

EARLY HEAD START TIP SHEET

No. 2

Why do both staff members in an Early Head Start classroom with eight children need to be teacher qualified?

Response:

In every Early Head Start classroom, the maximum group size is eight children. To meet the 4:1 child to teacher ratio, the classroom is considered two clusters of four children. Since each teacher is responsible for the direct care and well being of the children, both staff members need to be teacher qualified.

Considerations:

- With the reauthorization of Head Start, Congress is requiring 50% of teachers nationwide to have at least an associate degree by 2003. This has tremendous implications for Early Head Start since the classes are manned by teachers versus assistants or aides.
- Currently teacher qualifications include CDA, AA, BA, or an equivalent degree. The Performance Standards mandate that Infant/Toddler teachers are given a year, from the date of hire, to receive the minimum of an Infant/Toddler CDA.
- Some programs have worked with community colleges in creating local CDA programs and/or Early Childhood Education programs.

Performance Standards, Title 45, Code of Federal Regulations:

- **1304.52(f)** Early Head Start and Head Start staff working with infants and toddlers must obtain a Child Development Associate (CDA) credential for Infant and Toddler Caregivers or an equivalent credential within one year of hire as a teacher of infants and toddlers.
- **1304.52(g)(4)** Grantee and delegate agencies must ensure that each teacher working exclusively with infants and toddlers has responsibility for no more than four infants and toddlers and that no more than eight infants and toddlers are placed in any one group.

Resources:

Head Start Act as amended October 27, 1998

- **Sec. 648A (a) Classroom Teachers (2) Degree Requirements.** No later than September 30, 2003, at least 50 percent of all Head Start teachers nationwide in center-based programs have an associate, baccalaureate or advanced degree in early childhood education; or in a related field to early childhood education, with experience in teaching preschool children.

Teacher Quality Funds: Program Instruction [Log No. ACYF-PI-HS-99-03] on “Quality Improvement Funds to Increase the Number of Teacher with College Degrees” issued 3/24/99.

http://www.headstartinfo.org/publications/im99/pi99_03.htm

HeadsUp Reading: National Head Start Association provides a credit-bearing course via the HeadsUp Network.

(1999) **Early Head Start Program Strategies-Staff Development** Early Head Start National Resource Center @ ZERO TO THREE: Washington DC.

<http://www.ehsnrc.org/pdffiles/staffdev.pdf>

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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.