

# Helping Children and Families Succeed-From Preschool Through Life



*Holy Cross Mission Statement: To provide comprehensive educational opportunities for eligible families and their children birth to five in collaboration with community partnerships in a safe, diverse environment.*

Holy Cross Head Start is a school readiness and family development program helping children and families succeed from preschool through life. Along with meeting the educational and socialization needs of pre-school children, Holy Cross Head Start provides support to families as they work to achieve their goals. Comprehensive services in the areas of health, mental health, nutrition, disabilities and social services are provided. In addition, Holy Cross Head Start strives to involve parents and other community members by offering a variety of enriching parent involvement

and volunteer opportunities.

Holy Cross Head Start, Inc. is one of the many Head Start pre-school programs serving children 3 and 4 years old

and families throughout the country. Holy Cross is a literacy based program with certified teachers for

each classroom, actively recruiting children with disabilities. A research based curriculum, bilingual staff, family style meal service, transportation options, along

with a variety of different program options including part day, full day and Universal Pre-K are just a part of what makes Holy Cross Head Start unique.



Holy Cross Head Start is a delegate agency of Community Action Organization of Erie County. Children who are or will be three and four years old, according to date

of birth guidelines of the school district which the Head Start center serves, are welcome to apply to our high-quality program. Head Start is federally funded, with no cost to enrolled children.

## **Holy Cross provides services for 499 children ages 3-4 years old and families in Erie County, New York in the following areas:**

Holy Cross Center  
150 Maryland Street  
Buffalo, NY 14201  
716.852.8373

Northwest Center  
155 Lawn Avenue  
Buffalo, NY 14207  
716.877.5022

Central Center  
89 Military Road  
Buffalo, NY 14207  
716.875.1506

Akron Center  
7 Church Street  
Akron, NY 14001  
716.542.2962

Parkside Center  
169 Sheridan Parkside Drive  
Tonawanda, NY 14150  
716.876.0100

North Buffalo Center  
203 Sanders Road  
Buffalo, NY 14216  
716.464.7771

### Service Options:

Holy Cross offers a range of program options to fit the needs of families including: Extended Day, Full Day and Half Day options. In addition to these options, Holy Cross also has collaborations with Buffalo Hearing and Speech, Summit Educational Resources, Buffalo Public Schools and Akron School District Universal Pre-K.



Find us on the web:

[www.holycrossheadstart.org](http://www.holycrossheadstart.org)

## MENTAL HEALTH AND DISABILITIES

Holy Cross Head Start works closely with surrounding agencies to provide accessible resources for children and families. Holy Cross Head Start continues to collaborate with Child and Adolescent Treatment Services to provide assessments, individual counseling, Parent Child Interaction Therapy, and other counseling related services. Holy Cross Head Start also provides all families with information on the Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE) evaluations and services. Many children at Holy Cross Head Start require additional in-classroom services to assist with developing and strengthening the skills necessary to be successful in kindergarten and beyond. Holy Cross Head Start ensures that all surrounding school districts have an LEA agreement with Holy Cross to support and service children going through the CPSE process. Additional resources, including the Early Childhood Development Center, have provided in house observations and suggestions to address challenging behaviors in the classroom. Holy Cross Head Start provides learning opportunities for all children, by offering collaboration classrooms at four locations with Gateway-Longview, Summit Education Resources and Buffalo Hearing and Speech.

Holy Cross Head Start assesses all children's social and emotional needs with the Ages and Stages: Social and Emotional Questionnaire. Children and families are provided with the results of the questionnaire, and if warranted, a referral for additional services to address any concerns. All children with an indicated score are rescreened during the school year to allow for continued follow up and individualization with all children.

In 2012, Holy Cross Head Start was awarded a two year grant to assist in addressing social and emotional concerns. The grant is through the Peter and Elizabeth C. Tower Foundation and the Health Foundation of Western and Central New York, Positive Emotional Development and Learning Skills (PEDALS) program. Holy Cross Head Start was provided with the Second Step Early Learning Curriculum for all classrooms, in house training and mentoring for all teaching staff, as well as additional funding to promote Mental Health awareness throughout the agency. The grant concluded in June 2014 with a concrete plan for sustainability. With the PEDALS program, Holy Cross Head Start successfully increased the children's social and emotional learning and decreased the number of Mental Health referrals.

The Mental Health and Disabilities Coordinator is a Licensed Mental Health Counselor and is certified in Trauma Counseling. On-site interventions for children in need of behavior plans, crisis intervention, counseling referrals or additional resources is provided.

## PREPARING CHILDREN FOR KINDERGARTEN

To help prepare children and families for kindergarten and beyond, school readiness goals were created using learning objectives from the Creative Curriculum's *Teaching Strategies GOLD* assessment tool. *Teaching Strategies GOLD* is utilized not only as a framework to guide children's learning but is also the main database used to collect, analyze, and interpret assessment data. *Teaching Strategies GOLD* is based on 38 research-based objectives that include predictors of school readiness and goals that focus on the success of the five essential domains and are aligned with the Common Core State Standards, State Early Learning Guidelines, and the Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework.

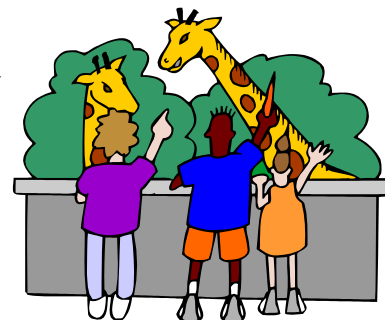
Domain	3 Year Olds meeting and exceeding	4 Year Olds meeting and exceeding
Social/Emotional	94%	92%
Physical-Gross	92%	89%
Physical-Fine	96%	88%
Cognitive	91%	95%
Language	80%	86%
Math	86%	81%
Literature	90%	93%

*One of the goals at Holy Cross Head Start is to prepare each child and their family for Kindergarten.*

*In order to reach that goal, some children and families may require a bit of extra help. Holy Cross Head Start has a Mental Health and Disabilities component included in its program to ensure the emotional, social, and physical well-being of every child.*

## Holy Cross Night at the Zoo

One of many successful family engagement events held throughout the school year, took place in September 2014. Our “Night at the Zoo” provided an evening at the Buffalo Zoo for all the families we serve at no cost to them. Each child was able to attend with up to five family members. Zoo volunteers were stationed throughout the zoo to answer questions and provide interesting information about various animals. We had one thousand (1000) people who attended the zoo and had an enjoyable evening with their family. Bess the Book Bus was also stationed inside the zoo and provided every child with a book of their choosing. With the success of this event, Holy Cross Head Start will provide this opportunity to our children and families again during the 2015-2016 program year.



Cavity Free Kids is an Oral health Program created by Delta Dental /Washington Dental Service Foundation

Holy Cross Head Start Inc, has received a grant and is the local HUB for Erie County for this program.

The goal is to increase oral health awareness in our children, families and community and increase the awareness on how having good oral health leads to ones over all good healthy state. Knowledge is a powerful tool to decrease the amount of dental caries in our children. The children at Holy Cross Head Start Inc. brush their teeth daily. They will receive oral health education through the Cavity Free Kids curriculum by performing dental educational experiments, crafts and other activities. They will build a solid foundation for developing good oral health habits for the rest of their lives.

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### NUTRITION

All children that attend Holy Cross Head Start receive 1/2 to 2/3 of their daily nutritional needs. A child in program will receive a meal upon arrival. Children who attend half day sessions are given either breakfast and lunch or lunch and a snack. Children enrolled in full day classrooms receive breakfast, lunch and snack. All meals follow the nutrition guidelines of the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) and are low in sugar and high in vitamins.

Parents and caregivers have the opportunity to participate in menu planning and can review and make suggestions to the meals that are served to their children. Nutrition staff collaborate with teaching staff to teach and model healthy eating activities in the classroom. The Nutrition Sub Committee of the Health Services Advisory Committee meets throughout the school year to discuss nutrition issues relevant to the community and the families enrolled in Head Start. Many community members are present at the meetings including, Food and Drug Administration, Cornell Cooperative Extension Eat Smart New York program, Catholic Charities WIC, D'Youville College Dietetics Department and Buffalo State College Dietetics Department.



## Board of Directors

The Board of Directors works closely with the Executive Director, Cortland Purks, to oversee the program. The Board is made up of people from various professional and community backgrounds. The Board meets quarterly each year and participates in the Federal Review and Strategic Planning for the agency.



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**Mr. Phillip Garofaro, Treasurer**  
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**Mr. Benoit Kabatiza**  
**Ms. Shawniqua McAdams**

**Holy Cross Head Start, Inc.**  
**150 Maryland Street**  
**Buffalo, NY 14201**

**Main Number: 716.852.8373 - Fax Number: 716.854.7046**

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