

e[valor

Building Stronger,
More Inclusive Communities

—
2015 Annual Report



el valor

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LETTER FROM THE BOARD

When we look back on the previous year, we'll remember iconic moments, major events, and big ideas. Often, we lose sight of what made up our day-to-day—small moments that inspired us, or simply made us smile; a beautiful sunset, a call from a loved one, a kind stranger holding the door.

These small moments are powerful—they add meaning to our lives. I'd even call them miracles. **At El Valor, small miracles like these happen in our centers every day.** A hungry child is served a healthy breakfast and is able to focus during a day of fun and learning. A young adult with a disability puts the finishing touches on a résumé, one step closer to independent living. A day program participant celebrates her 80th birthday surrounded by caring staff, family, and friends.

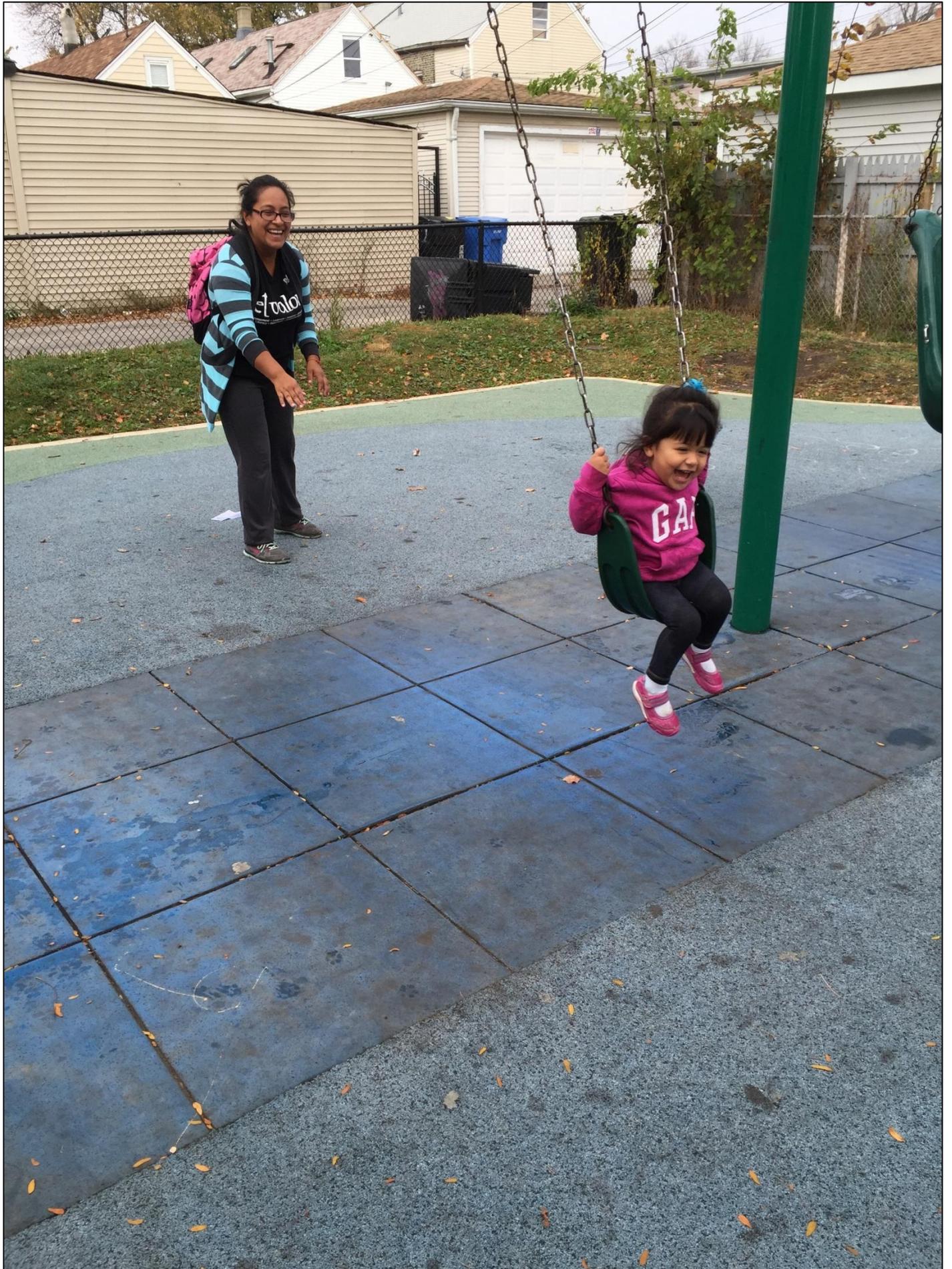
El Valor has been providing services for those most in need since 1973, so it's easy to take what we do for granted and assume we will always be here. However, the ongoing state budget crisis has forced organizations like El Valor to discontinue services for those who are most in need. **We rely on our partners—from corporations to families to community members—now more than ever.**

“We cannot seek achievement for ourselves and forget about progress and prosperity for our community... Our ambitions must be broad enough to include the aspirations and needs of others, for their sakes and for our own.” This quote by Cesar Chavez embodies the spirit of Guadalupe Reyes and El Valor. Through your generosity you are ensuring this spirit and these small miracles will be possible today, tomorrow, and in the future. **We hope you decide to become a partner, or continue your current partnership with El Valor, by sharing your time, talent, and treasure.**

With Gratitude,



Rafael Malpica
Board Chairman





OVERVIEW

El Valor is a non-profit organization founded in 1973 by the late Guadalupe A. Reyes. A visionary leader, Mrs. Reyes dreamed of a community in which all members, including her son with special needs, could live, learn, and work. She and several others took out a small bank loan and borrowed a church basement in Chicago's Pilsen neighborhood, where they started the first bilingual, bicultural rehabilitation center in Illinois. They named the center El Valor, which means courage in Spanish.



Today, El Valor is a multipurpose organization with a mission that reaches thousands of families throughout Chicago and surrounding communities via direct services. It also reaches a national audience with its Public Awareness campaign, Parents are Teachers. El Valor builds stronger, more inclusive communities by supporting people with disabilities, promoting early childhood development, enriching youth, strengthening families, and developing leadership.



Our Mission: To support and challenge urban families to achieve excellence and participate fully in community life. Programs enrich and empower people with disabilities, the disenfranchised, and the underserved.



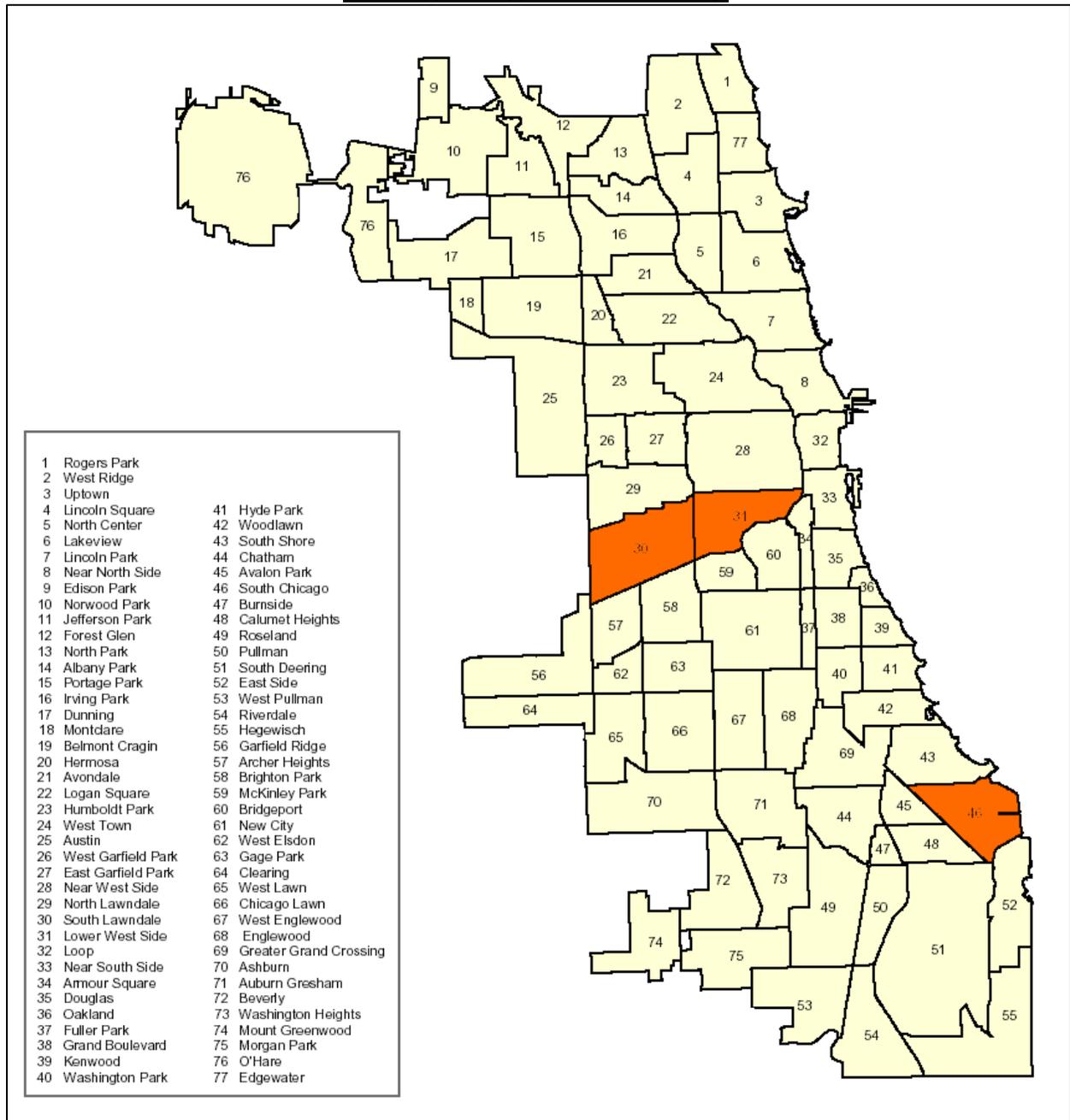
Our Vision: El Valor seeks to be the best in the nation in early childhood and youth enrichment, to be the premier organization developing Hispanic leadership, and to be an international model for inclusion of people with disabilities.



OUR COMMUNITY, OUR STORY

Although we serve individuals and families throughout the Chicagoland area, El Valor’s centers and programs are primarily located in the Lower West Side and South Chicago neighborhoods of the City of Chicago. These communities have diverse, vibrant populations that face unique challenges.

Chicago Neighborhood Map

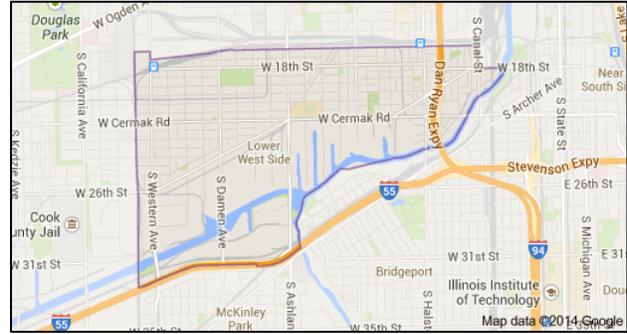




OUR COMMUNITY, OUR STORY

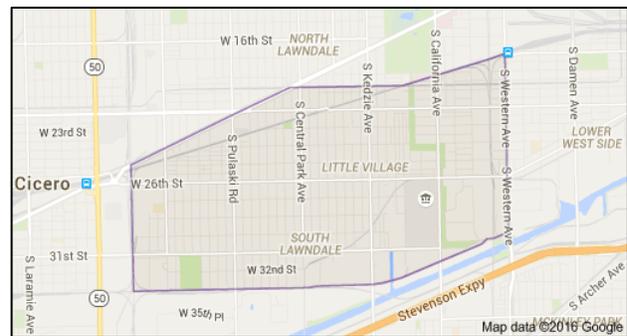
Lower West Side (Pilsen)

The Pilsen community is located in the Lower West Side, three miles from Chicago's downtown. It has been a port-of-entry community for various immigrant groups for more than 130 years. Today, it is the primary gateway for Mexican-Americans, and has a population that is 78% Latino. The most recent United States Census notes that Pilsen had 47,352 residents in 2010. The eastern section of the community has attracted artists and galleries for more than 20 years. The arts district, alongside the expansion of nearby University of Illinois at Chicago, has brought gentrification to the community.



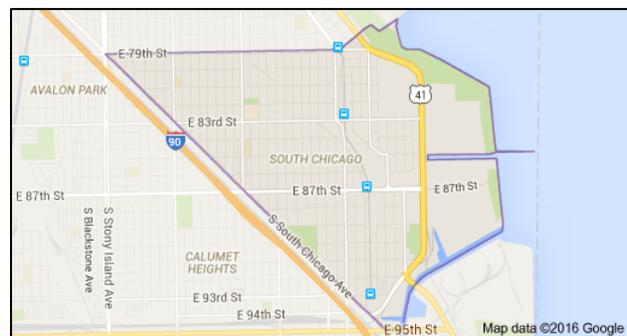
South Lawndale (Little Village)

Little Village, also known as La Villita, straddles the Lower West Side and South Lawndale neighborhoods. It became home to a growing Latino population beginning in the 1970s as many Mexican-Americans and Mexicans moved west in response to rising rents and cost of living in Pilsen. The 2010 Census records a population of 98,551, 88% of which are Latino. A thriving shopping district with authentic Mexican wares is attractive to tourists—both Mexican and non-Latino—from throughout the Midwest.



South Chicago

South Chicago traces its roots to a working-class community that formed around the steel industry. When that industry declined in the 1980s and 1990s and the USX South Works mill, which was located on the eastern edge of the community, closed down in 1992, the community suffered. More than 20,000 South Chicago residents had been employed in the steel industry. The population declined significantly as families uprooted to find job opportunities elsewhere. The 2010 Census records 35,224 residents—70% are African American and 22% are Latino. The effects of USX's closure on the community are still visible today in shuttered storefronts, empty lots, and abandoned homes. New development initiatives by both the city and private funders are slowly advancing.





OUR COMMUNITY, OUR STORY

El Valor Site Locations

Main Office & Developmental Training Center
1850 W 21st Street
Chicago, IL 60608

Guadalupe A. Reyes Children & Family Center
1951 W 19th Street
Chicago, IL 60608

Carlos H. Cantu Children & Family Center
2434 S Kildare Avenue
Chicago, IL 60623

Rey B. Gonzalez Children & Family Center
3050 E 92nd Street
Chicago, IL 60617

ComEd Inclusion Center
1924 W 21st Street
Chicago, IL 60608



LEADERSHIP

Rey B. Gonzalez
President & CEO

Clara Lopez
Vice President of Children's Programs

Jillian Moore, Esq.
Vice President; In-House Counsel

James O'Brien
Director of Fiscal Operations

Dennis Warren
Director of Information Technology

Eleni Giannakopoulos, Esq.
Director of Development, Assistant In-House Counsel

Ilinca Ivan
Director of Education, Children & Youth Services

John Emory
Director of Adult Programs

Marisela Moreno
Director of Health and Social Services, Children & Youth Director

Eduardo Moreno
Director of Employment & Facilities Services



SUPPORTING PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Intake and Referral • Comprehensive Vocational Evaluation and Assessment • Employment Opportunities • Parent Support Group • Developmental Training/Day Programming • Lifestyle Enrichment • Acquired Brain Injury Program • Community Residential Services • Respite Care • Home Base Case Management Service

Disability Statistics

According to the United Cerebral Palsy's annual [Case for Inclusion](#) report, the State of Illinois ranks 47 out of 51 in funding for adults with disabilities. Illinois has consistently remained near the bottom of this list since 2007. In Illinois, 1,730 people with disabilities live in state institutions, making it the 3rd largest institution population in the country. According to a recent [infographic](#) created by Going Home Illinois, State of the States 2015, and the Illinois Department of Human Services, Illinois could save \$337 million per year by redirecting funds from state institutions to programs like El Valor's that allow people with intellectual and developmental disabilities the opportunity to experience a higher quality of life in the community.

Illinois utilizes a database called the Prioritization of Urgency of Need for Services (PUNS) list that includes infants, children, adolescents, and adults with developmental disabilities who need services or supports. There are currently 20,764 individuals on the active PUNS list. 1,457 of these individuals speak Spanish as their primary language. Almost 12% of these individuals identify as Hispanic/Latino. Individuals on the PUNS list are eligible to receive PUNS support after they turn 18, but needs are high and resources are limited.

Based on the [2010 Illinois Census and Cornell University's Employment and Disability Institute's 2012 Illinois Disability Status Report](#), we know that in Cook County, 10.6% of individuals are disabled. Of those individuals, 6.4% are Hispanic/Latino and 13.8% are African Americans.

How El Valor Helps

El Valor believes that individuals with disabilities are valuable members of the community. El Valor is committed to assisting and supporting people with disabilities through programs that emphasize personal choice, employment, inclusion, enrichment, and leadership.

During the past fiscal year, *Vocational Development, Supported and Competitive Employment, and Individualized Placement Support (IPS) Programs* provided access to employment opportunities for 83 adults. The programs focused on strengthening vocational, social, and communication skills to prepare individuals with different abilities for employment opportunities. Each client works with a Case Manager and an Employment Specialist throughout the process of finding employment.



El Valor’s parent and young adult support group enables families to share their experiences and struggles while developing strategies to overcome obstacles they encounter. The young adults have the opportunity to socialize with peers and share common aspects of their daily lives.

Transition Services assists individuals between the ages of 16 and 22 in the development and implementation of a realistic transition plan that is based on the student’s interest, aptitudes, and abilities. El Valor provides students and families with resources and support that will allow each individual to grow and become self-sufficient. Unfortunately, El Valor’s Transition Service contract was not renewed by the State of Illinois due to the current state budget crisis.

Between July 1, 2014 and June 30, 2015, El Valor provided Developmental Training for 92 adults with substantial physical and developmental challenges in areas such as communication, socialization, life enrichment, recreational skills, and vocational skills. The primary aim of the program is to increase the individual’s independence, self-esteem, and integration into the community.

El Valor’s Developmental Training program provides day services to clients of varying ages and diagnoses. Individuals attending day services learn a variety of skills, safety skills, technology skills, and money management.

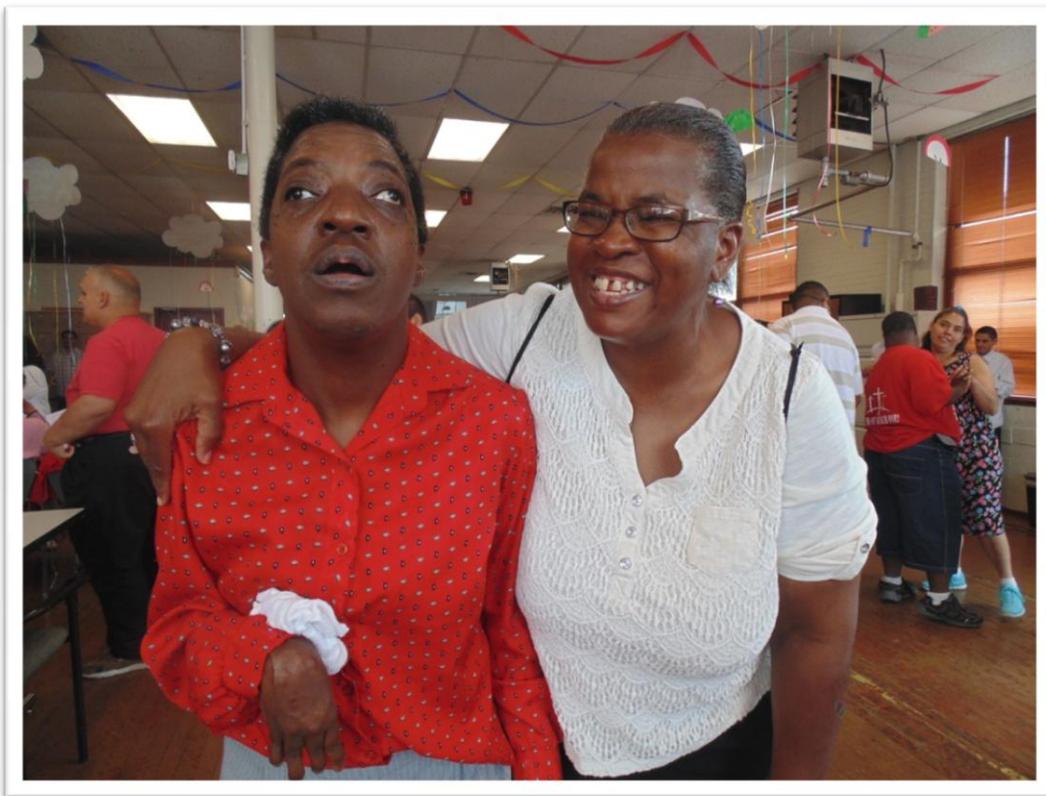
Through five (soon to be six!) residential homes located in the Chicagoland area, 43 adults with developmental disabilities live independently and participate in the community. Independence

and choice in everyday life are maximized utilizing existing social networks and community links.

Respite Care provides temporary relief to families, parents, and caretakers of children and adults with developmental disabilities or when emergencies occur that require caregivers to be absent for short periods of time. El Valor provided Respite services to 168 individuals in the past fiscal year.

Home Base Care Management Service works with 99 clients that have a family member with a disability. Services are delivered to families in their homes in order to avoid disruption to routines, ensure comfort, and maintain family integrity. These services are provided to Medicaid-eligible individuals in families with multiple service needs. Individuals receive a monthly stipend that allows them to purchase designated services such as Day Program or pay for a Personal Support Worker. A Qualified Support Professional designs an array of support services to meet the individual's needs. The services facilitator also assists the family in finding providers and conducts monitoring provision of services in the support plan in order to ensure the health, safety, and welfare of the participant. Individuals enrolled in this program qualify for other services including: adaptive equipment, assistive technology, home accessibility modification, vehicle accessibility modification, and temporary assistance on an emergency basis.

El Valor's Acquired Brain Injury Program provides specialized case management services to persons of all ages that live with an acquired brain injury. Approximately 138 people were served in this program during FY2015.





STRENGTHENING FAMILIES

Education Enrichment for Parents • Parenting Classes • Self-Advocacy • Family Support Groups • Parent Policy Council • Parent Conferences • Health Screenings

Parents are the key to their children’s success. Without family support, children struggle to succeed. Through education, training, and support groups, El Valor teaches parents to nurture the gifts in their children, their families, and in themselves.

One of our goals is to build partnerships between parents and program staff to create a supportive environment that promotes lifelong learning for their children. El Valor takes pride in offering the following personal and professional development opportunities that have been recognized by the Office of Head Start and the White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for Hispanics. These programs highlight the value of adult learning provided by El Valor: through parent engagement, parents will develop leadership, decision making, and family advocacy skills.



Parents’ participation in the program will include nominating themselves to participate in center-wide elections for the Parent Committee and Policy Council Groups. They will have the opportunity to represent their constituents at different levels, such as El Valor’s own Board of Directors as well as city-wide committees. For this reason, all parents are offered a variety of enrichment opportunities in English and Spanish, including English as a Second Language

(ESL), computer literacy programs, job readiness training, parenting classes, family budgeting, CPR/First Aid classes, Food Sanitation Certification, and family support groups.

Hundreds of parents participate in “Raising a Thinking Child,” an evidence-based program for parents that develops interpersonal cognitive problem solving skills in young children, improves parenting skills and parent-child communication, and decreases both impulsive and inhibited behaviors in young children.

Opening Doors/Abriendo Puertas is a training program developed by and for Latino parents with children ages 0-5. The AP curriculum strengthens parenting behaviors, leading to better outcomes for families and children. The ten sessions foster school readiness, family well-being, literacy, bilingualism, health, leadership, civic engagement, and advocacy by addressing best practices. Annual Fall Conferences are designed specifically with either Mothers or Fathers in mind, and stress the important roles they play in their child’s development.

Alongside the University of Illinois School of Dentistry, El Valor provides dental health education and services to our families. In partnership with the Chicago Department of Public Health, El Valor educates families on the prevention of lead poisoning in children. Eighty-seven percent of El Valor’s Head Start children received medical exams, and 85% have up-to-date dental exams. Eighty-eight percent of Early Head Start children at El Valor have updated medical records, and 85% of them received age-appropriate dental screenings.



PROMOTING CHILDREN’S EARLY DEVELOPMENT

Early Head Start/Prevention (Birth to 3-years-old) • Head Start (3-5 years of age) • Training for Spanish-Speaking Child Care Professionals & Providers • National Public Awareness Campaign • Advocacy and Public Policy

National, State and Local Statistics

For the first time in at least 50 years, a majority of U. S. public school students come from low-income families, according to [an analysis of 2013 federal data](#). In Illinois, one of every two students from pre-K to 12th grade is low-income. The neighborhoods El Valor serves are home to more than 10,000 children ages 0-5 in low-income (185% of Poverty Level) families.

Neighborhood	Number of Children Ages 0-5	Percent of Children 0-5 in Low-Income Families
Lower West Side	3,156	72%
South Lawndale	7,203	83%
South Chicago	2,729	82%

*Source: “Key Indicators of Need for Chicago Communities”, Illinois Action for Children, spring 2015

Why Early Head Start and Head Start?

Head Start is the national commitment to give every child, regardless of circumstances at birth, an opportunity to succeed in school and in life. Much like El Valor’s inclusive and holistic adult programming, the Head Start Model aims to provide comprehensive health, nutrition, and educational services to children in poverty. It is widely understood that socioeconomic disadvantages early in life can hold children back from later success, but the Head Start Model allows local educators to meet needs and mitigate obstacles to learning for both the children and their families.

Components of Head Start Programs, via the [National Head Start Association website](#):

- Education: Provide a variety of learning experiences to help children grow intellectually, socially, and emotionally.
- Health: Provide health services such as immunizations, dental, medical, and mental health, and nutritional services, and early identification of health problems.
- Parent Engagement: Involve parents in the planning and implementation of activities. Parents serve on policy councils and committees that make administrative decisions; participate in classes and workshops on child development; and volunteer in the program.
- Social Services: Provide outreach to families to determine what services they need.

El Valor's Children's Program

The future of our communities lies within the hearts and minds of our children. El Valor touches the future through a continuum of comprehensive programs that foster creativity, critical thinking, multiculturalism, and respect. El Valor strengthens the development of children with all abilities and reinforces the relationships with their families through parental leadership and educational opportunities.

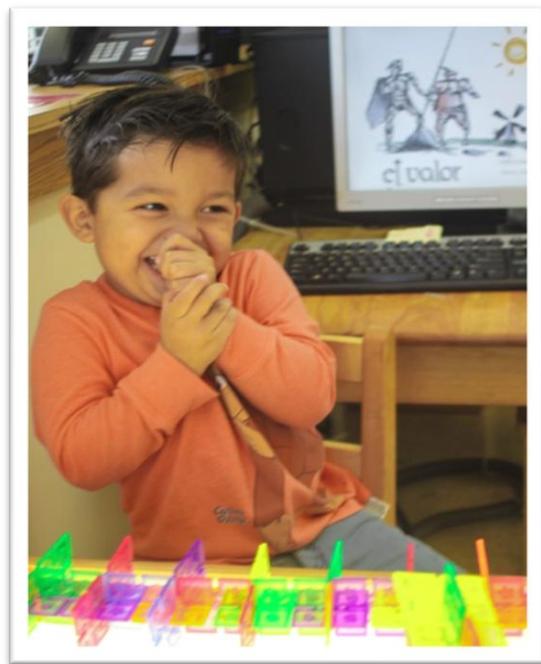
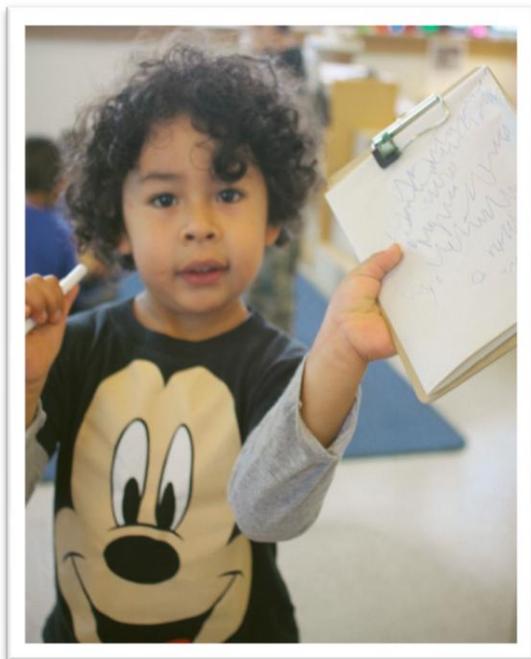
Services such as Early Head Start and Prevention provide early education and development stimulation from pregnancy to three years of age through weekly home visits and socialization groups.

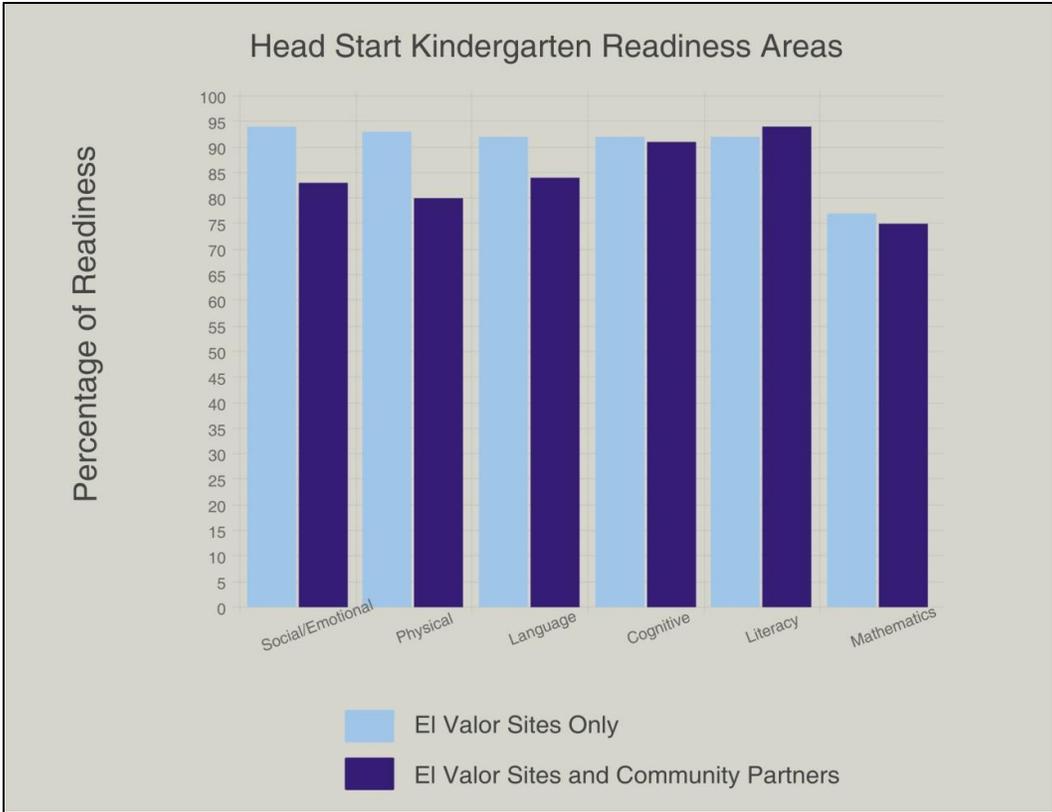
El Valor's Head Start and Child Care programs continue to support children between the ages of three to five to achieve excellence and school readiness. El Valor provides enriching learning experiences to nurture and challenge children physically, emotionally, socially, and cognitively.

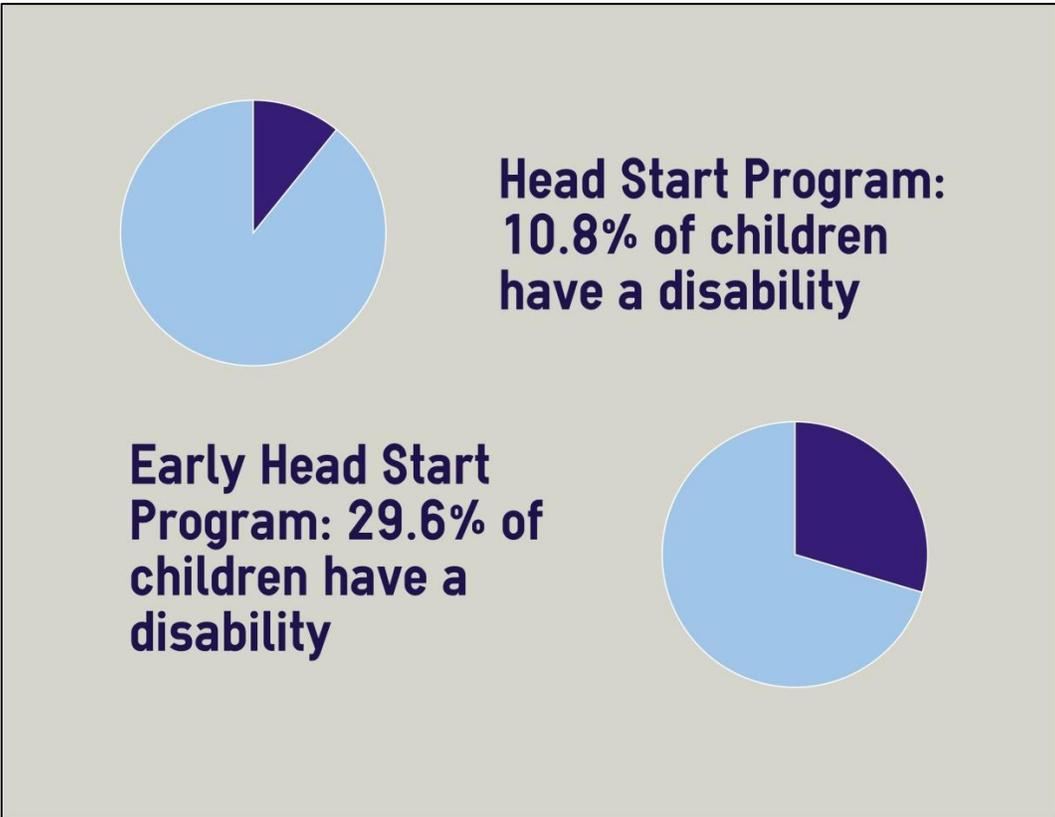
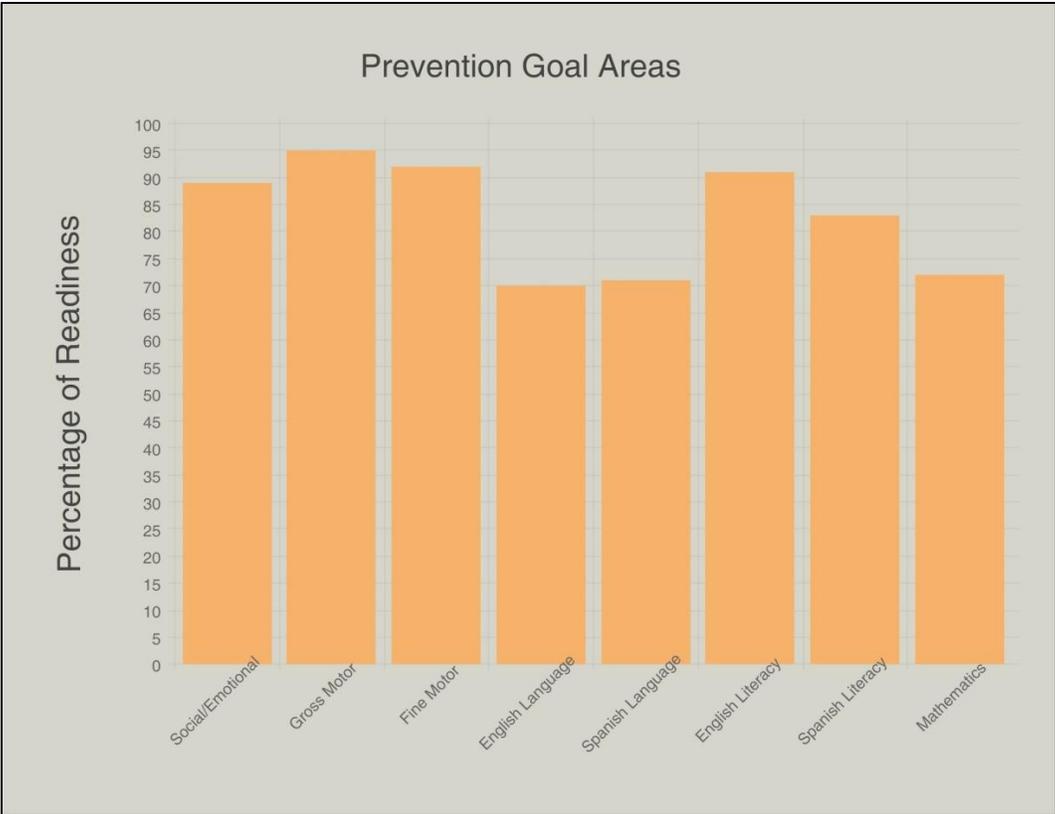
Children in all of El Valor's programs and at community partner sites have made strides towards goals and Kindergarten preparedness. See graphs and charts on the following pages for more information.

Average monthly enrollment for the 2014-2015 school year is 92% for Head Start and 100% for Early Head Start. Throughout this same year, El Valor served 1,464 families in the Head Start program and 275 families in the Early Head Start program.

Through professional leadership and strong management systems, El Valor upholds innovative local, state, and national partnerships to increase and engage community support for children and their families.









SECRETARY REVIEW



ADMINISTRATION FOR
CHILDREN & FAMILIES

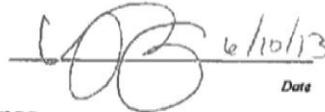
2000 K Street, NW

WDC

20254-2045 (DC 20045) acf@ac.fda.gov

To: Board Chairperson
Mr. Rey Gonzalez
Board Chairperson
El Valor
1850 W 21st St.
Chicago, IL 60608-2799

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


6/10/13
Date

Overview of Findings

From 4/21/2013 to 4/26/2013, the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) conducted a monitoring review of the El Valor Early Head Start program. 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 Mr. Rey Gonzalez, 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 Early Head Start program is 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.

During your review, the team used a sampling methodology that included a random selection of child files, staff files, and class, center, and group observations. If your report includes findings related to evidence that involved sampling, the finding narratives in your report include specific percentages from each sample that were determined by dividing the number of issues found by the total sample size. This methodology, which uses statistically driven random samples, allows the OHS to use information collected through the representative samples to make generalizations regarding your program as a whole.

For example, if, during your review, the team examines a sample of 45 child files, the finding narrative will indicate the percentage of files that were identified with an issue. The percentage will be determined by dividing the number of child files with issues by 45. Likewise, when summarizing information from classroom observations, the total number of classrooms with issues will be divided by the total number observed to determine the percentage of the sample with problems.

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. Kay Willmoth, Regional Program Manager
Ms. Corey Garcia, Policy Council Chairperson
Dr. Vincent Allocco, CEO/Executive Director
Ms. Clara Lopez, Head Start Director

Overview Information

Review Type: *Triennial*
Organization: *El Valor*
Program Type: *Early Head Start*
Team Leader: *Ms. Elsa Hernandez*
Funded Enrollment HS: *Not Applicable*
Funded Enrollment EHS: *206*

Area of Strength

The grantee's community partnerships enhanced its services to children and families and increased professional development opportunities for staff. The grantee partnered with the U.S. Forest Service to use monarch butterflies as a learning tool in its Birth to Five programs. Through this project, the grantee assisted the U.S. Forest Service with its conservation mission.

The butterfly project also promoted community engagement and parent involvement in the Mexican-American communities of Chicago. The monarch, a symbol for immigrants, was used to engage families in science- and nature-based activities at school and at home and encouraged vocabulary acquisition, fostered understanding of geography and spatial reasoning, and stimulated observation and investigation. To effectively implement the project, 27 staff participated in a week-long training on Schoolyard Ecology Explorations at the University of Minnesota since the partnership started in 2009.

In efforts to follow its alumni, the grantee established the Youth Enrichment Program/Saturday Academy through partnerships with and funding from the U.S. Forest Service and the McCormick Foundation. The Saturday Academy worked with graduates of the grantee's Early Childhood programs now in kindergarten and the first, second, and third grades. The academy

enrolled 80 children--20 in each grade level--and children attended for 24 weeks. Children focused on math, reading, and science skills, and their parents worked on communication and parenting skills. The last half hour of the academy focused on parents and children completing homework together.

The grantee also partnered with the Erikson Institute to provide a series of extensive trainings for staff and contracted home-care providers. Training content included infant/toddler development, planning for dual-language learners, and developing inclusion practices in Early Childhood settings.

— END OF REPORT —



ENRICHING YOUTH

Merit School of Music • El Valor Summer Camp • Saturday Academy

El Valor's Youth Enrichment Program has an academic focus supported by an enriching environment where school-age youth are nurtured to see their immense potential, and challenged to develop their unique gifts. The youth program works with committed, mission-driven staff and volunteers, who place high expectations and set clear goals and objectives for our children and their families.

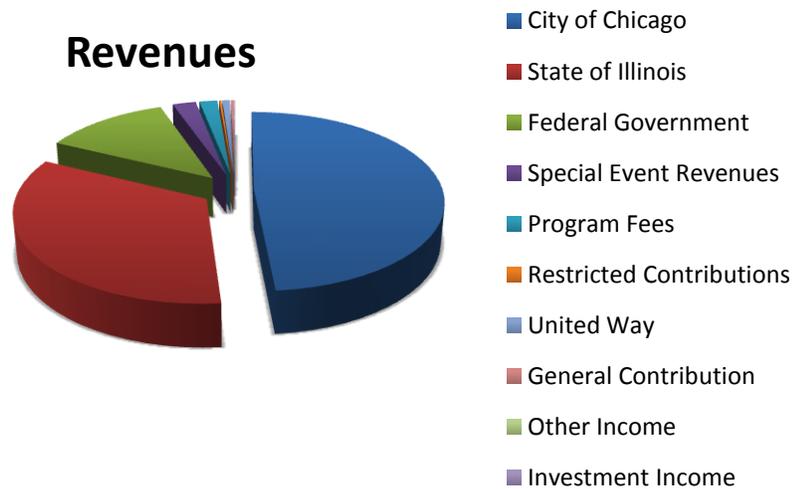
El Valor's strength lies in its ability to engage in effective partnerships. The Youth Enrichment Program works with the Merit School of Music, the United States Department of Agriculture, Midwin National Tallgrass Prairie, and the United States Forest Service.

El Valor's Saturday Academy addresses the academic and social needs of school-aged children, kindergarten through 3rd grade through an eight week session during the school year, focusing on reading, math, and environmental science. Since the program's inception in 2000, approximately 1,500 children have participated in El Valor's Youth Enrichment Programs.



FINANCIAL RESULTS: REVENUES

City of Chicago	\$8,140,949	48.6%
State of Illinois	\$5,629,481	33.6%
Federal Government	\$2,073,119	12.4%
Special Event Revenues	\$382,700	2.3%
Program Fees	\$298,171	1.8%
Restricted Contributions	\$36,000	0.2%
United Way	\$124,000	0.7%
General Contribution	\$47,024	0.3%
Other Income	\$551	0.0%
Investment Income	\$13,912	0.1%
Total Revenues	\$16,745,907	100.0%

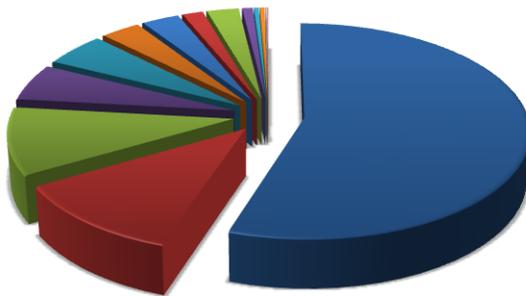




FINANCIAL RESULTS: EXPENSES

Salaries and Wages	\$8,864,085	55.1%
Employee Benefits	\$1,848,560	11.5%
Purchased Services	\$1,626,644	10.1%
External Services	\$900,796	5.6%
Occupancy/Physical Plant Expense	\$819,509	5.1%
Supplies	\$520,068	3.2%
Food Service Costs	\$493,735	3.1%
Interest Expense	\$272,269	1.7%
Travel & Staff Development	\$421,782	2.6%
Special Event Costs	\$135,865	0.8%
Insurance Expenses	\$66,298	0.4%
Bank Charges, Leases, Taxes, Licenses and Permits	\$66,709	0.4%
Bad Debt Reserve	\$15,000	0.1%
Printing/Publications/Advertising	\$24,105	0.1%
Reimbursements	-	-
Total Expenses	\$16,075,424	100%

Expenditures



- Salaries and Wages
- Employee Benefits
- Purchased Services
- External Services
- Occupancy/Physical Plant Expenses
- Supplies
- Food Service Costs
- Interest Expense
- Travel & Staff Development
- Special Event Costs
- Insurance Expenses



FINANCIAL RESULTS: ALLOCATIONS

Designations of Revenue	-	
Support Transfers	-	
Employee Benefits	-	
Depreciation Expense	\$620,796	
Occupancy/Physical Plant Expenses	-	
Maintenance	-	
Transportation	-	
Office Services	-	
Management & Administrative	-	
Fiscal & General	-	
Total Allocations	\$620,796	



FINANCIAL RESULTS, cont'd.

Statement of Financial Position

June 30, 2015

<u>Assets</u>			
Cash and Equivalents		\$	426,991
Investments			463,405
Grants, Contracts, Accounts Receivable			1,708,359
Prepaid Expenses			216,421
Other			123,099
Property and Equipment			12,513,716
Noncurrent Assets			58,932
	<i>Total Assets</i>	\$	15,510,923

<u>Liabilities and Net Assets</u>			
Accounts Payable		\$	699,296
Accrued Compensation/Taxes			601,507
Deferred Compensation			173,784
Other Liabilities			19,180
Long-Term Debt			4,674,876
Net Assets			9,342,280
	<i>Total Liabilities and Net Assets</i>	\$	15,510,923

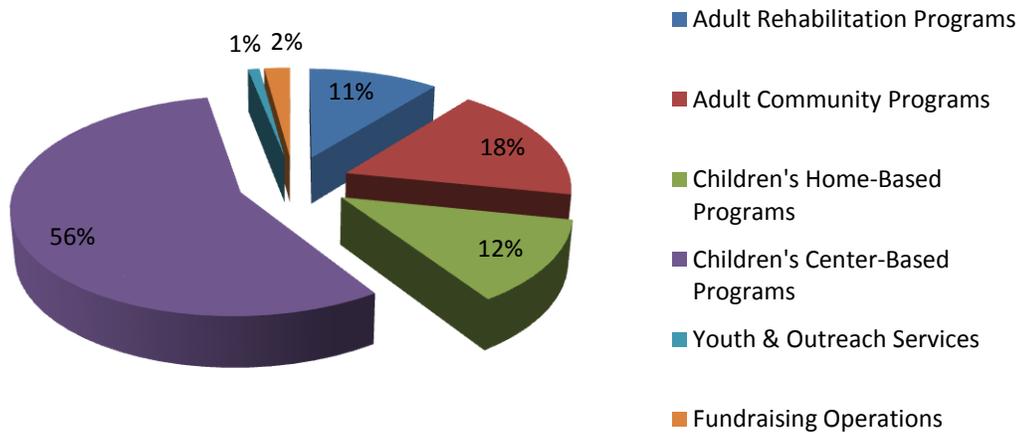


FINANCIAL RESULTS, cont'd.

PROGRAM BUDGET OVERVIEW FY 2015

PROGRAM	EXPENDITURES
Adult Rehabilitation Programs	\$1,790,598
Adult Community Programs	\$2,920,085
Children's Home-Based Programs	\$2,084,212
Children's Center-Based Programs	\$9,386,465
Youth & Outreach Services	\$158,589
Fundraising Operations	\$356,720
TOTAL BUDGET	\$16,696,210

PROGRAM EXPENDITURES





Contributions

Government Funders

Foundation, Organization, and Corporate Donors

Corporate and Foundation Matching Gifts

Individual Donors

Gifts In-Kind