

EARLY HEAD START TIP SHEET

No. 12

In what ways does the Administration on Children, Youth, and Families (ACYF) support Early Head Start-Child Care partnerships?

Response:

A joint letter sent to Head Start grantees and State and Tribal Child Care Administrators from the Head Start and Child Care Bureaus encourages communities to explore and initiate collaboration and partnership efforts with the intention of expanding high quality, comprehensive, full-day and full-year services for low-income children and families. The letter also states that ACF further encourages Head Start and Early Head Start to contract with community based child care centers or networks of family child care providers to serve Head Start eligible children (see attached letter). A second letter was sent urging key state leaders to ensure that resources go as far as possible to increase access to services, enhance program quality and expand opportunities for infants and toddlers (letter accessible via www.quilt.org federal information Child Care and Head Start Bureaus Announce New Federal information: *Funding for Programs for Young Children and Encourage Collaboration*).

The Head Start Bureau includes language in EHS Program Funding Announcements that supports and encourages programs to provide appropriate EHS experiences in community-based settings such as family or center-based child care. EHS applicants are asked to describe the community-wide results or benefits to be gained from collaborative partnerships, how they will provide high quality infant and toddler child care for children of parents who are working or in training, and how their community partnerships will be managed and coordinated.

The Head Start and Child Care Bureaus support the development of local partnerships through a training and technical assistance project, Quality in Linking Together, QUILT (referenced in resource list). QUILT is co-funded by the Bureaus to foster and support early education partnerships. The Bureaus also work together to provide partnership leadership seminars.

Considerations:

- What does the program's community assessment say about the availability or the need of EHS/CC partnerships? How do the partners use the community assessment when developing partnerships?
- How are eligible families included in the development and on-going support of partnerships?

- What training and technical assistance has the program received regarding partnerships? How is the program accessing and implementing QUILT resources?
- What systems does the program have in place to assure sound methods for allocating, accounting, and reporting on how braided funds are used to support program services?
- What systems does the program have to manage and coordinate the programs and services within the community partnerships? How do the partners ensure effective on-going communication?
- What steps have the partners taken in developing a formal partnership agreement?
- How are the members of the early education partnership included in program governance? Is community child care represented on the Policy Council and the governing board?
- How are the partners involved in the grantee's annual self-assessment process and the development of continuous improvement plans? How are the partners involved in the development and follow-up of action plans pertaining to the partnership?
- How does the program assess and ensure that partner's programs and services meet the Performance Standards?
- What systems are in place to ensure that family service staff works with partners' staff to establish holistic, integrated approach to serving families? How are partners involved in the development of family partnership plans?
- How do the partners involve parents in prevention and early intervention activities? How are the families who are served by partners linked with health and mental health care services?
- How do the partners track provision of all child health and developmental services? How do the partners individualize child development and health services to children in partners' programs?
- How does the child care partner(s) access the benefit of EHS resources and experience in such areas as enhancing the quality of staffing, providing comprehensive program services or that are consistent with Head Start Program Performance Standards?

Performance Standards, Title 45, Code of Federal Regulations:

- 1304.40(b)(1) Grantee and delegate agencies must work collaboratively with all participating parents to identify and continually access, either directly or through referrals, services and resources that are responsive to each family's interests and goals

- 1304.41(a)(1) Grantee and delegate agencies must take an active role in community planning to encourage strong communication, cooperation, and the sharing of information among agencies and their community partners an to improve the delivery of services to children and families in accordance with the agency’s confidentiality policies. Documentation must be maintained to reflect the level of effort undertaken to establish community partnerships.
- 1304.41(a)(2)(viii) Grantee and delegate agencies must take affirmative steps to establish ongoing collaborative relationships with community organizations to promote the access of children and families to community services that are responsive to their needs, and to ensure that Early Head Start programs respond to community needs, including providers of child care services.

Resources:

Information Memorandum: Budgeting for Partnerships between Child Care and Head Start. Log No. [ACYF-IM-HS-01-13](#), issuance date 11/16/01

Information Memorandum: Improving Head Start Collaboration with Programs funded through the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG). Log No. [ACYF-IM-HS-99-10](#), issuance date 6/29/99

Policy Interpretation Question: The length of CCDF eligibility for children in collaboratively-funded slots. Log No. [ACYF-PIQ-CC-99-02](#), issuance date 02/08/99

[Head Start Bulletin: Head Start-Child Care Partnerships.](#) Edition # 62, June/July 1997

(March 2002) *Strategies for Building Early Head Start-Child Care Partnerships.* Partnerships for Quality: Improving Infant-Toddler Child Care for Low-Income Families prepared for the Child Care Bureau by Zero To Three and Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. www.mathematica-mpr.com

Grantee Responsibility for Ensuring the Quality of Head Start Services in Community Partnerships memo. 1/00, attached.

QUILT: Quality in Linking Together. www.quilt.org or 1-877-867-8458

(April 2001) *Child Care and Head Start Bureaus Announce New Federal information: Funding for Programs for Young Children and Encourage Collaboration.* Accessible via www.quilt.com under federal information.

Ensuring Quality Services in Full-day/Full-year Early Education Partnerships: A PRISM Reviewer’s Guide. (11/01) Attached resource from QUILT.

NACCRRA: National Association for Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. www.NACCRRA.org NACCRA'S mission is to provide vision, leadership, and support to community child care resource and referral and to promote national policies and partnerships committed to the development and learning of all children.

NCCIC: National Child Care Information Center. www.nccic.org or 1 (800) 616-2242

Paulsell, Diane, Kisher, Ellen (Feb/March 2002) [Quality Care for Low-Income Infants and Toddlers: A Study of Community Strategies](#). ZERO TO THREE Vol. 22 No 4: Washington DC.

05/03

The Tip Sheet is not a regulatory document. Its intent is to provide a basis for dialogue, clarification, and problem solving among the Head Start Bureau, Regional Offices, T & TA consultants, and grantees

Grantee Responsibility for Ensuring the Quality
of Head Start Services in Community Partnerships

A review of a Head Start Program must include an evaluation of the quality of all Head Start community based services and partnerships. All of the Performance Standards must be

addressed, and reviewers must look at the quality of the overall Head Start experience that Head Start children and families are receiving.

For example: As a reviewer, during a program review you learn through a parent focus group that several mothers must go to work as a result of a state welfare reform mandate. The mothers tell you that they need guidance about where in the community to go for education and employment services. In addition, they say that they need help in connecting with the local employment agency, and that the Head Start program has not helped them in this area. This is confirmed when you interview staff and when you discuss family partnership agreements that are not meeting or addressing individual family needs. In this case, the grantee may not be meeting the Performance Standards in the area of family and community partnerships.

Similarly, if a child is in a community family child care or center-based child care setting as part of a family's Head Start services package, reviewers need to assess the quality of care being provided by evaluating the grantee in the following ways:

- 1) Is the grantee **taking ownership and being accountable for the quality** of the Head Start services that are being provided to Head Start families through community child care partnerships?
- 2) Are they demonstrating that in order to meet the Performance Standards they must **take responsibility for the quality of Head Start services wherever they are being provided?**
- 3) **How are they going about taking responsibility?** What processes, procedures, and systems are in place at the grantee level that allow the grantee to assess quality before entering into partnerships; provide training and technical assistance to partners; and evaluate the quality of the partners' services? For example: Do they have a system for assessing the homes and centers before placing children there? Do they have a system for working with parents to help them make informed choices about child care? Do written agreements say that the community providers will meet the performance standards? Does the grantee have staffing patterns that include regular contact with training and technical assistance to the partners? What system is in place to address situations when child care or other community services are not meeting the standards?

The monitoring approach needs to focus on the grantee's responsibility for implementing the Head Start Standards and other regulations.

- What is the grantee saying about what they are trying to accomplish in child care partnerships and how they plan to go about it?
- Are they moving toward their goals?
- Is progress being made?

The program review must focus on the grantee's approach, the systems that are in place to ensure quality, and how they are implementing the systems; including ongoing monitoring and self-assessment.

This Guide is intended to be used by PRISM Reviewers as they review Head Start Programs which are engaged in partnering with other early education providers to provide quality, full-day, full-year services for low-income working families or families receiving TANF services.

Core Area	Question
1. Program Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How are members of the early education partnership included in program governance? • Does the Policy Council review/approve and disapprove collaborative agreements with child care partners? • Is community child care represented on the Policy Council and/or the governing board?
2. Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How have the grantee and its partners used the community assessment and other information to develop the partnership and to address continuity of care, duplication of services, transitions and program operations/systems? • To address continuity of care and duplication of services, has a thorough assessment been completed regarding existing facilities or space where children are currently receiving services?
3. Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What systems have the grantee and its partners developed to ensure effective ongoing communications? What written communication protocols have the partners developed? • How do the communication systems address issues such as development/revision of partnership agreements, meetings among partners, professional development of staff, conflict resolution, program evaluation, services to be delivered by each partner, transitions, sharing of records, and the meeting of Performance Standards? • What system is in place for sharing necessary and appropriate information about children and families served by Head Start in community partnership settings?
4. Record Keeping and Reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What systems have the early education partners established to ensure compliance with Head Start regulations regarding record keeping and reporting? • What procedures has the grantee implemented to ensure that its partners' records on Head Start children are complete, accurate, and up-to-date?

5. Ongoing Monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does the written partnership agreement address ongoing monitoring of the partnership's services? • How does the grantee address partners' compliance or non-compliance with Head Start Program Performance Standards? What procedures are in place to develop and implement partnership improvement plans?
6. Self-assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How are the early education partners involved in the grantee's annual self-assessment process? • How are partners involved in the development and follow-up of action plans pertaining to the partnership?
7. Human Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does the partnership structure address staff development, supervision and oversight, and standards of conduct? • How does the grantee ensure all partnership staff included in the partnership are qualified according to Head Start requirements? • In what ways does the grantee support training for child care partners?
8. Fiscal Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are financial resources flowing from Head Start to the child care partner? How much and what are the procedures? • How have partners determined the equitable disbursement of financial and other resources to support the partnership? • What grantee systems monitor income and expenditures associated with the early education partnership? • If a cost allocation plan is appropriate, has one been developed and consistently implemented?
9. Prevention and Early Intervention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do the grantee and its partners involve parents in prevention and early intervention activities? • How are families who are served by partners linked with health and mental health care services?
10. Health Care Tracking and Follow-up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does the grantee track the provision of all child health and developmental services to children served by partners? • How do families who are served by partners receive health and developmental services and follow-up?

11. Individualization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do partners individualize child development and health services to children in partners' programs? • What systems are in place to ensure that partners are setting and measuring child outcomes?
12. Disabilities Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does the grantee ensure that children with disabilities and their families, served by partners, receive a full array of disabilities services? • Does the grantee have a system or plan to link its partners with community resources serving children with disabilities and their families?
13. Curriculum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How are the early education partners and the parents engaged in the process of curriculum selection, development, implementation, outcomes and evaluation? • What activities (training, staff development, etc.) does the grantee provide to partners to advance curriculum practices?
14. Family Partnership Building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What systems have partners developed to ensure that family service staff work with partners' staff to establish a holistic, integrated approach to serving families? • How are partners involved in the development of family partnership plans? • How does the grantee ensure home visits and parent-teacher conferences are implemented? • How do the grantee, community partner and family work together on child transition planning?
15. Parent Involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What opportunities (e.g., meetings, parent education and advocacy, communication, volunteer opportunities in and out of the classroom) do partners provide for meaningful parent involvement? • How do partners solicit and respond to parents' interests and needs?
16. Community Partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How are early education partners involved in community planning and advocacy to improve the delivery of services to children and families? • How do partners maximize their linkages with community agencies and resources and involve other community programs in advancing the partnership? • How do partners link with Local Education Agencies (LEAs) to ensure a smooth transition to public school for children and their families?

17. Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment, and Attendance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How has the partnership resolved differences in eligibility requirements between state early education programs and Head Start? • How are the grantee and its partners working together to address enrollment and attendance; maintenance of and follow-up on average daily attendance; and other issues regarding eligibility, recruitment, selection, enrollment, and attendance?
18. Facilities, Materials, and Equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do the partners' facilities meet relevant state and federal health and safety standards? • If new or expanded facilities are needed, have the partners joined forces to address this need?

11/01

A resource from the Quilt Project