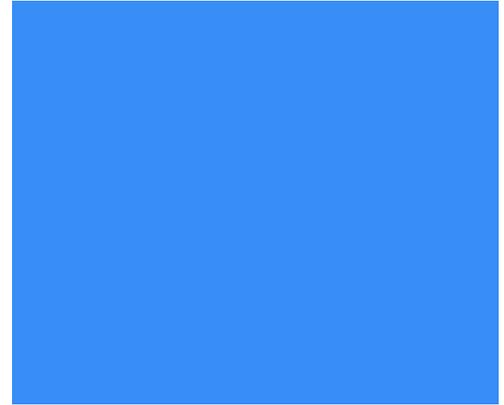


# Early Childhood Curriculum Resources



The purpose of this collection of resources is to provide information about key features of early childhood curriculum identified in the Head Start Program Performance Standards (HSPPS). These include:

- Research-Based Curriculum
- Curriculum Scope and Sequence
- Curriculum Implementation
- Curriculum Alignment with the *Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework (ELOF)*
- Standardized Training Procedures and Curriculum Materials to Support Implementation

The collection also includes two documents that provide specific guidance to home-based programs:

- Head Start and Early Head Start Home-Based Curriculum Checklist: What Is Research-Based?
- Head Start and Early Head Start Home-Based Curriculum Selection Checklist

Education staff can use these resources to select and implement curriculum in ways that meet the HSPPS. If you need additional information on the topics addressed in these materials, please contact us at: **[ecdctl@ecetta.info](mailto:ecdctl@ecetta.info) or call (toll-free) 1-844-261-3752.**

## Research-Based Curriculum

Head Start Program Performance Standards §1302.32(a)(1) and §1302.35(d)(1): “Center-based and family child care programs must implement developmentally appropriate research-based early childhood curricula” that “are based on scientifically valid research.” Home-based programs must “implement a developmentally appropriate research-based early childhood home-based curriculum.”



### What does “research-based” mean for early childhood curriculum?

- Is founded on solid research about child development and learning
- Promotes teaching and learning activities that are shown to have positive effects on child progress and outcomes
- Has descriptive research or evaluation reflecting child progress, but is lacking evidence from randomized control study

A research-based early childhood curriculum is consistent with research on how children develop and learn. It provides rich content and teaching practices that are shown to support children’s learning and development. A research-based curriculum focuses on **domain-specific, developmentally appropriate** content and skills that contribute to children’s later development in that domain. A research-based curriculum is also **content-rich**, meaning that it provides broad and varied experiences and activities that promote children’s learning and development. A rich curriculum **invites children to think deeply** about content that interests them and builds on their prior knowledge and experiences. Finally, a research-based curriculum offers a **sequence of learning experiences** based on children’s developmental progressions. There are both comprehensive research-based curricula that address all areas of the *Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework* (ELOF) and domain-specific curricula that the Head Start Program Performance Standards refer to as curricular enhancements, also sometimes referred to as curriculum supplements.

### Why is a research-based curriculum important?

A research-based curriculum promotes domain-specific teaching practices that are effective in supporting positive child outcomes. A research-based curriculum must be appropriate for the ages, developmental levels, and cultural and linguistic backgrounds of the children enrolled in the program.

## What does a research-based curriculum look like?

Read the following vignette to learn about how Sunny Days Early Head Start’s research-based curriculum supports infants’ and toddlers’ social and emotional development.

Sunny Days Early Head Start uses a research-based infant and toddler curriculum. For social and emotional development, the curriculum focuses on developmentally appropriate goals to support the development of infants’ and toddlers’ relationships with adults and peers, emotional functioning, and sense of identity. The curriculum reflects relevant child development theories, such as attachment theory. For example, the curriculum describes how learning happens in the context of warm, responsive relationships. When adults respond warmly and appropriately to infants’ and toddlers’ cues, they develop trusting and secure relationships with adults. Children use trusted adults as a secure base from which to explore the environment.

Sunny Days Early Head Start’s curriculum also describes children’s developmental progressions, such as developing secure relationships with familiar adults. As part of this progression, young infants rely on the efforts of familiar adults to help them cope with stressful moments. Older toddlers are able to seek out familiar adults for comfort as needed. The curriculum then provides specific research-based practices to help infants and toddlers develop secure relationships with familiar adults. It recommends consistent routines, interactions, and communication with parents to learn about children’s preferences and routines. The curriculum provides examples of how to interact positively and warmly with infants and toddlers (e.g., peek-a-boo), observe and respond to individual cues, and convey warmth and affection.

What do you learn about a research-based curriculum from this vignette?

- Sunny Days Early Head Start’s curriculum focuses on developmentally appropriate, important goals in social and emotional development. The curriculum aligns with the sub-domains of the Early Learning Outcomes Framework (ELOF) in this area.
- The curriculum is guided by robust knowledge and theory of social and emotional development (e.g., attachment theory).
- The curriculum describes children’s developmental progressions and offers concrete, research-based practices to help education staff build trusting relationships with infants and toddlers.

## Resources to Support Your Work

*Interactive Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework: Ages Birth to Five.* Select a domain, and scroll to the bottom for a list of “Related Resources” to learn more about children’s learning and development described in the ELOF and how to support it.

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/interactive-head-start-early-learning-outcomes-framework-ages-birth-five>

*Planned Language Approach (PLA).* The PLA is a comprehensive, systemic, research-based way for Head Start and Early Head Start programs to ensure optimal language and literacy services for children who speak English and for those who are dual language learners.

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/culture-language/article/planned-language-approach>

*Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework (ELOF) Effective Practice Guides.* This set of resources provides research-based teaching practices in each of the ELOF domains and sub-domains.

## Curriculum Scope and Sequence



Head Start Program Performance Standards §1302.32(a)(1)(iii) and §1302.35(d)(1)(iii): Center-based, family child care, and home-based programs must use curricula that have “an organized developmental scope and sequence that include plans and materials for learning experiences based on developmental progressions and how children learn.”

### What does “organized developmental scope and sequence” mean?

An **organized developmental scope and sequence** outlines what the early childhood curriculum focuses on and how the plans and materials support children at different stages of development. The **scope** refers to the areas of development addressed by the curriculum. Scope includes both the breadth (the curriculum addresses development across all of the *Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework* (ELOF) domains) and depth (curriculum content addresses specific developmental goals within each sub-domain). A content-rich curriculum ensures that this scope is sufficiently deep that it engages and sustains children’s interests across multiple learning experiences. The **sequence** includes plans and materials for learning experiences to support and extend children’s learning at various levels of development. A sequence of learning experiences progress from less to more complex, with the goal of supporting children as they move through the developmental progressions.

An organized developmental scope and sequence

- helps education staff support children’s development of skills, behavior, and knowledge described in the ELOF and a state’s early learning and development standards;
- includes examples of materials, teaching practices, and learning experiences that support children at different levels of development;
- allows flexibility to respond to the needs of individual children, including dual or tribal language learners and children with disabilities (or those suspected of having delays) and other special needs;
- provides information to education staff that helps them plan and communicate with families and other education partners.

## Why is a scope and sequence so important?

To be effective, curricula must be comprehensive in scope and provide learning experiences specifically designed to support children at various levels of development. A scope and sequence can be a helpful tool that education staff use to plan learning experiences tailored to children's ages and developmental levels. It helps staff look ahead to see where development is going, and intentionally scaffold their learning. It also helps education staff implement research-based teaching practices that support children as they move through the developmental progressions, including those described in the ELOF.

## What does a scope and sequence look like?

Read the following vignette to learn about the scope and sequence in the area of mathematics development in Elmwood Head Start's curriculum.

Elmwood Head Start education staff review their curriculum in the area of mathematics development. The **scope** of the curriculum includes number sense, operations and algebra, measurement, and geometry. The materials and plans for learning experiences are organized around a **sequence** designed to support children at various levels of development. The curriculum offers multiple learning opportunities that support children as they learn to understand simple patterns (ELOF Goal P-MATH 7).

For example, the curriculum includes learning experiences that invite children to experience patterns through movement (e.g., tap-clap-tap-clap) and to describe patterns while playing with colored blocks. Children are encouraged to say the pattern aloud as a group (e.g., red-blue-red-blue) or to fill in the missing element in a pattern (e.g., red-blue-red- ). The curriculum also includes learning experiences that invite children to copy simple patterns (e.g., with stringing beads). At a more advanced level, the curriculum provides learning experiences in which children, with teacher guidance, can create and extend patterns using objects, movements, or sounds.

The lesson plans within each of these learning opportunities describe how education staff can scaffold children's learning and development at various levels (e.g., asking a child earlier in the developmental progression to identify what would come next in a simple pattern, and asking a child later in the developmental progression to describe a pattern the child has created). This sequence of learning experiences supports children as they move along the developmental progression of understanding patterns.

## What do you learn about scope and sequence from this vignette?

- Elmwood Head Start's curriculum supports the development of skills and concepts in the ELOF domain of Cognition: Mathematics Development.
- The scope and sequence includes plans and materials for learning experiences that support children in making progress toward understanding more complex patterns.
- Education staff at Elmwood Head Start can use the curriculum's sequence of learning experiences to respond to different levels of mathematics development.

## Resources to Support Your Work

*The Kids Are in Charge: Children Guiding the Curriculum.* The infant/toddler and preschool Teacher Time webcasts provide useful tips for education staff to plan responsive learning experiences based on children's ages, developmental levels, and interests.

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/curriculum/article/teacher-time-birth-5-series>

*Tips for Teachers: Dual Language Learners.* This tip sheet provides practical strategies for teachers who work with children who are dual language learners.

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/no-search/iss/engaging-interactions-2/engaging-interactions-teach-tips-dll.pdf>

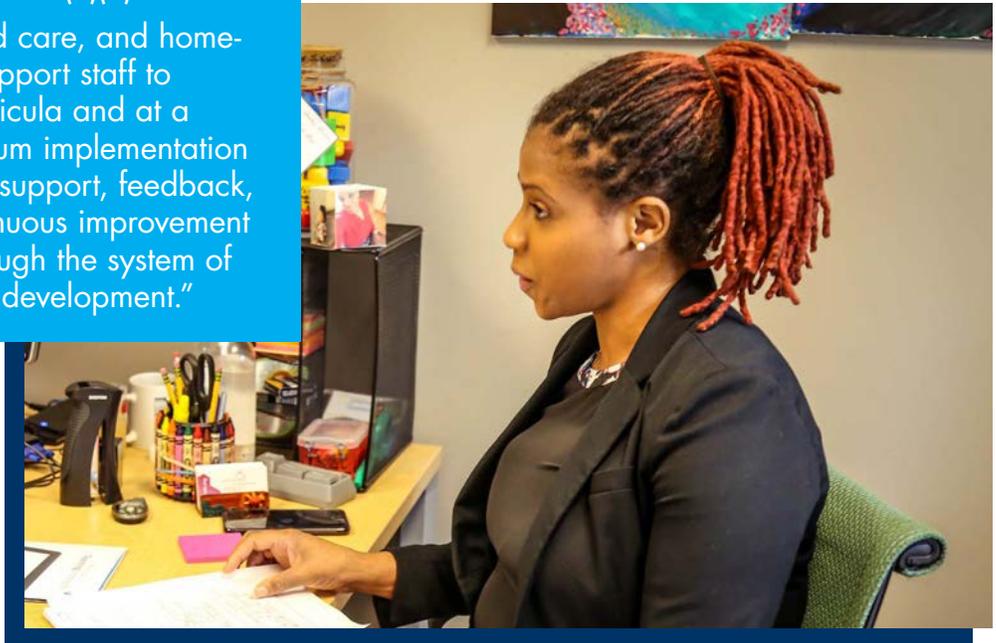
*Highly Individualized Teaching and Learning.* Explore these 15-minute In-service Suites to learn how to enrich activities for children with specific learning needs.

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/children-disabilities/article/highly-individualized-teaching-learning>

## Supporting Staff to Effectively Implement Curricula

Head Start Program Performance Standards §1302.32(a)(2) and §1302.35(d)(2):

Center-based, family child care, and home-based programs must “support staff to effectively implement curricula and at a minimum monitor curriculum implementation and fidelity, and provide support, feedback, and supervision for continuous improvement of its implementation through the system of training and professional development.”



### What does “support staff to effectively implement curricula” mean?

While an early childhood curriculum provides the foundation for supporting children’s learning and development, it must be effectively implemented by education staff who understand how to use it responsively, intentionally, and with fidelity (i.e., as it was designed to be used). Therefore, programs need to develop a system of training and professional development that supports education staff in their efforts to effectively implement their curriculum.

This system of support

- develops education staff’s knowledge and skills in implementing the curriculum;
- focuses on developmentally appropriate, and sufficiently rich content and skills that contribute to children’s later development across the developmental domains in the *Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework* (ELOF);
- for curriculum enhancements, focuses on content and skills that support children’s development in a specific domain; and
- monitors curriculum implementation and fidelity by collecting and using data as part of a continuous improvement process.

### How can programs support effective curriculum implementation?

Programs support effective curriculum implementation by providing

- training and professional development that includes both introductory and advanced trainings on the curriculum that are aligned with staff needs;

- ongoing feedback to education staff about their use of the curriculum to support children and families (e.g., through practice-based coaching); and
- supervision of education staff to refine their skills in effectively implementing a developmentally appropriate, research-based curriculum that is sufficiently content rich, meaning that it provides broad and varied experiences and activities that promote children’s learning and development aligned with the ELOF.

**Programs support effective curriculum implementation by**

- implementing the curriculum with fidelity;
- individualizing the curriculum to meet the needs of all children and families, including children with disabilities (or those suspected of having delays) and other special needs;
- implementing the curriculum with cultural and linguistic responsiveness for all children and families, including dual or tribal language learners;
- using the curriculum to engage families in their children’s learning by incorporating their unique cultural, ethnic, and linguistic backgrounds.

<b>How do programs use data to inform and improve their system of curriculum implementation?</b>	
Programs collect and use many types of data to learn about curriculum implementation.	
Fidelity data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The extent to which education staff are implementing the curriculum as designed</li> <li>• Which areas of curriculum implementation may require additional training or support</li> </ul>
Training and professional development data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Which education staff had training or professional development related to curriculum implementation</li> <li>• How education staff used what they learned from the training or professional development</li> </ul>
Practice-based coaching data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The percentage of coaching time spent focused on supporting curriculum implementation</li> <li>• Common challenges to effective curriculum implementation</li> <li>• Strategies that support education staff in overcoming common challenges</li> </ul>
Feedback from education staff, coaches, and families on their experiences with the curriculum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential strengths or weaknesses in the curriculum and in its implementation</li> <li>• Education staff’s feedback on additional types of training or professional development they need to effectively implement curriculum</li> </ul>
Child assessment data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The extent to which children are progressing within the developmental domains addressed by the curriculum content</li> <li>• Developmental areas where children would benefit from an increased focus on curriculum materials and experiences that address domain-specific skills or abilities</li> </ul>
Teacher-child interaction data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How teachers embed the teaching practices outlined in the curriculum in their interactions with children</li> <li>• How these data inform our plans for professional development</li> </ul>
<p>Program leaders analyze these various types of data as part of a continuous improvement process. For example, programs analyze fidelity and coaching data to understand whether the curriculum is being implemented as designed. If implemented with fidelity, a developmentally appropriate, research-based curriculum that is sufficiently content rich and aligned with the ELOF should support children’s progress toward school readiness goals. If, however, some children are not making progress toward school readiness goals even when this curriculum is being used with fidelity, other options must be considered (including curricular adaptation, enhancement, or replacement).</p>	

### Resources to Support Your Work

*Data in Head Start and Early Head Start Series.* These interactive online learning modules are designed to assist in planning for and implementing effective data use.

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/program-planning/learning-module/data-head-start-early-head-start-creating-culture-embraces-data>

*Implementation of Curriculum with Fidelity.* This webinar explores key features of programs that implement curriculum with fidelity and introduces ways to help education staff meet the Head Start Program Performance Standards related to curriculum fidelity.

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/video/implementation-curriculum-fidelity>

*Implementation Guide: Using the ELOF to Inform Curriculum Planning and Implementation.* This implementation guide helps programs align a curriculum with the ELOF and effectively plan and implement enhanced program and teaching practices.

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/no-search/elof-03-inform-curriculum-planning-implement.pdf>

*Dual Language Learners Toolkit.* This toolkit provides resources that can be used to support young children who are learning their home languages and English.

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/culture-language/article/dual-language-learners-toolkit>

*Implementation Guide: Using the ELOF to Inform Professional Development.* This implementation guide helps program leaders plan ELOF-related professional development.

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/no-search/elof-05-inform-professional-development.pdf>

*It's in the Details: Using Practice-Based Coaching to Support Curriculum Fidelity.* This webinar explores how practice-based coaching can support curriculum fidelity and identifies teaching practices that support curriculum fidelity.

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/video/its-details-using-practice-based-coaching-support-curriculum-fidelity>

*Highly Individualized Teaching and Learning.* Explore these 15-minute In-service Suites to learn how to enrich activities for children with specific learning needs.

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/children-disabilities/article/highly-individualized-teaching-learning>



## Curriculum Alignment with the *Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework (ELOF)*

Head Start Program Performance Standards §1302.32(a)(1)(ii) and §1302.35(d)(1)(ii): Center-based, family child care, and home-based programs must use curricula that “are aligned with the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework: Ages Birth to Five and, as appropriate, state early learning and development standards.”



### What does “aligned with the ELOF” mean?

Practically speaking, **aligning a curriculum with the ELOF** is a process that allows you to see which and to what extent the ELOF domains and sub-domains are addressed in the curriculum. Curricula that are fully aligned with the ELOF are comprehensive and address all areas of children’s learning and development described in the ELOF. The curriculum should also be aligned, as appropriate, with the domains of your state’s early learning and development standards (ELDS).

The curriculum may not be organized in the same way as the ELOF. For example, a curriculum might not list Approaches to Learning as a domain. Instead, a curriculum might list the sub-domain Emotional and Behavioral Self-Regulation under Social and Emotional Development or the sub-domain Cognitive Self-Regulation (Executive Functioning) under Cognition. You might also find that a curriculum addresses areas that are not found in the ELOF, such as social studies or the arts. The curriculum also might use different terms, such as strand or content area, than the ELOF or ELDS do.

### Why is aligning a curriculum with the ELOF important?

To be effective, curricula must provide content that is rich with meaningful and interesting learning experiences that are comprehensive in supporting children’s learning and development. This means all domains are addressed: Approaches to Learning; Social and Emotional Development; Language and Literacy; Cognition; and Perceptual, Motor, and Physical Development. A curriculum aligned with the ELOF and a state’s ELDS is designed to promote children’s development and learning in areas that research shows are important for children’s success in school. Curriculum content should specify supports for all children, including dual or tribal language learners and children with disabilities (or those suspected of having delays) and other special needs.

Even if a curriculum developer has already published a curriculum alignment with the ELOF, it is still important for your program to do its own alignment. The process will help you understand whether and how your program’s curriculum supports children’s development and learning described in the ELOF.

## What does aligning a curriculum with the ELOF look like?

Read the following vignette to learn about how El Bosque Early Head Start reviews how well its curriculum aligns with the ELOF.

El Bosque Early Head Start uses the *Implementation Guide: Using the ELOF to Inform Curriculum Planning and Implementation* to review how its curriculum aligns with the ELOF. The program establishes an implementation team made up of the program director, education manager, education staff from each center, and interested parents and family members.

The implementation team finds that the curriculum addresses most of the skills, behaviors, and concepts in four domains of the ELOF (Approaches to Learning; Social and Emotional Development; Cognition; and Perceptual, Motor, and Physical Development). It provides materials, teaching practices, and learning experiences to support children's development and learning in these domains. However, the curriculum does not adequately cover the Vocabulary and Emergent Literacy sub-domains in the Language and Literacy domain.

The *Implementation Guide* provides the process and tools they can use to strengthen their curriculum in the Language and Literacy domain. Education staff plan how to increase and strengthen their interactions with children during routine care. Program leaders consider planning professional development that focuses on expanding conversations with infants and toddlers and reading books with rich vocabulary.

### What do you learn about a research-based curriculum from this vignette?

- El Bosque Early Head Start's implementation team used the *Implementation Guide: Using the ELOF to Inform Curriculum Planning and Implementation* to align their curriculum with the ELOF. They found that their curriculum covers all five domains of the ELOF. However, they discovered they could provide additional supports for children's development in the Vocabulary and Emergent Literacy sub-domains.
- The *Implementation Guide* helps education staff and program leaders plan how to strengthen teaching practices that ensure they fully support all ELOF sub-domains.

## Resources to Support Your Work

*Implementation Guide: Using the ELOF to Inform Curriculum Planning and Implementation*. This resource provides the process and tools for aligning a curriculum with the ELOF and for strengthening teaching practices.

[https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/no-search/elof-03-inform-curriculum-planning-  
implement.pdf](https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/no-search/elof-03-inform-curriculum-planning-implement.pdf)

*Early Essentials Webisode 9: Language Development*. In this resource Linda Espinosa and others from the field share their tips on how to support language development with all children including those who are dual language learners.

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/video/early-essentials-webisode-9-language-development>

*Making It Work!* This planning resource supports American Indian and Alaska Native (AIAN) Head Start programs teach their language and culture while meeting Head Start requirements.

[https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/culture-language/article/making-it-work-connecting-cultural-learning-  
experiences-american-indian](https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/culture-language/article/making-it-work-connecting-cultural-learning-experiences-american-indian)

# Standardized Training Procedures and Curriculum Materials to Support Implementation

Head Start Program Performance Standard §1302.32(a)(1)(i):

Programs must use curricula that “have standardized training procedures and curriculum materials to support implementation.”



What does “standardized training procedures and curriculum materials to support implementation” mean?

**Standardized training procedures** include initial and ongoing training to support education staff as they learn to implement a curriculum with fidelity (i.e., as it was designed to be used). Standardized training procedures provide consistent content (e.g., curriculum approach and guiding principles) and delivery methods (e.g., training length, in-person or virtual) across training sessions. Standardized training procedures vary across curricula and may include

- in-person training offered by the curriculum developers, those qualified to train on behalf of the developer, or in-person trainings prescribed by the developer;
- training materials to be used by education managers and coaches, such as training scripts, presentations, webinars, and online modules.

**Curriculum materials to support implementation** include resources that come with a curriculum to help education staff understand how to use it (i.e., what to do and how). The materials might also include resources to help education managers and coaches support education staff to effectively implement the curriculum. Curriculum materials vary across curricula and may include

- manuals for education managers and staff to support understanding of the curriculum’s approach, guiding principles, and teaching materials;
- guides for education staff to support curriculum implementation, such as lesson plans that describe how to implement specific learning experiences and how to individualize for all children (e.g., dual or tribal language learners);
- tools that help assess the fidelity of implementation;
- reflection or self-assessment materials for education managers, coaches, and staff;
- coaching and other individualized training resources to guide curriculum implementation.

## Why are standardized training procedures and curriculum materials to support implementation important?

Research shows that ongoing professional development can build education staff's competencies related to curriculum implementation. Standardized training procedures offer education staff a consistent, foundational understanding of the curriculum and how to use it. Curriculum materials that support implementation help education staff use the curriculum with fidelity to promote children's learning and development.

### What do standardized training procedures and curriculum materials to support implementation look like?

**Read the following vignette to learn how Casa Naranja Head Start program leaders and staff used their curriculum's standardized training procedures and materials to support implementation.**

Casa Naranja Head Start program leaders and staff read the HSPPS and realized they had never thought about standardized training before. As a first step, they review their curriculum and their own professional development guides and policies. The team decides they will focus their upcoming pre-service meeting on training on the curriculum for all staff. They also develop a plan to target a few of their in-service events on further training in the curriculum. For new staff, the team decides that coaching will focus on curriculum implementation.

They find three online training modules that include presentations, video clips, and handouts to use in their pre- and in-service training. Two modules are designed for education staff and focus on becoming familiar with the curriculum as well as implementing it with fidelity. The third module is designed for education managers and coaches. It emphasizes ongoing training and support and offers strategies to individualize the support to match staff needs, including introductory or more advanced professional development.

Casa Naranja Head Start also explores additional curriculum materials to support implementation. The curriculum includes teaching materials that describe ways to set up the environment and how to implement learning experiences. Some teaching materials offer strategies to individualize learning experiences for dual language learners and children with disabilities (or suspected of having delays) or other special needs. Teachers use these curriculum materials in their daily planning and implementation. Furthermore, the education manager uses the curriculum's fidelity tool, including observations and interviews, to review how teachers use the curriculum. She develops a professional development plan to improve implementation based on the fidelity data and feedback from coaches and teachers.

### What do you learn about standardized training procedures and curriculum materials to support implementation from this vignette?

- Casa Naranja Head Start's curriculum offers standardized training procedures and a variety of curriculum materials to support implementation that can be used in professional development with staff.
- Casa Naranja Head Start program leaders and staff used standardized training procedures and curriculum materials to understand their program's curriculum and how to implement it with fidelity.

## Resources to Support Your Work

*Workforce Development: Ongoing Professional Learning.* This resource provides more information on the importance of ongoing professional development and training.

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/workforce-development-ongoing-professional-learning.pdf>

*Dual Language Learners Toolkit.* This toolkit provides resources that can be used to support young children who are learning their home languages and English.

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/culture-language/article/dual-language-learners-toolkit>



# Head Start and Early Head Start Home-Based Curriculum Checklist: What is Research-Based?

Research-based curriculum for the home-based program option is founded on solid research on parenting concepts, skills, and practices that promote healthy child development.



- Does your curriculum, or the curriculum you are considering, meet Head Start Program Performance Standard 1302.35 *Education in home-based programs (d) Home-based curriculum?*

**A program that operates the home-based option must:**

- (1) Ensure home visiting and group socializations implement a developmentally appropriate research-based early childhood home-based curriculum that:
  - (i) Promotes the parent's role as the child's teacher through experiences focused on the parent-child relationship and, as appropriate, the family's traditions, culture, values, and beliefs;
  - (ii) Aligns with the *Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework: Ages Birth to Five* and, as appropriate, state early learning standards, and is sufficiently content-rich within the Framework to promote measurable progress toward goals outlined in the Framework; and,
  - (iii) Has an organized developmental scope and sequence that includes plans and materials for learning experiences based on developmental progressions and how children learn.

## Developed for Home-Based or Home Visiting Programs

- Is the curriculum designed to be used in home-based or home visiting programs?
- Does it focus on how home visitors support the parents' role as their child's teacher?
- Does it provide content that supports the home visitor's ability to engage, connect, and establish relationships with families?
- Are the home visiting experiences and activities rich in content? Are they culturally and linguistically responsive to the families served?
- Does it promote parenting knowledge, attitudes, and practices that research has shown to be effective in supporting children's learning and development?
- Does it focus on practices that support parents in their ability to foster and guide their child's learning during everyday interactions and routines?
- Does it support parents on how to use the home as the learning environment by using everyday activities and routines as opportunities for healthy growth and development?
- Does it focus on how home visitors support the parent-child relationship?
- Have you looked at Program Information Report (PIR)\* data on curriculum developed for use in home-based or home visiting programs that are being used by other grantees?

*\*In the 2016 PIR data, the majority, or 61% of grantees were using a curriculum that was designed to be used in home-based and/or home visiting programs. These grantees were implementing Parents as Teachers, Partners for a Healthy Baby, or Growing Great Kids.*

- Does it provide strategies for home visitors to engage parents in observing and assessing their child's development and progress toward reaching learning goals?
- Does it allow for individualization based on children and parents' strengths, interests, learning style(s), and needs?
- Have you joined the MyPeers Home Visiting Community to connect with peers and learn what they have to say about the curriculum they are using? You can join the MyPeers Home Visiting Community by going to <http://www.123contactform.com/form-2230355/My-Peers>.

# Head Start and Early Head Start Home-Based Curriculum Selection Checklist



1302.35 *Education in home-based programs.* (d) *Home-based curriculum.* A program that operates the home-based option must:

- (1) Ensure home visiting and group socializations implement a developmentally appropriate research-based early childhood home-based curriculum that:
  - (i) Promotes the parent's role as the child's teacher through experiences focused on the parent-child relationship and, as appropriate, the family's traditions, culture, values, and beliefs;
  - (ii) Aligns with the *Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework: Ages Birth to Five* and, as appropriate, state early learning standards, and is sufficiently content-rich within the Framework to promote measurable progress toward goals outlined in the Framework; and,
  - (iii) Has an organized developmental scope and sequence that includes plans and materials for learning experiences based on developmental progressions and how children learn.

When your program is selecting a home-based curriculum, use this checklist to guide the decision-making process.

## Before You Begin

- Have you reviewed the NCECDTL resource *Head Start and Early Head Start Home-Based Curriculum Selection Checklist: What Is Research-Based?*
- Have you determined who needs to be involved in the curriculum selection process and serve on a curriculum selection team (e.g., home-based supervisors, home visitors, professional development staff, parents, policy council members, community representatives)?
- Have you developed a plan which includes the process and timeline the curriculum selection team will use?

## Meeting Head Start Program Performance Standards

- Does the curriculum meet the requirements for education in home-based programs under Head Start Program Performance Standard (HSPPS) 1302.35?
- Does it have an organized developmental scope and sequence that includes plans and materials for learning experiences based on how children learn and the way they develop?
- Does the curriculum provide content to support parents as they provide learning experiences that promote measurable progress towards the goals outlined in the *Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework*?
- Does your program have the capacity to support staff in implementing the curriculum effectively and with fidelity including training, ongoing professional development and supervision?
- Does the curriculum provide sufficient content and materials for weekly 90-minute visits for a minimum of 46 weeks a year for Early Head Start and 32 weeks a year for Head Start (HSPPS 1302.22(c)(1) and (2))?

## Focus on Supporting Parents' Capacity to Promote Healthy Child Development and School Readiness Goals

- Does it promote parents' roles as the child's teacher through experiences focused on the parent-child relationship?
- Does the curriculum focus on the home as a learning environment and on using materials found in the home for learning activities?
- Do curriculum-intended outcomes match your program's school readiness goals?
- Does the curriculum provide strategies to promote language-rich communication (in the family's home language) between parents and children that supports and extends children's learning?

## Individualization and Responsiveness

- Does the curriculum provide the best fit for the needs of your population?
- Is the curriculum culturally and linguistically responsive?
- Does the curriculum address dual or tribal language learners?
- Does the curriculum provide guidance for supporting parents who have children with disabilities or suspected delays or other special needs?
- Does the curriculum address the role of ongoing assessment to support planning and individualizing based on assessment information?
- Does the curriculum address parent involvement and engagement in the ongoing assessment process?

## Costs and Resources

- Have the costs of curriculum manuals, training costs—face-to-face, virtual, and consumables (e.g., home visit forms and parent handouts/booklets)—been taken into consideration?
- Are the costs of implementing the curriculum in line with your budget?

## Training and Ongoing Professional Development

- Do the current staff have the capacity and/or the qualifications to implement the curriculum effectively and with fidelity?
- What training do the curriculum developers offer (e.g., onsite/face to face, webinars, and online self-paced training modules)?
- What materials are available from the curriculum developer to support implementation of the curriculum with fidelity?
- What materials are available for program staff to use to provide ongoing training or technical assistance on implementing the curriculum beyond what the publisher provides?
- Is supervision available to fully support staff in the implementation of this curriculum?
- Have you joined the MyPeers Home Visiting Community to connect with peers and learn what they have to say about the curriculum they are using? You can join the MyPeers Home Visiting Community by going to <http://www.123contactform.com/form-2230355/My-Peers>.

## Systems Change

- How will implementation of the curriculum impact data collection, analyzing data, and tracking trends over time (or over the 5-year grant cycle)?
- If you have both Early Head Start and Head Start home-based programs, does the curriculum cover the birth to five continuum or will you need to have two separate curricula?
- Is your program able to plan a sufficient timeframe to match the time needed to implement the curriculum effectively and with fidelity?

## Making a Selection Decision

- Do you have plans for the selection team to meet to review all the information from the checklist and determine which curriculum best meets the needs of your parents, program, staff, and community?
- After selection, will you develop an implementation plan and timeline to phase in the new curriculum over a reasonable and sufficient timeframe?
- Will your implementation plan outline the initial installation of the curriculum as well as the steps leading to full implementation?