasks. They can selectively choose appropriate material to help children acquire basic cognitive skills. Furthermore, computers can perform a variety of administrative tasks like budgeting and planning. **94% of Centers and Head Starts (33 out of 50), 81% of School-Age Child Care programs (13 out of 19), and 40% of Family Child Care providers (6 out of 15) reported owning and using a computer.**

Top Three Computer Uses
• Word Processing
• Educational Software
• Internet

What is Boston EQUIP?

The purpose of the Boston Early Education Quality Improvement Project (EQUIP) is to measure and help improve quality for the 25,000 children and families that use Boston's public and private early childhood and school age care and education programs. In the Spring of 1999, Boston EQUIP surveyed licensed center-based, Head Start and Boston Public School early childhood programs, school-age child care programs, and a representative sample of licensed family child care providers. A total of 264 of Boston's early childhood and school-age programs returned surveys.

For more information, contact Boston EQUIP at 617-695-0700 x229.

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* Unless otherwise identified, all data is from 1999 Boston EQUIP Third Inventory. Analysis by Alyssa Na'im. Return rates in Roxbury/JP/Mission Hill were: 58% for CHS; 95% for SACC; and 42% for FCC.

ⁱ Statistics are from Rolf Goetze. *Facts about Boston's Neighborhoods: 16 Neighborhoods and 69 Neighborhood Statistical Areas.* February 1995.

ⁱⁱ From *A United Way Neighborhood View.* United Way of Massachusetts Bay

ⁱⁱⁱ School-age capacity numbers are projected from 1999 Boston EQUIP data. All other capacity numbers are from the Massachusetts Office of Child Care Services 1998 licensing records.

^{iv} CHS Accreditation is from the National Association for the Education of Young Children. FCC Accreditation numbers are from the National Association for Family Child Care.

^v Suzanne W. Helburn (editor). *Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes in Child Care Centers.* June 1995.

^{vi} None of the FCC providers supplied information on this item.