

EHS/HS/ECEAP

Recruitment

Early Head Start/Head Start Performance Standard

1302.13

In order to reach those most in need of services, a program must develop and implement a recruitment process designed to actively inform all families with eligible children within the recruitment area of the availability of program services, and encourage and assist them in applying for admission to the program. A program must include specific efforts to actively locate and recruit children with disabilities and other vulnerable children, including homeless children and children in foster care.

Child Recruitment ECEAP PAO-37

Contractors must conduct ongoing recruitment throughout the year to:

- Identify potentially eligible families in their service area.
- Inform families about ECEAP services.
- Encourage families to apply for ECEAP.
- Maintain a viable waiting list.

Contractors must focus their recruitment efforts to locate age-eligible children:

- In state or tribal child welfare system including foster care, kinship care, Child Protective Services, Family Assessment Response services.
- With developmental delays or disabilities.
- Who are experiencing homelessness as defined by the federal McKinney-Vento Education of Homeless Children and Youth Assistance Act as lacking a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason.
 - i. A fixed residence is one that is stationary, permanent and not subject to change.
 - ii. A regular residence is one that is use on a regular (i.e. nightly) basis.
 - iii. An adequate residence is one that is sufficient for meeting both the physical and psychological needs typically met in home environments.

Contractors must document their recruitment procedure and strategies in ELMS.

It is a requirement that staff conduct on-going and aggressive recruitment efforts every month and on an ongoing basis. In collaboration with the Family Services Program Manager, the ERSEA Program Manager, the ERSEA/Recruitment Coordinator Assistants, and the Family Services Coordinator Assistants and other Early Learning staff, Policy Council and Kitsap Community Resources (KCR) in order to maintain up-to-date wait lists so that vacancies will be filled immediately with eligible children and families.

Recruitment is the systematic, year-round outreach to our service areas to identify potentially eligible families and provide them information about the EHS/HS/ECEAP program. The most urgent recruitment needs are indicated by the yearly Community Assessment. The process of recruiting occurs in a number of ways and includes community education, displays of fliers, program inquiry forms and brochures in



businesses, schools, social service agencies and neighborhoods and by the physical presence of staff at appropriate community and school events. The most effective recruitment occurs when an eligible family has a positive encounter with EHS/HS family.

Collaboration is an important element of recruitment. The OESD program works closely with KCR to develop and disseminate information about each agency's Early Head Start, and Head Start, programs. Jointly developed recruitment information about program options and sites is distributed according to a collaborative annual plan. With parental consent, information is shared between the four programs to ensure families find a program that best suits their needs.

Recruitment is also the work done with the pool of eligible applicants to give further information about program options and to assist their application. Performance Standards clearly indicate we have an obligation to assist in completing paperwork.

Translation assistance and interpretation services may be provided when needed.

Non-Discrimination:

It is the policy of the Olympic ESD 114 to maintain a recruitment process that insures eligible families are enrolled regardless of race, color, national origin, citizenship, culture, gender, sexual orientation, family configuration, religion or physical or mental disability. Our services comply with the ADA and Family Policy Initiative principles defined in RCW 74.14A.025.

Who Recruits:

Recruitment efforts are coordinated by the KCR and OESD Family Service Program Manager, the ERSEA Program Manager, and the two Policy Councils. The Policy Council in each program reviews and revises the annual recruitment plan as needed based on the most current Community Assessment and program needs. During the program year, ERSEA Recruitment staff have primary responsibility for implementing the activities and strategies in the plan to ensure vacancies are filled and a waiting list is maintained. Part-year Family Services staff has summer hours included in their yearly calendar for more intensive canvassing and recruiting efforts and to ensure a greater number of applicants are recruited than enrollment opportunities. Recruitment continues year-round regardless of enrollment status, recruitment efforts should be intentional, regularly occurring, and regularly evaluated; recruitment efforts should also be documented to include location, date, information shared, and resulting applications and/or enrollments. All Early Learning staff are responsible for participating in the recruitment activities. Recruitment efforts are understood to be a major focus for *all* staff until all program options are fully enrolled and wait lists established.

The ERSEA Program Manager and the ERSEA/Recruitment Coordinator Assistants overseeing recruitment are responsible for ensuring adequate recruitment materials; technical assistance and support are available.

Outreach to Children from Low-Income Families:

In accordance with the Head Start Performance standards recruitment includes efforts to identify children from low income families whose incomes are at or below the 100% of the federal poverty level. Outreach to children within income guidelines requirements for EHS/HS/ECEAP is conducted throughout the year in several different ways including but not limited to regularly scheduled recruitment tables at the Community Service Offices, food banks, WIC, St. Vincent's, back to school days in districts, free summer meal service etc.

Outreach to Homeless Children

In accordance with Head Start and ECEAP Performance Standards, recruitment includes efforts to identify eligible homeless children. Outreach to homeless children for entrance into the program is conducted throughout the year in several ways. Ongoing connections with school district Homeless Liaisons help assess placement and family support. Staff is invited to attend the local Annual Homeless Conference (as available). The ERSEA Program Manager/Team and other program staff members

attend regular community interagency meetings to share resources with social service agencies serving homeless families. Staff also attends community functions designed to reach local homeless populations for example Project Connect (Bremerton), Operation Day of Hope (Poulsbo), OC Connect (Bremerton). Relationships with local shelters are maintained through community meetings, one-on-one visits and on-site staff trainings to establish service relationships with shelter staff.

Outreach to Foster Children

OESD staff members participate on Child Protective Teams in partnership with Department of Child and Family Services (DCFS) to build and maintain relationships with the Foster Care personnel. Contact with local private Foster Care programs is maintained with enrolling staff and Family Services Program Manager to increase awareness of EHS/HS/ECEAP/Early Head Start programs. The ERSEA Program Manager/Team attends staff training at DCFS to inform staff of EHS/HS/ECEAP services.

Outreach to Children with Disabilities

Ongoing recruitment of children with disabilities is conducted throughout the year. Relationships with the school district Special Education Departments is maintained by OESD staff to ensure that correct placement and eligibility is maintained for preschool age children. Vacancies are shared with the school districts. ERSEA Program Manager/Team and Early Head Start Managers maintain relationship with Family Resource Coordinator at Holly Ridge Center to coordinate enrollment and openings for Early Head Start. OESD staff attends FICC (Family Interagency Coordinating Council) Meetings. Recruitment efforts are demonstrated at events designated for children with special needs and their families.

Recruitment Strategies:

NOTE: Always obtain the permission of appropriate managers or administrators before distributing recruitment materials in the community. Specific, signed releases are required before using photographs of program families in recruitment materials. Schools often require pre-approval of flyers or material that is distributed to students and families.

The following recruitment strategies are among those used by the program:

Schools

- Banners displayed prominently, announcements on reader boards
- Announcements or “ads” in school newsletters
- Brochures, flyers and applications available in school and administrative offices
- Flyers posted in school windows and on bulletin boards
- Recruitment letters with application and brochures to principals, counselors, special education staff, LAP teachers, school nurses, etc.
- E-mail school staff
- Flyers or brochures in kindergarten registration materials
- Attend “kindergarten round-ups” or school transition meetings.

Families

- Ask families to distribute brochures and application to others they know who might be interested in, and eligible for, Head Start, Early Head Start or ECEAP programs

- Ask families to host information tables and/or post flyers and posters in places they frequent (e.g. grocery stores, Laundromats, churches)
- Ask families who live in apartment complexes and mobile home parks to post information in laundry rooms and other common-use areas
- Host an Open House and invite parents to bring friends and neighbors
- Provide recruitment materials at Policy Council Meetings

DSHS/DCFS

- Obtain DSHS list of eligible TANF program families and send letter, brochure and application at least one time yearly and in targeted areas as needed
- Send second mailing to those families that didn't respond
- Use targeted mailings as needed
- Educate DSHS/DCFS caseworkers about program on a regular basis and alert DSHS/DCFS of program vacancies
- Attend WorkFirst Partners meeting and distribute information on program
- Man a recruitment table at the CSO when appropriate
- Attend scheduled WorkFirst Partners meetings

Community Outreach

- Advertise in local newspapers and newsletters when needed
- Seek coverage for special events
- Brochures, flyers, applications and presentations to community agencies and service providers including:
 - Bremerton Housing Authority and KCCHA low income housing programs
 - DCFS Foster Care
 - CPS caseworkers
 - YWCA Domestic Violence programs and shelters
 - Health clinics, hospitals and health district offices
 - Medical and dental providers
 - WIC offices
 - USDA summer lunch programs
 - Community and family support agencies and centers
 - Salvation Army Commodity food bank
 - Community food and clothing banks
 - Thrift shops
 - Olympic College
 - Local Post Offices
 - Library Branches
 - Churches
 - Kitsap Mental Health, Lutheran Social Services, Center for Child & Family Therapy
 - Navy Family Service Centers and Family Advocacy Programs
 - Navy Relief
 - Navy Ombudsman Groups
 - Child Care Resource and Referral
 - Interagency Coordinating Committee
 - Employment Security
 - TANF/WorkFirst Partners

- Drug/Alcohol Treatment Centers and Programs
- Holly Ridge
- Public Recreational Areas
- Parks and Recreational Programs
- Pediatricians' Offices
- Dental Offices
- Set up table at selected community events
- Have booth with activities for children at appropriate Olympic College events
- Hang banner across main street of Port Orchard and other places throughout the county
- Community reader boards such as the Mentor signboard
- Provide local businesses with flyers for employee lounges and community bulletinboards
- Host "parent appreciation" tables and offer information to employees at local businesses
- Presentation to local civic organizations such as Kiwanis, Rotary

Other ongoing efforts

- Contact manager and arrange door to door efforts in low income housing areas, hotels and motels and campgrounds where homeless families are likely to be
- Continue practice of recruitment displays (artwork, photographs) in public venues
- Display children's artwork at Central Branch of Kitsap Regional Library
- Joint yellow pages display ad with KCR in Child Care section
- Community white pages listing
- OESD Website
- Olympic College Website
- Make applications and information available at each site and Child Care Connections center
- Continue outreach to non-English speaking populations and other underserved populations as identified in the Community Assessment
- Host children's activity at Central Kitsap Fire and Safety event
- Distribute informational materials at parades, the Kitsap County Fair, and other large public events

Extraordinary Efforts

If the wait list does not provide an eligible (see Eligibility Section) child for enrollment, the enrolling staff must take immediate action by contacting other enrolling staff to begin extraordinary targeted recruitment efforts with a goal of filling vacancies within 24 hours and build a wait list for the program. Extraordinary Recruitment efforts include the involvement of the ERSEA Program Manager, Family Services Coordinator Assistants and ERSEA Coordinator Assistants as needed. A plan for targeted recruitment will be developed and put in place. Extraordinary recruitment efforts should be considered in operation with the top priority to fill vacancies and build a wait list for the site in question. Among other extraordinary recruitment actions, the ERSEA Program Manager should coordinate with the Disabilities Program Manager to contact the school district Special Education or Part C provider assess the possible placement of a child receiving special services at the site. Recruitment efforts will be maintained with the ERSEA Program Manager.