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**INFORMATION MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Head Start and Early Head Start Grantees and Delegate Agencies

**SUBJECT:** Revisiting and Updating the Multicultural Principles for Head Start Programs Serving Children Ages Birth to Five

**INFORMATION:**

The Office of Head Start (OHS) is pleased to announce the publication in English and Spanish of *Revisiting and Updating the Multicultural Principles for Head Start Programs Serving Children Ages Birth to Five*.

In 1991, the former Head Start Bureau published the original *Multicultural Principles for Head Start Programs* Information Memorandum and resource handbook following two years of work by the Head Start Multicultural Task Force. Its purpose was to “stand as a challenge” to programs to “focus efforts on individualizing services so that every child and family feels respected and valued and is able to grow in accepting and appreciating differences.” (Administration for Children, Youth and Families, 1991, p.3)

There are a number of reasons for revisiting and updating the original resource handbook.

- In 1998, the Head Start Program Performance Standards were revised to incorporate requirements that address diversity in many service and systems areas. The Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007 also calls for improving outreach and services to diverse populations.
- With the creation and recent expansion of Early Head Start, it is imperative to support culturally and linguistically responsive programming for the youngest children and their families.
- The research literature addressing cultural influences on development and first and second language acquisition has grown enormously and reaffirms the value of integrating multiculturalism into early childhood settings.
- In a time of rapid demographic changes across the nation, the service areas of Head Start and Early Head Start programs are more racially, ethnically, culturally and linguistically diverse than ever before.

*Revisiting and Updating the Multicultural Principles for Head Start Programs Serving Children Ages Birth to Five* highlights the ten original *Multicultural Principles* and includes a brief research review, key implications, stories from the Head Start community, as well as reflective questions or activities. Head Start programs should continue to embrace the original “challenge” and use this updated resource to improve programming and service delivery for children and families.

Each Head Start center will be sent a copy of the revised and updated resource handbook. In addition, an electronic copy can be downloaded from the [Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center](#) (ECLKC). Additional printed copies of the handbook may be ordered by contacting the Head Start Knowledge and Information Management Services (HSKIMS) at 1-866-763-6481. Copies will be available on a first-come, first-served basis. A *Users Guide* to the updated resource is under development and will be made available as soon as it is completed.

It is my hope that *Revisiting and Updating the Multicultural Principles for Head Start Programs Serving Children Birth to Five* will be useful to you, your program, and the children and families you serve.

/ Yvette Sanchez Fuentes /

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