

Community Assessment Matrix

The community assessment describes the context in which Head Start and Early Head Start programs operate and is useful for ensuring that the correct services are provided to the appropriate population. This resource can assist program staff in coordinating their efforts to gather information required for a community assessment. The assessment paints a picture of the community and describes the diverse needs of families who may receive services. In addition, the community assessment covers the community's history, its economic and political scene, and its strengths and challenges.

Note: Bold, italicized items are required by the [Head Start Program Performance Standards, Subpart A, 1302.11\(b\)\(1\)](#).

"Triggers" for Data Collection <i>(Customize this list and add information not listed. What do you want to know?)</i>	Information Source <i>(Who/What agency or resource can assist you in gathering the information you need for your community assessment?)</i>	<i>These columns can be completed by members of your team.</i>		
		Responsible CA Team Member	Date Initiated	Date Completed
General Area Description – Demographics				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposed service area: Geographic boundaries (size, counties, distinguishing characteristics) • Governing structure • Population and related trends • Racial and ethnic composition • Gender, ages • Household composition • Economic activities • Future trends • Median income level • Principle source of income • Number below poverty level 				
Head Start-ELIGIBLE Children and Families				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ General <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Number of eligible infants, toddlers, preschool-age children, and expectant mothers ○ Geographic location ○ Race and ethnicity ○ Languages spoken ○ Children experiencing homelessness ○ Children in foster care ○ Household composition ○ Principle source of income ○ Median income level/ Employment ○ Number of children living below poverty level 				



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Number of public assistance recipients 				
Education Needs of Eligible Families				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education level • Adult educational attainment • Drop-out rates • Information on functional literacy levels 				
Health and Social Service Needs of Eligible Families				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incidence of child abuse and neglect • Reports of spousal abuse • Number of children with disabilities, including types of disabilities • Incidence of drug and alcohol abuse • Number of children born to addicted mothers • Infant and child death rates • Number of low-birth weight babies • Teen pregnancy rates • Women receiving prenatal healthcare • Immunization levels among school children • Prevalent health problems • Communicable diseases • Air and water quality 				
Nutrition Needs of Eligible Families				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children receiving free lunch and breakfast • Food stamp recipients • Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program participants • Participant in food distribution programs • Availability of low-cost food 				
Housing and Homelessness				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overcrowding/availability • Affordability • Conditions • HUD housing • Utilities • Homeless count • Mobility • Other prevalent social or economic factors 				



Child Care Availability

- **Child development, child care centers, and family child care programs, including home visiting, publicly funded state and local preschool and**
- **Approximate number of Head Start-eligible children served**
- Number or percent of working mothers
- **Typical work, school, or training schedules**

Transportation and Communication

- Vehicle ownership
- Relevant aspects of road conditions, climate and weather relating to jobs, services, isolation
- Availability of public transportation services
- Proportion of population with telephones/cell phones/televisions/computers

Resources available to address needs of eligible children and families

- Social service, mental health services
- Health, dental health, and nutrition resources
- **Disability services and resources**

Community Strengths

- Positive community attributes

Head Start ENROLLED Children and Families

- Recruitment area
- Center location
- Number and location of enrolled children
- Ages of enrolled children
- Tribal/racial/ethnic composition of enrolled children
- Attendance/waiting lists/over-income children
- Parent involvement and recruitment experience
- Number of foster children enrolled
- Number of homeless children enrolled
- Number of enrolled children with disabilities
- Types of disabilities (by diagnostic category) of enrolled children



- Resources provided to enrolled children with disabilities by other agencies

Head Start Staff

- Racial, ethnic, tribal composition
- Languages spoken
- Educational attainment

Relevant Opinions of Community Needs

Opinions of parents

- Prevalent community problems
- Knowledge of existing resources
- Accessibility of available resources
- Adequate service provision by existing resources
- Additional resources needed

Opinions of community leaders/institutions

- Prevalent community problems
- Knowledge of existing resources
- Accessibility of available resources
- Adequate service provision by existing resources
- Suggestions for improving services
- Additional resources needed

Opinions of Head Start staff

- Prevalent community problems
- Knowledge of existing resources
- Accessibility of available resources
- Adequate service provision by existing resources
- Suggestions for improving services
- Additional resources needed

Community Assessment Annual Update

Subpart A 1302.11(b)(2) of the Head Start Program Performance Standards requires programs to review and update the community assessment annually to reflect any significant changes, including increased availability of publicly-funded pre-kindergarten (and an assessment of how the pre-kindergarten available in the community meets the needs of the parents and children served by the program, and whether it is offered full school day), rates of family and child homelessness, and significant shift in community demographics and resources.

