

# Therapeutic Child Care Grant: FY23 Financial Report MSAR #14292, ED § 8- 420(e)

Department of Teaching and Learning  
Division of Early Childhood

December 30, 2023



---

**MARYLAND STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

---

**Carey M. Wright, Ed.D.**

Interim State Superintendent of Schools

**Dr. Deann Collins, Ed.D.**

Deputy Superintendent of Teaching and Learning

**Dr. Shayna Cook, Ed.D.**

Assistant State Superintendent of the Division of Early Childhood

**Wes Moore**

Governor

---

**MARYLAND STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION**

---

**Clarence C. Crawford**

President, Maryland State Board of Education

Joshua L. Michael, Ph.D. (Vice President)

Shawn D. Bartley, Esq.

Chuen-Chin Bianca Chang

Susan J. Getty, Ed.D.

Monica Goldson, Ed.D.

Nick Greer

Irma E. Johnson, Ph.D.

Joan Mele-McCarthy, D.A.

Rachel L. McCusker

Samir Paul, Esq.

Brigadier General (BG) Warner I. Sumpter (Ret.)

Holly C. Wilcox, Ph.D.

Abisola Ayoola (Student Member)

## Table of Contents

---

Introduction.....	3
History of the Program.....	4
Financial Report.....	5
Next Steps.....	27

# Introduction

---

According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, each year, there are babies born with physical, mental, and behavioral disabilities. Many disabilities stem from premature births and birth defects, however, there are not enough support services or child care placements to meet the needs of these children and the needs of the family.

Birth through age five are critical years in any child's life. Early intervention and education build on the natural learning that occurs during the first few years of life. Early intervention provides support and services that help children make connections that improve their ability to play and learn. Six Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) funded programs provide these systems of support and services so that children with disabilities have access to gaining critical school readiness skills needed to succeed in kindergarten and throughout life.

Other efforts to support and identify children with physical, mental, and behavioral disabilities include:

- Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Support Services, within MSDE's Division of Early Childhood (DEC);
- Maryland Infants and Toddlers Program (MITP), within the Division of Special Education/Early Interventions Services (DSE/EIS); and
- Maryland Preschool Special Education Services, within DSE/EIS.

## PURPOSE

The purpose of the Therapeutic Child Care Grant is to provide health/medical-based centered child care for early education services to children with medical/special needs diagnoses including but not limited to chronic medical conditions, developmental delays, physical disabilities, and behavioral issues requiring specialized care.

The impact of these services will provide children and families with the following:

- Accessibility – Many parents quit their jobs or stop working because they are not able to find child care for their children with disabilities.
- Cost Effectiveness – Cost of educating a child with special needs is two times the amount for a typical student.
- Family Engagement – Parents, staff, and other caregivers receive specialized training to help them care for children with disabilities and special health care needs, at the home and in the child care setting.
- Interdisciplinary Systems Approach – This approach brings the family together with all the professionals to support each child. Staff such as child psychiatrists, teachers, and nurses convene to support the child from a holistic perspective.
- School Readiness – The programs provide individualized education services as well as specialized health services that allow children with disabilities and special needs to prepare for kindergarten.

# History of the Program

---

In 2007, DEC, in partnership with DSE/EIS recognized that there was a greater need to prepare children with disabilities and special health care needs if these children were to reach their full potential. Together, DEC and DSE/EIS issued grant guidelines in 2007 for the expansion of child care for medically fragile children birth to five.

Five programs submitted proposals and were awarded grants to provide medically based child care and early education services to children with developmental delays, physical disabilities, and social emotional challenges requiring specialized care.

The initial grants were issued for \$200,000 per year to:

- The Arc Montgomery County
- The Arc Prince George's County
- Parents and Children Together (PACT): Helping Children with Disabilities
  - Therapeutic Nursery
  - World of Care

These medically fragile child care programs provided supports to ensure that children, regardless of their disability, receive access to a quality education, including:

- Administering daily child assessments and intervention as needed by qualified health providers;
- Monitoring and administering doctor prescribed medications;
- Serving families receiving MSDE child care subsidy; and
- Facilitating development and learning to enable children to enter school ready to learn and function at their highest potential.

In 2011, the annual support for the centers was reduced to \$137,500 per center. This happened as a result of the economic downturn. Three years later in 2014, The Lourie Center for Children's Social and Emotional Wellness became the fifth grantee.

All the programs have similarities, such as interdisciplinary teamwork and a focus on family engagement, yet each delivers educational and therapeutic services to children with unique sets of challenges, as well as their families, by utilizing models of care designed to best support each child. The **Arc Prince George's County** provides partnership, consultation and some direct specialized services within an existing child care center. The **Arc Montgomery County**, a fully inclusive program, provides a variety of integrated services and resources at one accessible location. **PACT's** programs are tailored for young children with limited early educational opportunities. The **Lourie Center** is a licensed therapeutic nursery, providing an array of early childhood mental health services and supports to meet families' needs. In 2022, **Kennedy Krieger Education and Community Services** applied and was awarded funding for Fiscal Year (FY)2023. PACT: Therapeutic Child Care changes its name to PACT: Southeast Head Start/Wee Cuddle & Grow.

# Financial Report

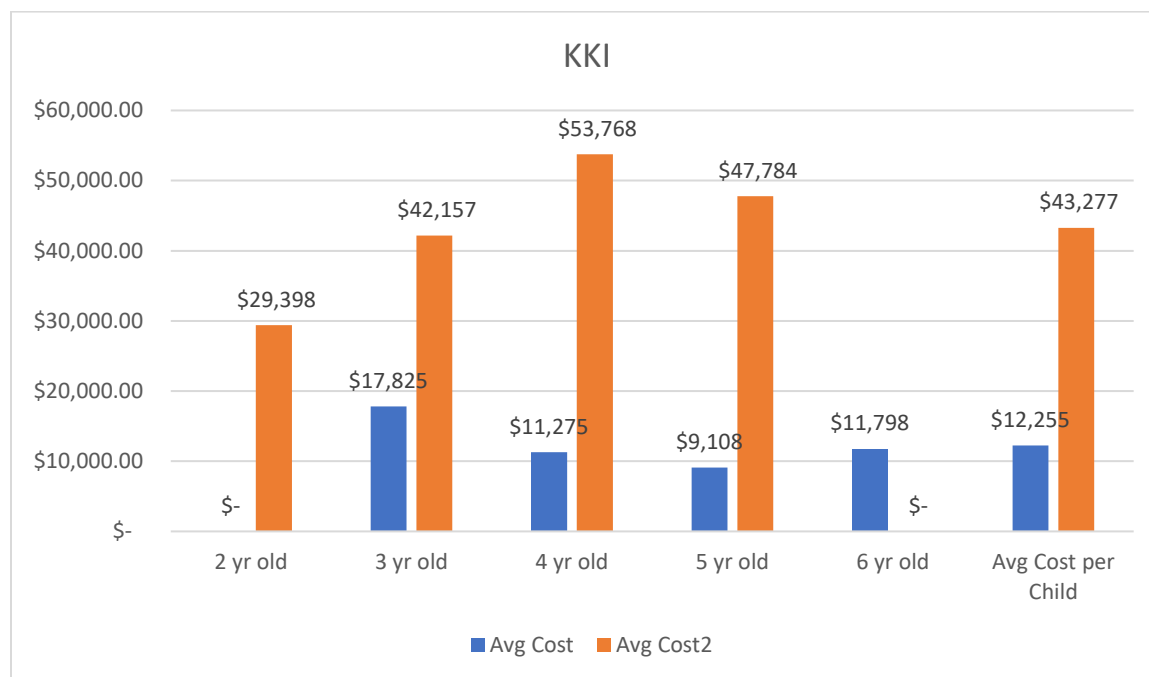
Per section 8-20 of the Education Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland, MSDE gathered programmatic financial data to provide the cost of providing services to a child with developmental delays, physical disabilities, or delays in social emotional, or behavioral functioning and the sources of funding received by the provider. Cost per child is inclusive of any streams of funding a child care program is using to provide services per child i.e., program funding, private funding, insurance.

The data in **blue** was reported by the program and reflects a **five-month time period** beginning **July 1, 2022, to November 30, 2022**.

The data in **orange** was reported by the program and reflects a **one-year time period** beginning **December 1, 2022, to November 30, 2023**.

## KENNEDY KRIEGER INSTITUTE’S CENTER FOR AUTISM AND RELATED DISORDERS (KKI)

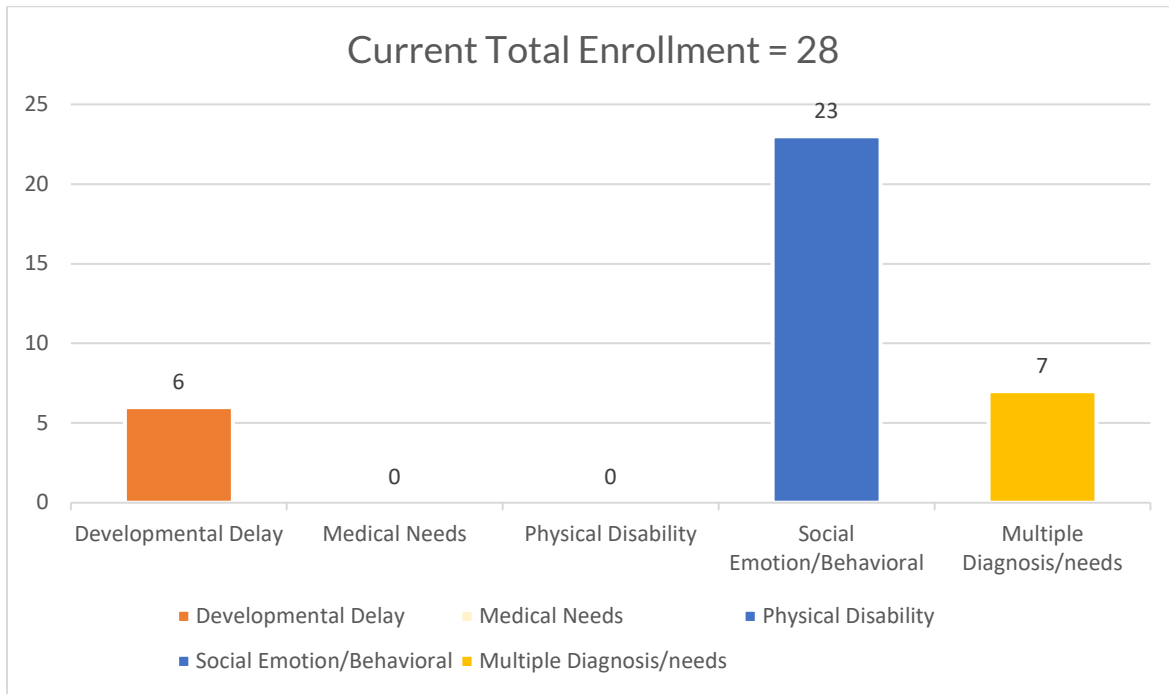
**Table 1 – Cost Scale – Average Cost Per Child by Age Group/Average Cost Per Child**



Please note a dollar symbol (\$) with no value indicates the program did not service that age group in the first reporting period.

The average cost by age group can be higher or lower based on the student’s diagnosis and services needed. The cost of services may be higher should a student need a dedicated aid, nurse, or other services not readily provided by the program. Enrollment fluctuates periodically, the program may service a variety of age groups.

**Table 2 -Number of children served/Diagnosis or Developmental Delay**



**Table 3 -Funding Sources**

Sources of funding	Average cost of services per child with special needs
Prekindergarten Expansion Grant FY 23 (MSDE)	\$4,541
Prekindergarten Expansion Grant FY 24 (MSDE)	\$5,773
Therapeutic Child Care Grant FY 23 (MSDE)	\$18,830
Therapeutic Child Care Grant FY 24 (MSDE)	\$6,044
Student Family Insurance	\$10,110
Cost-Shared by Institute (Unrecovered Indirect Costs)	\$3,732

## Staffing Modifications at Kennedy Krieger:

### July 1, 2022, to November 30, 2022

The program accepts a ratio of children with high needs, with lower but atypical needs, and those who are at risk, including behavioral needs, language challenges, and learning difficulties. This ensures that the classroom remains a safe and effective inclusive learning environment. The program added a third member to each classroom to fully accommodate students who currently are enrolled in each classroom. With staffing challenges, the program has not been able to fill classrooms to their full capacity.

### December 1, 2022, to November 30, 2023

The program has been staffed with three staff members in each classroom and two staff members who are intermittent and can act as substitutes when needed. While this would be sufficient for most classrooms, the program increased its classroom size to 13 students in one classroom and one student with unanticipated behavioral challenges that require extra support in the other classroom. This required the hiring of another instructional assistant to serve in a 1-1 aide/assistant role. The program is recruiting for this position.

In addition, the program is providing time and effort on the MSDE Therapeutic Child Care grant for their occupational therapist (OT), speech language pathologist (SLP), behavioral psychologist, and school social worker, to support students and families in the program. The OT and SLP continue to support all students who are considered at risk due to income and/or family history, in addition to specific children who meet the threshold for therapy, and the behavioral psychologist and social worker are targeting specific children who have demonstrated behavioral needs or social emotional needs.

These two factors have allowed the program to accept a ratio of children with high needs, with lower but atypical needs, and those who are at risk (including behavioral challenges, language delays, and learning difficulties) while ensuring that the classroom remains a safe and inclusive learning environment. Before the school year began, the program had enrolled 26 children in total, but two students did not complete the enrollment process in the week before school started. The program has a total of 24 students enrolled, 21 of whom fit the qualifications for participating in the Therapeutic Child Care grant. The program has a maximum of 26 students who can be enrolled. The program anticipates having all 26 students enrolled by the end of the school year.

## Special Problems/Challenges

### July 1, 2022, to November 30, 2022

Staffing is a challenge for the program due to the salaries the program can offer candidates. The program has difficulty attracting qualified applicants who are willing to work with children with developmental delays and behavioral challenges. The early care and education staffing shortage has exacerbated the problem, causing staff burnout as well as little to no time off for professional development. In addition, the program has been forced to hire staff with lower qualifications.

### December 1, 2022, to November 30, 2023

One of the biggest challenges is enrollment and the balancing of potential students to create an appropriate inclusion classroom. It is not possible to anticipate all the needs that will surface for the students that enroll or to determine how much support they will need in a classroom setting. This can mean that once the school year begins, the program might need more support from either an administrator, behavioral psychologist, social worker, or another staff member than originally expected. This can make it more difficult to balance the work that needs to be completed for the whole program.

This year the program has a student who has had higher needs than anticipated. The program ordered new supplies and materials for the student, used an experts' time for consultations, distributed the Early Childhood



Center Manager's time differently to support making visuals, plans, and supporting staff in the classroom, and is hiring a new staff member to support the child's needs.

**NOTE:**

Early childhood education is a historically underpaid field, which means that the program is fighting against traditionally low salaries for jobs that involve a lot of training and hard work. The program has increased salaries over the last three years, but there are still a variety of positions that are not able to be compensated for in a way that matches the effort and skill required.

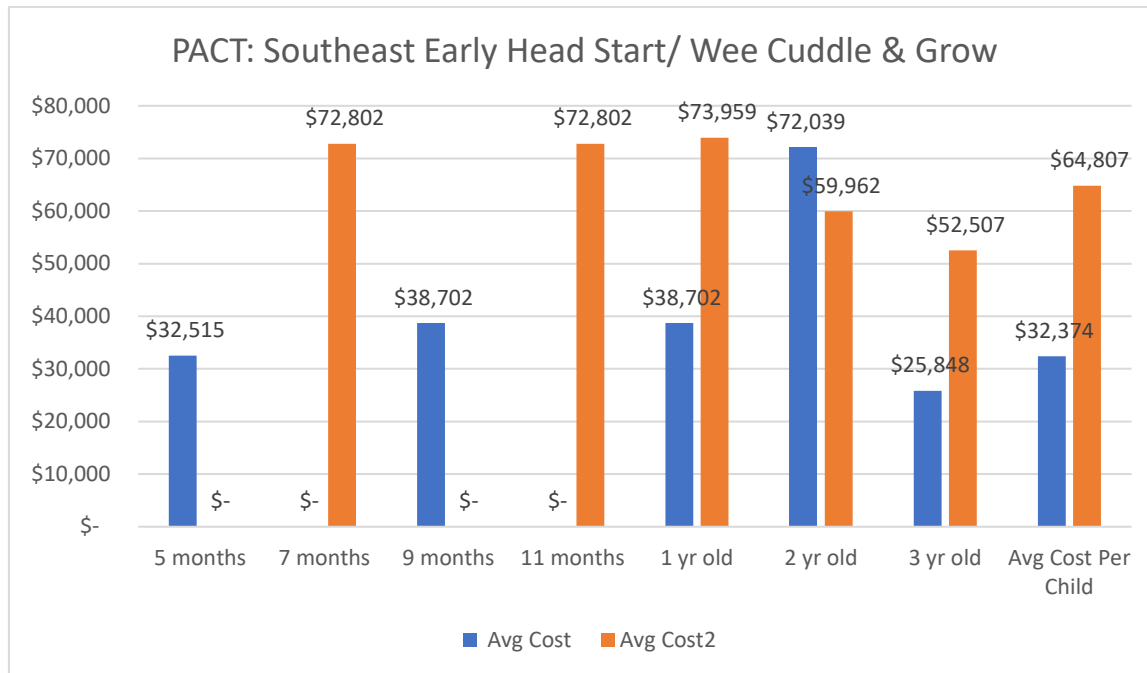
In addition, because the program operates in an economically responsible way, it can be hard to add extra materials, staff, and supports for students who display more challenges than anticipated before a school year begins, and other needs that occur unexpectedly throughout the school year. This report allows Kennedy Krieger to demonstrate costs that were actually incurred for the needs of students, not costs that would be incurred if the program had the funds to support unexpected expenses like students whose insurance did not cover the copay for evaluations or treatments, students with higher needs than what they are able to balance in the classroom but who need a safe place to learn, and other items to help the program run smoothly.

**PACT: SOUTHEAST EARLY HEAD START/WEE CUDDLE & GROW**

The data in **blue** was reported by the program and reflects a **five-month time period** beginning **July 1, 2022, to November 30, 2022**.

The data in **orange** was reported by the program and reflects a **one-year time period** beginning **December 1, 2022, to November 30, 2023**.

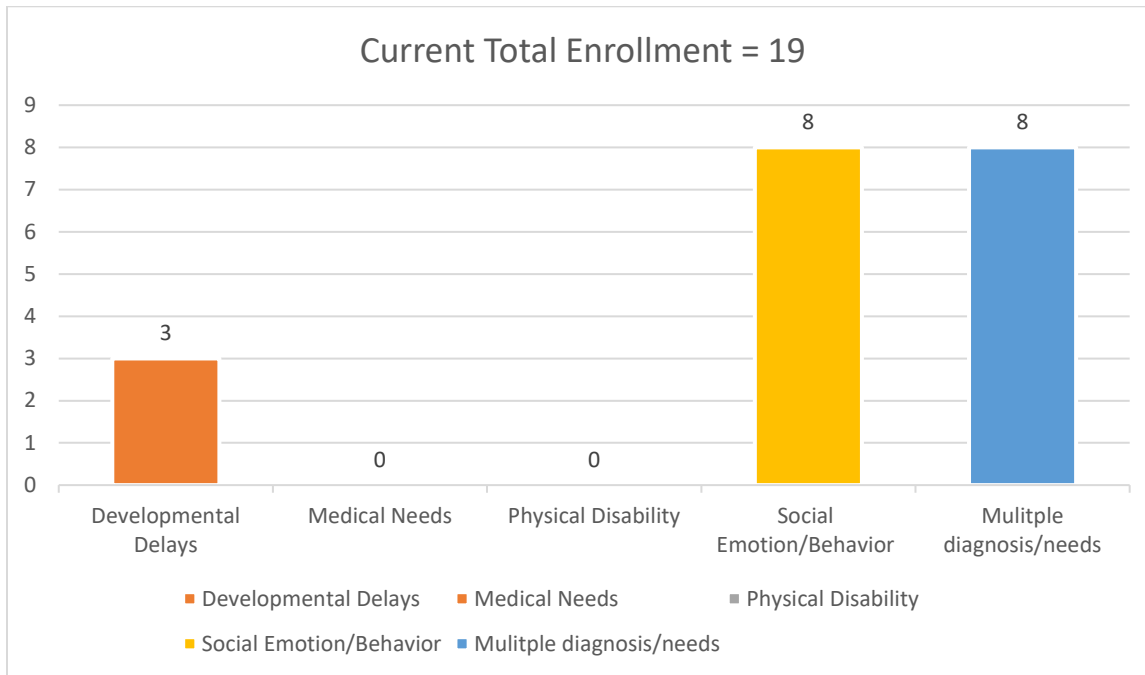
**Table 1 – Cost Scale – Average Cost Per Child by Age Group/Average Cost Per Child**



Please note a dollar symbol (\$) with no value indicates the program did not service that age group in the first reporting period.

The average cost by age group can be higher or lower based on the student’s diagnosis and services needed. The cost of services may be higher should a student need a dedicated aid, nurse, or other services not readily provided by the program. Enrollment fluctuates periodically, the program may service a variety of age groups.

**Table 2 –Number of children served/Diagnosis or Developmental Delay**



**Table 3 –Funding Sources**

Sources of funding	Average cost of services per child with special needs
Insurance Reimbursement <sup>1</sup>	\$0
Governmental Agency Competitive Grant (Local) <sup>2</sup>	\$5,622
Governmental Agency Competitive Grant (State) <sup>3</sup>	\$37,963
Governmental Agency Competitive Grant (Federal) <sup>4</sup>	\$19,571
Institute Support <sup>5</sup>	\$593

**Staffing Modifications at Southeast Early Head Start Program:****July 1, 2022, to November 30, 2022**

PACT's Southeast Early Head Start Program requires 16 Child Development Teachers to serve 55 licensed child care slots. Currently, the program has seven Child Development Teacher vacancies and one Child Development Aid.

**December 1, 2022, to November 30, 2023**

PACT's Southeast Early Head Start (SEEHS) Program requires 16 child development teachers to serve 55 licensed child care seats. They currently have the teaching staff needed to support the ten at-risk children being served but continue to work diligently to fill the remaining child development teacher and aide positions. Currently, the program has six child development teacher vacancies and one child development aide vacancy. PACT's SEEHS program struggles, as many Early Childhood programs struggle, with hiring and retaining qualified teachers and skilled support staff in the current job market. These vacancies have led PACT SEEHS to close a classroom and under-enroll in 2 classrooms. They have a waiting list of eligible children that can only be served once they fill these vacancies.

**Special Problems/Challenges:****July 1, 2022, to November 30, 2022**

The program's current challenge is staffing and offering competitive salaries.

**December 1, 2022, to November 30, 2023**

SEEHS has experienced three significant challenges:

**Staffing Shortage:** Like many Child Development Teachers programs, PACT, SEEHS has experienced ongoing challenges in finding highly skilled support staff and qualified Child Development Teachers.

**Staff Retention:** PACT SEEHS has experienced ongoing challenges related to recruiting and retaining highly skilled Child Development Teachers. Historically, early childhood teachers serving young children have been paid low salaries.

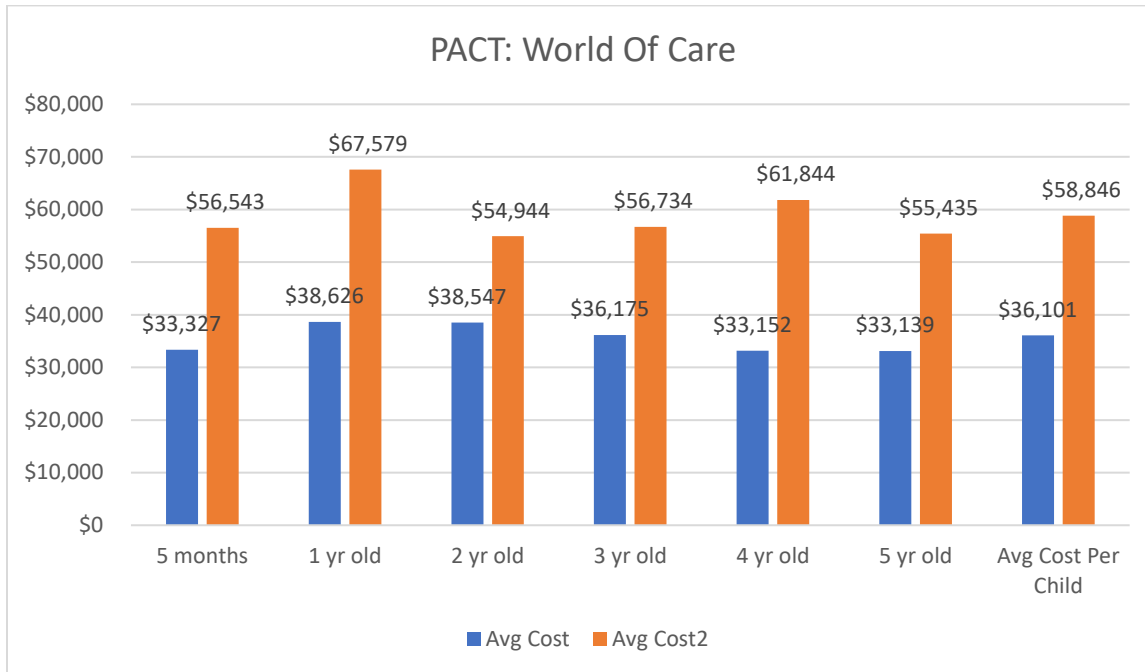
**Safety:** PACT SEEHS has experienced extensive safety issues related to playground vandalism and youth exchanging guns and weapons near their building during off hours.

**PACT: WORLD OF CARE CHILD CARE CENTER**

The data in **blue** was reported by the program and reflects a **five-month time period** beginning **July 1, 2022, to November 30, 2022**.

The data in **orange** was reported by the program and reflects a **one-year time period** beginning **December 1, 2022, to November 30, 2023**.

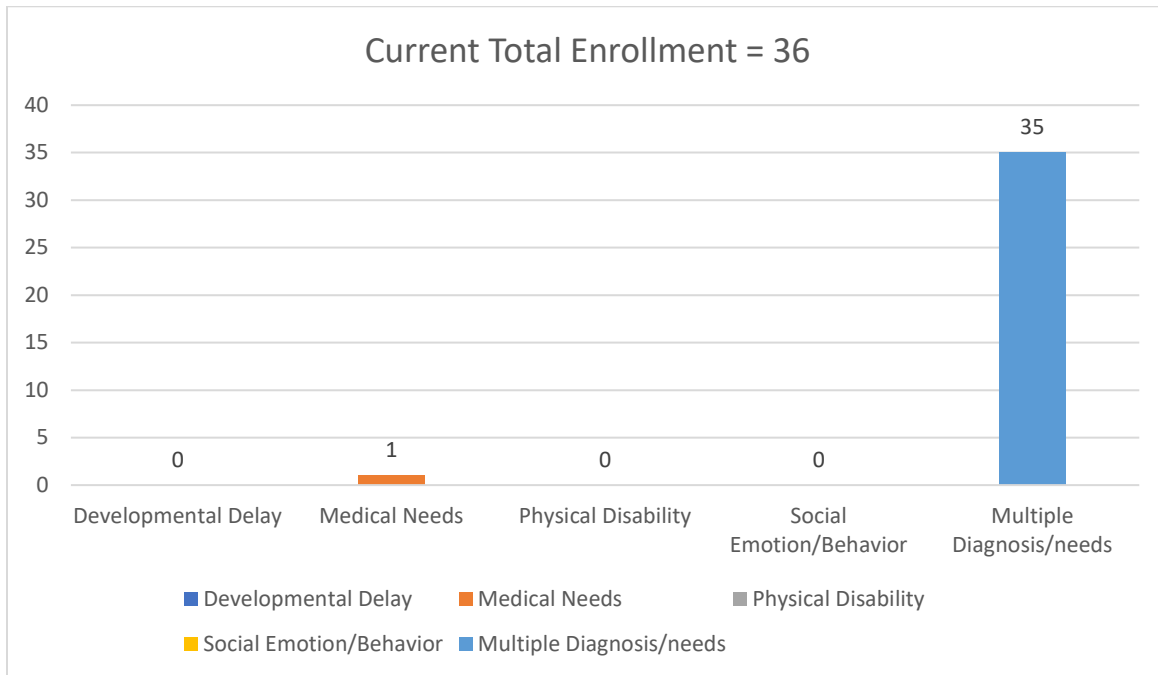
**Table 1 – Cost Scale – Average Cost Per Child by Age Group/Average Cost Per Child**



Please note a dollar symbol (\$) with no value indicates the program did not service that age group in the first reporting period.

The average cost by age group can be higher or lower based on the student’s diagnosis and services needed. The cost of services may be higher should a student need a dedicated aid, nurse, or other services not readily provided by the program. Enrollment fluctuates periodically, the program may service a variety of age groups.

**Table 2 –Number of children served/Diagnosis or Developmental Delay**



**Table 3 –Funding Sources**

Sources of funding	Average cost of services per child with special needs
Insurance Reimbursement <sup>1</sup>	\$5,980
Governmental Agency Competitive Grant (Local) <sup>2</sup>	\$1,488
Governmental Agency Competitive Grant (State) <sup>3</sup>	\$43,947
Private Foundation (competitive funding) <sup>4</sup>	\$0
Institute Support	\$4,551

## Staffing Modifications at World of Care:

### July 1, 2022, to November 30, 2022

The program requires the hiring of support staff in order to keep the classroom ratios. Finding qualified staff has been a challenge.

### December 1, 2022, to November 30, 2023

Programming requires fixed essential staff to support a reduced or maximum census. Currently, 30 staff comprise our multidisciplinary team. The program hired two additional child development teachers who are meeting the needs of the additional children enrolled with the support of this grant. They have six (6) child development teacher vacancies and two (2) child care aide vacancies. Recruiting qualified child development teachers in the current job market is highly competitive and PACT is often thwarted by staff salaries. The staff vacancies resulted in one closed classroom, partial enrollment in two classrooms, and a waiting list of more than 40 families. Children on the waiting list include those who are immune compromised, receive nutrition exclusively through feeding tubes, have complex seizure disorders, and/or multiple developmental disabilities that limit movement, communication, and play.

## Special Problems/Challenges

### July 1, 2022, to November 30, 2022

The primary challenge for the program is offering competitive salaries. The program would like to hire a full-time social worker to help meet the needs of students and families. The social worker would help reduce financial crises, social isolation, and the impact of complicated grief for the families. However, the salary the program can offer is low and unattractive, therefore resulting in months long searches for candidates.

### December 1, 2022, to November 30, 2023

PACT has experienced seven significant challenges:

**Recruitment:** The primary staff recruitment barriers the program faces in hiring is a competitive salary.

**Staffing Ratio:** Additional staff are required to meet the educational and health needs of enrolled children and their families. First, the program has smaller staff-to-child ratios for children ages 2 – 5 compared to child care licensing guidelines. This is due to the varied neurodevelopmental levels of the children in the Center.

**Impactful Staff:** A full-time social worker and a part-time behavior psychologist would improve access to specialized infant mental health and family wellness, resources, and referrals for a range of socio-economic, educational, and family support needs, and facilitate family engagement. This is particularly needed as the impact of the pandemic continues to unfold with young children and their families.

**Nursing Staff Administrative Hours:** World of Care ensures that two pediatric registered nurses are on staff each day. This does not include time for the level of medical care coordination and family training needed for enrolled children or for timely admission into the program. Increased nursing administration hours would create more opportunities for preventative services.

**Therapy Opportunities:** The service coordinator and the physical, occupational, and speech-language therapists work with enrolled children and their families to support child skill development and family training opportunities as well as to create functional adaptations, and link families with additional resources (i.e., equipment vendors and recreational groups).

**Diversity Inclusion:** More families who are not fluent in English are interested in and enrolling their children into PACT's program.

**Complex Needs Support:** With the complex needs of the children and families served at World of Care, the early care and education team needs a system of support to ensure they are addressing the whole child: meeting children’s individual goals, scaffolding and modifying instruction, highlighting family wishes and expectations, and maintaining best practices with the curriculum, environment, and relationships.

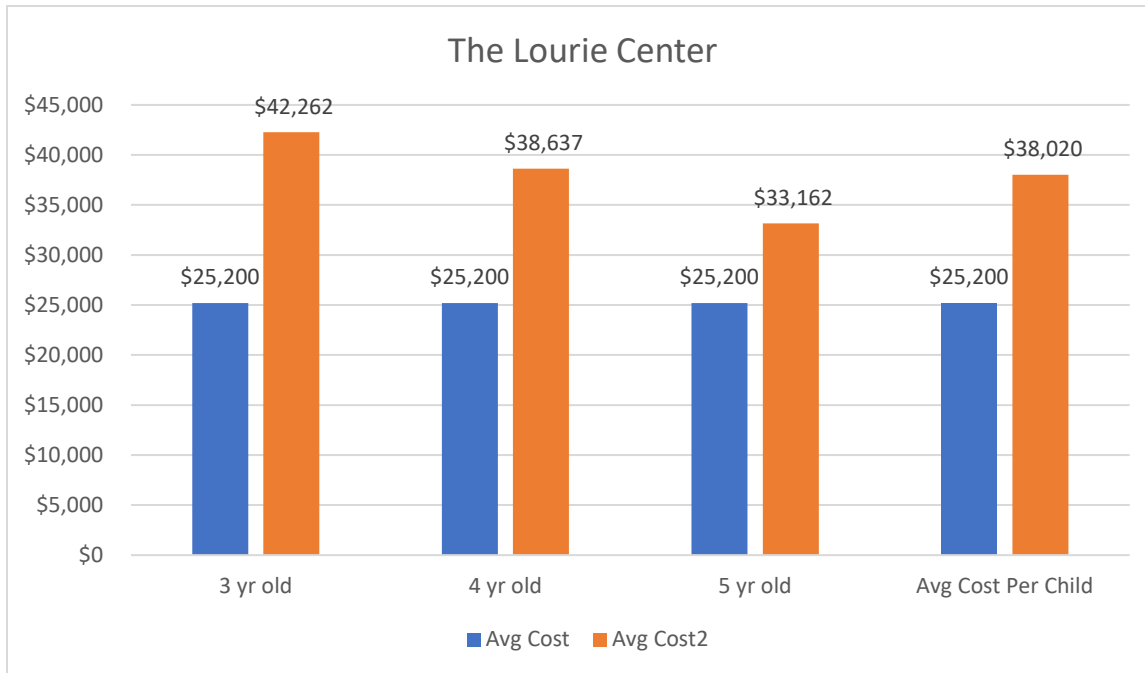


**THE LOURIE CENTER**

The data in **blue** was reported by the program and reflects a **five-month time period** beginning **July 1, 2022, to November 30, 2022**.

The data in **orange** was reported by the program and reflects a **one-year time period** beginning **December 1, 2022, to November 30, 2023**.

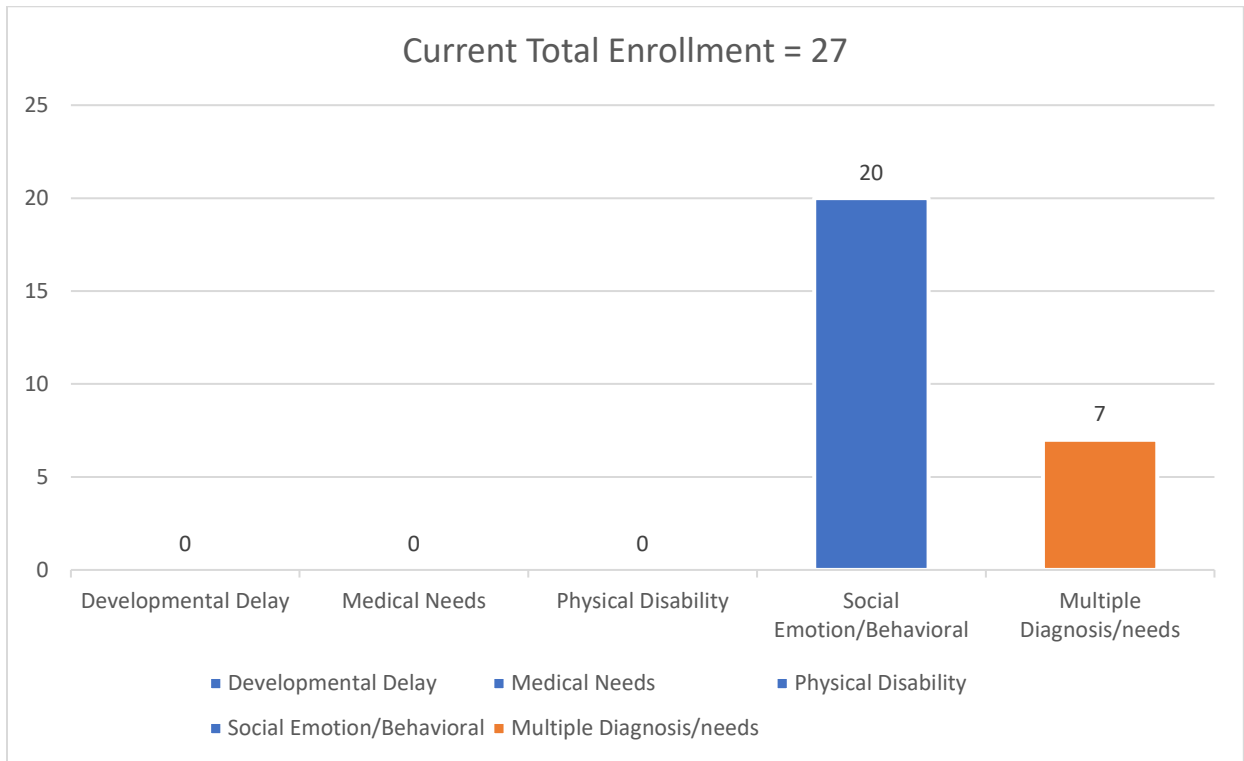
**Table 1 – Average Cost Per Child by Age Group/Average Cost Per Child**



Please note a dollar symbol (\$) with no value indicates the program did not service that age group in the first reporting period.

The average cost by age group can be higher or lower based on the student’s diagnosis and services needed. The cost of services may be higher should a student need a dedicated aid, nurse, or other services not readily provided by the program. Enrollment fluctuates periodically, the program may service a variety of age groups.

**Table 2 –Number of children served/Diagnosis or Developmental Delay**



**Table 3 –Funding Sources**

Sources of funding	Average cost of services per child with special needs
Therapeutic Child care Grant Fund	\$23,782.84
Behavioral Health Administration – through Montgomery County Local Behavioral Health Authority Grant funding	\$20,237.54
Behavioral Health Administration – ARPA	\$5,066.76

## Staffing Modifications at the Lourie Center's Therapeutic Nursery Program:

### July 1, 2022, to November 30, 2022

The significant lack of an available and qualified workforce has negatively impacted the Lourie Center's Therapeutic Nursery Program's (TNP) ability to add more students to the classroom. TNP has a capacity for 36 children but currently has 14 enrolled. The Rockville campus currently has nine students enrolled, with five students on the active waitlist. The Hyattsville campus has five students enrolled, with two more in the initial enrollment/intake process. As staffing increases and staff are properly trained, TNP's ability to enroll students on the waitlist will increase.

There are currently nine vacant educational and clinical positions in the TNP including: one lead teacher, two social workers, one teacher assistant, two teacher's aides, two behavior technicians (crisis support), and one safety officer. For the Lourie Center's Therapeutic Child Care Program, staffing costs make up 83% of the total budget. With the significant workforce shortage, including these nine unfilled positions, the current cost per child underestimates the true cost by approximately \$40,000 per child.

### December 1, 2022, to November 30, 2023

The Lourie Center's Therapeutic Child Care is currently under-enrolled, with only 44% enrollment, and was under-enrolled for this reporting period. The workforce crisis impacted the ability to enroll more students for the previous school year (FY23). Ten staff have been hired in this reporting period which has allowed staff to begin to enroll students more quickly.

For the Lourie Center's Therapeutic Child Care Program, staffing costs make up 83% of the total budget. Given that the majority of this reporting period was during a significant workforce shortage and 11 unfilled positions, the current cost per child underestimates the cost by \$20,000 per child. It is important to note that the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding currently extends only through FY2025.

TNP has a capacity for 36 children per school year. During this period TNP served 26 students and their families. During this current school year (FY 2024) TNP has 16 enrolled. The Rockville campus currently has 14 students enrolled, with six students in the intake process. The Hyattsville campus has two students enrolled, with seven in the process of enrolling and recruitment actively being managed by the TNP intake team and Care Coordinator. Given the nature of the program, students are regularly referred throughout the first few months of the school year as they are found to be unsuccessful in their typical daycare or preschool setting. Because of this, TNP has rolling admissions and traditionally becomes fully enrolled by the New Year.

## Special Problems/Challenges

### July 1, 2022, to November 30, 2022

Understaffing, as mentioned above, remains the main challenge that adversely impacts the program's ability to provide safe, quality care to children with intensive therapeutic needs. In order to address these concerns, TNP leadership have been actively involved in recruitment efforts along with the Adventist Healthcare Recruitment team. Jobs have been posted on a variety of sites, including Indeed, Handshake, local colleges/universities, and the Adventist Healthcare Hospital's main site. The TNP team also recently presented a trauma workshop at the National Association for the Education of Young Children's Annual Conference in Washington, DC. This workshop and other Lourie Center events help to increase awareness of the Center's work and help to attract workforce talent.

In addition, a retention bonus has been added for all new hires to both decrease turnover and increase hiring rates. The Lourie Center also evaluates employee engagement as one of the core measures of the program's success. Over the past few years, employee feedback has highlighted concerns about burnout. For instance,

employees reported that they were not able to decompress after work. Multiple efforts to enhance team- and self-care have been implemented to help increase employee engagement and resiliency as well as increase retention.

#### **December 1, 2022, to November 30, 2023**

Staffing, as mentioned above, has been a challenge during this reporting period that impacts on the ability to provide safe, quality care to children with high needs. In order to address these concerns, TNP leadership is actively involved in recruitment efforts along with the Adventist Healthcare Recruitment Team. As a result, ten new staff have been hired in this reporting period.

The focus for staffing now is on employee engagement and training. TNP has utilized its professional development plan to ensure staff are trained in trauma-informed, relationship-based care that blends therapeutic and educational principles. This includes training on Play Therapy, Circle of Security- Classroom, Nonviolent Crisis Prevention Intervention, Teaching Strategies/Creative Curriculum, and Teaching Strategies Gold.

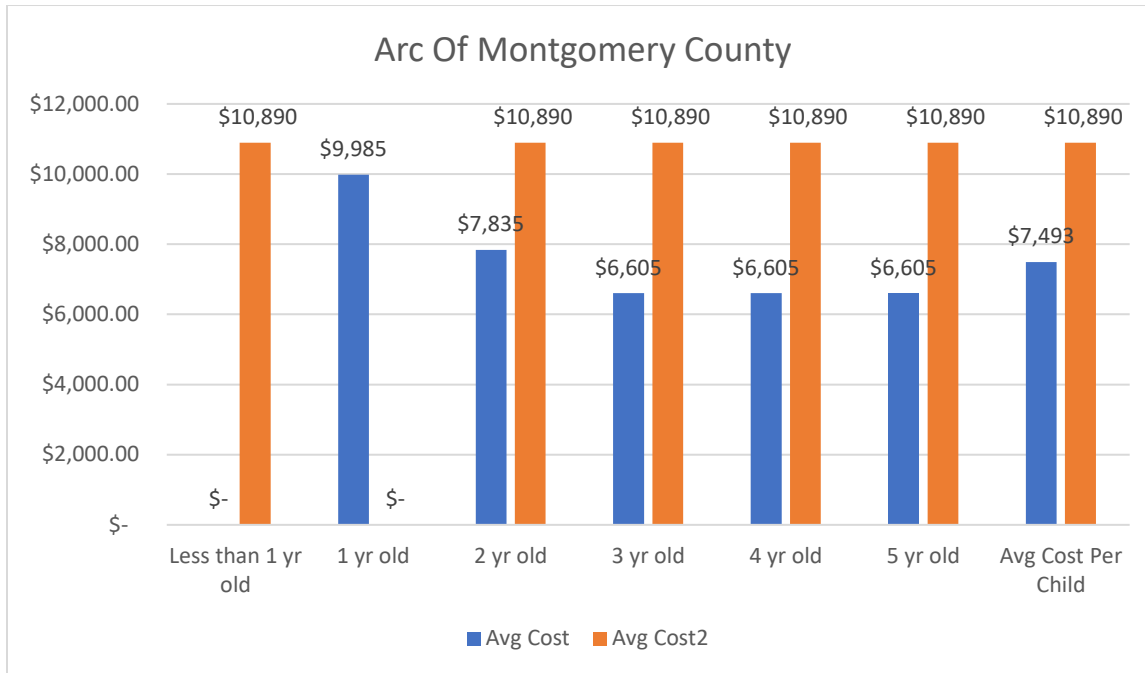
Simultaneously, the TNP intake team is promoting recruitment and refining the intake process. TNP leadership has refreshed the intake process map and clarified roles among the team. The newly hired Care Coordinator is focused both on recruitment with schools, daycares, and community organizations in both counties. One of TNP's Core Measures of Success is also focused on timely response to families reaching out for intakes. The past two months have shown a 100% response rate within two business days.

### THE ARC MONTGOMERY COUNTY

The data in **blue** was reported by the program and reflects a **five-month time period** beginning **July 1, 2022, to November 30, 2022**.

The data in **orange** was reported by the program and reflects a **one-year time period** beginning **December 1, 2022, to November 30, 2023**.

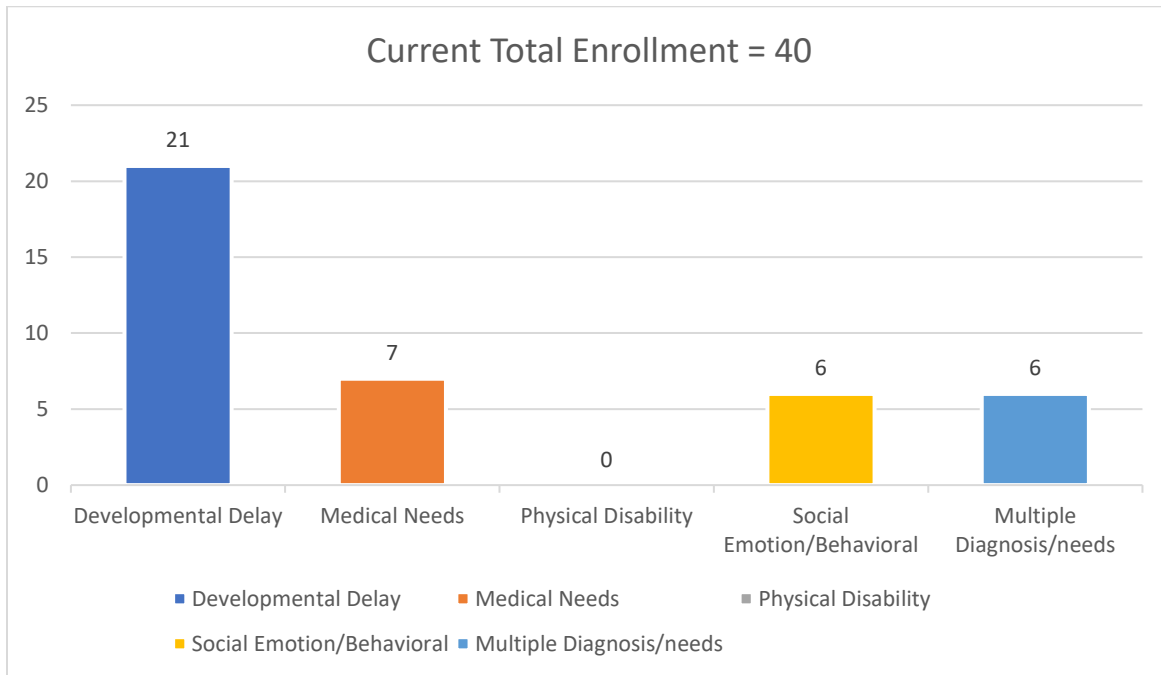
**Table 1 – Cost Scale – Average Cost Per Child by age/Average Cost Per Child**



Please note a dollar symbol (\$) with no value indicates the program did not service that age group in the first reporting period.

The average cost by age group can be higher or lower based on the student’s diagnosis and services needed. The cost of services may be higher should a student need a dedicated aid, nurse, or other services not readily provided by the program. Enrollment fluctuates periodically, the program may service a variety of age groups.

**Table 2 –Number of children served/Diagnosis or Developmental Delay**



**Table 3 –Funding Sources**

Sources of funding	Average cost of services per child with special needs
<b>Therapeutic Child Care Grant</b>	\$312,000
<b>Office of Genetics and Persons with Special Health Care Needs</b>	\$125,000

## Staffing Modifications at the Karasik Family Infant Child Care Center:

### July 1, 2022, to November 30, 2022

The program has sufficient staff to deliver services for all the positions funded by this grant, but the Karasik Family Infant Child Care Center (KFICCC) is not fully staffed. They are actively recruiting both employees and children for the KFICCC program. Maryland covers the cost for any child who enrolls in the program with an Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP) or Individual Education Plan (IEP).

### December 1, 2022, to November 30, 2023

The program made great strides in addressing staffing challenges that have plagued child care for years and particularly during and post-pandemic. They added a part-time nurse, thanks to this grant. Now they have only one teacher and one assistant position open, which is the best shape the program has been in for years.

That said, with two open positions, the administrators do have to work in the classroom daily. This is not a bad thing now and then, but daily makes it very draining. The teaching staff are tired from filling in for each other. The program hoped to return to offering care from 7 am to 6 pm (currently operating from 7:30 to 5:30) but they just cannot do that until every position is filled.

## Special Problems/Challenges

### July 1, 2022, to November 30, 2022

Staffing is also a concern for the Arc of Montgomery County Program. The program is in the process of interviewing and hiring staff but finding qualified candidates has been a challenge.

### December 1, 2022, to November 30, 2023

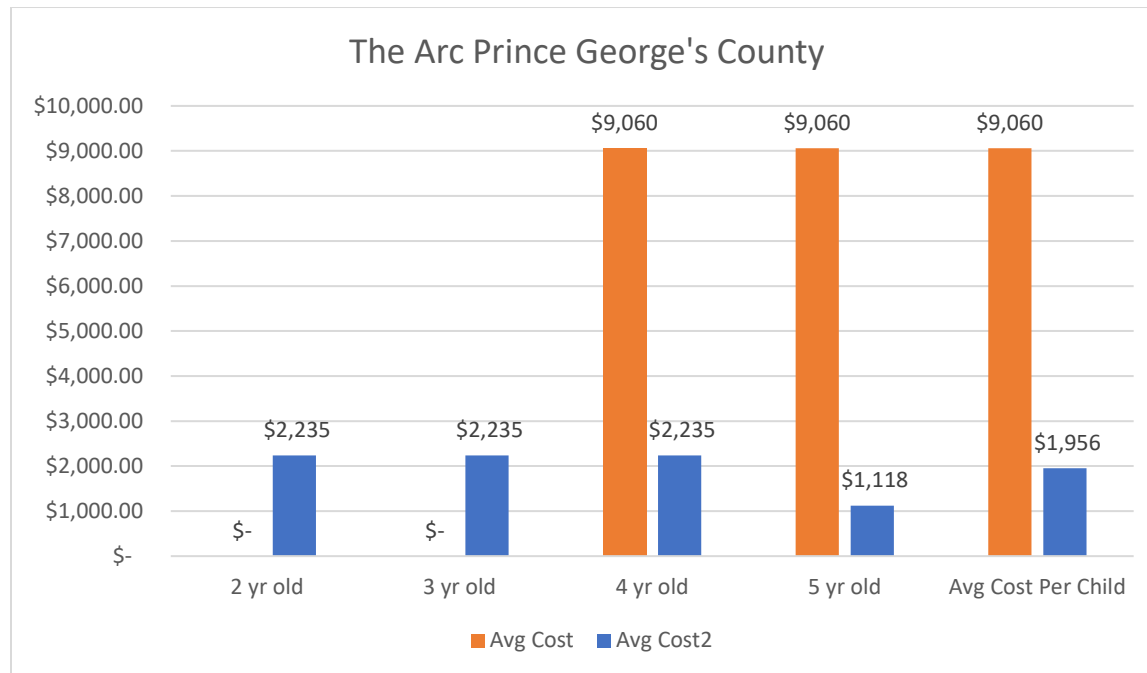
Aside from staffing, the program continues to look for creative ways to get the word out about the center. This includes a well-attended Open House last June, social media, flyers in English, Amharic, and Spanish as well as word-of-mouth through their many partner agencies. They find that parents are unaware of some excellent ways that they can afford the center (The Maryland Child Care Scholarship and the Pre-K Expansion Grant are just two), so the center also needs families to understand that there is support for them.

### THE ARC PRINCE GEORGE’S COUNTY

The data in **blue** was reported by the program and reflects a **five-month time period** beginning **July 1, 2022, to November 30, 2022**.

The data in **orange** was reported by the program and reflects a **one-year time period** beginning **December 1, 2022, to November 30, 2023**.

**Table 1 – Cost Scale – Average Cost Per Child/Average Cost Per Child**



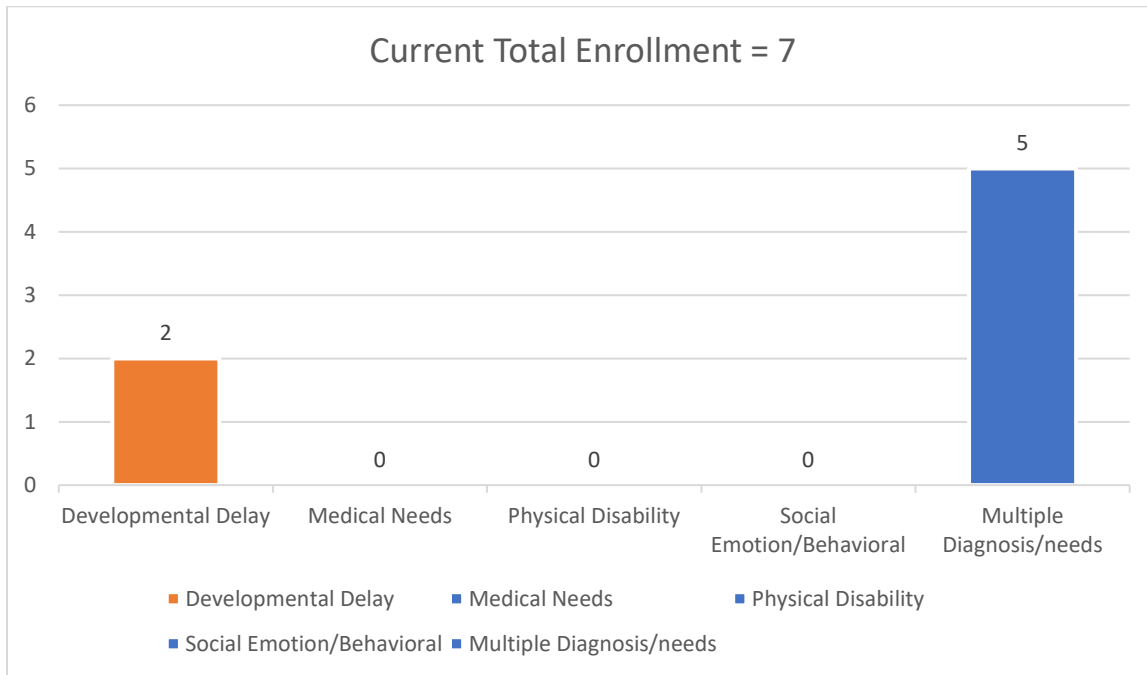
Please note a dollar (\$) symbol with no value indicates the program did not service that age group in the first reporting period.

The average cost by age group can be higher or lower based on the student’s diagnosis and services needed. The cost of services may be higher should a student need a dedicated aid, nurse, or other services not readily provided by the program. Enrollment fluctuates periodically, the program may service a variety of age groups.

- In FY 23, the Arc of Prince George’s County had a transition in leadership. Additionally, the program lost their partnership at Northwestern Child Development Center. As such, MSDE worked with the incoming leadership to secure a new partnership agreement with Jaycees Early Learning Center. Due to both transitions, the enrollment is lower than normal. The new partnership began over the summer and enrollment is expected to increase in FY24.



**Table 2 –Number of children served/Diagnosis or Developmental Delay**



**Table 3 –Funding Sources**

Sources of funding	Average cost of services per child with special needs
MSDE Therapeutic Child Care grant	\$2,235

## Staffing Modifications at the Arc Northwestern High School Child Development Center:

### July 1, 2022, to November 30, 2022

The Arc Northwestern High School Child Development Center (NWCDC) partnership has sufficient staff to meet the needs of the children currently enrolled. In October 2022, three new Prince George's County Public School (PGCPS) teaching staff were transferred from another high school's child care program, which had been closed. These teachers' presence allowed for increased supervision of the children, which has already helped the program to better serve the children with special needs at NWCDC. However, additional staff is needed to enroll more children. The Arc is in the process of hiring one new Child Development Associate (CDA) teacher and one teacher's aide. The original staffing of a part-time registered nurse (RN) and a part-time Licensed practical nurse (LPN) remains in place and those positions are currently filled.

### December 1, 2022, to November 30, 2023

The Arc NWCDC partnership had sufficient staff to meet the needs of the children enrolled at the beginning of the school year. In October 2022, three new PGCPS teaching staff were transferred from another high school's daycare which had closed. These teachers' presence provided increased supervision of the children and helped the program to better serve the children with special needs at NWCDC. However, additional staff were still needed to enroll more children, since children of adolescent mothers had first priority for enrollment and new babies were added. The Arc hired one new teacher's assistant in early 2023 and was working on hiring a new CDA teacher, when PGCPS announced they would be closing the daycare in June of 2023. For this reason, the posting of a CDA teacher position was removed. The newly hired teacher assistant was aware of the upcoming closing before she started and chose to work anyway. The original staffing of a part-time RN and a part-time LPN remained in place and those positions remain filled.

## Special Problems/Challenges

### July 1, 2022, to November 30, 2022

The greatest challenge to enrolling children with special needs at the NWCDC has been a lack of staff. The Arc is continuing to work with Northwestern High School and PGCPS to encourage the hiring of additional staff. As mentioned above, the Arc has also posted a CDA teacher position and a teacher's assistant position, made possible by funding from the Therapeutic Child Care Grant Program. Currently, there is also a waiting list of children seeking enrollment at NWCDC. The process of bringing in some of the children on the waiting list has begun. Once the waiting list has been exhausted and staffing is sufficient, recruitment efforts will be made.

### December 1, 2022, to November 30, 2023

The greatest challenge to enrolling children with special needs at the NWCDC was the lack of staff. In January 2023 PGCPS announced its intention to permanently close the child care centers at Northwestern and Bladensburg High Schools by the end of June 2023. After this announcement, we knew there was no possibility of adding staff. Fortunately, all the children under the Arc grant at NWCDC had reached an age when they would qualify for full-day services once the 2023-2024 school year began. The summer break was difficult for a family whose three children, with multiple diagnoses, qualified for Extended School Year (ESY) services for part of the summer. Families were made aware of the planned closing early, in order to allow time to make arrangements for care in the summer.

To continue the TCC Grant Program, the Arc needed to find another child care center to partner with to implement the program. In March 2023, Jaycees Early Learning Center in Fort Washington, MD, expressed an interest in partnering with the Arc and the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed with them in May 2023. After the closure of the NWCDC in June, the Arc staff consisting of the RN administrator and the agency LPN moved to the new center in July 2023. It was again decided to hire a new teacher assistant and a CDA

teacher at Jaycees. The CDA teacher completed orientation in July and the teacher's aide completed orientation in September. Both were current staff at Jaycees and were qualified staff.

Currently the most pressing problem is the enrollment of more children with special needs. Since transitioning to Jaycees ELC with no children, two children have been added, both in August. One was already attending the center and the other came from outside the center. Additionally, the Arc TCC grant manager retired in early September. She will be greatly missed after her 20+ years at the Arc, but before leaving, she worked with her supervisor to set in place a team of people to assume her TCC grant responsibilities. Those people are already working on outreach strategies to bring more children to the grant program at Jaycees and the new grants manager has a long history with the Arc and with networking in the community. The program will continue to recruit children with special needs from within the center, as indicated by teacher observations and assessments.

## Next Steps

---

Of the \$3.7 million awarded by the state there is \$651,000 remaining. Per House Bill 725, MSDE can redistribute those funds amongst the awarded programs.

MSDE successfully reallocated the remaining \$651,000 in funding to provide the current programs with opportunities to make programmatic changes in order to service children, increase teacher salaries and provide professional development.

In FY24, the Arc of Prince George's County will partner with Jaycee Early Learning Center in implementing the therapeutic child care program. MSDE is providing funding to two new grantees in Fiscal Year 2024. The Night Watch Child Care program is located on the Maryland Eastern Shore and Little Flowers Early Childhood and Development Center is in Baltimore, Maryland.