

Recruitment Assignments – Community Engagement

Policy

CFR 1302.13 – “In order to reach those most in need of Head Start services, each Head Start grantee and delegate agency must develop and implement a recruitment process that is designed to actively inform all families with Head Start eligible children within the recruitment area of the availability of services and encourage them to apply for admission to the program.

A program must include specific efforts to actively locate and recruit children with disabilities and other vulnerable children, including homeless children and children in foster care.”

Procedure

Recruiting for the Head Start/EHS program may include canvassing the local community, use of news releases and advertising, and use of family referral and referrals from other public and private agencies.

In addition, the Head Start program has developed a "Recruitment Assignment" document to guide community recruitment efforts of program staff. It is every staff's responsibility to support the recruitment process to assure 100% enrollment at all times. Additionally, all program staffs are responsible for recruiting for the ENTIRE agency.

The "Recruitment Assignments" document has been developed with input from Content Area Coordinating Unit (CACU), Area staff, and data resultant of the Community Assessment, with the intention of strategically targeting recruitment opportunities.

The "Recruitment Assignments" document is organized to identify specific health and social service community agencies located in the recruitment area. Each agency is listed by name, address, and telephone number. Each Head Start site located near each agency is noted, and identified as a "nearby Head Start site."

The document was developed to encourage creativity as related to recruitment expanding far beyond the delivery of Recruitment Flyers on random days and at random times. The document also targets specific populations for potential participation in the program.

Two (2) examples follow:

- 1) The agency is a Public Library. Most Public Libraries have an identified "Story Hour" that attracts Head Start age eligible children. Program staff collaborates with the Library Staff to determine when "Story Hour" is held, and obtain permission to recruit at that time,

Neighborhood House Association

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and/or having a Head Start Interest List available for parents to complete, and staff follow up contacting parents with application appointments.

- 2) The agency is a Community Health Center. We know that many of our currently-enrolled families utilize the services of this agency. Therefore, we know it is an excellent site to secure potential applicants. Program staff collaborates with agency staff and determine if there is a particular day and/or time that many families of potential applicants have appointments. If so, staff can make arrangement to be on-site during the identified day and time, and conduct recruitment activities. Staff could also leave a Head Start Interest List at the agency check-in desk, and return on identified days of the week to retrieve the Interest List.

In both examples, this streamlined and targeted strategy reduces confusion and eliminates duplication, such as repeatedly dropping off Recruitment Flyers at the same location. Additionally, this strategy encourages strong community engagement and enhances relationships between community agencies and Head Start staff.

The "Recruitment Assignments" is a living document, and is updated as new information is received, such as closure of an agency or a new agency being identified within the recruitment area.