

Boston EQUIP

Boston Early Education Quality Improvement Project

1999 Neighborhood Profiles: South End, Chinatown, Fenway*

DEMOGRAPHICSⁱ

Over the past twenty years, Chinatown has evolved from an almost entirely Chinese neighborhood to one comprising many racial and ethnic groups. Along with the South End, it is one of the most densely populated neighborhoods

<i>Total Population:</i>	95,048	<i>Median Income:</i>	\$20,290
<i>Population under 18 years old:</i>	3,139	<i>Percent in Poverty:</i>	27.3%
2.0% Age 0-4	1,943	<i>Percent of Youth in Poverty:</i>	37.7%
4.4% Age 5-17	4,196	<i>Unemployment Rate:</i>	11.9%
<i>Racial/Ethnic Diversity:</i>		<i>Highest Educational Attainment:</i>	
8.2% Asian		28.4% Less Than 12th Grade	
12.5% Black		22.5% High School Graduate	
5.9% Hispanic		18.6% Some College	
0.2% Native American		39.5% College Graduate	
25.9% White			
3.1% Other			

in Boston, having the least amount of open spaces and parks. In addition to the increasing ethnic diversity, the area has experience a rapid increase in the percentages of very young and elderly residents, single-parent families, and high school dropouts; Fenway, like Chinatown and South End, is densely populated, but the neighborhood has a considerable amount of green space. These three neighborhoods all lack valuable resources like English as a Second Language classes, affordable housing, youth recreation, child-care programs, counseling services, and job training.^{ii iii}

PROGRAM INFORMATION

Capacity^{iv}

Program Type	Capacity
Center & Head Start Programs (CHS)	1223
School Age Programs (SACC)	596
Family Child Care (FCC)	122

Capacity by Age Group	
CHS	
Infant	75
Toddler	192
Preschool	956
SACC	
Elementary School	282
Middle School	121

Waitlists

Demand for childcare combined with limitations on capacity often result in long waitlists. The average number of children on waitlists at individual **Centers and Head Starts in this neighborhood is 40; for School-Age Child Care the average is 21.** Citywide, these numbers are 62, and 10 respectively. In June 1999, approximately 179 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 this neighborhood who use subsidies for Centers and Head Start, School-Age Child Care, and Family Child Care are 51, 26 and three respectively.** Citywide, these numbers are 38, 30, and two respectively.

ACCREDITATION^v

Accreditation is often used as an indicator of the quality in a child care program. **In this neighborhood, four Centers and Head Start programs are accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). None of the Family Child Care providers were either accredited by the National Association of Family Childcare (NAFCC) or had received their Child Development Associate’s credential at the time of the EQUIP survey.**

	South End, Chinatown, Fenway	Boston	EQUIP Benchmark
CHS	20%	16%	25%
FCC	0%	10%	25%

TRAINING

Research shows that the quality of programs is directly related to the education and training of their staff.^{vi} Specialized early childhood training for caregivers helps make the most of children’s developmental potential. **In this neighborhood, one third (33%) of Center and Head Start staff had received college training in the past year; half (50%) of all FCC providers had received college training; and slightly less than a half (43%) of SACC staff had received college training.**

A significant number of staff and providers in this neighborhood have obtain a college degree. **Those who have obtained a BA or more include: 37% of CHS teachers and lead teachers; 48% of SACC group leaders and senior group leaders; and 50% of FCC providers.**

Staff Receiving College Credit

	South End, Chinatown, Fenway	Boston	EQUIP Benchmark
CHS	33%	41%	43%
SACC	50%	50%	43%
FCC	43%	57%	43%

Staff with BA or more

	South End, Chinatown, Fenway	Boston
CHS	37%	29%
SACC	48%	55%
FCC	50%	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 27% of parents are involved in Centers and Head Starts, and 24% of parents are involved in School-Age Child Care.** None of the Family Child Care providers in this neighborhood provided responses to the items on parent engagement so similar analyses could not be made. CHS parent participation exceeds the citywide average, but neither CHS nor SACC exceed the EQUIP benchmark.

Average Parent Engagement

	South End, Chinatown, Fenway	Boston	EQUIP Benchmark
CHS	27%	26%	50%
SACC	24%	16%	50%

Top Three Parent Engagement Activities

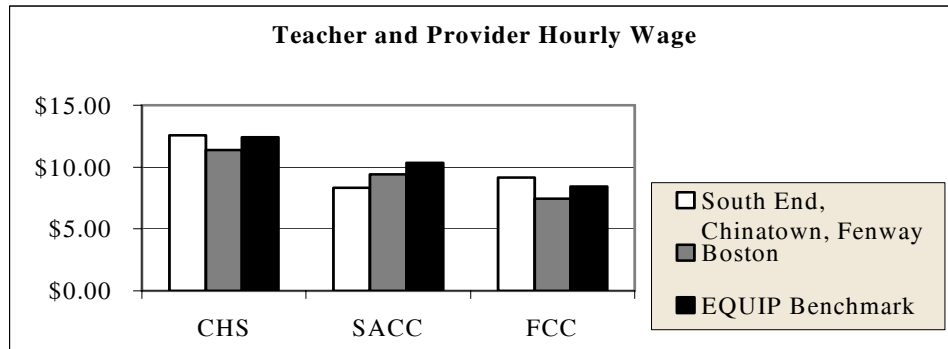
CHS	
Parent/Teacher Conferences	80%
Program Evaluation	60%
Celebrations, Holidays, Festivals	53%
SACC	
Fundraising	58%
Parent/Teacher Conferences	53%
Celebrations, Holidays, Festivals	52%

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 \$12.56, \$8.31, and \$9.15 respectively.** CHS and FCC hourly wages are higher than both the citywide average and the EQUIP benchmark.

	South End, Chinatown, Fenway	Boston	EQUIP Benchmark
CHS	\$12.56	\$11.32	\$12.40
SACC	\$8.31	\$9.41	\$10.35
FCC	\$9.15	\$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, 12% of center and Head Start programs and 75% of school age programs did not offer health care coverage to full-time employees.**

Turnover

Continuous changes in personnel limit efforts to build stable environments and relationships for children and their families. **CHS and SACC annual staff turnover rates in this neighborhood were 33 and 59 percent respectively.** Both programs had higher staff turnover than the citywide averages.

	South End, Chinatown, Fenway	Boston
CHS	33%	23%
SACC	59%	56%

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. **While none of the School-Age Child Care programs reported having to close in the past year, 35% of Centers and Head Starts reported having done so at least once.**

Expand, Relocate, Renovate

When Centers and Head Start programs were asked if they would like to expand, renovate, or relocate, 56% wanted to expand, 88% wanted to renovate, and 57% wanted to relocate.

	South End, Chinatown, Fenway	Boston
Expand	56%	63%
Renovate	88%	78%
Relocate	57%	39%

Computers

There are various software packages designed for young children. Caregivers can selectively choose appropriate material to help children acquire basic cognitive skills. Furthermore, computers can perform a variety of administrative tasks. **Although all CHS and SACC programs in this neighborhood reported owning and using at least one computer, none of the FCC programs owned computers.**

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| <p>Top Three Computer Uses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Word Processing • In the Classroom with Children • Enrollment |
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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 the South End, Chinatown, and Fenway were: 85% for CHS; 88% for SACC; and 15% for FCC. The FCC survey was not translated into Chinese, which may have affected both return rates and the reliability of the data for that neighborhood.

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

ⁱⁱ City of Boston website: <http://www.ci.boston.ma.us/neighborhoods/>.

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

^{iv} 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.

^v CHS Accreditation is from the National Association for the Education of Young Children. FCC Accreditation and CDA numbers are from the National Association for Family Child Care.

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