

Early Head Start Program Strategies

Staff Development

Early Head Start Program Strategies: Staff Development

Early Head Start National Resource Center @

ZERO TO THREE

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Cover photo credits: Community Action Inc., of Hays, Caldwell, & Blanco Counties, San Marcos, TX; Community Action of Belknap-Merrimack Counties, Laconia EHS, Laconia, NH; Civic Senior Citizens Inc., Early Head Start of Beaver County, New Brighton, PA; Southern Oregon Child and Family Council, Central Point, OR; Upper Des Moines Opportunity Early Head Start, Graettinger, IA.



The EHS NRC is funded by contract #105-98-2055

U. S. Department of Health and Human Services

Administration for Children and Families

Administration on Children, Youth and Families

Head Start Bureau

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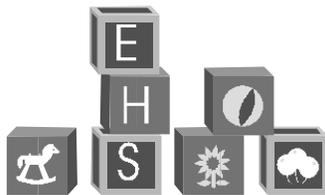
ISBN #0-943657-45-8

Printed in the United States of America

First Printing, December 1999

EARLY HEAD START PROGRAM STRATEGIES:

Staff Development



PREPARED BY THE EARLY HEAD START NATIONAL RESOURCE CENTER @ ZERO TO THREE

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INTRODUCTION

This publication represents an on-going effort of the Early Head Start National Resource Center (EHS NRC) to collect and disseminate information on issues of critical importance to the Early Head Start (EHS) community. This is the first paper in a series designed to present the experiences of Early Head Start programs in meeting the challenges of planning and implementing high quality services to expectant parents and families with infants and toddlers.

Section One profiles five Early Head Start programs that illustrate the creative and thoughtful ways that EHS programs have demonstrated their commitment to staff development. All EHS programs around the country were invited to participate by completing the detailed questionnaire found in Appendix A. The programs profiled in this document were selected based on the depth and breadth of their response.

Each program profile in this document consists of:

- a general description of the program;
- the program's approach to professional development;
- the process for developing a training plan;
- the process for reflective or supportive supervision;

- opportunities for career advancement;
- resources used for professional development;
- strategies for meeting the challenges unique to each program; and
- the perspective of staff members who are actively participating in the program's staff development activities.

The commitment to support staff so that they can provide the highest quality services to infants, toddlers and families was evident across the responses we received. Many programs had interesting and valuable information to share, and three additional programs are included in **Section Two** of this publication for aspects of their approach to staff development that were particularly noteworthy.

Each year the EHS NRC will be providing this unique opportunity for EHS programs to learn from each other. Each publication in this series will focus on a different aspect of high quality programming for expectant parents and families with infants and toddlers. For more information, please visit the EHS NRC Web site at www.ehsnrc.org.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The EHS NRC would like to thank the following Infant/Toddler Specialists from the Head Start Quality Improvement Centersⁱ who participated in the Work Group to develop the questionnaire, participate in the review process, and select the final programs:

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ⁱ A regionally based system consisting of seventeen (16) *Head Start Quality Improvement Centers* (HSQICS) and twelve (12) *Disabilities Services Quality Improvement Centers* (DSQICS) provides T/TA to meet the needs of all Head Start grantees and delegate agencies. These centers are staffed with specialists in early childhood education and development, health, family and community development, program design and management, transportation and facilities. The Infant/Toddler Specialists serve as professional resources to Early Head Start programs beginning with initial funding through an on-going delivery of services designed to enhance quality programming for pregnant women, infants, toddlers and their families. These services are specifically targeted to meet the individual needs of each Early Head Start program. Contact information for the HSQICs and DSQICs is available on the Web site of the Head Start Bureau at www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/hsb.

SECTION ONE

Program Profiles

Civic Senior Citizens, Inc., Early Head Start of Beaver County

New Brighton, PA

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Program Description

Beaver County Early Head Start (EHS) was originally funded as a home-based program to serve 75 pregnant women, infants, and toddlers. Eight Early Head Start home visitors provide intensive weekly contact through a mixture of home visits and small group socialization opportunities. The case load for each home visitor varies from 8 to 10 individuals.

An expansion grant funded a center-based child care program located in a local high school to serve the infants and toddlers of its students. Two EHS Child Development Specialists provide parent support and child development programming for teen parents of 12 enrolled infants and toddlers.

A third element of this program design is a therapeutic nursery for eight infants and toddlers born to parents with

a psychiatric disorder or who have been prenatally exposed to drugs or alcohol. This work is done in collaboration with the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center (UPMC). The EHS home visitor in this program has intensive home visiting responsibilities with the parents of enrolled children following the model of the existing home visiting component. Families in the therapeutic nursery program participate in the same group socialization experiences as the broader home visiting component.

In another program service delivery option, EHS is recruiting and training prospective family child care providers interested in becoming collaborative partners. Twelve infants and toddlers will participate in this aspect of the program. The EHS home visitor will visit EHS enrolled children in their family child care home three times a month, and in their family home once a month.

Approach to Professional Development

The most important components of professional development are the assessment of skills, staff self-evaluation, training outcomes, and the application of new knowledge. The primary purpose of staff training is to improve the quality of services to children and families. A secondary purpose is the personal development of the staff members. Well-trained, informed, and confident staff are a priority in a high quality program. This philosophy or approach to staff development is a “given” and is



EHS of Beaver County; New Brighton, PA

addressed in all professional development exchanges between program administration and staff.

It is important for the immediate supervisor to be familiar with each staff person's work - both the quality of the work and the staff person's self-assessment of their skills. Moreover, it is important that many opportunities, both formal and informal, exist for the supervisor and the staff person to share this information in a collaborative manner. As a program administrator, I am constantly evaluating whether the quality of staff performance and the staff members' sense of professional competence is improving as staff development opportunities are provided. In addition, there is mutual understanding that staff members who are involved in individual training opportunities are expected to return to their colleagues and share their information, ideas, and materials. This broadens the audience receiving the benefit of training opportunities as well as providing the presenting staff member with another professional growth opportunity.

The staff of this EHS program have been actively involved in the planning and implementation of the program and are very much aware of how staff development fits into the program goals. There is an ongoing and open dialogue between program administration and staff regarding both program and staff development.

Developing a Training Plan

There is a written staff development plan for each program year. The Project Coordinator has the primary responsibility for the planning and implementation of staff development activities. Individual staff members are encouraged to identify training needs and professional development interests and to share this with the Project Coordinator. The Executive Director has final approval of all staff development plans.

Approach to Reflective Supervision

Reflective supervision is the operating principal for supervision of EHS staff for many reasons including the bearing that such supervision has upon sound staff development. It is necessary for the supervisor to understand the staff members work and for the staff members to recognize their own strengths and weaknesses. Reflective supervision helps this to happen. In this program reflective supervision occurs in several ways: during monthly individual meetings, during weekly group staff meetings, and through the "open door" policy which ensures that staff have the opportunity to share what they need to when they need to.

Opportunities for Career Advancement

To date, career moves in our program have been lateral ones. Professional accomplishments are recognized both formally, at the time of yearly performance evaluations, and informally on an ongoing basis in verbal or written form between the Project Coordinator and staff person. Another way that we recognize the professional accomplishments of staff is by asking them to give presentations in their area of expertise to their peers, to other agencies, or at conferences.

Resources for Professional Development

Twenty-five percent of our operating budget is allocated for professional development opportunities. The EHS program will pay for each staff member to take one college level course and participate in NCAST (Nursing Child Assessment Satellite Training).ⁱⁱ

ⁱⁱ The Nursing Child Assessment Satellite Training (NCAST) has a variety of programs for training staff who work with families with infants and toddlers. This research-based training is based on the work of Kathryn Barnard, R.N., Ph.D at the University of Washington. One of the programs in this series, *Keys to Caregiving*, is a video training that can be used pre- and postnatally. Topics include understanding infant cues, behaviors, and states of arousal, feeding issues, and communicating with parents. For more information: phone 206-543-8528, email ncast@u.washington.edu, or visit their Web site at www.son.washington.edu.

We believe in the importance of community collaboration for staff development purposes. As a result of Special Quest,ⁱⁱⁱ EHS has collaborated with the local early intervention provider in this county on several joint training activities. In addition, we have shared information about potential training resources thus making available many more professional development opportunities to the staff members of our respective agencies. Members of the EHS staff have also provided training opportunities to other agencies and groups in Beaver County. These training presentations have primarily involved parent education and child development topics. In addition, EHS staff members who have indicated an interest in particular community agencies now serve as EHS representatives on a variety of community agency committees and boards.

The Infant/Toddler Specialist from the Disabilities Services Head Start Quality Improvement Center (DSQIC) has been most helpful in supporting our efforts to strengthen the relationship between EHS, our early intervention partner, and the Base Service Unit in this county. She has been involved with our planning of joint training opportunities and has given us much support and helpful information as we created a tri-party Memorandum of Understanding.



EHS of Beaver County; New Brighton, PA



EHS of Beaver County; New Brighton, PA

Meeting the Challenges

The two biggest challenges are the availability of funds and releasing staff from their job responsibilities to take the time for staff development opportunities. However, we have devoted the financial resources and made time available for staff development purposes because we believe it is crucial to the success of our Early Head Start program.

A collaboration with Carlow College has also been a great benefit. The Chair of the Early Childhood Department has been involved in our program planning and implementation since the earliest stages of the EHS program design. This individual has provided not only a pool of resources but also helped build mechanisms into the program by which staff development opportunities may be identified and provided.

Voices from the Staff

All of my staff development experiences continue to help me grow professionally. There are two, however, that help me the most. The first is the individual monthly meetings with my supervisor. They help me to stay grounded and focus on the goals of the EHS program and each family. They help me to stay mentally organized. The second is the opportunities I have been given to present at conferences. They are

ⁱⁱⁱ SpecialQuest is a component of the Hilton/Early Head Start Training Program, a public-private partnership between the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation and the Head Start Bureau, U. S. Department of Health and Human Services. The purpose of the program is to provide training opportunities for Early Head Start/Migrant Head Start staff and parents to more effectively meet the needs of infants and toddlers with disabilities. The program is administered by the California Institute on Human Services at Sonoma State University. For more information: phone 707-664-2707, email hilton.ehs@sonoma.edu, or visit their Web site at www.sonoma.edu/cihs.

challenging and force me to grow. My staff development needs are met on an on-going basis by the consistency in which support, guidance, and encouragement are offered. I have a constant source of opportunities for growth. Staff development is one of EHS's greatest strengths. If I had to identify a challenge, it would be only that there aren't enough hours in the day to do everything that I would like to do.

EHS Home Visitor

The combination of staff development experiences that I have been offered as part of the EHS program is the strength of the program. Because of the diversity of experiences offered, I am able to gain valuable information from each of them. Each home visitor having a unique background and strengths also contributes to the development of the whole staff.

EHS Home Visitor

Community Action Program of Belknap-Merrimack Counties, Laconia Early Head Start

Concord, NH

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Program Description

Laconia Early Head Start (EHS) is a part of the Belknap-Merrimack Head Start Program under the umbrella of the Belknap-Merrimack Community Action Program. Laconia EHS is located in the small city of Laconia in the beautiful Lakes Region of New Hampshire.

Laconia EHS provides services to forty-five prenatal women, infants and toddlers and contracts services from the Strafford County Head Start Program to provide EHS

services to an additional thirty-five prenatal women and children. Together both programs have a partnership with the University of New Hampshire (UNH) to provide professional development activities. A Training and Technical Assistance Coordinator acts as a liaison between UNH and the two EHS programs.

Laconia Early Head Start began as a traditional home-based program with weekly home visits of an hour and a half and an enhanced socialization component referred to as "center days." Center days consist of breakfast, parent and child activities, an adult group time and lunch. Transportation is provided. Late afternoon and evening socializations are also offered for parents who are in school, training or working. In response to changing family needs a combination option was added. This option includes biweekly home visits for children attending the center two or more days a week. A center-based option is currently offered as well as full day, year round child care. The number of families requesting each option is evaluated on a yearly basis. The ability to be flexible by offering a variety of services and options to parents is critical in enabling us to meet the differing needs of families.

Staff at the Laconia EHS program include the EHS Manager, five Home Visitors, a Head Teacher, Assistant Teacher, three Classroom aides, a Nurse, a Bus Driver, and a Management Information Systems/Adult Development Coordinator.

Approach to Professional Development

Since individuals learn and develop in different ways, a variety of professional development experiences are necessary. Laconia Early Head Start's philosophy maintains that it is important to provide a variety of opportunities for people to learn, grow, and develop. Staff members are in different stages of their professional development and some approaches are more meaningful to them depending on their current stage.

Laconia Early Head Start has a collaborative partnership with the early childhood education department of the

University of New Hampshire. Three key faculty members have provided on-going training and technical assistance to both the Laconia Early Head Start and Strafford County Early Head Start programs. Other professors from UNH have also provided group trainings both on site and at the Child Development Center at the University. The Early Head Start Technical and Training Assistance Coordinator acts as a liaison between the University and the two EHS programs.

On site technical assistance visits from UNH faculty have focused on environment and curriculum within a cultural context. Infant/toddler development, infant mental health and family systems have also been areas of concentration. Learning about other systems of early childhood education such as those found in Reggio Emilia, Italy, have informed our own theory and resulting practice.^{iv} Small group meetings after each technical assistance visit allow for discussion and reflection.

EHS's on-going relationship with UNH allows the program to provide training that has a great deal of continuity, enabling staff to build on previous T/TA experiences. Rather than a series of disjointed trainings on separate topics, staff are able to explore an area of interest through multiple, in-depth experiences. For example, three years of on-going study of the environment through training, technical assistance, visits to other centers, and conferences, culminated in a visit with a faculty member to Italy to visit high quality infant/toddler centers in Milan, Pistoia, and San Miniato. Staff members were committed to personally financing the trip.

Developing a Training Plan

EHS's approach to training values input from all staff. The Professional Development Planning Group (PDPG)^v meets periodically to review input from staff and plan trainings. In addition to the EHS T/TA Coordinator and faculty from UNH, both the Laconia and Strafford County programs are represented by the EHS Manager, EHS Nurse, Adult Development Coordinator, Home Visitor and a Teacher. This enables EHS staff to actively participate in the planning and development of the training process.



Laconia EHS, Laconia NH

Approach to Reflective Supervision

The Laconia EHS program supports the belief that supervision is integral in providing quality services to children and families. EHS staff engage in regular, individual supervision. The Mental Health Specialist is also available on a weekly basis to provide support and consultation as needed. In addition to weekly staff meetings, staff have the opportunity to participate in family staffings with the EHS Manager and Mental Health Specialist where teachers, home visitors, the nurse and adult development coordinator have the opportunity to dialogue about their work with children and families.

EHS staff meet monthly with their supervisor for one-on-one reflective supervision. New staff begin by meeting with their supervisor on a more frequent schedule, in most cases, weekly. This enables the supervisor and supervisee to develop a relationship based on trust, mutual respect, and open communication. Supervision is used to support staff in the following ways:

- Providing an opportunity to reflect on the work done with families;
- Discussing practices that have resulted in both successes and failed or missed opportunities and the feelings associated with each;
- Providing empathy and support to staff dealing with difficult situations;

iv The Reggio Emilia approach to early childhood education refers to the early care and education practices in Reggio Emilia, Italy. Visit the Web site of the ERIC (Educational Resources Information Center) Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education at <http://ericece.org> for a variety of articles, multimedia resources, and reports on the unique aspects of this approach to educating young children. ERIC can also be reached by phone at 1-800-583-4135 or by email at ericece@uiuc.edu.

v The PPDG label was created by this agency and refers only to this specific EHS program.



Laconia EHS, Laconia NH

- Developing goals and discussing ways to accomplish them as well as determining progress;
- Sharing knowledge and information;
- Reiterating and reflecting on program philosophy, values and goals and how it relates to everyday practice;
- Enhancing one's own self understanding and knowledge;
- Providing opportunities for collaborative problem solving; and
- Assisting with issues surrounding personal boundaries.

Opportunities for Career Advancement

When individual staff are first hired their initial salary is determined based on education and experience. Staff participating in further formal education, which results in a Child Development Associate (CDA)^{vi} or college degree, receive additional compensation. Staff have the ability to move up the career ladder as they attain additional education and experience.

The program recognizes the professional accomplishments of staff by providing additional compensation. Individuals are also given recognition by the program director during a specific meeting or training where all Early Head Start and Head Start staff are present.

Early Head Start staff receive Continuing Education Units (CEUs)^{vii} for all training provided by UNH. Staff have the ability to also receive college credit by completing additional assignments. A college course is also being offered focusing on infant/toddler environments in the fall of 1999. The EHS program contributes to the cost of coursework. All classroom staff without previous credentials or degrees are enrolled in an infant/toddler CDA program.

Resources for Professional Development

Seven to ten percent of the budget is allocated for professional development activities. The major resource for our program in terms of planning and implementing our approach to staff development has been our strong partnership with the University of New Hampshire. This has afforded a unique opportunity for staff development. In addition to our various staff development activities with UNH, the EHS program has also utilized professionals from our community to provide training. We have also developed a collaborative training partnership with our local Early Supports and Services program. Staff are invited to attend training done by both programs. In some instances trainings are jointly planned.

All UNH coursework fits into the professional development plan and is specifically tailored to meet the needs of the program. The UNH professors that provide training, technical assistance, and formal coursework are also members of a group focusing on continuous improvement and the Professional Development Planning Group (PDPG). In addition, the CDA Advisor is a member of the PDPG group and attends EHS management team meetings. This system of organization provides continuity within the professional development plan and facilitates communication between all the participants.

Meeting the Challenges

Scheduling regular supervision has always been a challenge. In order for this to be accomplished it must be a highly valued component of staff development. In order to allow for dedicated time, changes have been made in the scheduling of supervision meetings, which are now

vi The Child Development Associate (CDA) is a national credentialing program for early care and education professionals. It is administered by the Council for Early Childhood Professional Recognition. For more information about the CDA, contact the Council at 1800-424-4310.

vii Continuing Education Units (CEUs) are used to document participation in continuing education activities.

done at least a month in advance. Responsibility for the supervision of the classroom assistants and aides has been given to an experienced head teacher, which reduces the number of staff supervised by the program manager to a more manageable number.

Another challenge has been the integration of new staff into a program with very experienced, seasoned staff. A sub-committee of staff members developed an orientation program for new staff, which was reviewed by all EHS staff. This orientation program gives responsibility for training to a wide variety of staff. Mentorship by an experienced staff member and weekly supervision meetings are also a part of the program.

Another challenge early in our program development was the continuity of professional development experiences. Initially, our professional development opportunities were somewhat disjointed. Information on various topics would be presented to larger groups on a monthly basis. We developed the partnership with UNH to provide continuity and more in-depth training. The various components of professional development are now able to support and build upon each other.

The Laconia and Strafford County EHS programs have a continuous improvement group, Continuous Organization Renewal Enterprise (CORE), which is facilitated by UNH faculty. This group consists of various staff members from both programs and helps evaluate the impact of staff development through formal staff interviews. The Professional Development Planning Group (PDPG) also reviews staff evaluations of all trainings that are offered.

Voices from the Staff

My most valuable staff development experience has been the training from UNH that has included extensive work with the principles of the Reggio Emilia model of Early Childhood Education. The theory, readings, slide presentations and workshops over the past three years have influenced my teaching style in a dramatic way...teaching involves building relationships...I have come to look for opportunities to collaborate with parents, home visitors, and community members. I struggle to develop lesson plans that encompass



Laconia EHS, Laconia NH

all the variables that guide our infant toddler curriculum. I focus on relationships and still need to learn how to observe and document the emotions that building relationships create. I reflect on my struggles and reflection leads to a new awareness as to the direction that I shall go.

After three years of study and experimentation with new theories and methods, it was made possible for some EHS staff to travel to Italy with our UNH professor to observe and learn about the work being done in Milan, Pistoia, and San Miniato in regard to early childhood education. This experience to date has been the highlight of my career.

Laconia EHS Head Teacher

Community Action Inc. of Hays, Caldwell & Blanco Counties

San Marcos, TX

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Program Description

Early Head Start provides services to 75 infants, toddlers, and pregnant women in four implementation sites in Hays County, Texas. Based on the Community Assessment, a high priority for our EHS program is to support teen parents through the transition from public school to the community. The most pressing issues are family self-sufficiency and child safety. EHS offers services at two community based centers and two high school campuses which provide services for teen parents. Full day/full year center-based child care is available for approximately 45-50 infants and toddlers of parents who are employed full-time or going to school. Other EHS children and families receive services through home visits and linkages to other community services.

Each EHS family is linked to a Family Advocate. The Family Advocate plays a pivotal role as a “broker” of information for families. Their role varies and may include providing child development information, explaining health care options, transporting to appointments, and supporting job and education opportunities. Each Family Advocate serves 18-20 children.

Approach to Professional Development

The program’s philosophy toward training and staff development acknowledges that there are wide educational and experiential backgrounds represented by Early Head Start staff and training must be multi-leveled. This means that staff are offered a variety of approaches and methods for learning at different levels of complexity and depth. Training must also support an integrated approach to professional development. Our Early Head Start program is committed to comprehensive services for families. Therefore, it is imperative that staff understand the inter-relatedness of their particular area of expertise in relation to the overall Early Head Start vision.

Our EHS program also recognizes the pivotal role that supervision plays in supporting staff to carry out their responsibilities most effectively. The guiding principle in relation to supervision is the formation and preservation



Community Action of Hays, Caldwell, & Blanco counties EHS; San Marcos, TX

of relationships which promote self-sufficiency, not dependence. This approach to relationship-building applies not only to the professional relationships between EHS staff and families, but also to the relationships between co-workers and supervisors. Therefore, our approach to professional development includes scheduling time to create relationships and for self-reflection.

Professional development goals are identified through a process of staff input, staff self-reflection, and management team observations. Through this process, areas for growth and development are selected. This determines the topics and processes for staff development. The management team mutually develops strategies to respond to the needs of staff.

Developing a Training Plan

A written professional development plan is created annually based on responses from a staff survey. The management team plans staff development topics based on concerns identified in the annual survey, and the observations and feedback they receive throughout the program year.

In addition to overseeing the implementation of the overall Early Head Start Program, the Early Head Start Director coordinates with the community college for

availability of child development classes, disseminates information for staff to register for classes, and coordinates with other management team members and center directors to implement staff development opportunities for all staff. The Early Head Start Director is part of a management team that provides vision and leadership for the entire program. Therefore, staff development is seen as central to all programmatic decisions.

Approach to Reflective Supervision

The Family Advocates are involved in twice-monthly reflective supervision sessions with their supervisor to discuss their work. The Mental Health Consultant is also available to each Family Advocate on a monthly basis to further reflect on their work and develop effective strategies to strengthen families. EHS is working toward implementing this process at other levels of the program. All staff need the opportunity to experience support and encouragement from those with whom they work. The EHS Master Teacher has provided reflective supervision with each EHS teacher to reflect on their work and set goals for further growth.

Opportunities for Career Advancement

Our program has a career ladder in place that recognizes education and experience. Staff are recognized through increased compensation and the pay scale is reviewed annually by task force on staff development. This task force is comprised of representatives from every worksite and every job position. They make recommendations impacting staff development issues. These recommendations are taken to the administrator in charge of the budget process. These recommendations are integrated into the requests for Quality Improvement funds.

Our program is working toward having every center NAEYC (National Association for the Education of Young Children) accredited. Each teacher is either working toward a Child Development Associate (CDA) credential or determining the next step for professional growth. The



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agency provided the opportunity for all staff to start the process of working toward an Associate degree in child development. All of those who showed an interest are currently attending classes. The agency supports their commitment through payment of tuition, books, and compensation for their time in class. The completion of classes is linked to higher wages. These individual and organizational accomplishments are also recognized at the annual staff recognition event.

All CDA classes are offered through Austin Community College. Currently, completion of CDA counts as 11 credits toward the Associate degree in child development. Austin Community College works with our program to offer classes in our community so staff do not need to travel long distances to attend classes. In addition to college credit, all pre-service training is linking to CEU's. The CEU's are required for CDA renewals. At this time, the community college system has not articulated the process for CEU's to be converted into college credit.

Resources for Professional Development

Twenty percent of the operating budget is allocated to training and staff development activities. Additional funds are acquired through caregiver scholarships, support from the Head Start Quality Improvement



Community Action of Hays, Caldwell & Blanco counties EHS; San Marcos, TX

Centers, and through community in-kind training. Our program will receive additional funds allocated specifically to staff development for the 1999-2000 program year. These funds will be used for expenses related to the Associate degree program, including tuition and books, release time to attend class, and attendance at the State AEYC conference. For staff that have completed degree work, opportunities are offered to attend national conferences such as NAEYC and ZERO TO THREE.

Specific resources and materials that have been useful include the materials, resources, and conferences provided by the Early Head Start National Resource Center and the ZERO TO THREE organization. Secondly, the WestEd intensive training^{viii} has been a major influence in realizing how to implement our vision for services to infant, toddler, and their families. Our program has also taken advantage of the Parents As Teachers^{ix} program. All of the Family Advocates are certified Parent Educators with the Parents As Teachers program.

From the outset of our program, the Head Start Quality Improvement Center (HSQIC) and Disabilities Services Quality Improvement Center (DSQIC) have been involved. During our planning phase, staff from the QIC's attended numerous planning meetings and focus groups to give input and support to our processes and plans. The QIC support has been a vital and valuable part of our staff development efforts.

Meeting the Challenges

One of the major challenges in staff development is having an impact on the attitudes of staff. One of the resources that has been helpful, *Training Teachers: A Harvest of Theory and Practice*^x describe core dispositions for teachers. These dispositions include, for example, the ability to delight in and be curious about children's development or to expect continuous change and challenge. It is not enough to present a workshop to instill this attitude in staff. Opportunities must exist for application, follow-up, modeling and mentoring.

While staff have expressed enthusiasm for furthering their professional growth, they have also expressed concern about being ready to succeed at the college level. Therefore, we are providing adult education assessments so that staff are aware of their areas to strengthen. For example, a requirement of the Associate degree is a math class. Our program will provide some math tutoring sessions for all interested staff to equip them with the skills necessary for success with their math class. It is anticipated that this investment in human resources will have broad implications for staff as they continue to grow professionally, gain self-confidence, and develop dispositions that value learning and continuous improvement.

The other major challenge is with the practical logistics of having the time to address the staff development needs. Our program constantly balances the needs of families for full-time/full year center-based child care with the need for staff to meet. We continue to search for strategies to more effectively address this challenge.

Continuous improvement efforts will be addressed through monthly meetings with the local evaluator of our EHS program. Our local evaluator will assess EHS staff and parents to monitor satisfaction with the program. She will also attend a sample of home visits, observe at the child care sites, and visit some of the parent involvement activities. She will use videotape of staff in action and samples from staff journals to evaluate the effectiveness of training and staff development efforts.

Voices from the Staff

My college education continues to be an ongoing process in staff development. The more knowledge I gain in early childhood development, the more I realize how much more there is to learn. I frequently find myself sharing with staff new information that I have just learned. As they see me struggle to balance a full time career and six hours each semester at the local university, they are encouraged to pursue more education themselves. It is fantastic to celebrate our educational successes with each other. There is a powerful support system within our agency to strive to achieve your personal and educational goals. A mentor is always available to help you through the tough times and rejoice with you as you face new challenges.

EHS Master Teacher

I have gained amazing insight from my fellow family advocates. We discuss our experiences, our reactions to certain situations, our successes, our failures and our fears. We have become a source of support for each other.

EHS Family Advocate

Southern Oregon Child and Family Council

Central Point, OR

Contact:

Talley Dunn, EHS Program Coordinator
1001 Beall Lane, PO Box 3819
Central Point, OR 97502
541-774-1346

Program Description

Southern Oregon EHS serves low-income families in four neighborhoods within a two-county area at three center sites. Each family participates in a weekly center-based parent/child group and two home visits per month. The parent/child group is 3 1/2 hours and includes parent/child activities, parent education, child development activities



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and a meal. The home visits are 1 1/2 hours duration and consist of parent/child activities, resource referral, peer counseling, health/nutrition follow-up, developmental assessment and goal-setting.

The two counties are a mix of both urban and rural communities. The demographic information reveals high unemployment rates, teenage pregnancy, low education, and medically underserved families. There is also a large number of Hispanic seasonal farmworkers during the peak agricultural season.

Approach to Professional Development

We have found that individualizing training efforts is essential to professional development. Along with this, and of utmost importance is striving to provide each staff member with collaborative supervision. The components inherent in our method of supervision are regularity, collaboration, and reflection. The staff are given initial training in this approach to staff development and we have found that over time, as the supervisory relationship grows and deepens, the staff also grow to understand the meaning of their work in a deeper way.

Staff development begins when preparing to bring new staff on board. At the time of hiring decisions, we look for staff who demonstrate the attributes and commitments



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to our EHS program principals. Once a staff person is hired they complete the *Southern Oregon Early Head Start Staff Training Needs Assessment*. This assessment is helpful in knowing the strengths as well as areas in which staff need additional training.

Developing a Training Plan

A written training plan is developed each program year. Each and every staff person contributes to our overall yearly staff development plan. The staff members prepare input for their evaluation and goal setting. We use several questionnaires to get feedback from the staff: *Southern Oregon Training Needs Assessment*, *Preparing for the Planning Conference* and *Highlights of My Work this Year*. We then discuss the strengths and areas in need of improvement and growth. This results in the formation of goals and objectives for the year. It is designed to be a rich and meaningful evaluation. All the staff input is used to prepare a plan identifying staff training needs and a staff development plan for the coming year.

Approach to Reflective Supervision

Our reflective supervision process occurs in the one-on-one twice per month supervision session, and in group “debriefing” sessions. Staff also seek each other out for

informal support and reflection. Every three months, a day is set aside to review videotapes of staff interactions with families. This reflective opportunity results in a deeper understanding of their work with families. In addition, these reflective times help staff to:

- feel more effective with families;
- understand how to integrate principles and techniques into their specific situations with families;
- develop critical thinking skills;
- recognize and explore boundary issues, such as under- or over-involvement with families;
- stay in touch with how their feelings, reactions, and worries influence their interventions; and
- never feel alone with situations that are difficult.

Opportunities for Career Advancement

In response to the new teacher qualification requirements set forth in the Head Start Reauthorization of 1998, our agency has conducted a salary study and revised the salary scale to ensure higher compensation levels for positions, by degree held. It is our intent to provide incentives for staff to seek higher education levels.

CDA training is required as an entry-level credential. We are developing ways that support our staff toward achieving higher education degrees. Administrators from our local Head Start agency are collaborating with the college to develop a course of study toward a degree. The quality improvement funds will be used to help staff with the costs associated with pursuing a degree. The newly revised salary scale provides increases in teacher compensation tied to the attainment of AA, BA, and advanced degrees. We do anticipate that this plan will attract and retain individuals that have attained, and are interested in attaining higher degrees.

We recognize professional accomplishments and achievements of our staff. We have an end of year celebration which is a fun day for staff to receive affirmations, recognition and awards. The individual accomplishments that staff achieve throughout the year are celebrated at their EHS center sites on a more informal basis.

Resources for Professional Development

Three percent of the budget is allocated for professional development activities. We have used a variety of print materials on supervision and staff development (i.e. *Reflective Supervision: A Relationship for Learning*^{xi} and *Blueprint for Action: Achieving Center Based Change through Staff Development*^{xii}). Visiting other EHS programs and attending EHS conferences and trainings provides resources for various aspects of staff development.

We have leaned heavily on the Region 10 Head Start Quality Improvement Center at Portland State University, Early Childhood Training Center. The Infant/Toddler Specialist has been a mentor and guide throughout the process of evolving to the level of staff development that we are now implementing. This is truly a process and we will continue to grow and learn how to best serve our staff so that they are equipped to best serve our families.

Meeting the Challenges

We are all challenged to keep informed of all aspects of infant and toddler development, best parenting practices, and the skills and strategies which prove to be most effective with families. This is a tall order! We must continually make time for observation, coaching, feedback, and team building. Although these strategies take considerable time, they are essential to supporting staff and allowing them to apply their knowledge in their work with children and families.

Voices from the Staff

I am fortunate to have a great deal of input into planning my professional development goals. I meet formally with my supervisor at the conclusion of each program year for performance evaluation and goal setting. This is a very meaningful experience as we evaluate my strengths, achievements, and possible areas to continue to grow during the following year. This is also a time where we can look at the upcoming year and set goals based on projected program needs and changes. I meet twice a month with my supervisor on an ongoing basis to discuss issues relating to my work with staff, program concerns, or any areas in which I feel I need support or guidance. I find this time to be extremely valuable. It gives



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me the opportunity to process difficult situations regarding both staff and families and to see these issues with a different perspective. Even more valuable, this is a time where I can get some much needed support, encouragement and feedback on my work. It provides me a safe time and space to grapple with difficult issues and questions and to speak honestly about what is or isn't going well with my work. This type of regular, intensive supervision is what makes it possible for all of us to continue to do challenging work with minimum stress and burnout, and maximum amount of satisfaction and effectiveness.

EHS Center-based Supervisor

Something that has been specifically helpful for me during this past year is the willingness and availability of my supervisor to partner with me on home visits for a couple of very high need families. Home visiting high risk families can be a very challenging and sometime lonely experience. I believe the rate of burn out in this field is so high because of the emotional intensity and sense of personal responsibility some of us feel when working with high need families. I had particular challenges this year and in response to some of my comments during supervision, the partnership occurred. It has been a powerful learning experience for me because my supervisor sees what I am doing with families firsthand and is then available to offer very specific support and feedback...The work I do is difficult both physically and emotionally. Without the high level of quality support, training, and encouragement I receive on a regular basis I would not be able to do this work with families. Because of the support I am given I am able to honestly say I love my job.

EHS Home Visitor

xi Shahmoon Shanok, R., Gilkerson, L., Eggbeer, L., & Fenichel, E. (1995). *Reflective supervision: A relationship with learning*. ZERO TO THREE: Washington, DC.

xii Bloom, P. J., Sheerer, M., & Britz, J. (1991). *Blueprint for action: Achieving center-based change through staff development*. Mt. Rainier, MD: Gryphon House.

Upper Des Moines Opportunity, Inc.

Graettinger, IA

Contact:

Mary Jo Madvig, Early Childhood Director
101 Robbins Ave. Box 519
Graettinger, IA 51342
712-859-3885

Program Description

Upper Des Moines Opportunity, Inc. (UDMO) provides EHS services to 96 children in a combination of home-based and center-based activities. Our staff/parent partnership is one of the most essential aspects of the program. Each staff member has varied educational, work, and life experiences allowing for a match between family and staff which promotes a team approach to building on family strengths.

Home visitors meet with families weekly. A Registered Nurse is an integral part of the home visiting component. She provides prenatal visits during the entire pregnancy and postnatal visits until children are three months of age, as well as staff training. Families are invited to participate in a parent meeting and “care” groups each month. Care groups provide opportunities for socialization and consist of Mom’s Time, Dad’s Time, Family Time, and Baby Jamboree.

The center-based component provides full-day, five-day-a-week care and education for toddlers aged 24-36 months. Classrooms are staffed by teachers with degrees in Early Childhood Education and assistant teachers who have the Child Development Associate credential.

EHS collaborates with local family child care providers to enhance the quality of child care for the entire community. Home visitors provide activities and information to child care providers who care for children enrolled in EHS. A Child Care Advocacy Board consisting of local child care providers team with EHS and Child

Resource and Referral to actively promote quality child care for all children in the community. The group has designed promotional materials and has presented child care topics to EHS parents and they serve as chairpersons for the *I am Iowa’s Child Campaign*. A council member was selected to be on the Governor’s Child Care Task Force charged with the redesign of the child care system for the State of Iowa.

Approach to Professional Development

The program’s approach to training is multifaceted and based on Head Start program philosophy as well as the personal goals that staff members have determined for themselves. Ongoing professional educational growth is a requirement for all Early Head Start staff. We value new knowledge and attempt to bring the most current research and practices into our program. In addition to providing all staff with the general knowledge required to meet the Head Start Program Performance Standards, we believe in developing the individual expertise of staff. Our community collaborations allow us to extend and broaden our learning opportunities.

The philosophy or approach to professional development begins during the staff hiring process. Interview questions are designed to convey both the philosophy of EHS as well as the program’s approach to professional development. Similarly, the orientation process reflects the staff development policies and procedures. Individual training plans help staff commit to the process of continual professional development.

Developing a Training Plan

Responsibility for staff development begins with the program director. Early Head Start has a written work plan that covers the Performance Standards. Individual staff members complete a professional assessment questionnaire yearly, from which staff development opportunities are created. The director then meets with the management staff of EHS to gather collective input into the design of the training plan.

Staff development has become an evolving program component as ongoing program needs and opportunities have been identified. Staff from the eight county UDMO are brought together for broad-based training throughout the year. Cluster trainings bring staff together who share a similar role or geographic area for bimonthly meetings.

Approach to Reflective Supervision

The basis for supportive, reflective supervision is the individual goals of the staff and the broader program goals of what we hope to accomplish for families. Classroom lead teachers and home visitors each have an assigned supervisor. Individual observations are scheduled a minimum of once a month followed by a time for reflective dialogue. Staff members are periodically videotaped and reviewed. Newer staff members are also assigned a mentor who uses the same techniques in a supportive role.

Lead teachers in the classroom supervise the assistant teachers. They model appropriate practices, permit assistants to assume teaching duties, and provide continuous mutual reflective observations and support. All classroom staff meet weekly with their supervisor to provide team reflection, communication and supervision.

Home visiting staff also have weekly team supervisory meetings which provide opportunities for support as well as formal and informal training. All staff meet for collective training and to review the program once per month. The home-based supervisor accompanies each home visitor monthly. Over the course of a year she attempts to visit the home of each family. Her role is to observe and record the home visitors activities and interactions during the home visit. Immediately following the visits, the supervisor and home visitor meet to share observations and reflect on the experience. This method allows home visitors to examine their strengths and needs and together with the supervisor identify professional development needs.

EHS supervisory staff meet as a team biweekly to support one another. This team joins the UDMO Head Start management staff once a month to share program information and ensure a seamless system of birth - 5 services.



*Upper Des Moines Opportunity Early Head Start;
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Opportunities for Career Advancement

Early Head Start takes a very broad approach to the advancement of the personal and professional development of staff, parents, and child care providers. The overall goal is to assist all persons in reaching their life-long potential. Setting individual goals with actions steps becomes the basis for career advancement. The management staff in the program take a very active role in providing opportunities to obtain these goals.

Numerous opportunities are provided for advancement within the Head Start organization, always looking first to parents and present staff. Parents are assisted with personal and professional growth opportunities and have become valued employees in the program. Advancement opportunities are contingent on educational, personal, and professional growth. With the planned expansion of EHS to the other seven counties, the present staff have already been engaged in staff development activities to provide an easy transition into new and expanded roles.

Career advancement is not limited to the perimeters of the program. Staff members have been given opportunities to work outside of the program with the Region 7 Head Start Quality Improvement Center



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operated by Community Development Institute (CDI). The program believes that career development may promote staff members to positions beyond EHS and views this as successful staff development.

The program has provided numerous student teaching and internship opportunities for local and state colleges. Several outstanding students have begun their careers at EHS.

Staff members are encouraged to pursue lifelong learning opportunities and the program provides for this both monetarily and with time off from job responsibilities as needed. There are no time restraints on professional development days. Staff attend numerous educational opportunities locally, regionally, and nationally which are mutually selected to attain individual goals.

Evaluations take a strength-based approach and become written documents placed in professional staff files. Supervisory staff make an effort to write personal notes to acknowledge staff successes and efforts all year long. Staff members are nominated for regional, and national awards and efforts are made for local publicity. Accomplished staff assume the role of staff mentors and become resources for new and less experienced staff. Staff are given the role of the program representation on local, state, regional and national conferences and workshops.

All management staff are now Regional CDI consultants and are recognized for their knowledge and skills in EHS.

Resources for Professional Development

Eight to ten percent of the Early Head Start budget is allocated for professional development activities. In-kind, collaborative, contributions for staff development from local agencies are equivalent to an additional 10-15% of the total budget. Collaborative efforts include: Early Intervention, Child and Domestic Abuse Prevention, Mental Health Services, Community and Public Health, Department of Human Services, local school districts and others.

The Region 7 Quality Improvement Center is utilized on a regular basis for phone consultation, on-site work, and access to resources.

Head Start and Early Head Start have CDA instructors and supervisors. A formal agreement is established with a local college to provide 11 hours of college credit for CDA training and experience. Plans are under way to create a HS/EHS training site in collaboration with the local college system in order to tailor course content to meet the needs for increased demand for instruction on the birth to three population. EHS also has an agreement with the local community college to transfer Associate degrees to state and private four year early childhood institutions.

Meeting the Challenges

UDMO's rural location presents significant challenges to the program's staff development efforts. There are limited local resources, transportation issues, and the expense of bringing trainers to our site. The limited availability of well-qualified staff has required extensive staff development efforts to ensure staff members have the necessary knowledge and skills. EHS has associated with area agencies and organizations to provide training to meet the similar needs of the partners. EHS staff members participate on all area councils, boards, and committees who provide services to families and children. This involvement has lead to numerous training opportunities.

Local educational institutions do not have adequate emphasis on infant and toddler development. Head Start and EHS are initiating plans for a collaborative HS/EHS/college training site to better prepare students in early childhood education.

Another challenge is meeting the varied training needs of the home visiting staff who come from a wide range of educational backgrounds, including early childhood education, social work, psychology, and nursing. Thus, staff development for home visitors is very individualized. A training plan is developed for each staff person and priorities are determined. The varied professional background of staff has led to cross training, both formally and informally.

Collaborating with family child care providers has been a challenge. The awareness that the quality of home child care is often substandard has resulted in substantial staff development efforts. EHS, through the Child Care Initiative, has developed a unique partnership with home child care providers. Twelve providers are members of the EHS Child Care Initiative Mentor board. With their assistance, EHS has developed a working relationship with home care providers to improve the quality of care for all children in family child care.

Voices from the Staff

Staff development needs are met on an on-going process as we strive to achieve our personal and program goals. The greatest assets of the professional development process are:

- It has continued to enhance my decision making skills through my involvement in management meetings;*



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- It provides specific opportunities for me to share and update the staff on current health trends and information on a regular basis;*
- It allows line staff easy access to managers;*
- It facilitates direct and indirect support for myself from fellow staff members; and*
- It provides direct support for both the home-based and center-based staff regarding health issues.*

EHS Health Services Manager

Our agency works as a team. Each one of us has an area of expertise that we bring to the team. We share our knowledge and expertise with our fellow staff members working to enhance their skills...I love learning and sharing with others.

Mental Health Disabilities Coordinator, 0-5 Head Start/Early Head Start

SECTION TWO

Unique Program Features

Three of the programs that responded to the Staff Development Questionnaire (Appendix A) described aspects of their staff development efforts which were noteworthy in the following areas:

- Meeting the Needs of Children with Disabilities
- Distance Learning
- Utilizing a Career Development Plan to Meet Diverse Staff Development Needs

Meeting the Needs of Children with Disabilities

Community Partnerships for Child Development, Colorado Springs, CO

Respondent:

Gloria Nikolai, EHS Manager
2330 Robinson Street
Colorado Springs, CO 80904

Community Partnerships for Child Development is funded to serve 75 children. An expansion grant will increase the number to 102 in the fall of 1999. Families participate in a combination home-based and center-based program.

The enrollment level for children with special needs averages 20-22%. This is due to strong relationships between EHS, Part C and Early Intervention. The consistently high

enrollment level occurs both as a result of direct referrals to EHS, and through the evaluation of children already enrolled in EHS.

Maintaining high visibility in the community is critical to effective recruitment of children with special needs. The relationships with the early intervention community have been facilitated in several ways:

- The EHS manager has developed professional relationships by participating on local boards and councils for early intervention.
- One of the strategies the agency used was to hold community breakfasts and invite potential partners to tour the facility and learn about the organization.
- Formal Memorandums of Understanding (see Appendix B) are revised every year to ensure that they remain relevant.
- Families are dually enrolled in early intervention and EHS. The early intervention personnel provide service coordination and conduct playgroups with EHS enrolled families.
- The EHS program participates extensively in community advocacy groups to raise the standards and quality of services in the community.
- Training is jointly offered by EHS and Part C to the child care community.
- EHS conducts a biannual community conference which includes issues for children with special needs. Workers in the judicial system pay a reduced fee and are able to get legal education credits for participating.

Implications for Staff Development

Staff members must be adequately trained for a wide range of disabilities, from common disorders to rare diseases. Parents of children with a disabilities often share their knowledge and expertise with the staff in formal and informal training. In addition, the agency will bring specialists in to teach staff specialized techniques, such as sensory integration activities. Each year all staff are trained in Part C and Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP) development by the EHS manager and the director of the Part C agency.

Central to the program's approach to recruiting and enrolling children with special needs is maintaining a warm and accepting environment. From the time that a potential candidate is interviewed, EHS emphasizes the philosophy of the person first, and the disability as one aspect of the child's life. Early Head Start also models this philosophy throughout the program. For example, three women with developmental disabilities from a local senior center volunteer in the program each week.

Distance Learning

Little Dixie Community Action Agency, Hugo, OK

Respondents:

Sue Evans and Kelly Thomas
502 West Duke St.
Hugo, OK 74743

Little Dixie EHS provides services to 30 pregnant women and 36 children in a center-based setting.

One of the biggest challenges in this rural program was the ability of staff to attend college due to the distance. Staff would have to travel 100 miles to get to the local college. The Head Start director has worked closely with the college coordinator to bring training closer to the staff. One option for staff is to go to a campus that is 45 miles away and attend two classes one night a week and earn

six college credits. The EHS program also has arranged with a local high school to utilize their classroom space for satellite training. Staff would only have to travel 16-24 miles to attend these classes. The high school was willing to donate the space and have someone available to unlock and lock the building before and after class. EHS staff will have their college course work and their books paid for by the program. Other distance learning opportunities that the staff can participate in are course work by mail and on-line.

Meeting the Diverse Needs of Staff: Utilizing the Career Development Plan

Child Development Services of Ottawa County, Bright Beginnings EHS, Grand Haven, MI

Respondent:

Deanna Eastling, EHS Home-based Coordinator
332A North Ferry St.
Grand Haven, MI 49417

Bright Beginnings EHS is funded to provide home based services to twelve families and center-based services to eight families.

The *Career Development Plan* was developed to ensure ongoing learning opportunities for all staff. Each staff member sets goals at the beginning of the year and is required to obtain a certain number of points which are obtained by any combination of the activities listed in the plan.

Each activity is worth a specific number of points. Examples of some of the activities to choose from include:

Article Review: Read 3 articles on a subject relating to child development and/or your job. After completion of the articles, write a one page report or make a presentation to other staff members.

Recipe Book: Put together a theme book of recipes that can be shared with other cooks, classrooms, and parents.

Local/Regional/National Training: Attend 8 hours of training and submit a written report or evaluation on each training indicating what you learned and how you could apply it to your current position. Credit will be given upon submission of all reports.

Classroom Observation: Spend at least half a day observing in two classrooms other than your own. Write a one page report on what you liked, what you think could be improved, etc. Discuss this with your supervisor. Credit upon completion and submission of the reports.

Staff Advisor/Mentor: Be an advisor for a new employee or for an employee who is working on improving their

position within the agency or working on their CDA or BA degree. A written plan indicating steps to be taken and expected outcome must be completed and submitted to the Training Coordinator. This project should range from 2-12 months. Credit will be given upon submission of a written report indicating the employee's progress.

Staff/Parent Inservice: Present an inservice to staff and/or parents on a topic related to child development. The inservice should be between 1-2 hours in length. You must draft a written plan (to be handed in to the Training Coordinator), present the workshop, and complete a workshop evaluation form to receive credit.

Staff members are also encouraged to be creative and design their own activities in collaboration with the Training Coordinator.

APPENDIX A

Staff Development Questionnaire

The programs profiled in this paper responded to the following questionnaire to describe their approach to professional development.

Please complete the following questions in as much detail as you need to adequately convey your program's approach to staff development. Staff development is broadly defined as your approach to building competence in your program, so please take into account the many ways in which you address this goal. Please note that in this document we use the terms 'staff development' and 'professional development' interchangeably.

The first section is to be completed by a program administrator/manager and the second part is to be completed by two members of your staff that have different roles in the program. We request that at least one of the staff members have direct service contact with EHS families (i.e. home visitor, child development specialist, etc.).

TO BE COMPLETED BY PROGRAM ADMINISTRATOR

Briefly describe your program model (home or center-based, number of children served, staffing patterns and caseloads).

Early Head Start Funding Wave (please circle):

1 2 3 4 5

Your Approach to Professional Development

1. What are the most important components of professional development, in your view? Do you have a written plan that outlines how the components work together?
2. What is the philosophy or rationale for how your EHS program approaches staff development. Describe your approach to training.
3. How is this philosophy/approach to professional development understood and subscribed to by all staff?
4. Describe your process for group/individual supportive or reflective supervision. (Give examples of how it is used to support staff development.
5. Describe how an individual staff person *new* to the program would be brought on board?
6. What are the major challenges you have faced in your efforts with staff development? How have you worked to overcome these challenges?
7. What strategies have you developed to help your staff apply what they learn in staff development activities to the delivery of services? How does the staff training your program provides affect practice? How do you evaluate the impact of staff development?

Opportunities for Career Advancement

1. Does the program have a career ladder in place?
How does participation in formal and informal educational opportunities relate to job responsibilities, compensation, and advancement?
How is work experience taken into account?
2. How does the program recognize the professional accomplishments of staff?
3. Do you have any links to college credit/CDA training/adult education or other formal training programs? How do they fit within your professional development plan?

Allocating Resources for Professional Development

1. What resources have been helpful in planning and implementing your approach to staff development? (Please consider resources broadly, including print materials, community resources, collaborative efforts with existing early care and education systems, etc.)
2. Is there an individual or a team in your organization that is responsible for staff development in your program? Please identify that person's position or role in your agency and describe how that person carries out his or her staff development responsibilities.
3. Do you allocate a percentage of your operating budget for professional development activities? What percentage?
4. Are you able to share your training efforts with non-Head Start entities to enhance the larger community? How?
5. Have you used the Quality Improvement Centers in your region for professional development resources? If yes, how? If not, please explain why.

Additional information you would like to share:

TO BE COMPLETED BY STAFF MEMBER

Please have two staff members complete this section, preferably one who is responsible for working directly with families and one who is at the coordinator level.

1. What is your role in the program? For how long? If you have held other positions in the program, please list and describe how you advanced from one position to another.
2. Describe your experience with professional development within the EHS program. Describe what your current staff development activities are, how they build on what you have done in the past, and your plan for the future.
3. Do you have a role in planning your staff development experiences? Please describe.
4. Do you have the opportunity to engage in supportive or reflective supervision? How? How does this process contribute to your professional development?
5. What have been your most valuable staff development experiences? (Please consider the variety of experiences in your program that are aimed at building competence: new staff orientation, a buddy system or "shadowing" experienced staff, CDA training, peer/individual/group supervision, case discussion, mental health consultation, college classes, etc.)
5. How are your staff development needs met on an on-going basis?
6. What are the challenges in the staff development system of your organization? How have these challenges been addressed?

The term reflective supervision refers to a collaborative relationship between supervisor and staff member that provides regular opportunities to reflect on the work of providing high quality services to expectant parents and families with infants and toddlers.

APPENDIX B

Sample *Memorandum of Understanding*

The purpose of this memorandum of understanding between Community Partnership for Child Development/Early Head Start (CPCD/EHS) and Resources for Young Children and Families (RYCF) is to formalize the existing working relationship between the two agencies and maintain open communication and inter-agency collaboration to ensure that all children and families within our service areas are linked to appropriate resources in accordance with Part C of the federal IDEA law.

Background

Since the inception of Early Head Start in the fall of 1995, CPCD/EHS and RYCF, the local Part C entity and Lead Agent for El Paso County, have created and maintained extensive collaborative efforts to ensure the successful identification, referral, evaluation, and provision of services to children and families. Prior to the inception of EHS, CPCD and RYCF have collaborated together to maintain Child Find since 1989.

The mission statement of Community Partnerships for Child Development is to lead the Pikes Peak region in developing and providing quality, integrated, comprehensive early childhood development programs which offer a broad range of services and respond to the needs of young children and their families for the purpose of preparing them for success in school and life.

The mission statement of Resources for Young Children and Families is to assist families with children

birth to five years age in identifying strengths and concerns and to enhance their ability to access supports and services within their community.

Basic Agreement

CPCD/EHS and RYCF agree to coordinate efforts in identifying, evaluating, and referring children ages birth to three and their families who qualify for services under the federal IDEA law. CPCD/EHS and RYCF agree to utilize Colorado's eligibility guidelines for such children.

Resources for Young Children and Families agrees to:

1. Maintain an open dialogue between RYCF and CPCD/EHS through clear and professional communication. The Director or Assistant Director is the contact person to facilitate this process.
2. Host Interagency Review Team meetings on a consistent and regular basis to discuss newly identified children ages birth to three and make appropriate referrals.
3. Assist in planning and participation of the El Paso County Service Coordination Subcommittee of the Colorado Interagency Coordinating Council (ICC). The meeting meets regularly to increase communication and knowledge amongst service coordinators in the community and to increase the quality of Individualized Family Service Plans in the community.

4. Provide Childfind evaluations for District 2 to identify and evaluate children with areas of developmental concern.
5. Provide Bridgers to work with families who have children in the Newborn Intensive Care Unit (NICU) and District 2. The Bridgers will actively identify families who may be eligible for EHS services and will provide information to potentially eligible families about EHS. They will mentor families through the referral and EHS application process.
6. Participate in the Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) process by initiating the documents or attending the IFSP staffings with the family. When possible and requested by the family, the initial Bridger will also attend subsequent IFSP meetings.
7. Provide one consistent staff member for attendance at Early Head Start Advisory Council to offer relevant insight and information.
8. Agree to share family information between RYCF and CPCD/EHS only when the family has signed an appropriate Release of Information form.
9. Be responsible for the local data collection to the federal government for all children who are Part C eligible and receiving services in El Paso county.
10. Provide one consistent staff member, Director or Assistant Director, to attend annual Special Quest training at no cost to RYCF. This will include ongoing meetings, planning and implementation to meet the Special Quest goals.

Community Partnership for Child Development/Early Head Start agrees to:

1. Maintain an open dialogue between RYCF and CPCD/EHS through clear and professional communication. The EHS Manager is the designated contact person to facilitate this process.
2. Provide staff representation at IRT meetings on a consistent basis to receive information on eligible children and their families. During the IRT meetings, the CPCD/EHS staff will inform the team

on the status of the program and current space availability. The EHS staff member will also present program information to any family present at IRT, when appropriate.

3. Inform RYCF and RYCF Bridgers of families referred by RYCF who choose to not enroll in EHS or who drop out of the program.
4. Develop, maintain, and implement IFSP's on all Part C children with parent participation. EHS will participate in or plan the IFSP meetings on a biannual basis for each family with an identified child who chooses to do so. EHS will actively encourage the acceptance of IFSP development for families who choose not to do so. EHS will, with parent approval, invite the assigned bridger to IFSP meetings after the initial evaluation.
5. Will have staff representation at Service Coordination meetings on a consistent basis to actively participate in community building regarding service coordination needs of children and families. During the Service Coordination meetings, the CPCD/EHS staff will inform the team on the status of the program and current space availability.
6. Provide appropriate developmental screening for all children applying and enrolling in EHS. EHS will refer children with developmental concerns to RYCF for evaluation. EHS will also provide staff observation on the child's developmental status when warranted. EHS staff will attend scheduled ChildFind evaluations upon parent request and approval.
7. Maintain an Early Head Start Advisory Council comprising of parents, staff and professionals from the community whose purpose is to advise in the planning, operation and evaluation of the EHS program and to work on issues relevant to the needs of children prenatal to age three and their families.
8. Provide center and home-based services to eligible children within the service area, providing space is available.
9. Agree to share family information between RYCF and CPCD/EHS only when the family has signed an appropriate Release of Information Form.

10. Cooperate with the data collection efforts of RYCF to represent EHS children in the data count of Part C eligible children and explain what services each child receives.
11. Assist EHS families in the application and presentation process of requesting funds from the Early Childhood Connections (Part C) Payor of Last Resort Committee.
12. Provide consistent team membership on the SpecialQuest team. This will be comprised of the EHS Manager, one EHS Teacher, Motor Therapist and one EHS parent in addition to the Part C representative. This will include ongoing implementation to meet the SpecialQuest team goals.
13. Provide one consistent member, the EHS Manager, to the RYCF Board of Directors to assist in guidance and decision-making at RYCF.

This Memorandum of Understanding is intended to be a nonbinding understanding between the parties regarding the nature of the relationship and division of responsibilities between the parties.

Signed,

President/CEO Community Partnerships for Child Development/EHS

Interim Director, Resources for Young Children and Families



Early Head Start National Resource Center @ ZERO TO THREE