Olympic Educational Service District 114

Early Learning Team Handbook

Welcome to the OESD 114 Early Learning Department!

Mission

Through caring relationships with families, respect for diversity, and community partnerships, we nurture school readiness by promoting supportive learning environments, comprehensive health and well-being, and the empowerment of children and families.

Values

- Relationships
- Collaboration
- Curiosity
- Empathy
- Compassion
- Inclusion
- Innovation

We provide a strengths-based approach and nurturing environments where children can learn, thrive, and develop on their journey towards school readiness. It is through this same strengths-based approach that we partner with families as the first and most important educator in their child's life.

The three tenets of Early Head Start, Head Start and ECEAP:

Children—the whole child

- Developmentally appropriate, intentional play-based activities
- Early and ongoing developmental screenings and assessments
- Individualized Learning Plans based on the family's informed developmental goals
- Individualized lesson and home visit planning based on children's strengths and goals

Families—the first and most important educator

- Strengths-based assessment and goal planning
- Linkage with community resources and supports

Health and Wellness—physical and mental wellness

- Early and ongoing health and social emotional screenings and assessments
- Tracking of immunization status, Well Child and Dental exams
- Oral health education
- Nutrition support
- Mental health supports

The three tenets come together to provide a rich environment in which children and families can thrive.

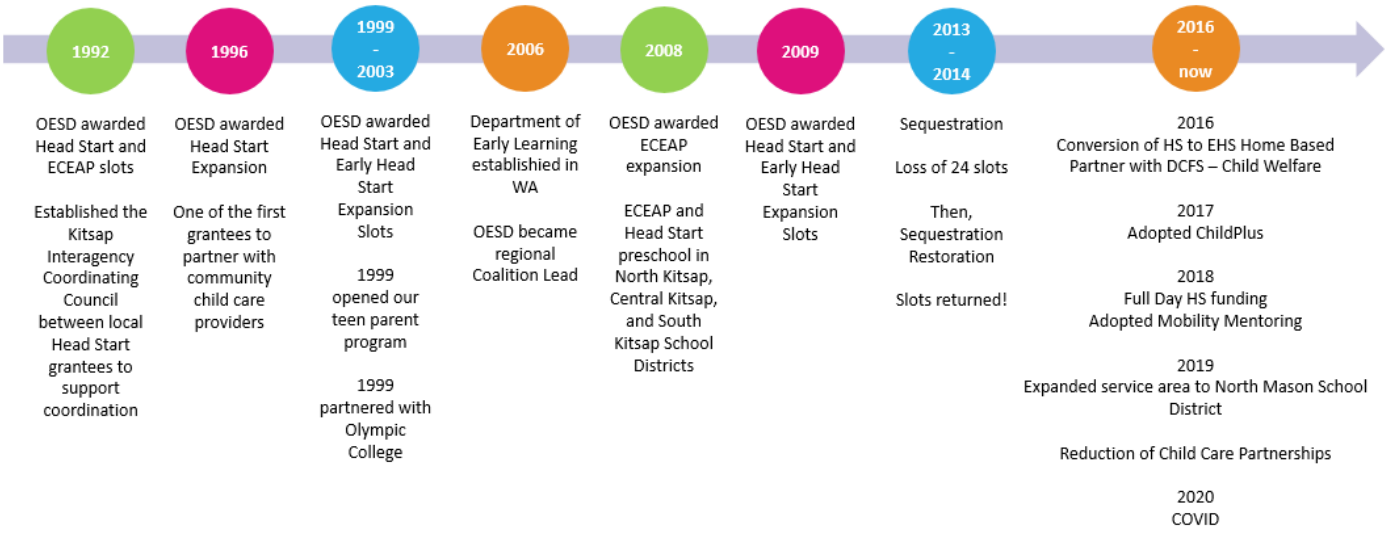
Core Values

Standards of ethical behavior in early childhood care and education are based on commitment to core values that are deeply rooted in the history of our field.

We have committed ourselves to the following:

- Appreciating childhood as a unique and valuable stage of the human life cycle
- Basing our work with children on knowledge of child development
- Appreciating and supporting the close ties between the child and family
- Recognizing that children are best understood and supported in the context of family, culture, community, and society
- Respecting the dignity, worth, and uniqueness of each individual (child, family member, and colleague)
- Helping children and adults achieve their full potential in the context of relationships that are based on trust, respect, and positive regard

History of Our Department



History of Head Start

The Head Start program was designed to help break the cycle of poverty, providing preschool children of low-income families with a comprehensive program to meet their emotional, social, health, nutritional and psychological needs. A key tenet of the program established that it be culturally responsive to the communities served, and that the communities have an investment in its success through the contribution of volunteer hours and other donations as nonfederal share.

The Head Start Program Performance Standards were originally published in 1975. In 1998, the Head Start program was reauthorized to expand to full-day and full-year services.

Programs assist families in meeting their own personal goals and achieving self-sufficiency across a wide variety of domains, such as housing stability, continued education, and financial security.

**Source: https://www.acf.hhs.gov/ohs/about/history-head-start*

History of Early Head Start

In 1995, the first Early Head Start grants were awarded, establishing services for pregnant women, infants and toddlers. Early Head Start programs provide family-centered services for low-income families with very young children.

Early Head Start programs, similar to preschool Head Start programs, provide family-centered services designed to promote children's development and empower parents in fulfilling their parental role as they move toward self-sufficiency. This includes providing early, continuous, intensive, and comprehensive child development and family support services to enhance children's development.

Early Head Start programs support continuity of early intervention and related services for children with disabilities and their families, in collaboration with other service providers. This includes supporting the family from the enrollment and identification process when the child enters the program, through planning and coordination of services for scheduled transitions at age three.

EHS programs can support or enhance Part C services if modifications or adaptations are needed to reach the child's Individual Family Services Plan (IFSP) goals within the natural environment.

History of Early Head Start Child Care Partnership (EHS CCP)

In the 2013 President Obama announced plans to grow the supply of high-quality early learning opportunities for infants and toddlers from low-income families, meaning they could have expanded access to the high-quality learning and comprehensive services of Early Head Start. The first EHS CCP grants were awarded in 2015.

Integrating Early Head Start comprehensive services and resources into the array of traditional childcare and family childcare settings created new opportunities to improve outcomes for infants, toddlers, and their families.

Childcare centers and family childcare providers respond to the needs of working families by offering flexible and convenient full day and full-year services. In addition, childcare providers have experience providing care that is strongly grounded in the cultural, linguistic, and social needs of the families and their local communities.

History of ECEAP (Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program) *(pronounced "E-Cap")*

Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program funded by Washington State for three and four year old children. It was established in 1985 by the Washington State Legislature as state-funded preschool and modeled after Head Start services.

ECEAP, like Head Start, provides the following:

- Free early learning preschool to support child's development and learning.
- Family support and parent involvement.
- Child health coordination and nutrition.
- Services responsive and appropriate to each child and family's heritage and experience.

Children who attend ECEAP build the beginning skills for reading, math and science. The programs work closely with parents to support their children's health and education and to meet family goals. ECEAP staff support families in accessing medical and dental care and social services.

History of Filming Interactions to Nurture Development (FIND)

FIND was developed at the Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University for both home visiting programs and home and center-based childcare programs. The home and center-based childcare option is currently implemented in Washington as part of the quality rating and improvement system (QRIS) for Early Achievers. The program uses select

video clips of adults engaging with children to reinforce the developmentally supportive interactions of "serve and return.

" Building serve and return skills is a simple, powerful way to build the environment of relationships that promote resilience and help children reach their full potential.

The Home and Center-Based FIND program is a video-based coaching program that aims to strengthen positive interactions between caregivers and children. It is offered to community childcare teachers free of charge.

The cycle of positive, strength-based support follows these steps:

1. The coach films natural interactions in the childcare setting (home or classroom)
2. Trained editors edit the video and select specific interactions that show responsive care
3. Coach reviews the video with the teacher while providing positive, detailed feedback

**Source https://developingchild.harvard.edu/innovation-application/innovation-in-action/find/*

CHILDREN

Intent of Child and Education Services in EHS/HS/ECEAP

Healthy, curious, engaged learners is the intent of our educational and child development elements of programming. Child development and educational supports, whether in the home or classroom, are culturally responsive and integrated into the home life as much as possible.

Parenting is both rewarding and hard. Our team helps parents understand the developmental tasks and milestones their child is practicing and mastering, such as mobility, cause and effect, object permanence, separation anxiety, and autonomy. They help families adapt their responses to meet their children's need and support learning.

Child development is the focus, or base, of our interactions with and supports for families. We screen and monitor through ongoing assessment children's development to support their growth trajectory and to refer for early intervention services if indicated. We use research-based curriculum to guide our conversations with families and planning for children.

We use the following tools to support this work:

CURRICULUM

EHS/HS/ECEAP all utilized research-based, developmentally appropriate curriculum that provides structure for lesson and activity planning.

Conscious Discipline

- Social-Emotional Learning and Classroom Management program
- Skill building for adults to respond rather than react to conflict, create safe homes and safe schools

Parents as Teachers

- This is the foundational curriculum for our Early Head Start Home Visiting program
- It is a nationally utilized, research-based curriculum that builds on the understanding that parents are experts on their children and that families have all they need to provide a connection-rich and learning-rich environment for children

Creative Curriculum

- The foundational curriculum for our Early Head Start, Head Start & ECEAP center-based classrooms
- A research-based curriculum that supports the development of the whole child. It provides structure and guidance for individualized and group planning to ensure children are receiving learning experiences that based on their individual needs and goals

SCREENINGS AND ASSESSMENTS

Screenings and assessments are an integral part of EHS/HS/ECEAP services. Family participation in the screening and assessment process is foundational to building capacity and confidence in the adults in a child's life and honoring that they are the expert on their child.

Screenings allow for early identification of developmental or social emotional needs that can benefit from targeted early intervention services. They provide an understanding of where children are in their development and if they are demonstrating progress as anticipated.

Ongoing developmental assessments allow for tracking of all areas of development and provide families with data that helps them make informed choices in planning for next-steps in developmental goal setting. These goals will translate into school readiness as the child grows.

Parents and caregivers are the experts on their children. We increase family skills and confidence through utilizing strength-based observation and motivational interviewing skills and taking into consideration the cultural experiences and truths of each individual family.

Due to the quality of time and relationships we have with families, we have a unique opportunity and responsibility to work in partnership with parents/caregivers to complete the following for every child:

- Screen early for delays in development, including in hearing and vision and heights and weights
- Conduct thorough, ongoing assessments of all areas of development to show individualized growth
    - Data gathered is shared with families so they can plan for the next stage
    - Data gathered is also used to guide activity and lesson planning for each child
- Refer children for further assessment when our screenings, assessments, or families indicate that a child would benefit from further evaluation(s).

Screening Tools

- **ASQ** *(Ages and Stages Questionnaire)*
    - Developmental screening conducted within the first 45 days
    - Annually or as needed

- **DECA** *(Devereux Early Childhood Assessment)*
    - Social emotional screening conducted within the first 45 days
    - Re-screenings are conducted two more times during the year.

- **Three Prong Vision and Hearing** and **Preschool Vision and Hearing**
    - Conducted within first 45 days
    - Conducted every 6 months for Early Head Start
    - Conducted once during school year for Head Start/ECEAP

Assessment Tools

- **DRDP** *(Desired Results Developmental Profile)*
    - Assessment tool for children in our home visiting program
    - Conducted 4x per year
    - Data is used to support development of lesson planning, Individualized Learning Plans and developmental growth monitoring
- **TSG** *(Teaching Strategies GOLD)*
    - Assessment for children in our center-based programs
    - Conducted 4x per year
    - Data is used to support development of lesson planning, Individualized Learning Plans and developmental growth monitoring

- **PICCOLO** *(Parenting Interactions with Children: Checklist of Observations Linked to Outcomes)*
    - Support for parents in our home visiting programs
    - Measures 29 developmentally supportive parenting behaviors in four critical domains—Affection, Responsiveness, Encouragement, and Teaching.
    - Conducted 3x per year

- **HVORS** *(Home Visit Rating Scale)*
    - Supports home visitor's practices in engaging the parent and the child in home visiting activities and in interactions with each other
    - Includes indicators of relationship building with families, responsiveness to family strengths, facilitation of parent–child interaction, and collaboration with parents. Three family engagement scales include indicators of parent–child interaction, parent engagement, and child engagement in the visit.
    - Conducted 2x per year

DISABILITIES SERVICES IDEA Part B and C - CDC

Partnerships

- For Early Head Start, we refer children to Holly Ridge Center for further assessment and evaluation
- For Head Start and ECEAP, we refer children to their local school district's ChildFind for further assessment and evaluation
- Referrals occur based on screening or assessment results or expressed parent concern.

If a child has a formal early intervention plan (see below), we work with both service coordinators and service providers on aligning goals and services and support families in understanding the referral process.

- **IFSP** (Individualized Family Service Plan): a formal intervention plan for infants and toddlers, age birth through 2 years old.
    - A written treatment plan for early intervention services a child will receive, including how and when these services will be administered. It details a child's current levels of developmental functioning, specific needs, and goals for treatment.
    - Focused on the child and family as well as the services a family needs to help enhance the development of their child.

- **IEP** (Individualized Education Program): a formal intervention plan, written with education system staff and parents/caregivers, for three years old through 12th grade children.
    - A written educational support plan for educational supports provided in the least-restrictive environment. This may include teaching or testing support aids and services, modifications and additional supports needed to help the child make academic progress.
    - Focused on academic success of child.

Referrals

- Referrals are made to outside agencies that are qualified to further assess, and diagnose if necessary, developmental delays.
- Referrals can be made as the result of a screening indication or parent request.
- Referrals are only provided with parental/caregiver permission. We walk them through what to expect in the process, whether the child is 2 weeks old or almost 5 years old.

FAMILIES

Intent of Family Services in EHS/HS/ECEAP

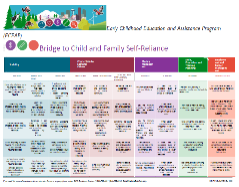
Families are the experts on their children. In supporting families through increased developmental knowledge, achievement of personal goals, connection with community and utilization of resources their children benefit in all ways.

FAMILY SERVICES IN EHS/HS/ECEAP

Family Services encompasses all supports that provide an opportunity for families to develop self-advocacy, access to resource and engage in their community in a confident way.

We support families in strength-finding, goal setting, resource identification and engagement, leadership development, parenting skill development and much more.

MOBILITY MENTORING AND FAMILY GOALS



We work in partnership with families to support each individual goal. We help break down large goals into smaller, SMART goals that set families up for success.

CONNECTING TO RESOURCES

Part of supporting a family is ensuring that they are able to connect to available, needed community resources that will promote a family's self-sufficiency.

These resources may include accessing WIC, TANF or child care subsidy. It may be connecting to a food bank or shelter. Becoming aware of services in the community is an important part of the work you will do with families regardless of your role.

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

There are many opportunities for families to become involved in our program. We encourage participation in as many experiences as possible as it builds relationship with their children, creates a larger community connection, and builds confidence and even resume-building skills.

- Policy Council
- Health Advisory Council
- Parent Workshops
- Family Gatherings/Socializations/Play and Learn Groups

HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Intent of Health and Wellbeing Services in EHS/HS/ECEAP

Health screening and monitoring can help support a family in getting connected to and engaged with primary care providers, dental providers and specialists when needed. While we support the health and wellness of a child, we also encourage the rest of the family to care for their own health and wellness.

Children develop rapidly during the first three years of life and their physical health and mental health affect all aspects of their engagement in learning and growing from attendance to assessment results.

Physical Health

Children who access ongoing health care[3] have better attendance and are more engaged in learning. Consistent attendance helps children prepare for school.[4] Routines such as handwashing and wearing helmets help children stay healthy and avoid injuries.[5]

- **Oral Health**: Children with healthy teeth are better able to eat, speak, and focus on learning. [6, 7]
- **Nutrition**: Good nutrition is essential for children's brain development. Children who have access to nutritious food have energy to learn. Providing healthy snacks and meals helps children's bodies grow, giving them what they need to talk, play, and learn together.[8, 9, 10]
- **Physical Activity and Motor Development**: Staying active benefits young children's physical and cognitive development. Activities that get children moving build motor skills that are useful to reading, writing, and math skills.[11]
- **Sleep and Rest**: When children get enough sleep, they can pay attention, remember what they learn, and manage their feelings. [12]
- **Perceptual Development**: When children use their senses to explore, it helps them learn about the world around them. [14] A child's ability to see and hear affects their reading, writing, and speech and language skills. Sensory screening helps identify children who may need vision or hearing support. [15]

Health Related Screenings and Tracking Requirements

	Early Head Start Home Based	Early Head Start Center Based	Head Start/ECEAP Center Based
Screenings	Three Prong Vision & Hearing Growth (Heights & Weights)	Three Prong Vision & Hearing Growth (Heights & Weights)	Preschool Vision & Hearing Growth (Heights & Weights)
Tracking	Well Child Exams Insurance Access Medical/Dental Home Immunization Status Dental Exams Lead Anemia	Well Child Exams Insurance Access Medical/Dental Home Immunization Status Dental Exams Lead Anemia Medication Administration Meal Offering (CACFP) Emergency Care Form	Well Child Exams Insurance Access Medical/Dental Home Immunization Status Dental Exams Lead Anemia Medication Administration Meal Offering (CACFP) Emergency Care Form

Mental Health

Services that support families are provided in a variety of ways: observation and follow up, classroom observation and follow up, postpartum depression screening support, acute crisis support, and community referrals as needed.

Staff and families can request behavioral support when child social and/or emotional concerns occur.

- **Nurturing and Responsive Relationships:** Early relationships shape children's learning and development. Children thrive when adults support their strengths and needs. Responsive adults help children feel safe and valued and learn how to get along well with others.[17]
- **Self-Regulation:** Children who can manage their feelings can learn and play with peers. They are better able to plan, monitor and control their behavior. They can also adjust to changes in schedules and routines.[18]
- **Prosocial Behavior:** Children who get along with adults learn to work together and follow rules. They can also show concern for, and share, take turns and compromise with other children.[19]
- **Play:** When children play, they use their imagination and creativity. They also solve problems and learn to interact with others; skills that help them grow in all developmental areas.[20]

Family Wellness

Services that promote family well-being help parents keep their families healthy. When families are healthy, safe, and financially secure, they can better support their children's learning.[21, 22]

- **Prenatal and Postpartum Services:** Services for pregnant mothers and expectant families set the stage for children's health and development. Postpartum services promote positive health outcomes for mothers and children.[23, 24]
- **Health Literacy:** Families who have health information they understand can make better health choices for their children.[25]
- **Cultural and Linguistic Responsiveness:** Respecting cultural practices and home languages honors families' experiences and beliefs. This respect encourages children's growth and development by understanding who they are and where they come from.[26, 27]

Nutrition

We provide healthy, culturally and developmentally appropriate nutrition for all of our center-based children. Depending on the site, our food comes from school districts or we make it ourselves.

We provide food, including formula, snacks or meals to enrolled children at no cost to families. We do not offer juice, candy, cookies or other sugar-heavy or unhealthy options.

In addition to food and educational materials for children, a Nutritionist is available for support as needed.

- Classroom meal planning
- Nutrition support for children who are transitioning between food patterns (milk to solids, etc.)

Our Early Learning department, in partnership with Central Kitsap Food Bank, provides a food bank to any family or staff member who needs this added support. Minimal, non-identifying data is requested.

GENERAL DEPARTMENT INFORMATION

Workplace Information

Your worksite will become your "community." We want families and children to feel welcome and that happens when we cultivate a welcoming "community" in which we work each day. We are inclusive, responsive, and strength-based with one another, as colleagues, and with each person we interact with.

We: Speak openly. Ask questions. Assume positive intent. Are present. Avoid assumptions. See possibility.

Support Team

WHO	WHAT	WHEN
Supervisor	Reflective Supervision, general support, goal support, task management, planning, problem solving	As needed
Coach	Practice-based guidance and support, education screening and assessment questions, curriculum development, and child development	As needed
Professional Development Team	Professional Development questions and support	As needed
Administrative Team	Technology, travel, purchasing, supplies	Per Supervisor recommendation Copy Supervisor on emails
ERSEA Team	Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment, and Attendance questions	As needed Copy Supervisor on emails
Program Manager	Questions regarding specific content area or concerns not able to be addressed by Supervisor: • Professional Development • Early Head Start • ERSEA • Family and Health Services • Head Start/ECEAP • Mental Health	As needed Copy Supervisor on emails
Director	Oversight of program operations	As needed

General Workplace Expectations (Outlook Calendar, Email, Work Hours, Skyward, etc.)

Communication:

- **Outlook Calendar**: utilized to track time and effort, meetings, time off at a minimum
    - This is kept up to date at all times
    - Calendar invites are accepted as applicable
- **Email**: checked at least twice a day
    - Emails are responded to promptly; with 24 hours is preferred response time

Documentation:

- **Skyward**: time off is documented per OESD policy
    - Time off is reflected correctly on Time and Effort
    - Time off must be approved by supervisor prior to submitting to Skyward
- **ChildPlus**, **ELMS** and other program databases:
    - Documented fully, using objective language and "telling the story" of the work happening

Recruitment Responsibilities

We believe that it is not the job of one person or team to recruit families in the Early Learning program, but all staff.

All staff, regardless of their role in the program, are given a basic understanding of all areas of Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment & Attendance (ERSEA) and can articulate the program's process when sharing the program with the community.

In ensuring every member of our Early Learning team is versed in our ERSEA process, we can build a stronger program with cross-program knowledge that allows us to share about our services in the community and support families in their transitions between our program options.

Closing

All information related to our program can be found at www.oesd114.org/earlylearning.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FXH7CuCoack