

SOUTHWEST HRA HEAD START

Section: Administration
Subject: Community Assessment
Revised: February 27, 2003

REGULATION REFERENCE:

Grant Application instructions, Part IV; 45 CFR 1304.51 and 1306 Program Options (ACYFIM-93-01); 45 CFR Part 1305, Eligibility Selection, Enrollment and Attendance in Head Start (ACF-IM-92-20).

POLICY:

Each Head Start grantee must conduct a Community Assessment (CA) within its service area once every three years. The CA must include the collection and analysis of information about the service area as described below. In each of the two years following completion of the CA, the grantee must conduct a review to determine whether there have been significant changes in the information. If so, the CA must be updated and program decisions must be reconsidered.

PROCEDURE:

The Program will conduct an in-depth Community Assessment (CA) of the Southwest Human Resource Agency seven county area the first year of a three-year funding cycle to collect recent data and pinpoint relevant physical, economic, social or other community needs related to the design and implementation of the Head Start program. The CA will begin in the fall and continue through March as a vital part of our program planning process.

CA information will include the following:

1. The demographic make-up of Head Start eligible children and families, including the estimated number, geographic location, and racial and ethnic composition.
2. Other existing pre-school and child care programs that are serving Head Start children, including United Way, Even Start and other publicly funded State and local preschool programs, and the approximate number of Head Start eligible children served by each.
3. The estimated number of children with disabilities (three and four year olds), including types of disabilities and relevant services and resources provided to these children by community agencies.

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4. Head Start program data regarding the education, health, nutrition, social services needs of Head Start eligible children and their families, such as number of siblings, income, source of income, single parents, head of household, education levels, etc.
5. The education, health, nutrition and social service needs of Head Start eligible children and their families as defined by families of Head Start children (Family Partnership and Agreements) and other institutions in the community that serves young low-income children and their families.
6. Resources in the community that could be used to address the needs of Head Start eligible children and their families, including assessments of their availability and accessibility.
7. Population projections and trends for service areas, such as transient populations, changing neighborhoods, housing developments/projects, ethnic composition, etc.
8. Economic trends that impact low-income families in the service area, i.e., new industries entering or old industries closing, job opportunities available, welfare reform, etc.
9. Survey Head Start parents and staff for CA information, i.e., gaps in services, needs, etc.

The following information will be used to estimate the number of eligible children:

- Census Data - Southwest Tennessee Development District
- AFDC/Food Stamp Data - Department of Human Services
- Free Lunch Data - Public Schools Kindergarten Programs
- TennCare Data - Department of Human Services (Public Welfare)
- Each County Health Department/WIC/ESPDT, etc
- Each Housing Authority
- Other Child Care Programs (Day Care, Even Start, etc.)
- Head Start Licensed Child Care Centers (Tennessee Department of Human Services Licensing Unit)
- Child Find Reports on Children with Disabilities (Schools Special Education Departments)
- Tennessee Department of Employment Security
- United Way
- Door-to-door surveys by Head Start Family Services Staff will also be made when necessary

Program decisions for basic grant applications and expansion will be made based upon the CA, as well as Program Information Report (PIR), and self-assessment reports to:

1. Help determine the Head Start Program Philosophy and short-range objectives.

2. Determine the type of comprehensive services that are most needed and the program option(s) that will be implemented.
3. Determine the recruitment areas with the greatest needs that will be served by the program based upon available transportation which can be a deciding factor.
4. Determine appropriate center locations.
5. Set criteria that define the types of children and families who will be given priority for recruitment and selection.

In each of the two years following completion of the in-depth CA, the program will conduct a review to determine whether there have been significant changes in the information.

The final CA report will include a brief introduction which provides an overview of the service area and community. This will consist of general information about the community including relevant history, location and geographic information, basic population characteristics, urban and verbal environment economic trends, principal income sources, poverty population and trends, and special problems and concerns in the community. The report will be supported by appropriate maps, charts and tables.

Information from the CA will be presented to Social Services/Parent Involvement Advisory Committee and staff and to the Policy Council for approval and program decisions. A summary of the CA will be submitted with the annual Grant Application along with the program decisions that have been made.

**SOUTHWEST HUMAN RESOURCE AGENCY
HEAD START
COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT CYCLE AND TIME TABLE**

PLANNING			
STEP		TASK	PERSON RESPONSIBLE
1	Dec./Jan	Review the procedure, forms, time lines, etc., utilized the previous year.	Head Start Director & Asst. Dir. for F. C. and P.
		Review the CA procedure/process with coordinators/management team and request input regarding community needs and resources.	
		Review previous community assessments.	
		Revise written plan, procedures, forms, etc., for the CA process, if needed.	
		Review sources of information and revise if necessary.	
	February	Involve Parent Involvement/Social Services Advisory Committee in the process, or brief the members and ask for their input.	Asst. Dir. for Family and Comm. Partnerships & Head Start Director
		Review the CA Plan/Process with management Team.	Head Start Director
COLLECT, ANALYZE, AND SUMMARIZE INFORMATION			
2	February	Conduct CA by reviewing latest census reports, contacting service agencies for information, reviewing PIR and other program records, etc.	Head Start Director & Asst. Dir for Family and Community Partnerships
		Prepare report of CA findings.	Head Start Director
DECISION MAKING			
3	March	Make program decisions from CA; i.e., center locations, target areas, program options, etc.	Head Start Director
		Submit CA report and program decisions to Policy Council for approval or disapproval.	Head Start Director