

School Accountability Report Card

Children's Workshop

2024-2025

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I. General Background and History

The Children's Workshop (CW) is a California Department of Education certified nonpublic, nonsectarian school located in San Diego, California. Children's Workshop is part of The Institute for Effective Education's (TIEE), which also includes Mt. Helix Academy, Mission Valley Academy, COOK Education Center and Urban Skills Center. Founded in 1972, The Institute for Effective Education (TIEE) is a California nonprofit corporation in good standing and was incorporated for the purpose of providing education and other services to individuals with unique learning needs. Children's Workshop provides extensive professional training and conducts research on teaching methodologies.

TIEE was formed as a non-profit corporation called Children's Workshop, which was initially located in the Bankers Hill area, central San Diego. In 1982, Kenneth Traupmann, Ph.D. was retained as the Clinical Director and served as the CEO and Executive Director of Resources, Policy, and Planning until retiring in 2021. Suzanne Fitch, Ed.D. was also hired in 1982 as a school counselor and served as the Executive Director of Programs and Personnel until also retiring in 2021. In 1984, the Urban Skills Center was opened as a second school site and in 1990, the organization name was changed from Children's Workshop to The Institute for Effective Education (TIEE). In 1992, the COOK Education Center opened as a third school option in the Mission Valley area. In 2001, Children's Workshop moved from Bankers Hill to 4055 Camino del Rio South in Mission Valley. In April 2019, Children's Workshop opened the doors to a newly designed school at 9524 Kearny Villa Rd. in the Miramar area.

Mission Statement

The Institute for Effective Education (TIEE) is dedicated to using behavioral principles and evidence-based practices to create and provide positive and effective learning environments for children, adolescents, and adults whose talents span the full range of ability.

II. School Facility, Safety and Climate for Learning

School Description

Children's Workshop occupies a 2 story building in the Mira Mesa area of San Diego. The building has 21,000 square feet of administrative, classroom and activity space that is centered around a beautiful playground with various equipment. The teaching space is divided into four "villages" and the students are separated by age/grade groupings. Within each village, there are 2-3 credentialed teachers. The space is divided into small classroom areas called "huts" that can provide instruction for students in 1:1 and small group settings. The main open area has the perfect space for large group instruction. Technology is incorporated into the lessons using iPads, computer laptops and desktops as well as display screens on the wall. The school also has a large multipurpose room with 2 story high ceilings that has Occupational Therapy and other play equipment for our students. This can be transformed quickly to provide space for school events and professional trainings and workshops. There is also an Independent Living Center which has many components of a kitchen (e.g., refrigerators, dishwasher, toaster ovens) as well as a washing machine and dryer for teaching our students critical daily living skills. Every square foot has been crafted and designed specifically to meet our students' specialized needs.

School Safety

TIEE has a comprehensive program of Health, Welfare, and Safety that applies to Children's Workshop and involves written policies and procedures that are updated based on actual TIEE incidents, on insurance carrier requirements, and on information concerning safe practices in schools; initial and on-going training of its staff members; information dissemination to students, parents, and staff members; site visitations by loss-control experts; a pro-active Safety Committee that meets monthly to review safety practices, to identify hazards, and to perform site evaluations; hazard reporting procedures; follow-up of incidents involving harm or potential harm to students and/or staff members; and budgeted funds for the repair or replacement of facilities or equipment that is deemed hazardous. The principal items for which safe practices have been identified in TIEE's Health, Welfare, and Safety policies and procedures are the following: Floors, walkways, play surfaces and their coverings; Stairs and ladders; Tools and equipment; Electrical power, power cords, and outlets; Kitchen appliances and equipment; Broken or malfunctioning tools and equipment; Heavy objects; Chemicals and chemical spills; Hazardous particulates; Cleaning and maintenance; Infestations, infections, and illnesses; Visitors and intruders; Miscellaneous student activities; Miscellaneous personnel activities; Immunizations; Medication administration as school; Severe problem behavior; "Safe response" as emergency intervention for severe problem behavior; Child abuse reporting; Release of students; Off-campus travel; Operating vehicles; Fire safety; Earthquake safety; Sexual harassment; Blood-borne pathogens; and Emergency medical care.

Health, safety, and welfare of TIEE's students, staff, and visitors is of paramount concern. TIEE provides a janitorial/custodial staff to maintain cleanliness and good repair of its facilities and budgets funds adequate to provide for the day-to-day maintenance and the repair or replacement of worn out or broken equipment. Playground equipment is less than five years old and is inspected and maintained according to regulations for such equipment.

School Programs and Practices That Promote a Positive Climate for Learning

Children's Workshop endeavors to provide "positive environments in which all people learn the skills and knowledge essential to success." Its motto is "catch 'em being good," which is embraced by all staff members, whose goal is to maintain at least four positive consequences for desirable student behavior for each negative consequence for undesirable student behavior. Typically, TIEE staff members achieve ratios of 20:1 or higher. Our staff members are exceptionally positive.

Children's Workshop's practices are consistent with those research-validated methods known as Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS). The main practices include (a) teach students all essential classroom and school procedures; (b) provide positive consequences when students perform according to these expectations; (c) provide immediate corrective feedback for errors; (d) collect data on student performance and use the charted data to alter the program or provide special assistance for students whose behavior continues to require improvement; (e) develop Behavior Intervention Plans based on Functional Analysis Assessments for students whose problem behavior is severe. Finally, the enrollment of students whose behavior is persistently unmanageable or hazardous is terminated. Positive School Support also includes certain practices related to instruction more generally, including placement of students according to their level in a particular skill area, providing initial instruction that permits students to respond correctly about 80 percent of opportunities, provide high rates of opportunities to respond for all students, correct errors immediately and in the manner most conducive to learning, provide praise and other positive consequences for accurate responding, and use charted student performance data to make instructional decisions. All Positive School Support practices are implemented in all of TIEE's schools and by all staff members. It is TIEE's way of inducing the most disciplined learning for all of its students.

Suspensions and Expulsions

During the 2024-2025 school year, there was 1 suspension and 0 expulsions.

III. School Program

On October 1, 2024, Children's Workshop served 52 students, Pre-K through 8th grade, with severe language, social, and behavior problems associated with autism and other developmental disabilities. All of our students require the support of a specialized, highly structured environment in order to make reasonable gains, both academically and behaviorally. School is in session for 210 days each year, which includes 30 additional days provided during our Extended School Year. Our students would experience significant regression in critical areas (communication, socialization, behavior, life skills) without the provision of such services. Additionally, an unreasonable amount of time would be needed to recoup skills lost.

Specialized Academic Instruction

Our standard student to teacher ratio for learning is 2:1. Although some of our learners can participate in instruction and acquire new skills in a 2:1 setting, a large portion of our learners require 1:1 for at least a portion of their day in order to acquire new skills. Almost half of our students required 1:1 throughout their school day implement both their instructional and behavioral program effectively and safely

Our students are in school for 5 hours per day. Each hour/period, the student rotates to a different teacher. This allows us to plan for various activities, student groupings and to target teaching flexibility and generalization of skills across people.

All students enrolled in Children's Workshop are special education students and their programs are developed annually through the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) process by the team members which includes parents, school administration (including a representative from the school district), the special education teacher, and any related service specialists. For students enrolled privately by families, the school team works with them to develop a private education program. In our setting, this typically includes a Speech Language Pathologist and an Occupational Therapist. Goals are determined on an individual basis and the team takes into consideration both strengths and weaknesses for targeting new skill development. We serve students with a wide range of needs and the breadth of our curriculum is reflective of this range.

Following an IEP meeting, the credentialed teacher along with the paraprofessional teaching staff conduct baseline probes on the skills addressed by the goals. During these baseline probes, credentialed teachers are also assessing which effective instructional practice or combination of practices will be utilized to teach the skills related to each goal. Following the collection of baseline data, an instructional program is developed and documented on a task sheet. The task sheet includes which objective or goal is being worked on and describes in detail the procedures that will be used across implementers to teach targeted skills. The task sheet includes a list of needed materials, the environmental signal presented to the student to elicit the desired response, the research based methodology, the teaching procedure, strategies for error correction, scoring criteria and related data collection and charting conventions. Task sheets for all goals are gathered into the student's "working" binder, with a section for each IEP goal and corresponding data sheets.

The raw data collected on goals is transferred to charts in the student's "permanent" binder. On a weekly basis the data are analyzed by the credentialed teacher and their team of paraprofessionals to determine if the skill has been met, if it is on target, or if the task sheet needs to be modified. Minor changes to the instructional program may be directly documented on the task sheet. As goal targets are achieved, new task sheets are developed to teach the next level of skills. At weekly team meetings, lesson plans are developed for the following week. The lesson plans are designed to be implemented in conjunction with the task sheet. The identified goals of the lesson plans are directly tied to the targeted skills in the IEP goals.

Curriculum

The framework includes 6 curriculum areas and notable subcategories within those areas. We are addressing over 1000 skills across our curriculum. Skills within the curriculum are aligned with the Common Core Standards where appropriate.

1. Learner Skills

This first section of our curriculum describes the various environmental and instructional factors that are optimal for each student's learning as well as identifies effective teaching

practices for maximizing skill acquisition. Additionally, this section of our curriculum details the foundational skills that are required for students to benefit from instructional opportunities.

Observational Learning, addresses our student's awareness of and response to people, events, and objects. For many of our students awareness of others may be impaired and we need to directly shape this attention and build relevant responses. One of the basic foundational skills for learning is learning through imitation. Being able to look at a model and duplicate it is a pivotal skill that can impact higher level learning. Another area of need for our students relates to their awareness of and response to environmental stimuli (visual, auditory, tactile). For most of our students, this may be underdeveloped and in some cases, their awareness and reaction may be heightened. For the latter, many students display a high level of sensitivity and have difficulty filtering the information productively, which may lead to aberrant behaviors requiring intervention. Intervention may involve strengthening their ability to attend in the presence of such "distractors", desensitizing them to the undesired stimuli, or teaching them how to manage/cope with them in a more appropriate manner. Lastly, this area of our curriculum sharpens our students discrimination skills for recognizing similarities and differences across stimuli. Basic skills include matching, sorting into categories and selecting items from an array as described by others.

In the area of **School Skills**, heavy emphasis is placed on having our students readily approach learning opportunities and increasing the amount of time our students are available for meaningful learning interactions. Increasing compliance when the teacher signals it is time to transition to class and increasing the duration of each instructional session and reducing interfering behaviors is essential to this outcome. Additionally, teaching our students the skills necessary to be a member of an instructional group holds high importance. These skills include being able to attend to an independent activity (leisure or instructional) for brief periods of time, taking turns completing these independent tasks and working directly with the teacher, and lastly being able to respond to teacher directions and instructions along with another student. Reducing reliance on adults and increasing group skills is of critical importance as we prepare our students for less restrictive settings throughout their education and beyond.

2. Generalized Motor Skills

This next section of our curriculum addresses both gross and fine motor skills that have purposeful and meaningful outcomes for our students, directly impacting their tasks of daily living, leisure opportunities and socialization. Each individual student's unique motor and sensory needs are taken into account, and goals are developed to encourage their motor development.

Within the area of **Gross Motor**, balance and coordination, bilateral coordination, motor planning, as well as body awareness are also emphasized with the overall goal of encouraging engagement in activities like riding a bicycle, climbing up a ladder, and completing multiple step obstacle courses. Functional mobility or the ability to move throughout the school grounds and community efficiently is addressed. When appropriate, students may work on activities that address endurance like walking without fatiguing, keeping pace with peers when ambulating and engaging in fitness activities for extended

periods of time. Playground skills are also addressed with emphasis on improving our students' visual motor skills to engage in play on the structures while motor planning through the slides, ring ladder and rock wall as well as engaging in interactive play through games such as catch, basketball, T-ball, and kickball.

Research has shown that students who move regularly are able to attend to academic tasks for longer periods of time. Because of this, our students are provided many opportunities throughout their days to engage in gross motor activities in between academic tasks. Often times, students choose activities like riding a bicycle or tricycle, swinging in the OT area, playing on the play structure, or walking and running on the playground.

In the area of **Fine Motor**, manipulative skills are addressed. Students work to better use both hands in coordination to complete tasks that require various movements (e.g., put it, put together, put through) as well as increase their hand and arm strength in order to improve their tool grasp and ability to complete functional activities. Emphasis is placed on teaching students to independently complete daily living tasks that require fine motor skills like zipping and unzipping their backpacks. Students also learn to write and improve their handwriting skills through a variety of mediums (e.g., chalk, playdoh, ipad tracing games, and pencil and paper tasks). Special attention is placed on legibly writing letters and words and correct letter placement on the line. Computer skills are also taught and students learn various skills like keyboarding, typing using predictive text, sending emails, using a search engine to learn about topics, and mouse skills.

3. Verbal Behavior

Children's Workshop is an intensive language based program. We design environments that not only support language but evoke language from our students. We provide many opportunities for using language with regular feedback, we use shaping to enhance language, we expand on the language used by our students to model new information, and we incorporate language into all activities. In addition to capturing language opportunities, we create these opportunities. Some strategies include limiting access to reinforcers by putting them out of reach but in sight, establishing the need for assistance by presenting a task that necessitates help, setting up situations where items needed to perform a task or activity are missing, and crafting situations where more information is needed to perform a task or activity. Our curriculum in the area of Verbal Behavior addresses both the listener repertoire (also referred to as receptive language) and the speaker repertoire (also referred to as expressive language).

Within the **Listener Repertoire**, the curriculum addresses our student's ability to follow basic single step directions (e.g., pick up, give me, come here), advances to include multi-step complex instructions that require more attention to detail (e.g., go to the kitchen, get a paper towel, and help clean up) and extends their attention to auditory information to make conditional discriminations.

Children's Workshop's Verbal Behavior curriculum also includes the **Speaker Repertoire**. This section of our curriculum emphasizes the various forms as well as functions of expressive communication. Forms of Communication The majority of the students at Children's Workshop have communication impairments associated with their disability and

utilize various forms of communication. When vocal communication is not present or very limited, Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) strategies are sought out. AAC is a communication method used to repair or supplement vocal language when typical speech development or language is impaired. It encompasses a variety of methods ranging from low-tech strategies such as sign language and the Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS), to more sophisticated tools such as speech-generating devices that produce written output or symbols like the applications Touch Chat and Proloquo, which are available on an iPad. AAC may be used to repair communication breakdown when not understood or to amplify their language, allowing for more complex communication. The devices supporting AAC are used for modeling language, teaching new concepts, and emphasizing syntactical order through aided stimulation.

Echoics involve the vocal imitation of the spoken language of others, is critical to speech development. Other speaker repertoires develop from this pivotal skill. Mands is language under the control of motivating operations and functions to meet the wants and needs of the speaker (also referred to as requests). Tacts are verbal behavior that is under the control of non-verbal stimuli and function to access generalized reinforcement, often in the form of joint attention from the listener (also referred to as labeling). Intraverbal behavior is under the control of the language of others and most often takes the form of reciprocal interactions (e.g., response to questions, conversation).

4. Social Development

This section of our curriculum comprises a wide array of skills.

Within **Play Skills** we attend to the array of solitary leisure skills, the appropriateness of play and the ability to play independently without the need for adult intervention. We also focus on the skills required for interactive play. Within **Social Skills** we concentrate on awareness, interest and response to others, basic and advanced conversation skills and pragmatics, social manners and response to the needs of others for offering help. Higher level skills include teaching perspective taking, problem solving, conflict resolution, as well as audience and setting control.

Many of our students are referred to us due to **Inappropriate Behaviors** that impede learning, compromise their likeability, and deter the development of pro-social relationships. Currently, all of our students have a formal Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) plan in place to address behavioral issues. In order to develop these plans, we conduct a functional analysis assessment (FAA) that involves directly observing the behavior in multiple environments over a period of time, recording information about the behavior (e.g., how often, how long does it occur, what happens just before the behavior, patterns in time of day), and analyzing the information to hypothesize a function (i.e., how the behavior works). This allows us to develop proactive and positive plans, designed to prevent and reduce the occurrence of problem behaviors as well as manage such escalations should they occur. For some students, we need to conduct a full functional analysis (FA) that involves systematic control and manipulation of the variables that may be responsible for triggering the behavior and maintaining it over time. Not only do we focus on reducing

these behaviors but we also address teaching our students alternative and adaptive responses to replace these behaviors.

5. Daily Living Skills

This section of our curriculum addresses a variety of skills that are beneficial to our student's caretakers, teachers and members in the community in general. In the area of **Self-Help**, we teach skills that will lead to increased independence for self-care in the following areas: toileting, grooming, dressing and eating. In the area of **Independent Living**, we work towards developing our student's array of domestic skills (e.g., cooking, laundry), vocational skills (gathering and putting away materials for an assigned task) as well as skills that will allow them greater access to the community (e.g., safety skills, mobility, purchasing).

6. Academic Skills

The last section of our curriculum addresses our student's participation in traditional academic instruction. In the following chart, our student's progress towards their goals and objectives in the areas of **Language Arts, Reading, Spelling, Math** and **Science/Social Studies** are represented. Both traditional and applied academic goals are included.

Related Services

Children's Workshop offers direct services in the area of Occupational Therapy and Speech Therapy. Currently employed to deliver Occupational Therapy services is 1 full time Occupational Therapist (OT) as well as a part time Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant (COTA). For speech services, we have 1 full time Speech Language Pathologists (SLP) as well as a Certified Speech and Language Assistant (SLPA). In order to deliver these services and maximize the benefit a "push in" model has been adopted. This model differs from the traditional "pull out" model in that the services are provided in the classroom or other natural teaching environments throughout the school rather than the student being "pulled" from these areas to be serviced in a separate location. Research has been conducted to support the benefit of this model and the results have been observed in the program especially with respect to generalization of skills related to these services (e.g., generalized motor skills, verbal behavior and social development). This model also allows for the teachers and the direct service paraprofessional staff to work with DIS service providers to implement shared IEP goals. This collaboration ensures all staff members support individual student's educational programs consistently. This is especially crucial with respect to students using AAC (Augmentative and Alternative Communication). Speech and language group services are curated and led by a speech-language pathologist (SLP) or SLP assistant to be functional, meaningful and engaging opportunities for students to practice communication goals. Activities are designed to foster language comprehension, increase independence and quality of expression, encourage requesting and self-advocating, and allow for social interaction with emphasis on sharing thoughts, feelings, and opinions.

The Occupational Therapy staff leads specially designed PE activities for each of the different classrooms on a biweekly basis. These activities include a variety of simple/complex stretches, targeted ball handling skills (e.g., catching, throwing, kicking) and obstacle courses with stations that target balance, coordination, and strength. These activities are then available daily for the

students with the support of the classroom instructional team. Throughout the year classrooms also play modified games of kickball and T-ball which incorporate the targeted ball skills worked on throughout the year and teamwork skill development.

Fine Motor groups are run periodically each quarter and set-up in a format where students rotate completing various activities that target functional grasp, manipulatives, dressing skills, handwriting, leisure and art activities.

With this comprehension model in place, both OT and speech related skills can be worked on with students on multiple occasions daily and are not limited to the direct service minutes only.

Regularly scheduled meetings occur between DIS service providers and teachers to review progress towards IEP goals and to collaborate in order to problem solve when students are having difficulty achieving a goal.

Community Based Instruction

Another unique component of our school program is that for many of our students, we provide Community Based Instruction (CBI). This allows us to focus on developing many lifelong skills in the natural setting rather than teaching through simulation. Programming for generalization of skills to new settings, which is a major deficit for our student population, may then be achieved. Additionally, structured and thoughtful exposure not only benefits the students themselves by allowing them to participate more successfully, but also their families and other community partners. Many of our families report various behavioral and safety challenges when trying to include their children in community activities such as going to parks, stores, and restaurants. It has been expressed by some families that the community's lack of understanding and acceptance can be discouraging and has led them to avoid such situations. For this reason, we also believe it is part of our responsibility to educate our community members about our students so that they can be more tolerant of their needs.

Skills addressed during CBI include but are not limited to: community mobility and purchasing. Mobility consists of skills that are required to access and navigate public areas. Students learn about vehicle/passenger safety, how to stay with their assigned group, maneuver parking lots, recognize strangers, and manage personal belongings. Purchasing training emphasizes both the transactional skills (e.g., money exchange) as well as the social skills (e.g., greeting cashier, keeping personal space while waiting in line) which can be utilized across a wide range of settings. Practice of these skills is scheduled such that students have a range of experience with locations, staff members and peers. There is one van on campus each day that is dedicated to CBI. The scheduled trips are not only related to individual student goals, but also benefit the greater school community. For example, students purchase the needed items for cooking classes, art projects, and special events such as the Fall Festival.

Lastly, many students participate in community activities throughout the week based on their interest or as a component of their reinforcement system. These activities may include going to a store to acquire a preferred food item or toy, or engaging in leisure activities such as playing at the park or going to the bowling alley. Specific skills targeted during these times revolve around mobility and purchasing, similar to those students who participate in CBI as a component of their IEP.

Extracurricular Activities

In an effort to provide students with additional opportunities to enhance their skills within our curriculum, extracurricular activities are embedded regularly within classroom schedules. These activities include modified PE activities as well as music, cooking and art activities.

Parent Training & Collaboration

Children's Workshop highly values collaboration with parents with respect to their child's education. Likewise, parents are encouraged to capitalize on opportunities to collaborate with the educational team through bi-quarterly clinic meetings which are scheduled outside of the school hours. At these meetings, progress towards IEP goals is reviewed and skills targeted for generalization between home/school are reviewed. Parents are also given an opportunity to collaborate and receive individualized training on their child's program through one quarterly video view at a designated clinic meeting. This typically involves short clips of the teachers and specialists implementing their child's instructional and behavioral program with an opportunity to role play and ask questions. Outside service providers (e.g., in-home ABA therapists, private Speech/OT) are also welcomed to join clinic meetings in order to provide for consistent programming across environments. Parents may also request more specific training throughout the year on unique programs (e.g., how to program and utilize their child's communication system) as well as up to one live observation per month.

Parents and family members are also encouraged to volunteer and attend our various school events throughout the year (e.g., Fall Festival, Spring Fling, Annual Family Event).

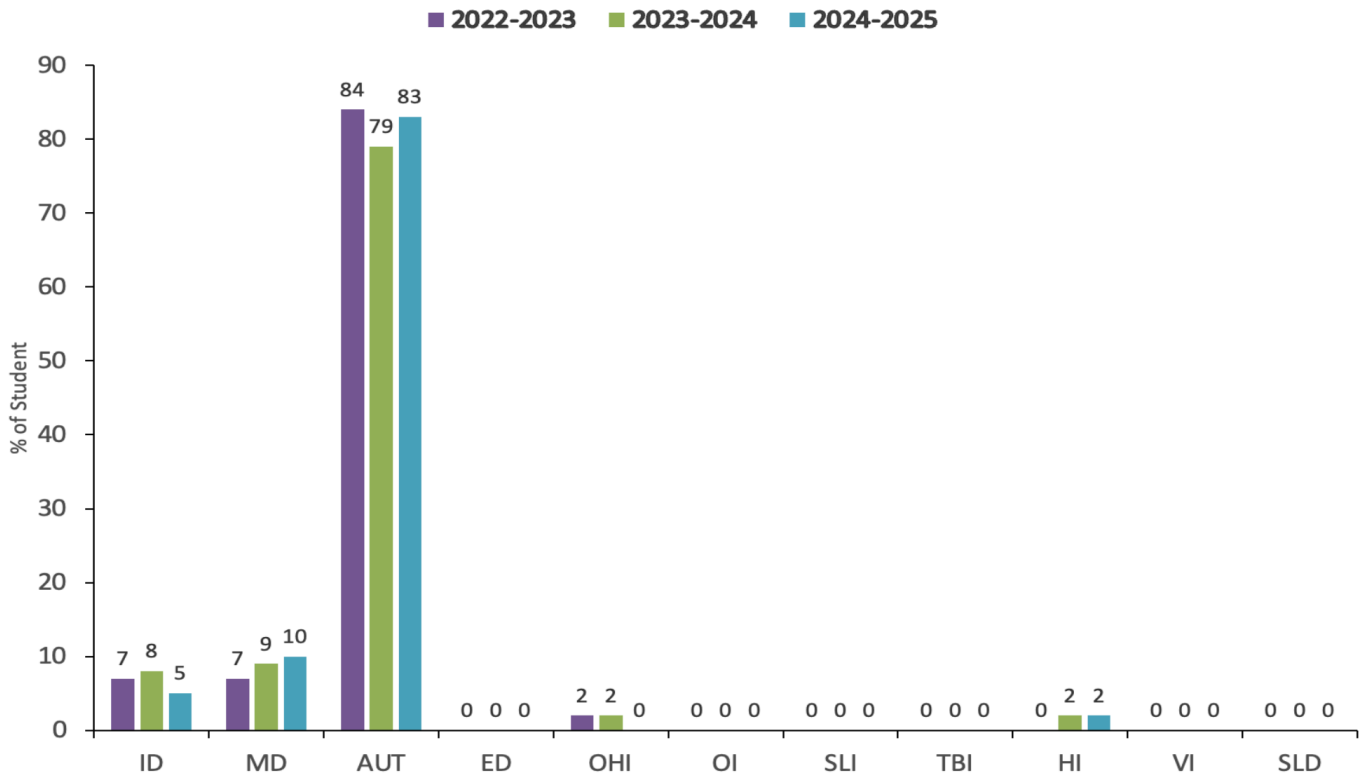
IV. Demographics

Enrollment

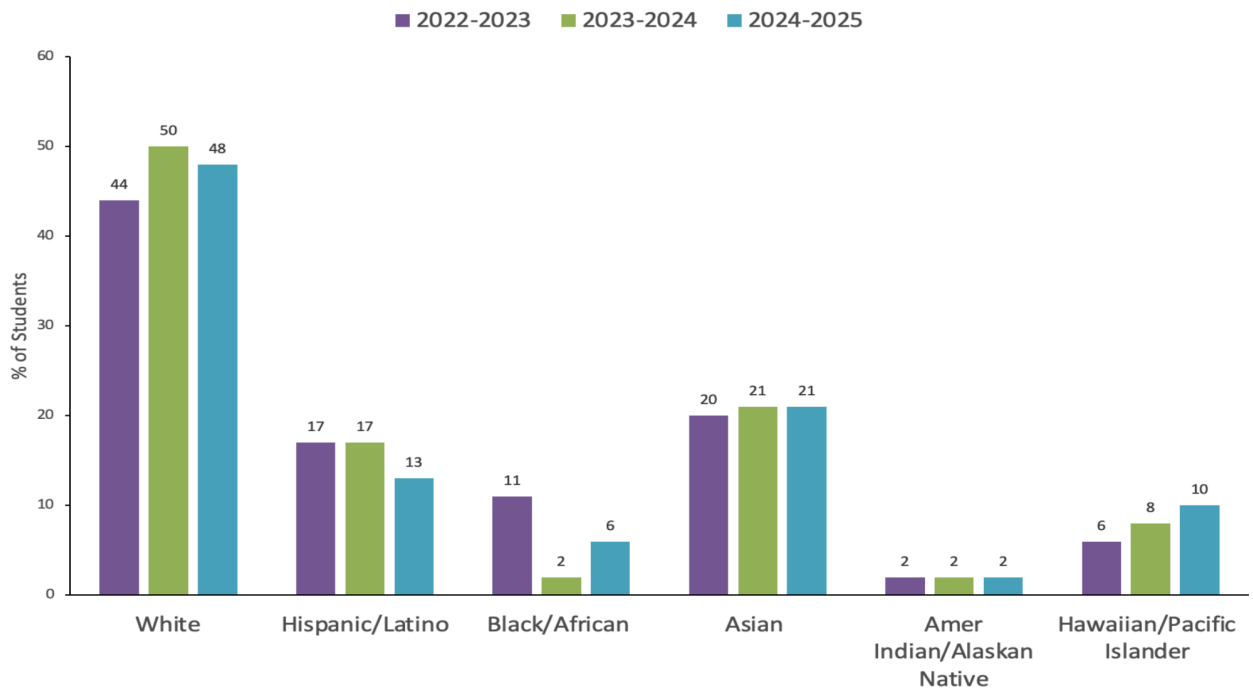
Children's Workshop currently serves students with a range of moderate to severe developmental disabilities and behavior problems including students with Autism, Intellectual Disability, Multiple Disabilities, and other complex medical conditions. Most students are diagnosed with Autism and would be considered on the severe end of the spectrum because of their communication, socialization, behavioral and/or developmental delays. We are currently enrolling students ranging in age from Pre-K to 8th grade.

Below are graphs displaying demographic information for our students.

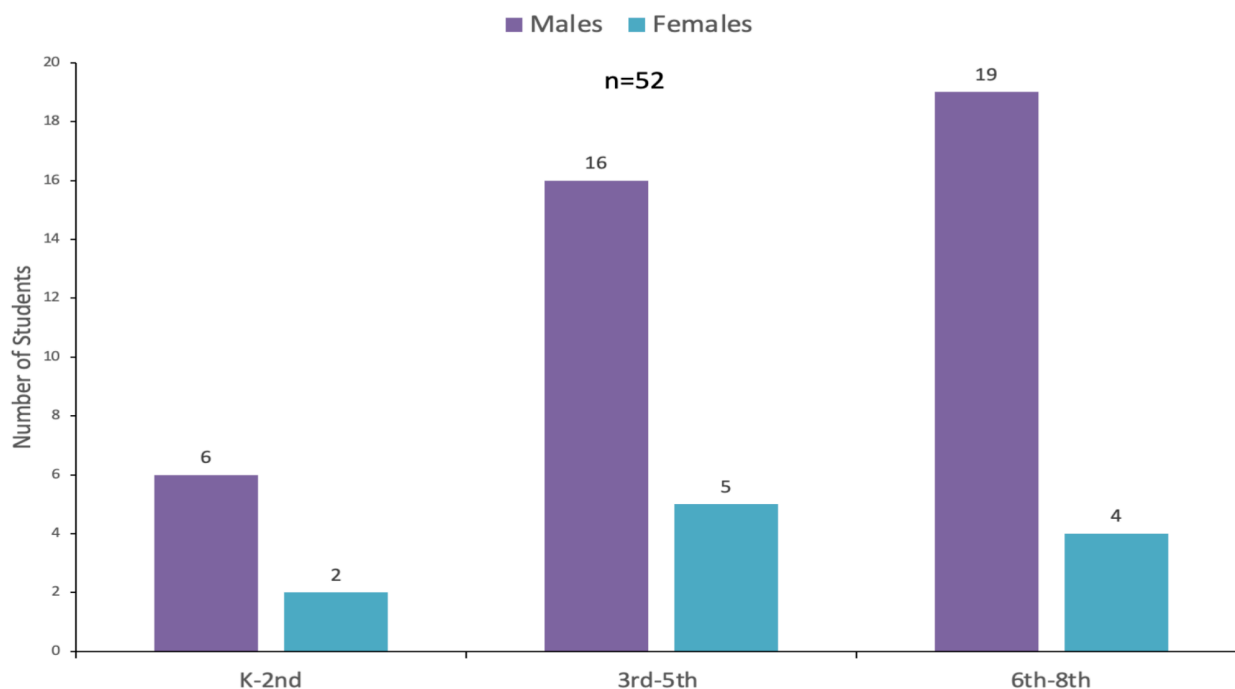
Children's Workshop 2024-2025 Students Enrolled on October 1st by Disability Category



Children's Workshop 2024-2025 Students Enrolled on October 1st by Ethnicity



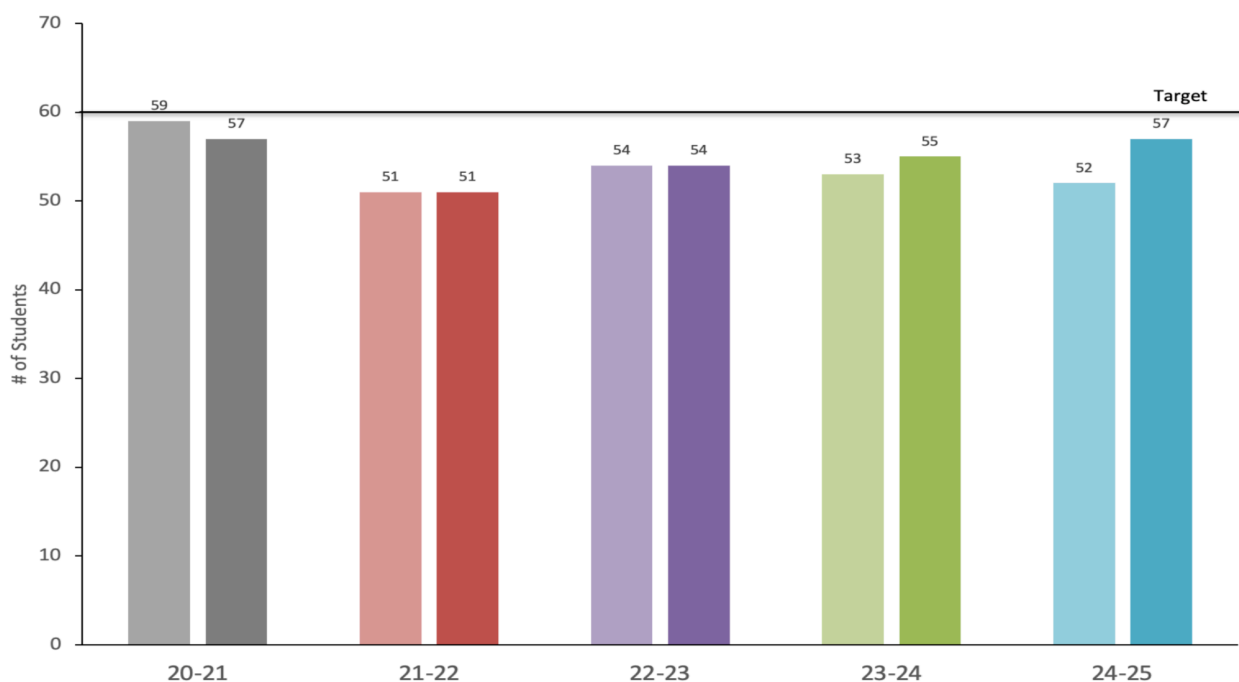
Children's Workshop 2024-2025
Students Enrolled on October 1st by Gender and Grade



As of October 1st, we had 8 students that qualified for ELL services; however, their instruction at school is to be provided in English based on their IEP.

The chart below shows the number of students enrolled at Children's Workshop over the last 5 years on October 1st and again on June 1st.

Children's Workshop 2024-2025
5 year Student Enrollment on October 1st & June 1st



Transitions

Transition from Children's Workshop to other schools happens on an individual basis and options are reviewed on an annual basis. For some students their progress in the areas of Learner Skills, Communication & Behavior provides rationale for a transition to a least restrictive environment such as a comprehensive school within their district of enrollment. In other cases it is beneficial to transition to TIEE Mission Valley Academy where they can generalize their skills in larger groups, and with a program wide schedule.

Students in grades 7th and 8th are preparing for transitions to secondary schools and programs. These transitions range along the placement continuum from a comprehensive campus to TIEE secondary schools to other nonpublic skills.

V. Personnel & Professional Development

TIEE Executive Leadership

Hillary Whiteside, M.S., BCBA was promoted to Executive Director in 2021. Prior to this she served as the Director of Children's Workshop from 2005 to 2021. Ms. Whiteside received her B.S. in Psychology from San Diego State University and M.S. in Special Education from National University. She holds a Professional Clear Multiple Subjects credential with the Commission on Teacher Credentialing and a Professional Clear Moderate/Severe Education Specialist credential. Ms. Whiteside completed coursework in Behavior Analysis at the University of North Texas and is a Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA).

Ms. Whiteside has been an Adjunct Professor in San Diego State University's Department of Special Education since 2004 and serves as Practicum Supervisor in the Masters in Autism Program. She also is a member of that program's Advisory Board. Ms. Whiteside also serves on the Board and is the President Elect and Regional Representative for CAPSES, California Association of Private Special Education Schools.

Ms. Whiteside is an expert in teaching behavioral supports for the classroom, in supervising and coaching teachers who are implementing ABA methods, and in developing educational programs for young children with developmental disabilities, including autism. Ms. Whiteside was awarded TIEE's Teacher of the Year in 2000.

Children's Workshop Educational Leadership Team

Director

Alicia Ritter, M.A., BCBA was promoted to the Director of Children's Workshop in 2021. She began as a paraprofessional teacher for TIEE in 2001, she became a teacher in 2002, and was promoted to Program Coordinator of Children's Workshop in 2007. She was awarded TIEE's Teacher of the Year in 2008. Ms. Ritter received her B.A. in Sociology from University of San Francisco and M.A. in Teaching from National University. She holds Professional Clear Moderate/Severe Education Specialist credential as well as a Professional Clear Mild/Moderate Education Specialist credential. Ms. Ritter completed coursework in Behavior Analysis at the University of North Texas and is a Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA). In addition to her duties at Children's Workshop, Ms. Ritter has worked as a Lecturer and BCBA Fieldwork Supervisor in San Diego State University's Department of Special Education.

Program Coordinators

At Children's Workshop we have 3 Program Coordinators: Megan Ameng, Kirsten Amundson and Serenity Medina. The Program Coordinators work alongside the Director participating in curriculum development, program design, enrollment and transition, professional development and staff training. Each Coordinator directly supervises 2-3 credentialed teachers and approximately 10-15 paraprofessional educators.

Megan Ameng started as a paraprofessional at Children's Workshop in 2007 after receiving her B.S. in Psychology from University of California at Irvine. In 2011, after she completed the requirements for her Clear Moderate/Severe Education Specialist credential and was promoted to classroom teacher. Following this, Megan completed her coursework for a M.A. in Special Education as well Behavior Analysis at San Diego State University in 2014 and became a Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA) in 2015, the same year she was awarded TIEE's Teacher of the year. Megan was promoted to Program Coordinator in 2018.

Kirsten Amundson started as a paraprofessional at Children's Workshop in 1999. She was awarded TIEE's Paraprofessional of the Year in 2004. She became an intern teacher in 2009, and then teacher in 2012. She was promoted to one of the Program Coordinators in 2023. She received her B.A. in Anthropology from San Diego State University. She also holds a Clear Moderate/Severe Education Specialist credential.

Serenity Medina started as a paraprofessional at Children's Workshop in 2008, became a teacher in 2010, and was promoted to one of the Program Coordinators in 2023. She was awarded TIEE's Teacher of the Year in 2017. She received her B.S. in Child and Family Development and M.A. in Special Education from San Diego State University. She also holds a Clear Moderate/Severe Education Specialist credential. Mrs. Medina has additionally completed the coursework in Behavior Analysis through San Diego State University and was certified November of 2017.

Educational Team

The professional team is composed of 10 teachers. Of the 10 teachers 5 are fully credentialed and while 5 are intern or pre-intern teachers. There is 1 full time Speech and Language Pathologist (SLP) and a Certified Speech Language Pathology Assistant (SLPA). There is also one full time Occupational Therapist (OT) and a Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant (SLPA). We have 9 teachers and specialists that hold a Master's degree in addition to their credential, license or certificate. We also have 4 professionals that are also Board Certified Behavior Analysts. There are ~40 direct services paraprofessional educators that support our classrooms and students.

Professional Development

Supervision of Employees

Employees are assigned to a supervisor as soon as their job placement is determined within the organization. TIEE's policy is to nurture and encourage the development of each employee's skills as necessary to perform the assigned job. Each employee can expect explicit training of job skills, frequent observation and feedback of job performance, and meetings as necessary with her/his supervisor regarding job performance. In return, employees are expected to be responsive to feedback and eager to learn the necessary skills.

In order to obtain and maintain the highest possible quality of instruction, we provide frequent observation accompanied by specific feedback to direct-service personnel concerning their instructional activities and other aspects of their job performance. Direct-service employees are evaluated on standards of performance (e.g., attendance, dress code, timeliness), fundamentals of instruction, organization and materials management, team meeting participation, response to supervision, behavior management strategies, and data collection. Professional staff members are also evaluated on the development and oversight of Individualized Education Plans and Behavior Intervention Plans, as well as coaching and supervision of their assigned supervisees. Formal reviews are provided at least annually for direct-service employees. Retention and advancement depend, among other factors, on the quality of such reviews.

Formal Trainings

TIEE maintains an intensive program of professional and paraprofessional staff training, supervision, and evaluation that characterizes the practice at Children's Workshop. All staff members are trained on effective instructional practices, behavior management strategies, and research-validated educational practices. These trainings are conducted by multiple professionals including the Director, the schools 3 Program Coordinators and by 1 of our Moderate/Severe Education Specialists of whom holds their Board Certified Behavior Analysts (BCBA) certification. Additional online trainings are provided on supporting and enhancing communication

using Alternative and Augmentative Communication, as well as multiple trainings on diversity awareness and multicultural education.

Side by Side Coaching

In addition to formal trainings, great emphasis is placed on teacher training inside the classroom. Research has shown that hands-on-coaching yields the most positive short-term and long-term outcomes on performance as compared to other training modalities (e.g., formal trainings, workshops). Training is provided for teachers and direct service paraprofessionals identified as “coaches” for new staff. This training includes role play and practice of the side by side coaching protocols. When a new staff member starts there is a 10-15 day training sequence they each go through. This is modified or adapted based on the speed at which they acquire teaching skills.

VI. Student Outcomes

Progress Monitoring & Lesson Planning

Student progress monitoring and lesson planning involves a multi-layer, hierarchical approach at Children’s Workshop. First, data is collected daily for skills identified by IEP goals or behavior programs by the classroom staff. This data is graphed and analyzed weekly during bi-weekly Goal Review meetings. Paraprofessionals are taught how to participate actively in these meetings and share information on their “primary students”, whose binder/s and data they are responsible for. For goals in which progress is detected, new targets are selected and lessons are developed. For goals where little to no progress has been identified, modifications to the program are made by the Credentialed teacher (e.g., adding additional cues, altering the materials, increasing reinforcement, altering the schedule for when and how often it is run). Any changes to student programs are then documented on the Goal Review Notes and the team practices implementation through role play to ensure consistency across educational staff.

The next layer of progress monitoring occurs during meetings between the Credentialed teacher and their Program Coordinator. In these meetings, emphasis is placed on goals or teaching programs that have been chronically flagged or that have been modified multiple times with no change to progress. The teachers pre-identify these goals by referring to their weekly Goal Review Notes from that month.

Finally, the Director reviews all student Progress Reports, which are submitted on a quarterly basis, and either meets with the Credentialed Teacher or the Program Coordinator to discuss further modification to instructional programs which have not responded to intervention or to consider amending the goal through the IEP process.