

Minnesota Early Learning Foundation Scholarship Pilot



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MELF Scholarship Pilot

- Research motivation
- Organizational design
- Implementation and preliminary findings
- Next steps



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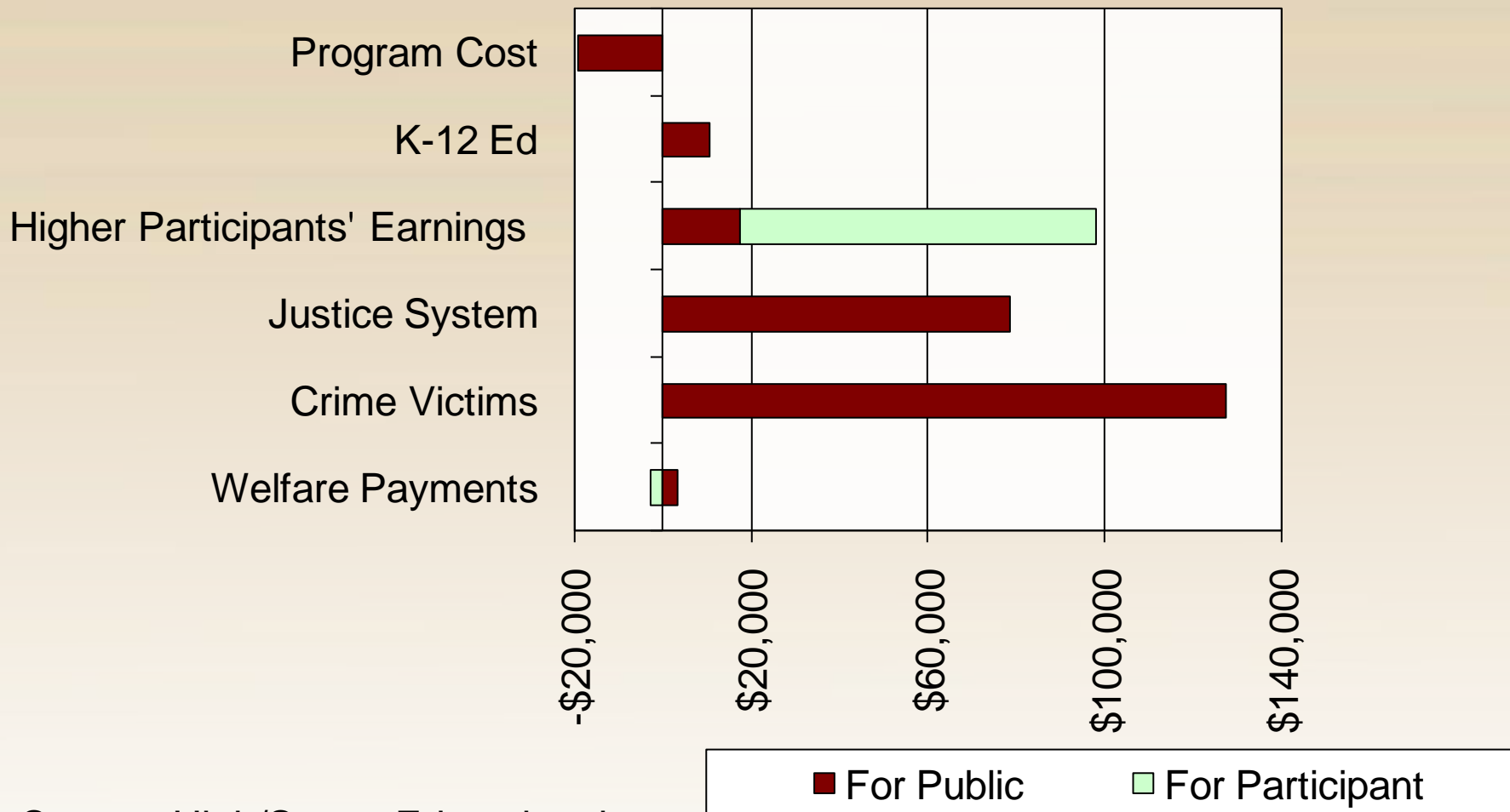


High/Scope Study of Perry Preschool

- In early 1960s, 123 children from low-income families in Ypsilanti, Mich.
- Children randomly selected to attend Perry or control group.
- High-quality program with well trained teachers, daily classroom sessions and weekly home visits.
- Tracked participants and control group through age 40.



Perry Preschool Costs and Benefits Over 62 Years



Source: High/Scope Educational
Research Foundation



Perry Preschool — Estimated Return on Investment (Inflation-adjusted)

Benefit-cost ratio = \$16 to \$1

- Total annual rate of return = 18%
- Public rate of return = 16%

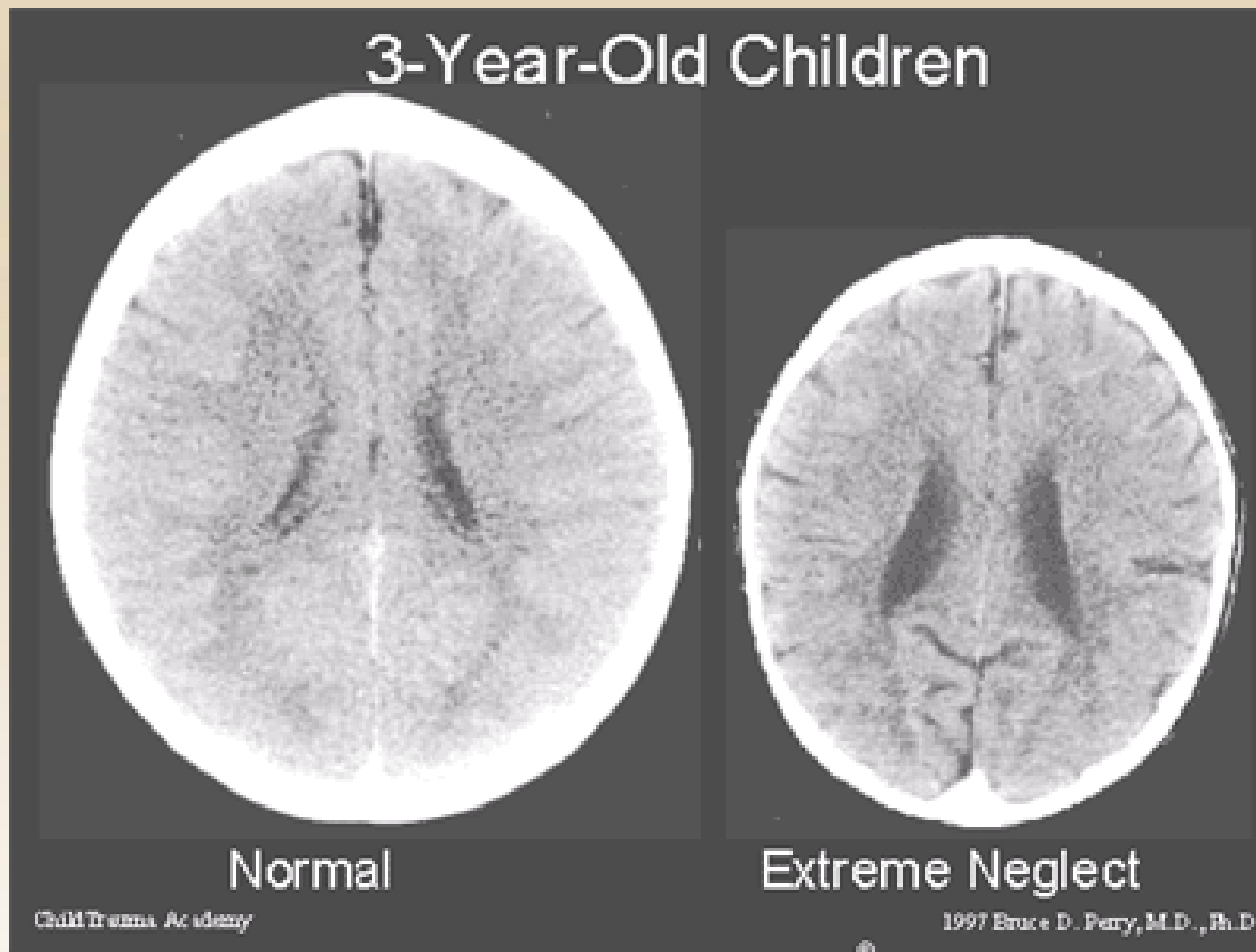


Rate or Return for Other Longitudinal Studies

- Abecedarian Educational Child Care
 - Total annual rate of return (inflation-adjusted): $\approx 7\%$
- Chicago-Child Parent
 - Total annual rate of return (inflation-adjusted): $\approx 20\%$



“Experience is the chief architect of the brain.”



Source: Bruce Perry, 1997

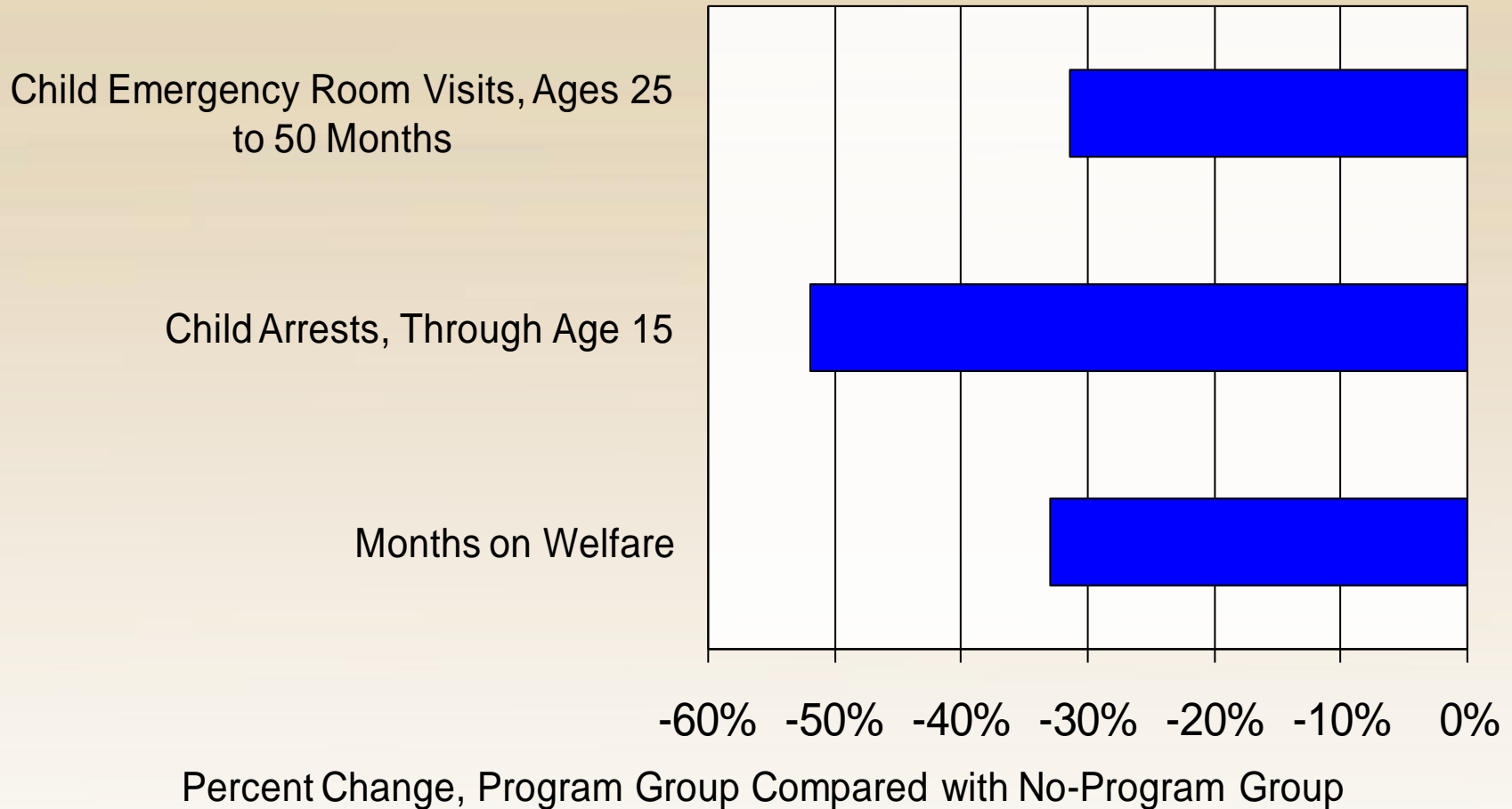


Elmira Prenatal/Early Infancy Project Higher-Risk Families

Home visiting program by registered nurses for at-risk mothers, prenatal through first two years of child's life. Randomly selected participants were compared with a control group.

≈20% total annual rate of return (inflation-adjusted)

Elmira Prenatal/Early Infancy Project High-Risk Families



Source: David Olds, et al.



Lessons Learned from Research

- Focus on at-risk population
- Invest in quality
- Start early
- Empower parents
- Bring to scale



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MELF Overview

- Partnership of foundation, corporate and civic leaders
- Limited lifespan: 2005 – 2011
- Mission: Recommend cost-effective school readiness strategies
- Key activities:
 - Quality Rating System: Parent Aware
 - Scholarship-Parent Mentor Pilot



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Parent Aware

- Goals
 - Support parents with information about quality of ECE programs
 - Promote program quality improvement through market forces and technical assistance
- Voluntary 4-star scale rating system
- Includes centers, family child care, Head Start and school-based pre-k



Market-based approach to ECE

- Demand-side
 - Empower parents with tools: parent mentors and scholarships
- Supply-side
 - Providers compete for scholarship families
 - Must achieve 3-star Parent Aware rating

The Saint Paul

Early Childhood Scholarship Program

Helping Families Get High-Quality Child
Care and Early Education

How enrolling 3-year-old children in Saint Paul's program and
North East neighborhood

Tam si no you lib si khaw rau cov rauyau rauj khaw rauyau 3 ayaw rau rauj ha an
St. Paul si khaw rauj rauyau rauj North East cov rauj rauj juab!

Herinda waw la qonjau khaw 3 rauj juab rauj rauyau rauyau rauj North
East an Saint Paul!

¡Ahora registrando a los niños de 3 años de edad de los vecindarios de Saint Paul,
Frogston y North East!





Scholarship Program Provides:

Families with a 3-year-old:

- Parent mentoring to age 5 or kindergarten entry
- Scholarship to attend a high quality ECE program

Families with a 0-1 year old:

- Parent mentoring to age 5 or kindergarten entry
- Scholarship at age 3



Scholarship Program Eligibility

Residence: Live in Frogtown or North End St. Paul

Income: Below 185% of poverty

Child Age: Either age 3 or age 0-1 on September 1st of current school year

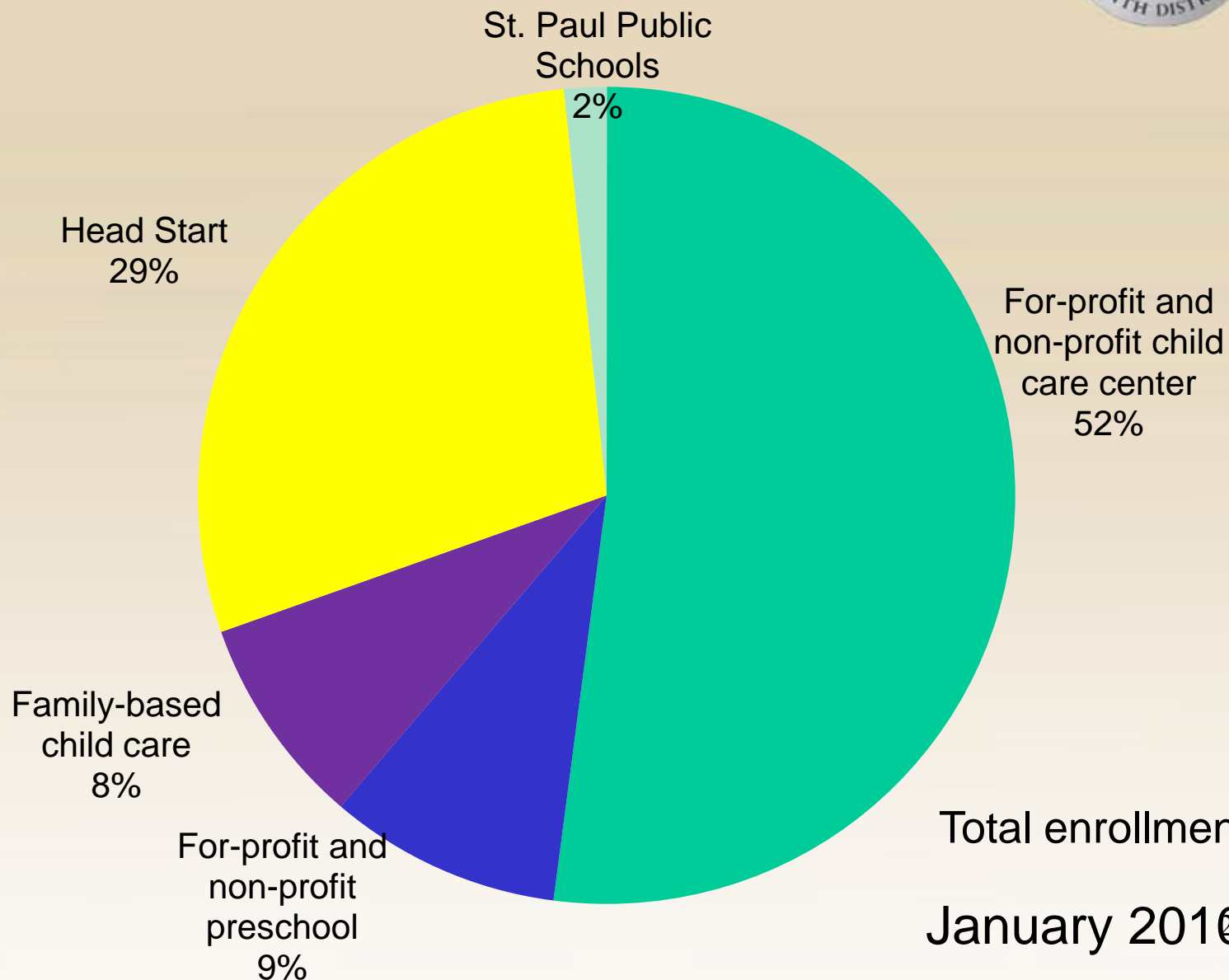


Parent Mentoring

- Assess child's health needs
- Help parents choose quality child care
- Keep families connected to scholarship program



Children Enrolled in a Variety of Programs

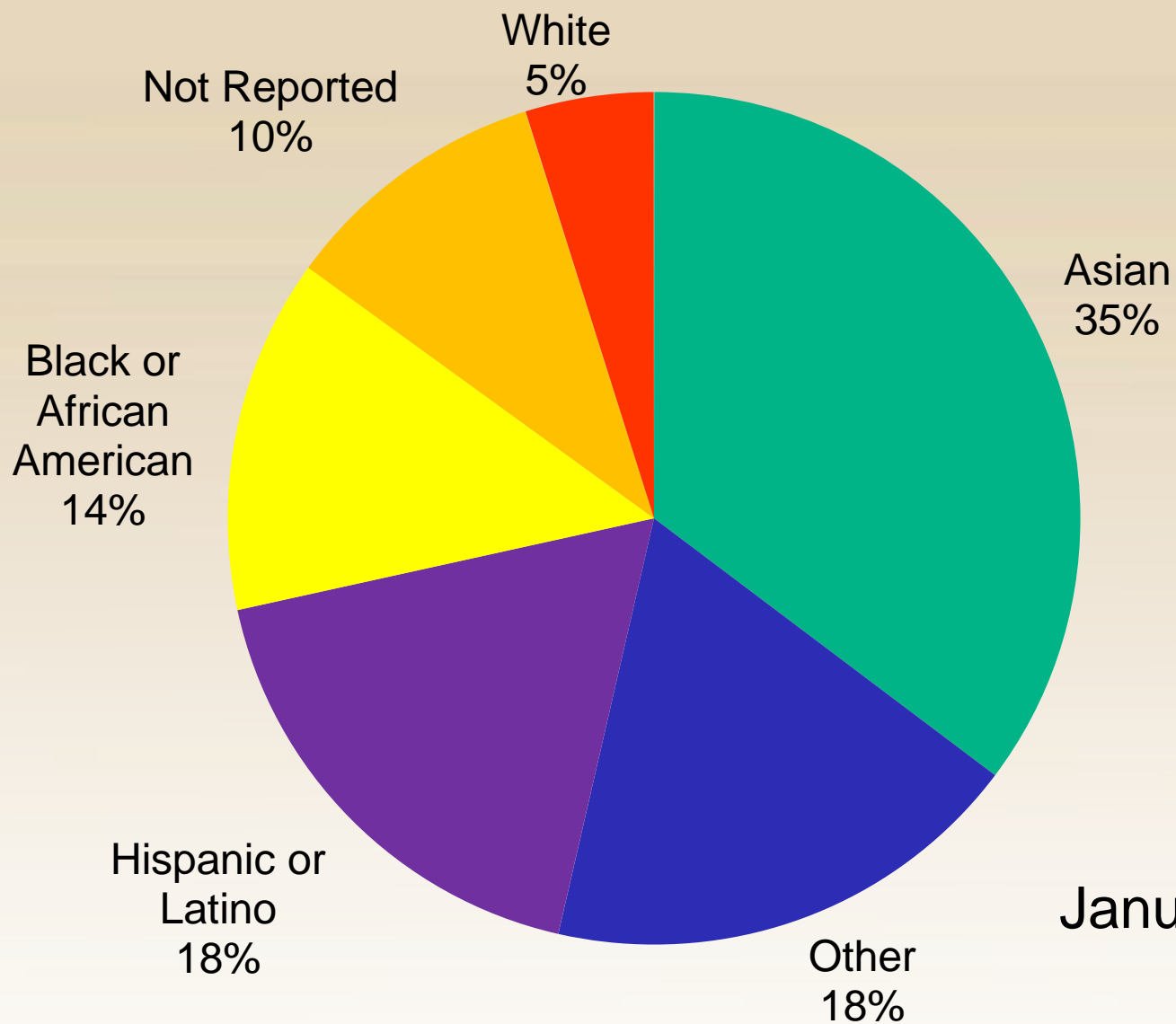


Total enrollment: 240

January 2010



Ethnicity



January 2009



MELF Scholarship Evaluation Findings

Based on interviews by SRI

- Increased awareness of high-quality ECE programs
- High satisfaction with implementation
- Challenges:
 - Transportation
 - Recruitment: Person-to-person works best



Scholarship parent responses

- Enthusiastic about the program
- Program considered user friendly
- Participation provided school and work opportunities
- Strong positive opinions about parent mentors



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Next Steps

- Other scholarship-based programs underway:
Sioux Falls and Denver
- Interest in scholarship model from other communities:
Detroit and Virginia
- Federal level: Early Childhood Challenge Grants



minneapolisfed.org