
	DHS Early Head Start Program Policy		
ERSEA 1			
SUBJECT	Determining Community Strengths & Needs		
REFERENCE	Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment, and Attendance		
EFFECTIVE	2/1/2025		
Policy Council Approval: 1/24/17	Policy Council Revision: 1/28/25	Governing Body Approval: 2/20/17	Governing Body Revision: pending
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Policy:

The Head Start Program, which includes both the Early Head Start (EHS) and Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership (EHS-CCP) programs, will perform a comprehensive Community Assessment once over the five-year grant period with annual updates as necessary. Results from the Community Assessment will be used to ensure community strengths, needs, and resources are identified and adequately integrated. Results from the Community Assessment and updates will be analyzed, as required by Head Start Performance Standards.

Results from the Community Assessment will be used annually to reassess long and short-range objectives; program option and services provided; center locations; and criteria that assign priority to children and families.

The Community Assessment will include information related to:

- Number of children experiencing homelessness and foster care
- Availability of publicly funded full day pre-kindergarten
- Availability of early childhood programs in the community
- Availability of state and other publicly funded preschool
- Demographic data on Head Start eligible children and families
- Children with disabilities, including types of disabilities services
- Education, health, nutrition, and social service needs of Head Start eligible children and their families including prevalent social or economic factors, challenges, and barriers to program participation such as transportation needs
- Typical work, school, and training schedules of parents with eligible children
- Child development, childcare centers, family childcare programs, publicly funded state and local preschools and approximate number of eligible children served and their ages
- Communication methods and modalities available that best engage with prospective and enrolled families
- Community resources; to include gaps and strengths in areas such as transportation, culturally appropriate and responsive supports, housing, food and employment assistance.

If resources are determined to be inadequate to meet the needs of the entire service area, the EHS program will request permission from the Federal Regional Office to revise the

recruitment area to select the areas that have the greatest need for EHS program services, as determined by the Community Assessment.

Community Assessments and all updates will be approved by the Head Start Policy Council and Governing Body Advisory Committee which holds responsibility of programmatic oversight as it reports to the City Council (Governing Body).

Performance Standard:

1302.11