



ANNUAL REPORT 2015

**EL
HOGAR
DEL NIÑO**
The home of the child

Creating Everyday Heroes

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MISSION STATEMENT

El Hogar del Niño lights the path for children and their families to reach their fullest potential in nurturing, culturally sensitive learning environments.

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Creating Everyday Heroes

From Executive Director Mario Perez

Five-year old Santiago is captivated by superheroes. “Batman is an awesome guy,” he tells me. “He fights the bad guys.”

I sit down with Santiago (one of our most recent Head Start graduates), his older sister Evelyn (who is in our after school program), and their mother, Diana, to talk about why they chose El Hogar.

“Did Batman learn to read and write?” I ask Santiago. “Yes, he reads and writes,” Santiago answers, “but I don’t know who taught him. I don’t know.”

I can tell from his response that Santiago understands what it takes to be a hero: a person has to learn, and someone has to teach them. We don’t pretend to nurture superheroes at El Hogar, but we’re convinced we help create the everyday heroes our communities need. Our students are my favorite heroes, along with the teachers and staff who shape their lives. The support we provide allows our students to overcome the “bad guys” in their lives: the educational gaps that many of our families face.

Best-selling author Chris McDougall writes that heroes are made, not born. He studies cultures that produce citizens of incredible ability, and discovers that these communities deliberately pass on the skills, the strength and the compassion their citizens need to meet extraordinary odds. “The art of the hero,” McDougall finds, “wasn’t about being brave; it was about being so competent that bravery wasn’t an issue.”

In their own words, Santiago and his family share how El Hogar has helped them grow

in competence and overcome extraordinary odds. While Santiago was conquering the behavioral issues that hindered his learning, his mother was finishing school and advancing her career.

Diana talks about why she likes El Hogar. “El Hogar focuses on learning skills,” she says. “Teachers meet with parents one-on-one, and help us understand if a child is not catching on. They don’t leave any child behind. I really do feel my kids were prepared for kindergarten.”

Santiago and Evelyn’s confidence is inspiring. They quickly turn the tables and pepper me with questions. “What is your work?” they ask, “Do you like all the work?” I smile and say, “I love it. I work on making sure children have a safe place at El Hogar, that they are learning a lot, and that we are supporting parents so they can work or go back to school.”

Santiago’s sense of security and justice come from being surrounded by teachers and staff who fight for him, his sister, and their 326 peers. They work alongside more than 140 families to shape our students into heroes for the next generation.

Read more about Santiago’s journey and some of the key team members who helped him along the way in the following pages.

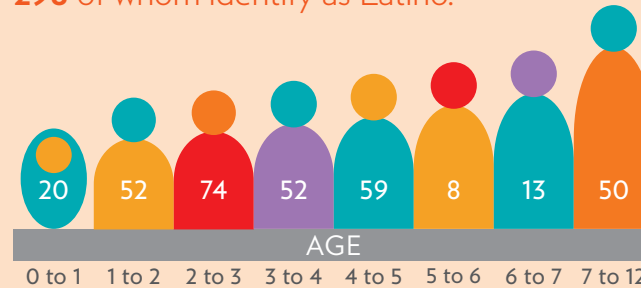
But do more than read. If you believe that heroes are made and not born, join us. With your financial and personal support, we can offer our families the skill, the strength, and the compassion they need to reach heroic distances. Thank you for supporting El Hogar.



Who is El Hogar?

El Hogar del Niño is a 44-year-old early childhood education agency in Pilsen, Chicago, with a strong bi-lingual tradition. We provide a continuity of educational support and family-centered care for children from birth through age 12.

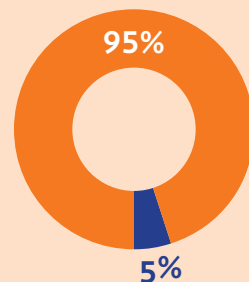
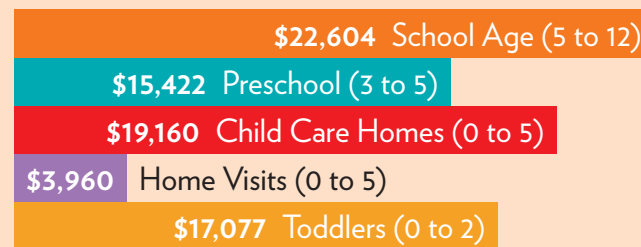
El Hogar served **328** children in 2015, **298** of whom identify as Latino.



The average annual household income of El Hogar's families is **\$16,588**.

The Federal Poverty Level in the U.S. for 2015 was **\$20,090**.

Families' average income by program was:



Use of Funds at El Hogar:

Direct Services	\$ 4,303,087	95%
Management & Fundraising	\$ 221,716	5%
Total	\$ 4,524,803	100%

At the head of a typical El Hogar family is a young mother who is:

- Raising 2 children
- Parenting alone
- Working long hours
- Going to school herself
- Living on an income that approximates the Federal Poverty Level
- Residing within 15 minutes of Pilsen

Like most parents, she is incredibly proud of her children and intent on helping them obtain a good education and a better life.

Creating everyday heroes, one step at a time

Step 1: At 15 months old, Santiago joined El Hogar's **Toddlers and Twos** program.



Toddlers and Twos

Community

As the proverb goes, it takes a village to raise a child. At El Hogar, our **community** of parents, staff, volunteers, supporters, elected officials, partner organizations, and local businesses all contribute to our vibrant culture.

To find out how you can support El Hogar, sign up for our newsletter at elhogardelnino.org, follow us on Facebook and Twitter, make a contribution, or contact us for volunteer opportunities.

Step 3: Santiago successfully transitioned out of El Hogar's Head Start Preschool program and is now flourishing in kindergarten. Santiago and his sister Evelyn return to El Hogar daily for our **School Age** after school program.



Mario Perez

School Age

Board of Directors



Step 2: In El Hogar's **Preschool** program, two to three teachers collaborate in every classroom of 20 students. This favorable student-teacher ratio was pivotal for Santiago's progress.

Ms. Aurea

Preschool



Diana

Teacher Jennifer

El Hogar's talented and diverse Board of Directors is dedicated to ensuring quality, sustainability, and innovation across the agency. We rely on their expertise and passion for governance and financial support. El Hogar is grateful for the service and commitment of our Board.

Ms. Aurea

Head Start Preschool Coordinator



When he started preschool, Santiago had trouble self-regulating and he would not follow his teacher's directions. Rather than learning through play alongside his peers, Santiago would play by himself.

"I was called into the classroom to help manage his behavior. We were consistent in expectations, helping him feel nurtured, valued, and respected while also helping him to understand that his behavior was not appropriate at times."

Ms. Aurea and El Hogar's support staff were able to help Santiago get treatment for his ear problems, get a referral to outside counseling, and help develop a behavior management plan so he could learn to follow a schedule and cooperate with others.

Teacher Jennifer

In her fifth year teaching at El Hogar, Jennifer loves what she does. "To be dedicated, you have to love what you do." Nowhere is her dedication more evident than in her relationship with Santiago.

Each time Santiago came into her class, Teacher Jennifer let him make a fresh start, even if their last encounter had been challenging. "We modeled empathy—a critical component in social/emotional learning—articulated expectations, and empowered students with choices."

Having an engaging classroom was also key to her students' growth. Teacher Jennifer often asked her students what they would like to learn about in a particular unit of study. "That environment worked well for Santiago. He was not quiet or shy and became an active participant in the classroom."



Santiago's mother, Diana, and El Hogar Executive Director Mario Perez talk with Santiago and his sister Evelyn

Diana

Santiago's Mom

Diana admits that she struggled at first to trust her children to any early learning provider. "I come from a Hispanic family; Moms stay home and raise their kids." Because she was returning to school to study human resources, Diana overcame her uncertainty and took a chance on El Hogar. Now she knows she made the right decision.

Teacher Jennifer built trusting relationships with Diana and all parents. That was especially important in Santiago's case because he had such a strong relationship with his family. Diana was

impressed with the engagement of the teachers and the staff. They kept her informed about what Santiago did each day in class, what he learned, and how he behaved. She is proud of the young person Santiago is becoming, and the incredible transformation she has seen since the earlier days of difficulty and defiance.

"In the beginning it's about colors and numbers, but as he grew older, he was learning how to express himself."

Mario Perez

Executive Director

"Our entire team works tirelessly behind the scenes to secure the resources that we need to ensure all 328 of our students can have outcomes like Santiago's. It's been a tough year for social services in Illinois given the budget stalemate, but thanks to our donors and supporters, we have kept our doors open and our classrooms vibrant. With your continued support, we will maintain our status as an essential resource for the city's most vulnerable communities.

"The real strength of our agency is in our people and parents," says Mario. Alongside compassionate donors and a smart leadership team that provides wise guidance, El Hogar benefits from a deeply committed and mission-driven staff who always put children first and who are absolutely dedicated to those children's families.

"We are really proud of and grateful to everyone who intersects with our agency."

El Hogar Programs

Toddlers and Twos: This program offers high quality early childhood care, education and support for toddlers and their families, with a focus on school readiness. Using Creative Curriculum® our teachers engage their students with fun activities that focus on key areas such as social/emotional, physical, cognitive, and language development.

Center-based Preschool: Our preschool program combines Head Start and Child Care to offer full day, year long programming to at risk children three to five years old. With the Creative Curriculum for Preschool®, teachers develop their students' social/emotional, cognitive, physical and language skills through engaging activities and focused lesson plans. School readiness is another priority in our center-based Preschool program.

Family Child Care Homes: We currently coordinate three homes located around Chicago's southwest side that provide services to children ranging from six weeks to five years of age. The setting promotes small group sizes of five to eight children within the home and offers opportunities for siblings to be cared for together.

Center-based School Age: We offer a School-Age program that serves children between the ages of five and twelve years. Most of the 65 students currently enrolled are part of a year-round program that offers homework assistance and report card tracking in half-day after school services and full-day summer services filled with club activities and field trips.

Home Visiting: Using the Parents as Teachers model, home visitors assist parents in learning about their child's growth and creating educational curriculum to maximize that development. Participants commit to weekly home visits, monthly socialization events, and development screenings.



Statement of Activities

For the Year ended June 30, 2015

PUBLIC SUPPORT

Fees & Grants	4,279,227
Corporate, Foundation, and Individual	8,592
Total Public Support	4,287,819

REVENUE

Program Service Fees	110,750
Other Income	8,326
Total Revenue	119,076
Total Public Support and Revenue	4,406,895

EXPENSES

Program Services	4,303,087
Management and General	214,146
Fundraising	7,570
Total Expenses	4,524,803

TOTAL NET ASSETS

Net Assets at the Beginning of Year	2,932,448
Net Assets at the End of Year	2,814,540

For full financials please refer to our website: elhogardelnino.org

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